



The Talk of Totterdown

The Newsletter of Totterdown Residents Environmental and Social Action Community Interest Company

Issue No 11, Autumn 2008 www.tresa.org.uk

This issue is sponsored by The Totterdown FRONT ROOM Art Trail

Park work to start

The School Road Park project is making good progress. The project must be completed by December, and has a series of tight deadlines to meet if TRESA is to spend the money in the allocated time.

Two series of workshops have already taken place at Hillcrest School. One was to create a welcoming sculpture with a local artist. The second was to design a butterfly and bee border with the younger children. This will be planted during the next school year.

Involving the local school is an essential part of the project, in order to forge a sense of pride and ownership for the park among the pupils. The main aim of this project, and the impetus behind the local parents who have worked so hard for this, was to provide all of our local children with an outdoor, naturally inspired play space, for healthy and happy local kids.

There was a display of possible playground designs at Hillcrest Summer Fair, where proposals from three different companies were on display.

In response to the community feedback, Sutcliffe Play has been chosen to install Kaiser & Kuhne equipment and to create a natural play environment. Some of the most popular parts of the design were embankment rocks to climb on, timber steps

and a new embankment slide.

Community comments changed the design in the following ways: equipment that can be found in other parks close by was removed, and an additional slide and climb unit for toddlers has been added. The final layout of the play area will be decided by Bristol City Council and Sutcliffe Play.

The new dog free area, which has been proposed by Bristol Parks in response to a large number of local parents' request for a larger, cleaner dog free space was also displayed at the fair. If you have any comments or questions about the dog free space and/or the playground design and layout, you can contact John Knowlson at Bristol Parks: john.knowlson@bristol.gov.uk.

The new seating for the park will now be built by a group of local residents, and made from locally sourced, sustainable timber. We are hoping that work will start in October – and take approximately four weeks, weather permitting!

Remember your childhood and often the memories which stand out are those of playing outside and the freedom to roam. Sadly children now are much more confined, mostly by the restrictions imposed by negotiating busy roads, traffic and fast driving



on even quite small roads. Our memories of this freedom being good are supported by research evidence which show the benefits afforded by the opportunity to play freely and safely in a green environment. Children who play more in green spaces have been found generally to have both better social and learning skills and to be less aggressive.

Adults too benefit from time spent in a green environment, it helps us relax and recover

from mental fatigue and it is no coincidence that actors have a 'green room' for preparation and relaxation before going on stage. Even more importantly green spaces and trees in an environment have been shown to reduce aggression and help people to feel more positive about their home area.

Living in an inner city area the greening of our environment is therefore very important. We do have trees, shrubberies and green areas including the

parks but at a recent meeting of TRESA^{cic} it was agreed to have an item on the agenda looking at where further improvements could be made and we were advised of the possibility of applying for funding to support any plans for planting more trees and shrubs.

How we can improve the environment for children by reducing risks from traffic and fast driving is another matter.

Anne, Park Street



TOTTERDOWN ART TRAIL

Friday 14th Nov, 6 - 9pm.
Saturday & Sunday 16th Nov.
12 - 6pm.

Make a diary date to join in the fun!

Visit our website for regular updates;

www.frontroom.org.uk

Book is recipe for success

Local people who contributed to the Taste of Totterdown cookbook brought their dishes along to a hugely successful book launch outside the Oxford Street shops in Totterdown Square. The Lord Mayor of Bristol Councillor Christopher Davies and the Lady Mayoress were on hand to toast the success of the cookbook with a bottle of Raspberry Fizz donated by Organique. Others raised a glass of Totterdown Press cider.

The cookbook, which was funded by an Awards for All grant administered by TRESA, is on sale now at local shops including Fig.1, Mak News, Organique, Jack and Jill, ACapella and the Banana Boat. The book costs just £7 if it is bought from one of these outlets. It will go on sale in bookshops and at www.tangentbooks.co.uk for £10 in November. So if you want your subsidised copy, buy it now!



The Lord Mayor launches Taste of Totterdown with Martyn, Mia, Suzanne and Natalie.

