

BHRA NEWSLETTER MAY 2016



The open gardens on June 11th 2:00 pm will be in the middle of the Hill close to White lodge bus stop. An up to date to date map of open gardens will be supplied on the day. If anyone would like to bake a cake or anyone in the middle of the hill would like to open their garden please contact us on bhra21c@gmail.com or call Sarah Trimmer on 330928. The event is free but we will be collecting donations for Next link (see below)

The A.G.M.

We held our AGM on March 17th, it was well attended. Kirsty Elliott gave a very well informed and interesting talk about Sydney gardens. The committee was re-elected unchanged as follows:

Sarah Trimmer : Chair; Claire Jackson : Secretary; Andrew temple Smith – Treasurer; Colin Clark - FoBRA representative; other members Felix Moore, Martin Carter, Helen Green and Julie Haywood. If anyone would like a copy of the minutes, please contact us.

Our Bus and Parking Survey:

We talked about the results of the Bus and Parking Survey – points that arose were number of buses, and how the expanding university would deal with increasing demand, the speed of the buses, pollution caused by the buses and the bottle necks on the Hill.

There is no easy solution to many of these things, but Matt Cochrane gave us the good news that First will upgrade to EURO 6 engines, which should reduce pollution significantly and hopefully also engine noise.

Parking : Matt said there will be a consultation on parking in the middle of the Hill from 5th May to 26th May. It is proposed to change to permit parking only up to Madeira walk with 4 hour non-residents parking with no return in 1 hour. Residents in this area will be able to get visitor parking permits even if they do not have a parking permit themselves. Residents directly affected will receive letters.

Speeding : Matt is also requesting that the speed monitor by Cleveland walk is fixed and is looking at additional speed monitors for the Hill.

We have written to First and Wessex regarding upgrading to EURO 6 engines and also speeding buses asking that they monitor the buses speed. In particular, we are concerned about standing passengers. We have talked to the Student Union about ensuring that students give up seats for older passengers, and they are fully supportive. If anyone feels unsteady on the bus, please do ask the younger passengers to give up their seats.

We also had an Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Saturday hosted by Elaine Gatehouse and her family. Thank you very much to them for a very enjoyable morning despite rather gloomy weather a good time was had by all.

We had raffles at both the AGM and the Easter Egg Hunt and raised a total of £169 for Next link, for which they were very grateful.

Bath Next Link – The BHRA Charity for this year selected at our AGM

Bath Next Link provides refuge accommodation to women and children who have to flee a violent relationship because their lives are in danger. The women and children are terrified and confused when they arrive having escaped at short notice and left behind all the things that are dear to them. They often arrive in the clothes they are standing up in and nothing else. They need both practical and emotional support to rebuild their lives and create a future that is free from fear. Next Link's workers help them to get the practical things they need and to find new accommodation. They also help them get the therapeutic support they need to deal with the trauma.

The money we raise will be used to support the women and children who come to Next Link. In particular, the money will be used to replace some of the precious things that the children have had to leave behind when they fled. Also it will go towards providing start up packs for the women who have lost all their possessions and have to start anew.

We will be asking for donations at the Open Gardens and also raise funds at our activities this year.

DEVOLUTION – A DIRECTLY ELECTED MAYOR & COMBINED AUTHORITY

Very briefly we would like to outline a possible, more generously funded future, if the councillors of the West of England's four local authorities confirm their Leaders' acceptance of the devolution deal offered by the Government. Devolution to a combined west of England authority headed by a directly elected mayor as agreed on the last budget is planned for May 2017.

An elected Mayor will chair the combined authority of B&NES, S. Glos, N.Somerset and Bristol. These councils have been working together for 7 years to strengthen the regional economy, supported by a Local Enterprise Partnership, which fosters economic development. Currently the region generates £30 billion economic output is home to 1.1 million people and is the most productive area outside of London with flourishing sectors including creative industries, health, advanced engineering, food & drink, business services, and a growing low carbon technologies and services industry.

The chancellor has announced economic support of up to £1 billion support - £30 million a year for 30 years.

The new Mayor's powers will be limited to matters now controlled by central government, -- control of a local transport budget, the franchising of bus services, establishment of key route networks, strategic planning, the adult education budget, housing and a new national work and health programme.

If the devolution agreement is accepted, the four councils – the constituent councils - will establish a Combined Authority. The first mayoral election is anticipated in May 2017 and the elected Mayor would chair the Combined Authority. The details of governance remain to be settled but each of the four councils will retain their current powers and decisions by the Mayor will require the support of at least two council Leaders.

The mayor's proposed strategies and spending plans may be rejected by a vote of 2/3 of the constituent councils' members. Any transfer of power or resources from constituent councils to the combined authority must also be agreed.

Programs planned :

Skills : prioritising skill for 16-19 year olds with careers guidance to meet local needs.

Employment : Investment to create sustainable high quality employment, also in conjunction with the DWP a new ~National Work and Health Programme focusing on the long term unemployed and those with chronic health conditions and disabilities.

Supporting and Attracting business : work closely with the UK trade and investment national agency with close consultation on trade missions and the region's export and investment strategies specific to the region and key local sectors.

European funding : The government will delegate powers to the Combined Authority to have a more effective relationship with the European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund.

Housing & planning :

The Combined Authority will secure investment in new homes and in the associated investment in transport, schools and health.

*Adopt a statutory spatial development plan to manage planning across the region, subject to the unanimous vote of the members of the Combined Authority appointed by the constituent councils.

*Undertake land assembly and compulsory purchase.

*Create corporations with powers to deliver sites for development, subject to the consent of the appropriate councillors for the area in which the development corporation is to be used.

Transport The Mayor will:

- a. Take responsibility for a devolved multi-year local transport budget.
- b. Have the ability to franchise bus services. Subject to Parliament's approval of the current Buses Bill, the Mayor will have power to support delivery of a high quality bus network, including smart and integrated ticketing, local branding and minimum standards across the network.
- c. Take responsibility for a Key Route Network of local roads, defined and agreed by the constituent councils, together with traffic management and road maintenance.
- d. Support better integration between local and national networks working with the Government, Highways England and Network Rail.
- e. Implement Clean Air Zones.

West of England Combined Authority Commitments : The Combined Authority is accountable to local people for the successful implementation of the devolution agreement and will monitor and evaluate its performance and report progress to the electors and to government.

***** FINALLY : Don't forget the Open gardens on 11th June ******

Other dates for your diary

Federation of Bath residents' associations (F0BRA) Summer garden party at Lyncombe Court BA2 4LR open to all Tuesday 28th June 6:30 – 8:00pm cost £10 pp call 01225 466937 more details on our web site

Haile Selassie Walk : Keith Bowers June 22nd stating point outside the Abbey doors , Abbey Churchyard at 6:30.

Keith is a mayor's guide and has just written a book about Haile Selassie's time in Bath. This event is free, but it would be useful to have numbers please

bhra21c@gmail.com or call Claire Jackson on 464228 or Sarah Trimmer on 330928.

??? Are you confused about the EU referendum ???

If so we understand that there will be debates as follows : 2nd June Widcombe ; May 27th Keynsham further details can be obtained from Matt Cochrane tel: 07833 678881 or email : Matt_Cochrane@bathnes.gov.uk

Look at www.bathwickhill.info for up to date details of all these events and future events.