



MALAGO VALLEY CONSERVATION GROUP

NEWSLETTER

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1997

ONCE UPON A TIME - and it seems like a long time ago, though it was only 1993 - a group of local people put together a report to the City Council making out the case for the Bishopsworth and Malago Conservation Area.

As we reported in the March 1997 *Newsletter*, the Council's Planning Committee finally agreed in February this year that work would be undertaken in financial year 1997/98 to investigate the proposed conservation area. I am delighted to say that work has now started, as promised. In August I had the pleasure of taking two planning officers on an abbreviated version of the Bishopsworth Village Trail by way of introduction to the (sometimes hidden) architectural and historical features of our area. Laurie Bingle knows our patch well, and we have been in touch with him on Chestnut Court, for example. Robin Smyth is new to this side of town, but was quickly appreciative of many of the things which our 1993 Report had identified. Both of them enjoyed the walk - though 'forced march' may have been a more accurate description, and on a very hot day, too!

We have agreed to provide Robin and Laurie with a summary of ways in which M.V.C.G. helps to maintain and improve the area - garbage raids, the hanging basket competition (see page 2), the finger post (see page 3), our ideas for Elm Tree corner, for the 'Matties' block of shops, for the Vale Lane entrance feature to Manor Woods etc. etc. The existence of a group of volunteers ready and able to contribute both ideas and practical help will itself add to the case for the proposals when the report goes to the Planning Committee.

ANDRÉ COUTANCHE

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SAY IT WITH FLOWERS

WELL, our corner of Bristol certainly did just that again this year. There were so many splendid displays that once more we had a very difficult task in selecting the prize winners for our hanging baskets and containers awards. However, we finally came up with (quite a long!) short list for our Riverside judge, Fiona, to inspect and the final results were:

<i>First Prize</i>	14 Brooklyn Road	£10 Riverside Voucher
<i>Second Prize</i>	62 Headley Park Road	£5 Riverside Voucher
<i>Third Prize</i>	4 Hill View Road	£5 Riverside Voucher
<i>Very Highly Commended</i>	12 Elsbet Drive	
	22 Valley Road	
	38 Kings Walk	

The first prize winner, Pat Howland, was on the front of the *South Bristol Observer* - more good publicity for M.V.C.G. The main prize winners also receive free membership of the Group for a year, and it's good to report that some of those from earlier years have maintained their membership after the initial year.

Our very grateful thanks are due again to Riverside Garden Centre, who kindly donated the First Prize, and to Fiona who tells me that she enjoys the opportunity to see what happens to some of their goods after they leave the Garden Centre!

LOLA HARDINGHAM



A very big thank you to Lola and to Jo Hawkins who have worked hard on this scheme for the past three years. They are now taking a well-earned 'retirement' from this project. Would anyone like to take it on for future years - or do you have an alternative idea? Please give Lola a ring on 964 1116.

A NEW SHOP FOR BISHOPSWORTH

IT IS A PLEASURE to report that the old shop premises at the junction of Church Road and Grange Road are being revitalised. **Amcraft Designs** have opened for business at 2 Grange Road, Bishopsworth. The shop specialises in handmade reproduction Victorian furniture, soft furnishings and re-upholstery.

The business started at a workshop at the Gatehouse Centre and, once it became established, it was decided to seek larger premises in a more prominent position. The relocation of the shop in Bishopsworth was not only to maintain the local contacts and business already built up but also because south Bristol has only three businesses providing this type of service.

One of the first things that Amcraft did on moving to Grange Road was to tidy and replant the small garden area in front of the shop (on the 'point' by the old Somerset County Council fingerpost). M.V.C.G. applauded this improvement in the appearance of our area, and we wish Amcraft every success.

JOHN TAYLOR

POINTING THE FINGER

AND SPEAKING OF THE FINGERPOST, for some time now one of the arms has been missing, broken off in an accident. We retrieved the broken-off piece and sent it to the Highways people, but nothing seemed to be happening. A few months ago, Steve Sparks, the Council's 'litter man' and a very good friend to M.V.C.G., kindly made some inquiries. As a result, (a) the broken arm was returned to us for safe-keeping, and (b) we were informed that the arm could be repaired. We were pleasantly surprised to hear this, since it is cast-iron and can't be welded. However, in order to repair it, the piece remaining on the fingerpost has to be removed and the two bits brought together on a work bench. Council contractors had apparently tried to get it off and found that it was stuck fast.

We said we would have a go, and John Taylor and I had an initial look the other weekend. To get to the broken bit, three other parts have to be removed, and several decades of rust have had their effect. We have dispensed copious quantities of penetrating oil and we shall return for another try. Watch this space!