You can also buy the book from the TRESA^{cic} website at www.tresa.org.uk. If you join TRESA by filling in the form on page 4, you get a copy of the book plus membership for £6.

About 20 local dishes from the cookbook were brought along to the launch. They varied from oatcakes to samba, kedgerree to sausage stew and 12-hour roast lamb to Middle Eastern mezze.

The Thunderbolt

LARGE GARDEN

CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA

BAR-B-Q

CYCLE PARKING

LIVE MUSIC

COMEDY

FILM

FRIDAYS: FREE ENTRY AND GUEST ALE PROMOTION

FOR DETAILS OF EVENTS SEE www.thethunderbolt.net

Perfect for all the family



Remember when...

Does anyone know anything about this picture? It was supplied by a reader, and copies of it can be bought at the Memories stall in St Nick's Market. We assume that it's a VE day or similar street party in Hill Street, but maybe you know better...



ToT Editorial

There's been so much going on in Totterdown over the last few

months that we've been hard pressed to find room for it all in this issue of The Talk of Totterdown. It's a sign of what a vibrant community we live in that there have been fundraising garden parties at the Thunderbolt, a fashion show at the Star & Dove, bingo at the Thali as well as events at The Shakespeare.

But Totterdown's biggest event is yet to come – The FRONT ROOM Art Trail attracts thousands of visitors to the area and this year's Art Trail in November is set to be as successful as ever. Most of these events are organised by a small number of volunteers so it's especially pleasing to see them so well supported by the local community.

TRESA^{CIC} continues to play a vital part in promoting the views of the people of Totterdown, but it can only do so with your support. So join up to TRESA, it only costs £2 or £6 with a copy of Taste of Totterdown. But hurry, stocks of the book are selling fast.

Richard Jones

Time to get arty in Totterdown...

It's that time of year again... the balmy (ha! ha! ha!) days of summer are coming to an end and as the trees in Victoria Park provide a colourful autumn display thoughts turn to what arty happenings the creative people of Totterdown are going to come up with for this year's FRONT ROOM art trail

Plans for events and activities are well underway, with FRONT ROOM 2008 dates confirmed as Friday 14 to Sunday 16 November 2008.

FRONT ROOM 2008 promises to be a fantastic multi-coloured, multi-faceted celebration of art in all its guises. Promoting creativity in Totterdown, the Art Trail encourages artists of all persuasions – amateur and professional – to showcase their creative talents, and visitors can expect a weekend of delights.

This year FRONT ROOM will be adopting a theme of 'sustainability'. Various activities will encourage participants and visitors to think what sustainability means to them. We have two great competitions to get those creative energies flowing! A greetings card competition, open to all FRONT ROOM 2008 registered artists, and a 'wheelie bin' competition which anyone can get involved in - see the website for more details.

Again there will be workshops, street art, and a fantastic FRONT ROOM 2008 Street Party offering plenty of live bands and entertainment and a variety of street stalls.

As always, a key highlight of the annual art trail will be the artists displaying their work and performing in their own houses. Front rooms, kitchens, basements and gardens in the area will all be transformed into impromptu galleries which offer a chance for artists and visitors to chat and enjoy art in a comfortable environment.

And it's still not too late to get involved as an artist or volunteer – visit the website - www.frontroom.org.uk – for regular updates and details of future meetings.

Work by some of the artists who will be exhibiting at this year's FRONT ROOM Art Trail.

Top: Hibernation by Kerry Day.

Middle: Diva by D Brookes.

Bottom: Pear Balloon by George Sander Jackson.



Behind the Doors: the Old Lodge in the park

The Old Lodge in Victoria Park, which had once housed the park keeper, has been empty for 20 years, which seems a terrible indictment of our priorities in society. With nobody on hand to keep an eye on the park, maintenance and standards had slipped. Fortunately there are now plans to re-open the lodge. The impetus for re-opening came from Victoria Park Action Group (VPAG) and our local councillors. I was shown round the building by Alf Havvock, who moved to Windmill Hill in 1970

and remembers that Victoria Park was beautiful then, with a park keeper and a team of staff.

