



# MALAGO VALLEY CONSERVATION GROUP

# **NEWSLETTER**

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**P**LEASE START by reading page 6! If all goes well with the printing and distribution, you will have this *Newsletter* in time for you to register to attend this free conference which will help take forward the work begun with the Malago Trek and Kathy Derrick's talk to us in October.

Other work going on steadily behind the scenes includes HARTWOOD ACRES STEERING GROUP, where grant applications are now being made to enable practical work to be done on the lower Dundry slopes. Another regular group which seldom gets reported here is COMMUNITY NETWORKS. This is an informal meeting every other month of any group, agency or individual concerned with Hartcliffe, Withywood or Highridge. It provides an extremely useful forum where news can be exchanged, new people can introduce themselves and presentations can be made to update people on existing projects (such as Symes Avenue) or explain new ones. The meeting on 17 November heard about proposed work in CROX BOTTOM - read more on page 3.

There was also a useful update on NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIPS, which we last reported in the May *Newsletter*. This had gone into suspended animation following the Council elections, because the three parties now running the City had different ideas on how things should move forward. A review is being undertaken, and further progress is expected in the New Year.

Finally, a brief update on MANOR WOODS. Progress on the management plan which we agreed with the Council has been slow, but both we (in conjunction with Hartwood Enterprises) and the Council themselves are still working on fund raising to make things happen.

ANDRÉ COUTANCHE

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## PLANNING MATTERS

**L**OTS OF UPDATES to report on many of our current planning issues, so, taking things in the same order as they were mentioned in the last *Newsletter* ...

At THE OLD VICARAGE, Bishopsworth, there has been a revision to the application to build two bungalows in the grounds (opposite the houses in Ilex Close) with parking for two vehicles in an extended turning head. Instead of being in line and parallel to Ilex Close, the bungalows are now staggered and set back slightly. This is intended to minimise the impact on the retained trees. Our position remains that we do not object to these bungalows provided they mark the end of development in the grounds of the Old Vicarage.

The developers who proposed the block of flats at PENTIRE AVENUE have appealed against the City Council's refusal of planning permission. Our comments about parking will be considered by the Planning Inspector in due course.

The scheme on the site of the MENDIP GATE, Queens Road, Withywood, for houses and flats (a total of 23 dwellings) was passed at the Development Control (South & East) Committee on 22 October. We had misgivings about some aspects of the road frontage, but broadly welcome the principle here.

The application for the site of the former Esso GARAGE on Bishopsworth Road is still evolving, and the landscape architects for the developers have asked for our views on the relationship of the proposed new block with Manor Woods. We will be meeting them as this *Newsletter* is going to press.

In the May *Newsletter* we reported on the planning application for a WASTE MANAGEMENT STATION, off Cater Road. This goes to the South & East Development Control Committee on 26 November, with a recommendation for approval subject to conditions to control potential noise and other pollution. As we requested, the report to the Committee shows a photomontage of the proposed building (which is 10m. high) from the adjacent allotments. It won't be an added attraction to the neighbourhood, but the Committee will have to decide whether this element of visual intrusion is too much.

Of the other 'imminent' planning applications mentioned last time, none has materialised yet, though another imminent one to add to the list is the redeveloped Bedminster Down School. Deputy Head Dick Hibdige gave an excellent presentation to the recent Highridge Forum meeting; the building looks most interesting.

ANDRÉ COUTANCHE

# CROX BOTTOM

**F**ROM TIME TO TIME, an issue comes up which we have had no inkling of, despite our extensive links with many parts of the City Council's organisation.

At the end of September we learned that the Council's Walking and Cycling Team were planning to do work on the path through Crox Bottom to improve it for cyclists. If you live in Headley Park, you may have had a leaflet about it through your letter box. The Walking and Cycling Team did try to consult people living near by, but unfortunately they did not know of the existence of Malago Valley Conservation Group, nor of the extensive network of organisations in BS13 who could have passed the information around to everyone interested.