ANDRÉ COUTANCHE

GETTING IN THE SWIM

FROM 1ST SEPTEMBER 1997, Bishopsworth Swimming Pool, along with all Bristol's sports centres and swimming pools, has been managed and run by Bristol Community Sport Ltd. Bristol Community Sport is an Industrial and Provident Society, a workers' co-operative managed by the people who work in the sports centres and swimming pools for the benefit of the community.

The lack of capital funding, combined with budget restrictions, has made the financing of necessary repairs and refurbishments difficult or impossible. Bristol Community Sport has been established to protect and develop the leisure facilities within the city. Any profits made by the company will be re-invested in the services.

The new Board of Directors consists of a Managing Director (Lindsay Renwick), six employees, a member from the Bristol Chamber of Commerce and Initiative, a member from the Bristol Sports Council and a member of the general public.

Bishopsworth Pool was built in 1974 on the site of the Congregational Chapel, which was built in 1828. The triangular site has been the centre of the village for many hundreds of years, and it was here that the Chapel of Ease was built in the twelfth century on land granted by Robert Arthur, Lord of the Manor.

The Pool serves a catchment area of Bishopsworth, Withywood, Hartcliffe, Highridge, Whitchurch and Bedminster Down. It has a capacity of about 430,000 litres (95,000 gallons) and it measures 25 metres long by 10.5 metres wide. Its deepest point is 2.3m (7'6").

There are sessions for everyone:

- Women in the Swim (exclusively for women)
- Adults only swim
- Lunchtime Lane Swim
- Adult Lane Swim
- Splash Tots (for mothers and young children)
- Fifty Plus Swim
- Early Morning Swim
- Aquarobics



A disabled hoist is available for those people with special needs. There are reduced rates for Leisure Card holders.

Swimming lessons are available for children of all ages, and there is a series of 10-week courses leading to the A.S.A. award scheme.

The local team is headed by Andy Farmer, the Manager, assisted by five lifeguards: Colin Chudley, Chris Ross, Alan Riddock, Samantha Evans and Amanda Wyatt. The staff work a shift system between the hours of 7.30am and 10.00pm and are responsible for the vast number of duties necessary to keep the Pool operational and safe.

Swimming is a great way to keep in shape and keep fit. It's also a social occasion - for example, you could ring the Pool to book a swimming party for the children. And if you don't already swim, it's never too late to learn. To enable this new initiative to succeed and progress it is necessary for us, as a community, to support it in every way possible. Bookings and information are available on site from the local management team or by telephone on 964 0258.

JOHN TAYLOR

MORE WATER

WE REPORTED last time about the proposed new fishing lake in Manor Woods. There was a public meeting at Bishopsworth Library in July, and a follow-up meeting on site in August. People living near by were rightly concerned about the possible implications, but it was made clear that no scheme would go ahead unless the engineering was properly proved. M.V.C.G. would welcome a well designed and well managed new feature in this area.

Things are still evolving, but the position as we go to press is that engineering investigations are continuing and there may be a further public meeting, possibly at Headley Park Community Centre and possibly in late September. Look out for posters or announcements in the press.

ANDRÉ COUTANCHE

MOVING MOUNTAINS

THE DUNDRY HILL GROUP - which M.V.C.G. is an active member of, and which is making excellent progress - is starting on a 'Planning for Real' exercise. This is a way of involving ordinary people in developing ideas for the future, rather than just the professionals and those familiar with planners' jargon.

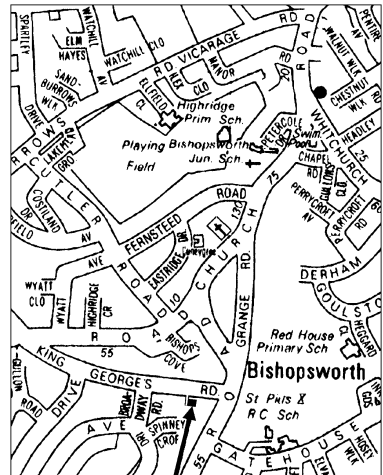
The principle is to have a good-sized model of the area concerned and to invite people to show on the model what improvements or changes they would like to see. This helps to make it more real than even the best-written consultative documents and the clearest diagrams and helps to spark off people's imaginations.

But first you have to make the model! Dundry Hill Group have organised two sessions over the weekend of 20th/21st September, from 10.00am to 4.00pm at Dundry Village Hall. The finished model will be used to pinpoint threats and opportunities to the Hill. If you would like more information, phone Chris, Peter or Sue on 964 5285 - or just turn up at one or both of the sessions and try out your 'Blue Peter' skills.

