

# Bathwick Hill Residents' Association newsletter

## February 2021

Once a year we deliver a paper newsletter to all residents on Bathwick Hill, otherwise we email members with updates, and newsletters. Paper copies of newsletters are delivered to those without email. They can also be found on **our web site** : [www.bathwickhill.info](http://www.bathwickhill.info)

### Chair's report by Sarah Trimmer

We hope that those who have not joined the association will consider joining. Over the lock down period we have seen quite a lot of new families move to Bathwick Hill and would like to welcome you. At the moment getting to know your new neighbours is hard, but we may be able to help you and put you in touch with neighbours in a similar situation as you.

At the beginning of lockdown we did ask that anyone who needs help contact us so we could see if we can help out. In Bath 3SG has set up a hub with a volunteer force who help out, so if anyone is shielding and needs help with shopping or picking up medicines please contact them on 0300 247 0050. There is more info on this link <https://www.3sg.org.uk/news/help-line-launched-for-covid-19>

Over the last year there has been little opportunity for gatherings. We were lucky to be able to have an autumn 'open garden' at the beginning to September. We had the good fortune to have a fine day. The Morgans, Wales and Otleys all very kindly opened their lovely gardens. There was tea and cakes at Old Apple, around 40 attended. Hopefully we can have another open gardens this year, only time will tell.

**AGM** This year we hope to hold an AGM on 15th April, we are not sure what form it will take. We will keep you posted via our web site [www.bathwickhill.info](http://www.bathwickhill.info) . The numbers to be limited whether it is in person at the church hall or by zoom, so it is important you let us know if you would like to attend. Agenda below.

### **Bathwick Hill Residents' Association Annual General Meeting:** **Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> April '21 7pm on-line by Zoom**

Our Councillors Dr Kumar & Manda Rigby will be at the meeting to update us on local issues and answer your questions. **Please RSVP to [bhraevent@gmail.com](mailto:bhraevent@gmail.com)** and we will send you the zoom link. Also please email any questions you have. We request that you mute yourselves during the meeting and use the raised hand to indicate you wish to speak.

#### **The AGM Agenda**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the AGM held in March 2019
3. Chairperson's Report
4. Treasurer's Report ( accounts will be posted on the web site )
5. Election of Chairperson
6. Election of the Officers and Committee
7. Annual Programme of Events
8. Any Other Business

#### **The proposed committee for 2021 / 22**

Chair : Claire Jackson  
Secretary / Treasurer : Andrea Haywood  
FoBRA rep: David Martin

Committee members: Colin Clark. Helen Green,  
Wendy Stockley, Sarah Trimmer

**The committee** will be changing. Sarah has resigned as Chair, but will stay on the committee. David Martin joined as our FoBRA representative replacing Colin. Many thanks to Colin Clark who has done the job for many years, and has also agreed to remain on the committee.

We would like more residents to join the Committee either as an ordinary member or for one of the officer positions. We aim to remain objective and act in the interests of the members. Please let us know if you are interested or would like more information. **Contact Claire on 01225 464228**

**Other news** : During the year the committee have been active in representing Bathwick Hill on various local proposals. We keep up to date with the friends of Sydney Gardens, Cleveland Pools, the Canal Trust, The Bath University Forum and the National Trust, attending local resident forum meetings. Our councillors keep us up to date with current consultations and we look at planning applications which have an impact on the Hill.

**The Clean Air Zone (CAZ)** will be introduced on 15<sup>th</sup> March, current signs are misleading, but we have been told they will be replaced with signs showing that the zone starts at the bottom of Bathwick Hill. Private cars will not be charged. More about the CAZ at <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/bath-clean-air-zone>

**Low traffic Neighbourhoods (LTN)** : Minor roads have been asked if they would be considered as low traffic neighbourhoods. If any roads adjoining Bathwick Hill become LTNs it could affect the traffic congestion on Bathwick hill, so we are watching this closely.

**20 mph speed limit** on Bathwick Hill .We consulted members about this proposal and the results showed general support for a 20 mph speed limit at the bottom of the hill near Tesco's. There were divided views on whether the 20 mph zone should be for the full length of the hill. We have asked for more effective monitoring of the 30 mph speed limit if this is retained. A decision is awaited.

**Cycle lane on North Road** there is a consultation on this. We plan to object as the traffic will be diverted to Bathwick Hill, and while the Hill has been blissfully quiet for most of the last year we can expect the traffic to return to normal volumes at some point. Also relatively few people cycle up the hill for obvious reasons! **Please make your own individual comments on the consultation to the council by March 21st**

### **Sydney Gardens**

Work is taking place in Sydney Gardens as part of the £3.4m Heritage Lottery funded project. There have been delays due to the Covid-19 restrictions so the project is currently estimated to be delayed by 6 months with a forecasted completion date of autumn 2022. There are details on the BANES website and you can sign up to a regular newsletter if you are interested but this is a summary of the current position.

