

Bathwick Hill Newsletter

Bathwick Hill Residents' Association Annual General Meeting

New & prospective members are welcome to attend

7.00 pm Thursday 21st March 2019 at St Mary's Church Hall

Arrivals 7.00-7.30 pm for drinks and nibbles; 7.30 pm Welcome from the Chair

Local Councillor Matt Cochrane will update us on local issues and answer questions.

The AGM Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the AGM held in March 2018
3. Chairperson's Report
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Federation of Bath Residents' Associations Report
6. Election of the Committee - Chairperson, Officers and Committee
7. Annual Programme of Events
8. Any Other Business

The committee is Chair person Sarah Trimmer; Secretary Claire Jackson; Treasurer Andrea Haywood, FoBRA Colin Clark; Plus Helen Green, Julie Hayward and Wendy Stockley We have recently recruited Wendy to the committee and are hoping to recruit one more committee member, William Hubbard a little later in the year. All committee members are happy to stand for 2019/20 but we welcome new nominations.

BHRA News

Our meeting in October was a social event, which was well attended and enjoyed by those who came. We had a very informative Q&A session with Matt Cochrane, who is one of our two ward councillors. The usual issues arose traffic & parking on the Hill, and of course the U1 bus service. However it was essentially a social event, which is one of our primary aims as an residents association. It was a good chance for people to meet their neighbours, and a good opportunity to meet those who may live at the end other end of the Hill.

Recently there was the issue of the U1 bus service, which happily has now reverted to traveling via the middle of Bath due to pressure predominately for the Students union. All local R.A.s and our ward Councillor Matt also made it clear that residents were very unhappy with the changes and reduction in the bus service that we have. The bus service First continuously review their services, and with the changes for the clean air zone the service may change again. However, James Freeman, the Manager of First West of England, is now aware of our issues, and those who attended all the meetings will be aware of the problems he faces running bus services in Bath.

We have also had issues with the closure of the Car parking behind Tesco, which led to even more dangerous parking outside the shops. We are watching this as we believe there is a possible planning application pending for the parking area behind Tesco. We would welcome any updates on the situation, as this is an issue that we believe is pertinent to the whole hill.

Recently we have been approached to take a stance on private planning applications, the REC and other changes pending. We made a decision as a committee about 10 years ago that we would remain neutral in the case of planning applications by private individuals on the Hill to build on or make changes to their homes. Please remember that if your neighbour has plans you object to, or support, your best line of action is to contact the council planning office. All planning applications are posted and those close enough to be affected are notified.

For wider issues like the Rec and moving the Post Office, we appreciate that some residents may be unhappy with these, but we don't see them as having a local impact we could respond to on behalf of the membership. However Colin Clark, who is our FoBRA (Federation of Bath Residents' Associations) representative will take your individual concerns to FoBRA, who look at Bath wide issues. Colin's report is below.

We did write a reply to the clean air zone consultation, while advising you all to make your own comments. Our concern was that the traffic on Bathwick Hill will increase as it will be used as a rat run down to Laura Place. We have yet to see the result of the consultation, but it is evident that the Clean Air Zone must be created in some form.

UPCOMING EVENTS – see last pages for more details

Looking to 2019 we have our AGM on March 21st at the Church Hall. We have invited our ward councillors again and, after the success of the Autumn event, we will limit the meeting to the AGM, socialising and a Q&A with our councillor. We have some plans for other events through the year, including a visit to the American Museum, but would like some feedback from the membership as to what you would like to do.

Suggestions and feedback at the AGM will help us to plan further events during the year.

Local News

Good News for Sydney Gardens and Cleveland Pools, both have received National Lottery funding for their restoration. If you are particularly interested in either of these projects, you can find out more information from the Friends of Sydney Gardens and the Cleveland Pools Trust.

Sydney Gardens The Delivery Phase of the project from early February – almost there now, just need the HLF to approve our Permission to Start form. They need to put together the team of professional advisers to draw up the technical detail design and specification and to discharge all the planning conditions by next autumn, so that tendering can start for the construction work in Nov/ Dec onwards.

The Project is starting this month; construction ends in December 2020, the defects liability period ends in December 2021 and the project ends 31st March 2022.

For more updates sign up to their mailing list to receive a monthly e-newsletter for project updates, details of events and activities in the park: <https://us16.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=2f1fcf0e01cb4fad809083866&id=4a4222dbaf>

We also attend local forums for Bath University and the National Trust to keep us up to date with events, and new developments, and voice any concerns. Currently there is little to report, but we do post relevant issues on our web site.