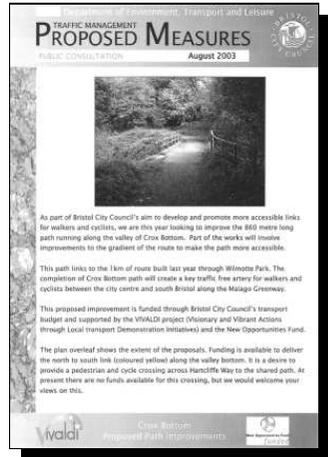
I spoke to Andrew Whitehead of the Cycling Team who apologised for not contacting us and helpfully sent us copies of the leaflet and of the ecological report on Crox Bottom which had been prepared. At my suggestion, he readily agreed to present the proposals to the meeting of Community Networks held on 17 November, where a good discussion took place.

The leaflet itself had left quite a lot to be desired as a meaningful consultation exercise: no details were given of the exact work proposed - all the leaflet said was that the path would be 'widened and resurfaced'. The proposed width wasn't given. A 'questionnaire' invited people to tick a box to say that they were 'in favour' or 'not in favour' of the proposals, and to say whether they were 'in favour' or 'not in favour' of lighting the path - though no mention of lighting was made in the leaflet (it turns out that it isn't intended after all).

It became clear that the proposed width was to be 3 metres (10 feet). This was worrying: it is equivalent to a small road and would be a serious visual intrusion in a much-appreciated natural setting. It also became apparent that other City Council departments had misgivings about the proposals.

We do not see why such a path is needed in Crox Bottom when the cycle-path in Manor Woods is no more than 2.8 metres wide for much of its length. We shall be writing to the Cycling Team, and if you would like to express your views as well, the address is: Traffic Management (Ref.AJW), Bristol City Council, Freepost (BS4341), Bristol, BS1 5ZZ.

ANDRÉ COUTANCHE



## GOLDEN GROVE

**C**HEDDAR GROVE will be golden next spring when our latest round of bulb planting starts to show. On Saturday 8 November we planted 1400 'February Gold' daffodil bulbs on the green 'square' in front of St Oswald's Church. Two areas were selected: surrounding the tree at the top end of the grass, and lower down to fill in a more open area.

As usual, thanks are due to Riverside Garden Centre, who supplied the bulbs to us at cost plus a small handling charge; to the 'planting sub-committee' of Beryl, Lola and Marie Jo; to all those who helped on the day; and - not least - to everyone who collected cans during the past year which were sold for recycling thus generating the money to pay for the bulbs.



*<< First we dig 'em ...*

*... then we plant 'em >>*





*<< And then we have  
a nice cup of coffee*

*(Seriously, we learned  
early on not to put the  
turfs back until all the  
holes had been planted,  
otherwise we didn't know  
where we was to ...)*



*<< Jamie needed little encouragement to  
jump on the replaced turfs to bed them in.  
(Sorry about your sofa, Lis)*

*Photos by Heaton Holographics*

## **HAPPY CHRISTMAS!**

OUR 'CHRISTMAS AT HOME' has just finished as this *Newsletter* is going to press. Thank you to Lola and her group of helpers who gave their time to make the event a great success. A lot of people came to do their Christmas shopping but also to enjoy a chat over a cup of coffee.

The Wildlife Trust were very pleased with their sales. Other stalls raised over £200 and this money will be shared between M.V.C.G. and the University of Withywood. Many thanks to the large number of people who donated goods so generously and to all who bought them.

# THE LIVING RIVERS OF SOUTH BRISTOL

*(New Cut, Malago, Pigeonhouse Stream, Brislington Brook, Colliters Brook)*

**A** NNOUNCING a **morning conference** to consider smarter working between statutory agencies and community organisations to make our river systems cleaner and more accessible for both people and wildlife. The conference will be held at The Southville Centre, Beaulay Road, Southville on Saturday 29 November 2003.

The river systems of Bristol are among the more neglected parts of our green heritage, especially in South Bristol. The Malago Trek of last August highlighted both the amenity and wildlife gems of the Malago-Pigeonhouse system and the really grotty sections. There were too many of the second.

This conference will bring key statutory agencies such as Bristol City Council and the Environment Agency together with community and voluntary organisations with an interest in environmental improvements in their neighbourhoods and especially near the New Avon Cut and the streams that run into it from the south.