In collaboration with the Council's Parks Department and the local police, enough money has been secured for renovation of the ground floor. Two downstairs rooms have been renovated so far. This will provide space for a police presence, the Detached Youth Team and VPAG. The neighbourhood police team, who currently work out of Bishopsworth police station, will be able to spend more time in

the ward and it is hoped to have regular police surgeries where people can call in and ask for advice, enabling a much better liaison between the police and the local community.

For the long term it is hoped that enough money can be secured for a full renovation including the upstairs. Overall, I was impressed with this grass-roots effort to bring the Old Lodge back to life, which emphasises the importance of local community groups in spearheading improvements to local facilities. **Patrick Hulme**



The Old Lodge in Victoria Park is being renovated after standing empty for almost 20 years.

Our changing landscape



You could be forgiven for thinking that this issue's picture of the Texaco Garage redevelopment is the same as the one we printed in June. But the fact is that work on the site seems to have virtually stopped. Could this have anything to do with the Credit Crunch we wonder?

Photograph by Allan Keen (allankeen@blueyonder.co.uk)

Happy Birthday Fig.1

Fig.1, Totterdown's ethical gift shop, has celebrated its first birthday. Fig.1 in St Luke's Road is both a shop and an online business. Reflecting on the first 12 months, Fig.1 co-founders Mark Fletcher and Luke Macfadyen said: "One of the things we have been most amazed about during our first year is how the internet can really help level the playing field for a business like ours."

"We've got the dynamism of a small business, we're really passionate about choosing the right products which are different, interesting and quirky, but we also really care about giving good customer service. What's great is that we can do this for our on-line audience as well as in the shop. We're a boutique business with an ever changing collection to match, but we also have customers from across the country who really appreciate what we do. This wouldn't have been easy to

achieve without the internet."

In October, Fig.1 is planning to launch a customer loyalty scheme involving a £5 voucher for every £100 spent. The till system will keep track of orders by name and automatically generate the voucher when the total spend is over £100. Fig.1 will also be running some early Christmas shopper evenings in November with nibbles and friendly advice. A percentage of the profits will be donated to charity. For further information contact Mark Fletcher on 07969 908316. Products can be viewed at www.fig1.co.uk

Up the Junction

The traffic signals at the junction of Wells Road and St John's Lane are being modified to improve the efficiency and safety of the junction. Vehicles waiting to turn right into St John's Lane were queuing back so far that they frequently blocked vehicles wishing to travel straight on. To help relieve this problem, right turners will be given a green signal earlier in the sequence.

The new traffic signals

will incorporate Bus Priority facilities. Specialised equipment will recognise when a bus is approaching the junction and, if the bus is running late, the traffic signals will alter the timings to allow it to get through the junction quickly.

Facilities for disabled pedestrians include tactile paving, dropped kerbs and tactile rotating cones located underneath the push button units for use by visually impaired pedestrians.

The signals will incorporate new technology to cancel a pedestrian demand when it is no longer required. The existing pelican crossing outside The Bush pub will be relocated to the main junction to provide better traffic co-ordination and help reduce delays.

New cycle lanes will be provided for cyclists travelling up the Wells Road and St John's Lane. Cycle advanced stop lines will allow cyclists to wait safely at the signals ahead of queuing traffic.

A CCTV camera will be installed to enable monitoring from the Council offices, and a system called SCOOT will coordinate the traffic signal timings with the rest of the local highway network.

News in brief...

CLIC Sargent Cotton Bags

Dear TRESA

Thank you so much for your donation of £309.36 to CLIC Sargent from the sale of cotton shopping bags. I do hope you all feel it has been worth the effort to achieve your objective of reducing plastic bag use. As you know, when a child is diagnosed with cancer their life changes dramatically and so do the lives of those around them. CLIC Sargent plays a crucial role in helping patients and family members cope, focusing on meeting individual needs through a range of services – at home, on the ward and back in the community. Your support has helped us make a difference to the life of a child who has cancer and their family. For example, £280 will accommodate a family at a CLIC Sargent 'Home for Home' for 10 days. Here they can stay together within walking distance of the hospital where their child is being treated, which is often many miles from their home. Thank you again for your kind donation and support.