COFFEE UP

THE NOW TRADITIONAL autumn *Coffee Day* to raise money for the Wildlife Trust and for M.V.C.G.'s funds will be held on **Friday 7 November** at **84 King Georges Road**. Opening times are **2.00pm - 5.00pm** and **6.00pm - 8.00pm**.

The Wildlife Trust has a wide range of good-quality merchandise, including honey and charcoal from Folly Farm. And although M.V.C.G.'s normal running expenses are covered by members' subscriptions, extra money raised at events like this enables us to contribute to local improvements such as the Frog litter bin at Highridge Infant School.



84 King Georges Road

Everyone is welcome, so do come along and bring a friend.

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS AND EVENTS

WELCOME to the new programme of autumn talks. As usual, they all take place at St Peter's Rooms (side of St Peter's Church, Bishopsworth), starting at 7.30pm. Visitors are always very welcome and will be asked to pay 50p towards the cost of room hire.

Saturday 20/Sunday 21 September: *Help Make a Giant 3D Model of Dundry Hill.* 10.00am - 4.00pm at Dundry Village Hall (see opposite page).

Monday 6 October: *Garbage Raid.* Meet at 4.00pm at the 'Elm Tree'

Tuesday 21 October: *Up the Garden Path - a place for insects* with MARGARET HAYMAN. Come and learn about the myriad forms of insect life which share our gardens with us. 7.30pm at St Peter's Rooms.

Monday 27 October: *Garbage Raid.* Back to the regular 'last Monday in the month' system, but with an earlier start as autumn draws on: meet at 3.30pm at Bishopsworth Library.

Wednesday 29 October: Bristol Civic Society are holding one of their regular 'Topical Forums' and all M.V.C.G. members are invited to attend. The subject is *What Price Pedestrians?* and the main speakers will be BEN PLOWDEN, Director of the Pedestrians Association, and STEWART CLARKE, in charge of pedestrian matters at Bristol City Council. The Forum is at the Friends' Meeting House, Hampton Road (corner of Leyton Villas), Redland. Coffee is served from 7.15pm, with the meeting starting at 7.45pm.

Friday 7 November: COFFEE DAY to raise money for the Wildlife Trust and our own funds. See opposite page.

Thursday 20 November: PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE FROM OUR USUAL TUESDAY - this is to avoid clashing with the Bishopsworth Quiz. A double bill: SANDRA HAYES of Community Enterprise Network will be telling us about *Credit Unions*; the other speaker is our own SUE WALKER on a topic which will be announced in the next *Newsletter*.

Tuesday 16 December: The CHRISTMAS PARTY MEETING. Come along for an evening of festive fun.

CREDIT WHERE IT'S DUE

THE GROUP is planning to start an annual award scheme to recognise and praise environmental improvements in BS13. Awards could be given for a good new building, a good re-use or renovation of an existing building, landscaping or planting - anything which improved the public face of south-west Bristol. The award(s) would be given to whoever made the improvement happen, whether a private individual, a business, a voluntary group or a public body. We might have an awards ceremony at the A.G.M., thus giving publicity to both the improvement and the Group. We are thinking that we could work on a calendar year basis, with awards being made at the 1998 A.G.M. for projects completed in 1997.

What do you think? We would like to hear any suggestions, either on the detail of the scheme, or - very importantly - any nominations for possible award winners. Please get in touch with any ideas.

ANDRÉ COUTANCHE

Malago Valley Conservation Group Committee Members

Chairman	André Coutanche	964 3106
Acting Vice-Chairman	Lola Hardingham	964 1116
Treasurer	John Taylor	964 2913

Other Members

Anton Bantock, Brenda Docherty, Richard Eddy, Beryl Heaton, Chris Lillington (*Committee Secretary*), Mary Sykes.

Co-opted Members

Peter Hall, Sue Walker, Cllr Bernard Chalmers, Cllr Terry Cleverley, Cllr Peter Crispin, Cllr Paul Walker (*All the City and County of Bristol councillors for Bedminster, Bishopsworth, Hartcliffe and Whitchurch Park wards have been invited to become co-opted Committee members*).

Newsletter edited by André Coutanche, 14 Queens Road, Bishopsworth, Bristol, BS13 8LB; telephone 964 3106. **Letters, articles and suggestions from readers are welcome.** The opinions expressed in this *Newsletter* do not necessarily represent those of Malago Valley Conservation Group.