



# DUNDRY HILL GROUP

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18 October 2005

Dear DHG supporter,

## **Notice of Special General Meeting to wind up Dundry Hill Group**

I am writing to give notice of a Special General Meeting which will consider a motion to amend the constitution of Dundry Hill Group and to declare the Group dissolved. This letter is being sent to everyone on the DHG mailing list, but the list is now old and needed some corrections, so I apologise if there are errors in your name or address.

I'm afraid this letter is rather long. This is partly because we have to set out all the constitutional considerations so as to ensure that we do things properly, but also - and more positively - because we want to bring you up to date with DHG and end its existence on a cheerful note.

### **The Background**

When DHG was founded, a member of staff of CSV Environment was employed nearly full-time to help run the Group and arrange activities, working with a voluntary, elected committee. Barbra Lakin (née Wharton) and Eleanor Davis did an excellent job and organised walks, working parties and the two major projects which the Group undertook: the 'Malago Spring' project and the *Walks on Dundry Hill* book. When funding for that post ran out, the volunteer members didn't have sufficient time to keep things going in the same way; some were active in organisations in Dundry, and some were committed members of Malago Valley Conservation Group, and filling the breach left by Barbra/Eleanor was too much.

On the lower Dundry Slopes, on land owned by Bristol City Council, a new organisation arose out of problems at Hartcliffe Community Park Farm, who had been leasing the land for grazing. Their withdrawal from the land meant that new opportunities opened up for its future management, and the HARTWOOD ACRES STEERING GROUP was formed, involving some of the active members of DHG along with Bristol City councillors and officers and other people working in Hartcliffe and Withywood. A funding application was successful, and Jude English became the CSV Environment employee working to develop a management plan and activities on the lower slopes.

At first it was hoped that Jude would be able to carry on some of the wider DHG work in some of her time but this didn't prove possible. Chris McFarling of CSV helped enormously, but meetings held in recent months of DHG members have been unable to elect officers or a committee. Informal discussions between previously active DHG members have led to this formal proposal to wind up the Group.

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## **What is being proposed**

The constitution of the Dundry Hill Group provides for its winding up and sets out a two-stage process: a two-thirds majority voting for winding-up at a General Meeting, followed by a simple majority to confirm the decision at a subsequent meeting not less than 14 days later.

We don't think this is appropriate or would work - no-one would come to two meetings in a row! So we are proposing an amendment to the constitution which would allow the winding-up to be agreed in one decision at one meeting.

The proposals before the meeting are therefore:

1) Paragraph 10 of the constitution of the Dundry Hill Group be amended to read:

'The Group may be dissolved by a two-thirds majority of members voting at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting of the Group. If a motion for the dissolution of the Group is to be proposed at an Annual General Meeting or a Special Meeting this motion shall be referred to specifically when notice of the Meeting is given. In the event of the dissolution of the Group the available funds of the Group shall be transferred to such one or more charitable institutions having objects similar or reasonably similar to those herein before declared as shall be approved by the Meeting of the Group at which the decision to dissolve the Group is taken. On dissolution the minute books and other records of the Group shall be deposited with the Bristol Record Office or such other suitable organisation as the Meeting decides.'

2) Dundry Hill Group be wound up in accordance with Paragraph 10 of the constitution.

If you don't have a copy of the existing constitution and would like one, you can download it from the DHG website at [www.dhgbristol.cjb.net](http://www.dhgbristol.cjb.net) in either PDF or DOC format, or you can e-mail me at [dhg@andrec.plus.com](mailto:dhg@andrec.plus.com) and I will send it to you in the format of your choice, or you can e-mail, phone or write to me (details at the top of this letter) and I will post a copy to you.

## **What about the money?**

The constitution says (and this bit isn't affected by the proposed amendment) that the funds shall be transferred 'to one or more charitable institutions having objects similar or reasonably similar to those herein before declared as shall be approved by the Meeting of the Group at which the decision to dissolve the Group is taken.' ('Charitable' doesn't necessarily mean a registered charity, just a body which acts in a non-profit way for the common good).