Chris Banting, Community Fundraising Manager

Front garden festival

The garden festival was a great success this year with over 40 houses entering the front garden competition. Congratulations to the prize-winners and to everyone who received a commendation. A range of market stalls filled the square while volunteers undertook litter picking and community gardening in the raised flowerbeds. Thanks are due to the Tesco staff who sold hot drinks and cakes again this year and gave all proceeds to TRESA.

Totterdown music festival

Congratulations to everyone involved with the Totterdown music festival. Held in Henry Street on 14 and 15 June 2008, the festival involved two days of live music, food, stalls and children's activities plus the usual friendly Shakespeare atmosphere. There are plans to merge the music and garden festivals next year to form a Totterdown summer festival weekend.

Book group

Totterdown's book group continues to meet once a month on a Sunday afternoon at the Star and Dove to discuss a range of books. For further information about the group contact: stuart.e.turner@hotmail.com

Local food champion

Francine Russell of Arnos Street, Totterdown's very own defender of good food, helped Bristol City Council to become national winner in the Food Champion Awards this year. In accepting the award from the Food Standards Agency, the Council have acknowledged the contribution of various projects including 'Cooking from Scratch', where Francine trained teenagers and young parents to plan, prepare and cook balanced and healthy meals.

Police priorities

At the PACT (Partners and Communities Together) meeting, held in the Bowling Club at Victoria Park on 14th July, the following policing priorities were established: anti-social behaviour at Victoria Park; Cotswold Road - drug dealing, anti-social behaviour, vehicle crime (to include the burial ground and the telephone kiosk, Windmill Hill); Oxford Street and New Walls - drugs, anti-social behaviour. The next PACT meeting is on 20th October 2008, 7:30pm in Broad Plain Rugby Club (off St John's Lane). The meetings are friendly and informal. Please come along and make your views known.

Arena site plans

Plans are due to be submitted to Bristol City Council early in 2009 for the 14-acre site next to Temple Meads station, previously promoted as the site for a 12,000 seat arena. The new plans will include offices, shops and homes. TRESA is keeping an eye on this development - we believe that any plans should incorporate improvements to the pedestrian and cycle route from Temple Meads to the Three Lamps junction.

Adventures of

Totterdown Ted
I nearly scored with Totterdown Ted one day at the Opera House! I had him in my bag for some strange reason. We'd gone to see a most amazing Aussie Hamlet and Hugo Weaving, actor of this parish who played one of the queens in Priscilla, was in the interval bar (he's everywhere). I got up to go over and tell him I had a poster of him in Priscilla in my kitchen and get him to sign Ted - but got my handbag in disarray and chucked coffee all over him instead. Classic. People mopped me sympathetically and he fled, dripping.

Kate Pollard (currently with Totterdown Ted in Australia)

Save our wall!

Residents in the School Road area of Totterdown have launched a campaign to raise money to repair the Totterdown mural opposite the School Road park.

Some of the paint on the landmark mural is beginning to flake and residents are concerned that the mural will become badly damaged. Artist Andy Council can make temporary repairs to the mural to protect it over the winter, but the wall will probably need to be completely stripped and repainted with either the same design or a new one next year.

The initial repair work should only cost about £100. Residents are suggesting that people who would like to contribute to the mural renovation should make a minimum donation of £5. When Andy has had a chance to take a

good look at the wall he will be able to estimate the cost of repainting it. Residents hope to raise money for the repainting with a series of fundraising events.

In the meantime, anyone who would like to contribute to the cost of repairing the mural should send a donation to 31 Balmain Street, Totterdown BS4 3DB.

Buster's bangers

The Star & Dove is now selling their fantastic Buster's Bangers to take home for cooking. Also on sale at the pub are homemade scotch eggs, chutneys and joints of meat. Eamon from the Star has also launched a monthly seven course tasting menu - first Thursday of every month. Check in advance for details.

