

Rethinking Kings Weston

rev.B Sep 14



FROM PLAN TO PROPOSALS

The Kings Weston Action Group's ambition is to work with Bristol City Council, and the National Trust to develop the new Conservation Management Plan into achievable and deliverable proposals, to secure funding to carry them out, and to ensure the estate is maintained into the future.

As a principle KWAG seeks to:

- Conserve and enhance the historic park
- Promote biodiversity
- Increase community interaction with the landscape
- Improve accessibility and inspire visitors from further afield
- Develop a long-term strategy for the future maintenance and conservation of the park.



Between 2000 and 2010 Bristol was successful in securing substantial partnership funding from HLF for Ashton Court, Blaise, and Arnos Vale and, in heritage terms, Kings Weston is arguably a more significant historic designed landscape. As the CMP points out, since acquisition by the City in 1937, Kings Weston has suffered progressive 'institutional decline'. The time for its prioritisation and investment is long overdue.



The new CMP maps a path to stabilise, repair and restore this green infrastructure asset for the city; a landscape asset with huge potential for heritage enterprise, education and community uses, green businesses, training and apprenticeships, and public health benefits.

KWAG have welcomed and embraced the new CMP and have started to tackle key elements of the plan. These are small but important steps but, given the scale and significance of the estate, they cannot be sustained by KWAG alone. It needs partnership and coordination; a strong and informed community working together with a strong and informed Council. Undoubtedly, this is what HLF will expect to see if Bristol is to successfully unlock future partnership funds for Kings Weston, or indeed for any other heritage asset within the city.

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FROM PLAN TO PROPOSALS (cont.)

To achieve these ambitions we see the most obvious route would be to secure Stage I HLF funding to develop proposals in partnership with park users, the city council, and National Trust. Following this a Stage II application could be made to undertake the proposals. With the current review of HLF strategy, and the urgent need to create a prioritised list for the city we strongly urge that Kings Weston estate is considered as a very high priority, and resources allocated appropriately to support an application within the next two years.

We would like to work with the City Council to form a project team to develop an application. We need to discuss how this could be supported, though we understand that funds are very short right now. It is our hope that resources and time could be allocated within the City and matched with skills, knowledge, and expertise of the Kings Weston Action Group. We would propose the following:



- **Identify a suitable project sponsor within the Council to champion the bid and oversee progress**
- **Appointment of a project team leader from within the City Council – we see the most appropriate officer to take this on is Landscape Architect Richard Goldthorpe.**
- **Formation of a team drawn from other council officers within the Parks (North) team (John Williams and Sarah Tyler) and professionally experienced volunteers from KWAG to develop the content of a bid.**
- **The support of KWAG to facilitate and support any public consultation process required to inform an HLF bid.**
- **Pursue options on future management, ownership, and maintenance of the estate with the City's Cabinet members, and property and legal teams.**



FROM PROPOSALS TO DELIVERY

A feasible strategy for continued support and maintenance of the estate are an essential component to any HLF bid. We recognise these issues and would like to work with Bristol City Council to identify a new model for securing a future Kings Weston estate. We would like to develop a similar model to that pioneered locally at Arnos Vale Cemetery, and are keen to work with the City Council to form a Trust that could look to provide Council services across the whole of the Registered Historic Landscape. A Trust would take on all aspects of running and maintaining the parkland and have the freedom to develop facilities and future income through a wider range of options than presently possible within the present scope of Parks management.

We see the following interests being represented as potential trustees subject to discussion:

- Kings Weston Action Group
- Bristol City Council
- Kings Weston House
- National Trust

We would like to work with the Council to identify future funding outside any HLF grant to allow a Trust to take on the responsibilities involved. We would like to explore the following:

- Receipts of annual grants from Bristol City Council equal to the percentage of the present maintenance budget spent at Kings Weston.
- Transfer of freehold income of Council-owned properties within the historic landscape to the Trust, including that of Kings Weston House, with reversion to the City Council.
- Development of education programmes for schools, higher education and the public to generate revenue.
- Use of appropriate sections of the parkland for food production and animal husbandry in cooperation with local organisations.
- Negotiate with The National Trust over similar approaches and the feasibility of adopting the 90 acres held by them as the “Shirehampton Park” component of the estate



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Timescales

2014:

- Outline approval of proposals
- Appointment of project team
- Allocation of resources
- Definition of roles and responsibilities

2015: Green Capital Year

- Compilation of HLF Stage I grant application
- Submission to HLF
- HLF grant awarded
- Identification of HLF Stage II team and targets
- Formation of Trust
- Public consultation
- Compilation of detailed proposals

2016:

- Submission of HLF Stage II grant application
- HLF Grant Awarded
- Commencement of HLF funded work
- Completion of HLF works and transfer of estate to Trust under license or lease.
- Trust undertakes to provide Council services on estate