A significant proportion of the Group's funds have come from the sale of the *Walks on Dundry Hill* books. After an initial joint effort, with different volunteers marketing the book to different outlets, sales effort slipped away, and many boxes of books were left lying at the CSV offices. Marie Jo Coutanche, an active member of Malago Valley Conservation Group, decided to take on the marketing and has now successfully sold virtually all the stock. Partly for this reason, and partly because it appears to be the only organisation in the area with aims similar to DHG and with a track record and with continuity, it has been suggested that Malago Valley Conservation Group (MVCG) be the recipient of all, or the bulk, of the DHG funds. (*Declaration of interest: as Chairman of MVCG, I'm clearly not against this idea! But the suggestion has been made and supported by non-MVCG members*). It has also been suggested that Dundry W.I. should receive support. It will be entirely up to the Meeting to decide how to apportion DHG's assets.

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Although there can be no formal control of any money handed over on dissolution, it has been suggested that MVCG could assume responsibility for maintaining the 'Malago Spring' artwork on Dundry Hill. It had been thought in the past that money from sales of *Walks on Dundry Hill* should be 'ring-fenced' to fund a future reprint or second edition. Again, any recipient of funds would be free to do as they wished, but MVCG would be in a position to do this if there seemed to be a demand.

### What happens next?

Although the proposal is to wind up Dundry Hill Group, we would like the occasion to be a happy one, looking back with a certain amount of pride on the Group's achievements. Arrangements will therefore be made, subject to confirmation by the Meeting, to spend a very modest amount of DHG money on some wine/fruit juice and nibbles to 'see the Group off'. There will also be a display of photos of DHG's work and activities.

Because DHG doesn't currently have elected officers, the Meeting will first have to appoint a chair for the occasion. The proposed agenda will therefore be:

- 1) Election of Chair for the Meeting
- 2) Apologies for absence
- 3) Approval of the expenditure of a sum to be notified on refreshments
- 4) The two motions set out on the previous page
- 5) Any other business

CSV Environment have kindly agreed to provide a venue for the meeting at their new offices, which are at ST DAVID'S CENTRE, QUEENS ROAD, BISHOPSWORTH (see map). To allow the 28 days notice which the constitution requires for constitutional amendments, the date has been fixed for Friday 25 November 2005, starting at 6.00pm. We hope the formal business can be completed reasonably quickly and that a pleasant social occasion with old friends will follow.

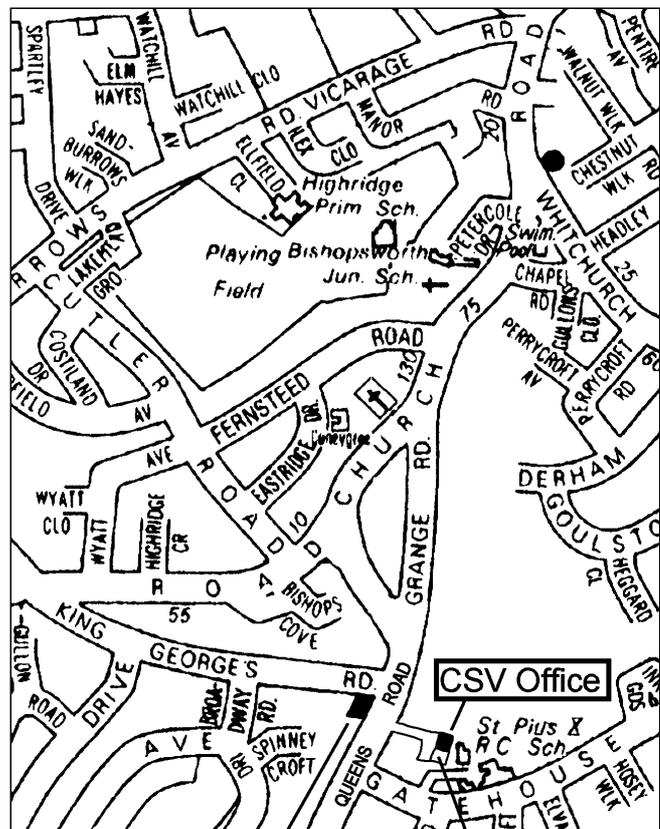
Please feel free to contact me to discuss any aspect of this letter. If you are unable to be at the meeting but would like to make any points, please let me know and I will raise them.

I look forward to seeing you at the meeting on Friday 25 November.

Yours faithfully,



André Coutanche



Queens Head      Sartan Club