Lavender Broom: Tut, tut!



Dear neighbours. According to our City Council, Bristol residents are 'spoilt for choice' when it comes to eating out. Totterdown has benefited from

this gastronomic renaissance and I am delighted to report that Mr Broom and I celebrated our wedding anniversary in a local establishment this year. Our enjoyment was enhanced by my not having to make use of the hygienic wipes I popped into my handbag just in case. When Mr Broom suggested my concern for hygiene may have tipped towards obsessive compulsive disorder, I reminded him to wash his hands before tackling the prawns as there could be as many germs hiding under his wedding ring as there are people in Europe.

The high standards at the restaurant bode well for my campaign to Tidy Up Totterdown and Tactfully Uphold Taste (Tut, tut!). Whether restaurant, café, public house or takeaway, there can be no excuse for squalor. Neither is it good for business. Catching a glimpse of the 'chef' loitering around the bin area to roll a cigarette, with a grubby tea towel dangling from his back pocket, does not inspire one to rush inside and order from the specials board.

Fortunately, environmental health officers are employed to ensure restaurants and takeaways provide food that is hygienically prepared and

safe to eat. Following a routine inspection, businesses are given a star rating which can be found on the website (www.scoresonthedoors.org.uk). I have investigated ratings for Totterdown but it appears the site may need updating. Although promising, we could do better. My advice to businesses is to aim high and ensure your rating is displayed accurately. Information and training are available from the City Council's food safety team (telephone 922 3807 or email food.safety@bristol.gov.uk).

Despite what that uncouth child yelled at me the other day, my concern with star ratings is not motivated by a sense of superiority. I pride myself that I have not lost the 'common touch' and can be content with simple fare from an establishment more suited to manual workers. Besides, I understand Jamie Oliver was given an 'advisory note' recently about hygiene standards in one of his prestigious restaurants, which suggests celebrity chefs might benefit from a little less flamboyance and a little more emphasis on the importance of a boil wash for kitchen whites.

We all enjoy eating out but concerns about global warming, and outrageous taxi fares, make it all the more pleasurable if one can stroll to a reputable local venue. So I hope you will join me in supporting Totterdown businesses and encouraging them all to strive for five-star hygiene rating. Tut, tut!

Mums put music on the menu

Two local parents have joined forces to offer singing and music classes as well as a social occasion for the tots and parents of Totterdown.

Having taken over the franchise for Music with Mummy and Jolly Babies in the area, Hannah Kirby wanted to find a venue that would provide somewhere for the mums and dads to relax and have a chat after classes. She approached Christianne at the Star and Dove pub who, being a mum herself, was very happy to have the tots in the pub and quickly volunteered Eamon to make cakes!

Now everyone gets a fun, interactive, musical time and

parents get to socialise with each other and enjoy delicious cakes too!

Helen Beak, (one of the mums) said: "We've always loved Jolly Babies and Music with Mummy but it's even better at the Star & Dove, as I get to talk to the friends I've made and Abigail and I always look forward to the amazing cakes!"

Music with Mummy and Jolly Babies sessions are small classes for under 3s, both involve singing, action songs, games, percussion sessions and listening.

For more information on Music with Mummy and Jolly Babies classes at the Star & Dove contact Hannah Kirby on 0117 377 8167.

Bath Road cycle path

Bristol City Council's Cycling Officer has confirmed that the white lines separating pedestrians and cyclists at the Bath Road bridge are to be reinstated following complaints that the path is dangerous. The lines were removed when drop kerbs were installed leading to much confusion about right of way. The cycle track is one of the busiest in Bristol. Complaints were received from cyclists and the case was taken up by the Bristol branch of the Cycling Touring Club.

Love Food festival

This huge indoor farmers market is on our doorstep! There are lots of extras to keep the kids amused. The next event is Sunday 19th October, 10.30am-4pm at Paintworks, Bath Road. For more information, visit www.lovefoodfestival.com

• Community-based weekly yoga sessions are now being held at the Totterdown Methodist Church Hall every Thursday evening. The sessions run from 8.30pm until 9.30pm.