- The Living Rivers Project is a new partnership of the key organisations involved in managing the river environment. They want to do this in a more sustainable way in the future and are exploring what needs to be done, how and by whom. The conference is an important opportunity to influence the process.
- Some streams and stretches of river have been 'adopted' by community groups. They chivvy the council and others, mobilise support for cleanups and other events, raise money and public awareness and enjoy their local streams. We want to map the groups in south Bristol and perhaps start to fill in the gaps.
- Special events are already being planned for 2004. These include a second Malago Trek on 23 May and a series of activities to celebrate the bicentenary of the New Avon Cut. Are there other things to do?

Please come to this free conference on 29 November 2003 at the Southville Centre from 9.40 until about 1.00. A vegetarian lunch will be available; please contact Ben Barker (923 1039 or [benbarker@lineone.net](mailto:benbarker@lineone.net)) so that we know who is coming.

BEN BARKER

- *This conference follows on beautifully from Kathy Derrick's talk to us in October. The M.V.C.G. Committee members who have been involved so far aren't available on 29 November, so please go along - it'll be fun!*

## PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS AND EVENTS

**T**HE TALKS by Kathy Derrick and Eleanor Davis got our winter season off to a great start, and the next event at St Peter's Rooms (side of St Peter's Church, Bishopsworth) is our Christmas 'Do'. M.V.C.G.'s own events are marked with a .



**Saturday 29 November:** *The Living Rivers of South Bristol Conference.* All very welcome (free, but please book with Ben Barker) - see opposite page.

 **Tuesday 9 December:** Our (un)usual *Christmas Jollities* at 7.30pm at St Peter's Rooms. As in previous years, we shall finish with an American Supper, so please bring a contribution to the feast if you can.

 **Monday 5 January:** *Garbage Raid.* Meet at 3.45pm at the 'Elm Tree', Bishopsworth.

 **Tuesday 20 January:** MARION GREEN (an M.V.C.G. member) will talk about *Our Plants and their Properties.*

 **Monday 26 January:** *Garbage Raid* at 3.45pm. See the *January Newsletter* for where to meet.

 **Tuesday 17 February:** *Our Annual General Meeting and Birthday Party.* Our Guest Speaker will be JULIAN COX, the new Community Parks Manager for our part of Bristol. More details in the *January Newsletter.*

 **Monday 23 February:** *Garbage Raid* at 3.45pm. See the *January Newsletter* for where to meet.

 **Tuesday 16 March:** RHIAN EVANS from the HHEAG Food Co-op will tell us about her *Visit to Nicaragua and Fair Trade.*

 **Monday 29 March:** *Garbage Raid* at 3.45pm. See the *January Newsletter* for where to meet.

● The Bishopsworth Quiz on Tuesday 18 November was - as ever - great fun and a good evening for everyone. M.V.C.G.'s team again came third - a splendid performance. Congratulations to Lola, Jo, Beryl and Danny. The winners were the University of Withywood who pay the price by having to set the questions next year.

## A NICE SURPRISE

A FEW WEEKS AGO we had a phone call from Lynne Haines at the City Council, who deals with the naming of new roads. She had been looking at our website and had read the tribute to Jack Price in the July *Newsletter*. Since she needed a name for a new close off Pawlett Road on the lower Dundry slopes, she wondered whether we thought it would be appropriate to name it after someone who had done so much research on the history of Dundry.

Needless to say, we thought it was a great idea - and so did Jack's son and his family in France when we contacted them. The new houses are still under construction, but sometime soon, a 'Jack Price Close' should be appearing in Hartcliffe - and ultimately in the AtoZ.

## Malago Valley Conservation Group

<b>Chairman</b>	André Coutanche	964 3106
<b>Vice-Chairman</b>	Lola Hardingham	964 1116
<b>Hon. Secretary</b>	Lis Pibworth	987 0825
<b>Hon. Treasurer</b>	Beryl Heaton	964 5780

### Committee Members

Anton Bantock, Don Bartlett, Brenda Docherty, Mavis Palmer

### Co-opted Committee Members

Tania Case, Valerie Gay, Paul Mizen, Ted Thomas, Sue Walker, CSV Environment, Cllrs Mark Brain, Peter Crispin, Richard Eddy, Royston Griffey, Ron Hodges, Colin Smith, Mary Sykes (*All the City councillors for Bishopsworth, Hartcliffe and Whitchurch Park wards are invited to become co-opted Committee members*).

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**Letters, articles and suggestions from readers are welcome.**

The opinions in this *Newsletter* do not necessarily represent those of M.V.C.G.