FOBRA REPORT

Austerity continues; B&NES, facing further cuts in Government funding, plans a rise in Council tax. In this prosperous city the economic strains are clear with shop closures and continuing deterioration of the public realm, with potholes and broken pavements unrepaired. Fortunately Bath continues to attract investment, particularly in hotels, the new Management School at Bath university and a range of residential developments, although the shortage of affordable housing remains acute. Work has begun at the South Quays to create a new area with modern office space, and some residential development

To support some retail businesses facing difficult trading conditions B&NES plans to ease Business Rate pressure and funding is also coming from the West of England Combined Authority, WECA, to support shopping centres in the region, house building and transport infrastructure.

To sustain its place in a competitive world Bath must continue to cherish its heritage, manage the city to world standards and ensure that its economy remains strong. Recently the following two major issues have come to the fore.

AIR POLLUTION AND TRAFFIC CONGESTION

The Government requires that by 2021 Banes reduce air pollution to meet the legal requirement. CAZ aims to achieve this. The Council's consultation on its initial proposal for a Clean Air Zone stimulated vigorous, wide ranging debate, which continues. Fobra is particularly concerned that solutions should include tackling the linked issue of congestion, the need for much improved public transport & protection of the built heritage. The debate has now widened to include the possible re-introduction of trams. Revised proposals for the CAZ are to be considered early in March by B&NES cabinet. Whilst the Government will provide funding towards the CAZ, funds will be available from WECA for other improvements to traffic management.

THE REC AND PROPOSED NEW RUGBY STADIUM

In recent discussions members have agreed that FoBRA should express views on some aspects of the Rugby Club's proposals. The Bath Preservation Trust & Fobra support the Club's objectives and acknowledges the economic benefits Rugby's presence brings to the city. However, the potential impact of the proposed new stadium on Bath's world heritage status, is a concern the Department for Culture, Media and Sport has referred to UNESCO. The main Fobra concerns are:

The under-pitch car park for 700 cars :This would raise the height of the stadium by four metres, increase traffic flows to and around the city centre and the Rec on roads already frequently congested. It would be available for public use on all except match days, a magnet for commuters and visitors, and contrary to Banes policy of minimizing traffic in the city centre.

The proposed height of the stadium fails to protect the iconic views of the skyline from Grand Parade and Parade Gardens. There will also be loss of views from Grand Parade to the hills and terraces of Bathwick and Claverton, and also views of the Abbey from Bathwick.

River frontage and Market Hall : Fobra believes the retailing proposed would not be complementary to the city centre, but competitive with and detrimental to city centre shopping and should be limited to retail directly related to the sport.

Temporary use of remainder of the Rec during development

Fobra understands Bath Rugby's preferred option is to build a temporary stadium at the Rec, immediately adjacent to the Stadium building site, causing serious loss of amenity to the wider community for two years or longer.

Progress on these major issues, and much debate, is expected over the next few weeks.

DATE for your Diary : UPCOMING EVENTS : Watch the web site for updates and dates

Wednesday June 5th at 6:00 pm : Guided Tour of the American museum gardens costing £15 per head.

Guided Tour of the American museum gardens to be led by Andrew, the head gardener, followed by a reception on the Terrace (or in the Orangery dependent on weather) where wine and canapes will be served. The charge of £15 per head covers the canapes, 2 drinks and entry to the gardens and the cost of the guided tour.

The garden has recently been re landscaped see this link <https://americanmuseum.org/whats-on/new-american-garden/>

Tickets need to be ordered in advance by May 26th so we can confirm numbers(max 30). Tickets will be available at the AGM. In the event of high demand we will create a waiting list for cancellations.

You will need to make your own way there and we will meet at the entrance to the museum. It will be rescheduled to 19th June if there is inclement weather.

OTHER EVENTS

Open Studio & Garden on Bathwick Hill in June

Sue Wales who lives at 6, Bathwick Hill, will be holding an Open garden and art studio to display her paintings, along with Philip Evans, a gifted Jewellery maker, who makes unique and affordable jewellery for all ages.

Sue is an established artist and a keen and talented gardener. She has offered to open it to BHRA members and friends (at a date and time to be decided) during her open week at the end of June. We hope to announce a date at the AGM.

YOUR MEMBERSHIP subscription is due at the AGM

Please note your subs for the year £5 per household are due in March if you don't pay by standing order please pay online or in cash – details on our web site www.bathwickhill.info

Also our calendar of events, posts and newsletters are online on the web site.

Please see the Web site to for what is going on in BHRA and associated news