And finally

The former allotment land opposite Bellevue Terrace has now been cleared of all vegetation by Network Rail. This work is prior to plans for development for the site. In the week commencing 23 June, residents worked with the RSPB, the Avon Badger Group and the police to halt the contractors before they destroyed bullfinch nests on the land. Many badger runs leading to a sett were also on site, but the speed of the clearance negated any opportunity to retain the wildlife habitat. Residents contacted Bristol City Council regarding alternative uses for the land, but the council were not looking to acquire small plots for park or green use.

Residents held a meeting in the street on 24 July at which local councillors Mark Bailey and Alf Havvoek were present. Mark and Alf were due to attend a meeting the following day with Network Rail concerning the future of the site. Following the meeting Network Rail confirmed that the land has been surveyed. Network Rail are fully aware that the flat-lining of the housing market means they will have to sit back and wait for an upturn in the house building sector before they can interest a potential developer.

Bellevue Terrace residents are unable to take further action until plans are submitted. There will have to be a good reason for any objection to planning as 'right to light' for example is identified as a civil matter not a legal one. One angle to consider is the iconic view across the city to the coloured houses of Richmond Street, any building that takes place along this eye-line must be in keeping with the current view, or Bristol may lose one of its most famous landmark images.

Suzanne Ferris

New book group

A new book group meeting mid week has started. The group will meet on the last Wednesday of the month. The first meeting was on September 24th at 7.45pm when the group discussed 'Salmon fishing in the Yemen' by Paul Torday. Telephone 07766 992016 or 01179 716829 [both nos. evenings only] for more information.

Ads and announcements



Arabic Dance with Farrah

AUTUMN TERM starts MONDAY 15 SEPTEMBER

HILLCREST PRIMARY SCHOOL, TOTTERDOWN

FFI or to book a place please contact PATSI BRADDICK
Tel: 0117 9715451
email: patsi-farrah@blueyonder.co.uk

TOTTERDOWN

RISING

HALF PRICE!

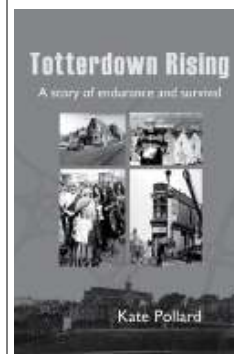
Kate Pollard's book is now just £5 if you

buy it from Fig.1,

Organique. or

online at

tangentbooks.co.uk



PATCO'S

- Super Community Store
- Open 10.30am-10.30pm
- Seven days a week
- Health/organic food
- Off licence
- Hardware – key cutting
- Electrical supplies – car care
- Polish food and mags
- TRESA letterbox
- More choice
- Small queues

NEXT ISSUE

The deadline for the next issue of The Talk of Totterdown is November 20th. It will be delivered to 2,000 homes and businesses in Totterdown from December 12th.

Get in touch

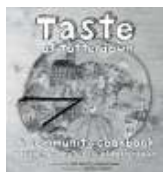
To contact the Talk of Totterdown with a story, please email webeditor@tresa.org.uk. The Talk of Totterdown is also available as a pdf document on the TRESA^{CC} website at www.tresa.org.uk. The Talk of Totterdown is edited by Richard Jones and Jonathan Wright. Views expressed are not necessarily those of TRESA^{CC}. Printed by Doveton Press Ltd: www.dovetonpress.co.uk, 0117 966 0078.



JOIN TRESA

TRESA is a 'community interest company' that aims to protect and improve the environment and support community activities within Totterdown. Membership costs just £2 per year. To join, please post this membership form with £2 cash or cheque, payable to TRESA, in the letterbox at Patco (by the door) or Tesco (by the post office counter).

SPECIAL OFFER with this coupon: £6 will pay for your annual membership plus The Taste of Totterdown community cookbook (RRP £10). Post the coupon + book request in one of the TRESA post boxes and we will deliver the book to you.



Name

Address

Email

Telephone