

Annual Report 2012.13

Introduction

The Barton Fields Trust has been in charge of the field for seven years. 'Fields in Trust' took ownership of the field from Bristol City Council and the trust took over the management of the field on April 1st 2005. The Trust has been given an annual grant by the Council to help maintain the field.

Improvements

The hedgerow planted five years ago running down Argyle Road is now a developed hedgerow. This hedgerow will in time replace the wire chain link fence which at the moment marks the boundary.

A New hedgerow has been planted this year running down the field on the far side of Argyle Road at a cost of £1000.

A small area of the field is not being mown as an ongoing trial to see how leaving the mowing in certain areas will develop like a meadow area. It is clear the birds love this area which is close the hedgerow.

Community Fun Day

Building on our success of last year's Jubilee day the Trust managed to obtain a grant for the local Neighbourhood Partnerships Wellbeing fund.

It was a hugely successful day with the Lord Mayor opening the day and over 800 local residents turning up of a sun drenched Saturday afternoon in June. We had lots of stalls and donkey rides, face painting, play work, circus skills, birds of prey, dog show, rides, the police and local beat team, fire service, BBQ, tombola and so much more. This event was an outstanding success for a neighbourhood that seems to lack that community feel sometimes.

The Trusts thanks go to the PCSO's Alison, Leanne, and all the Beat team for all their hard work and to the Rugby Club, wives and partners who offer lots of support. The event would not have happened without them!

Friends of the Field

This group started last year to improve community links and participation in the field. This hasn't grown as we would have liked. We have met however every other month with several people attending.

Maintenance

The Trust employs CPS Grounds Maintenance to look after the field. The Contractor has been doing a good job and we work closely with them to improve the condition of the field. The pitches has had lots in of investment and although there some unevenness the amount of grass on the pitches is fantastic compared with anything previous.

This year however has seen a large crater form on the first team pitch. This has been a major issue and the Trust has had to fill and condition this crater so that the pitch is playable next season. This has cost the Trust approximately £7000 to put right. The crater formed because of continuing subsidence as the previous use for the land was an old tip.

Both pitches have been fertilised and verti drained in the close season.

The hedgerows are trimmed and in good condition.

The field has been litter picked two hours a week to keep the field clean and pristine.

The Trust has a major issue with a pathway that runs across the field. It is uncertain who is responsible for the upkeep of it as it is part of a 'safer routes to school' pathway.

The path is steadily sinking and needs repairs or the path will not be possible in bad weather as it now floods.

The trust applied for a large sum of money to make repairs but was unsuccessful.

It is our intention to reapply in the second round of funding.

Accountability

The Trust has become accountable for the field as the community now knows who is in charge of the field. We know this by:

- Complaints received by the Trust about various things: litter, motorbikes, Fly tipping etc.
- The Trust advertises its AGM in June each year which can be attended by the public as there is a slot for Public Participation.
- Community Days
- There have been no complaints about litter this year as we have introduced a litter picking regime.
- The development of the 'Friends of the Field' group.

Finance

We were delighted to acquire grants from several sources to enable the development on the field.

The Council's funding for the field is vital for its development.

With good budget control and careful management of the funding, far more has been achieved with the capital than any previous management.

For the same amount of funding we have managed to achieve quality maintenance and development in the past seven years.

It is hoped that the council will give the Trust an annual increase to cover inflation etc.

The Future

After several disappointments over previous years, the Trust has decided the way forward to improving the field and facilities is by small sustained approaches to the development of the site, rather than grand schemes which it seems, at the moment, is not realistic.

One way the Trust is trying to improve its site is in supporting the Rugby Club in developing the Clubhouse. It is trying to build a small extension the front of the building to provide a Foyer, Toilets and Disabled toilets with baby changing facilities. Planning has been given for this. This will allow the Clubhouse to be used more widely and become a real benefit to the local Community.

Conclusion

We made good progress to have an excellent Playing Field and Park for all the community. The field is looking far tidier and pristine than ever before.

Active plans for development are continuing into the coming year.

My thanks go to all the trust members for their hard work, commitment and support over the past year!

Mike Bond

Chair, Barton Fields Trust

June 2013