

## **Pittville Park and Estate HLF bid**

Notes of Second Joint Meeting of the Heritage and the Community Consultation Working Groups, 17 July 2008, 1400-1600, at Hesters Way Community Centre

**Purpose of meeting:** to discuss the Conservation Management Plan (CMP), second draft

**Chair:** Rob Bell, CBC

Others present included CBC staff, Landscape Agency consultants, Friends of Pittville members of the Working Parties, plus Roger Turner and Arran Stibbe (the latter representing the University of Gloucestershire), PARA representatives

**HLF bid:** we were reminded that this is a ‘parks for people’, not a restoration project. Among the five outcomes are increasing the involvement of volunteers; improving employees’ and volunteers’ skills and knowledge, through training; and better maintenance and management of the park and estate.

Section 4.7 of the ‘Statement of Significance’ in the CMP was read out. This sets out the ‘principles and policies of management and development’ and is crucial to understanding the content of the bid.

**Discussion:** this was wide-ranging and covered, largely in the order in which items were raised, the following:

- Whether there were any physical plans to view and discuss now (*the answer is no, the CMP is a statement of intent. Detailed plans will be developed if the Stage 1 bid is successful; hence not till after March 2009*)
- A reminder that we are Friends of Pittville (FofP), **not** Friends of Pittville Park
- Need for clarification of greater role of Fof P (*FofP and PARA are key to developing the Audience Development and the Access plans, both of which must be submitted in September with the CMP and other documents. This led to some discussion of who the current users are and whether there are potential user groups which need to be canvassed. We will be asked to help survey users on National Play Day on 6 August; a short questionnaire will be provided*)
- Why the land west of Tommy Taylor’s Lane was not included? *There were difficult environmental issues which could not be resolved without compromising the bid; also the area is not part of the Pittville Estate.*
- What is happening to the underpass under Evesham Road which links the east and west sides of the park? *A decision has not been made; there are engineering and access problems which would make it prohibitively expensive to re-engineer for 21<sup>st</sup> century use. There was some discussion of what could be done to improve its current poor physical state and improve security so it would not be vandalised again. It was suggested that sponsorship for this could be sought as a separate project. It seems that sponsorship is difficult to obtain, especially with the economic downturn.*
- Could we be told more about the re-instatement of the bridge across the west lake? *This was the most popular of the proposals set out in the Pittville Park*

*Master Plan (i.e. the pale green map), according to feedback from the public so far. The community will be involved in developing design ideas.*

- *How will the public's expectations be managed, as there are more suggested improvements than the bid will cover? Public response to the Master Plan has been excellent with many detailed comments. There was some discussion of how to let the public know what the top five proposals were and how to thank those who had responded. One method would be for FofP to inform its members and the Pittville and St Pauls' residents through the newsletter and a wider audience through its website.*
- *What is envisaged for the community garden in Agg Gardner? St Pauls' residents requested this during consultations there. It will be managed and run by local people, who will have appropriate training and support. It could include flower, fruit and vegetable gardens.*
- *What will happen to the golf course, tennis courts and skateboarding area? There was some discussion about how much use there is of the first two facilities. They need to be better managed, with proper marketing, as part of a suite of facilities in the west side of the park, with improved ease of access and safety. The golf course may be reduced to nine holes. The location of the new skateboarding area is still under consideration, but it will be moved to nearer the leisure centre. All these facilities will be 'softened' with planting of shrubs and small trees.*
- *What about the space for older children and teenagers to 'hang out'? The nature and location of this will be explored with these groups once the bid reaches the next phase; the location as marked on the Master Plan is not set in stone.*
- *What do we think about the proposals for refreshment facilities? There was some disquiet at the idea that the Central Cross Café might be closed in favour of a new facility near the playground in the east park. The Café is an historic building and should be retained for its original purpose. Mobile facilities could be provided at the playgrounds. The Boat House is not suitable for preparing refreshments because of drainage and engineering issues. The group was not convinced that refreshment facilities in the Pump Room would be attractive enough, i.e. convenient, for the public.*
- *What is envisaged for the play areas? Will these be in bright colours as they are currently? New and modern play equipment is needed; they will probably be 'nature playgrounds', thus blending into the landscape more than now. However, this does not exclude bright colours, which are found in nature.*

The meeting was closed at 1600 as agreed. The Landscape Agency thanked Friends of Pittville Secretary, Ron Pattinson, for the excellent photos he had provided for the consultants.