Bowling green and play area:- work has been delayed on the former bowling green and play area so that soil contaminants can be dealt with and demolition of the bowls club building can commence in March.

Community pavilion and public loos:-The community pavilion which will house the new public loos is cleared and the foundations for the new extension completed.

Railway fencing:- Network Rail have been delayed and this work should now start in April

Edwardian toilets:- Iron Art are restoring the 1920s Ladies Loo off site, and will start work to restore the Edwardian Gents Loo in the park soon.

Tennis Courts:- The two tennis courts at the top of the park have been partially refurbished and are open for 'turn-up and play' using temporary markings until the Spring. Once the weather is warmer and drier, the courts will have their final coat of paint and new gates will be installed. The lower three tennis courts have been closed to create the construction compound and will re-open as two full size courts on completion of the build at the end of 2021

Historic building conservation work:- They now plan to start work on the Loggia and the temple of Minerva later this month.

Gardening and planting – Large swathes of laurel hedging have been removed to create new planting beds and a more open vista.

### **Cleveland Pools**

Cleveland Pools were awarded a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £4.7m and now have a relatively small amount to raise to complete the project of restoring Britain's oldest lido. The project will create a unique open-air public swimming pool with energy for heating the water coming from heat pumps in the adjacent river. The construction work is due to start soon and completion forecasted to be in 2022. The concept design detailed on the website includes the restoration of the 2 pools – a public open-air pool for adults and a smaller shallower pool for children. The grade 2 listed buildings will be restored creating an entrance and pay point, a caretaker's cottage, changing rooms, toilets and showers, and an exhibition and learning space. There will be a new river pontoon to access boat services to and from Pultney bridge and a green travel plan promoting travel to the baths by walking, cycling and bus.

### **Federation of Bath Residents' Associations - FoBRA Report**

We are members of FoBRA who represent the RAs on Bath wide concerns.

At the AGM in September 2020, Robin Kerr stepped down as chairman and Justin Draeger was elected as the new chairman. Graham Feltham was elected as the Vice Chairman.

Transport and planning have continued to occupy FoBRA as important issues for residents. FoBRA has responded to the Council consultation on Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, and have raised concerns and queries about the impacts on distributor roads. The LTN strategy has since been adopted by the Council and the next stage is to invite very structured, evidence based bids from areas which have to be submitted through ward councillors.

The Chairman has also written to the Council expressing concerns about the proposed repair work on Cleveland Bridge and the lack of consultation with residents. The proposals for city centre security have also raised questions on the impact on people living in the affected area, and FoBRA will be supporting The Abbey Residents Association in their concerns.

The Council has been testing the Clean Air Zone infrastructure and the CAZ is due to go live in March. FoBRA has supported the Council's commitment but has noted the importance of continuing to improve air quality monitoring.

The Planning Subcommittee has commented on the Local Plan Partial Update. The main sections of interest were - responding to climate change; affordable housing; flood risk management; the Recreation Ground; visitor accommodation; HMOs and the World Heritage Site setting. A useful discussion was held on the HMO and climate change topics with representatives of the Planning Department. Regular comments have also been made on planning applications and appeals where there is a city-wide interest in the decisions.

FoBRA has expressed concern that Bath should have a local level council. With the city of Chester, Bath has a democratic deficit by not having a local parish representation, whilst all the villages and towns within B&NES have elected parish representations. This issue is being raised with the Council.

The Bath Business Support Group has recently formed, aiming to develop a number of initiatives in the City trying to see what help can be given to struggling businesses as a result of the pandemic. The Council

had set up some activities, but had not invited FoBRA. The group is talking with other groups to try and establish a holistic approach.

### **From the National trust - Bathwick Fields**

Joe Mc Sorely has taken over as NT ranger managing over 500 acres of land around the Skyline Walk including Bathwick Fields, which were acquired by the NT in the 1980s. This is a synopsis of his report the full report can be seen under newsletter tab on our web site.

“Bathwick Fields include Richen’s Orchard which is grazed with sheep from August. This year more sheep were introduced for a shorter period (8 weeks) to reduce the risk of dog attacks which have troubled us for the last couple of years. Thankfully the sheep had a very peaceful and relaxed time.

The other fields are grazed for a short period in early spring Widcombe side, then left through Spring and Summer to flower and seed before the hay is cut. We graze the fields in Autumn, once the hay has gone, with young beef cattle to keep the sward height low and to add a little bit of disturbance to the soil which allows dormant seeds to get drawn up to the surface.

The land we manage would have once formed part of Bathwick Farm which stood across from Darlington Cottage down on Sydney buildings and which operated as the Darlington dairy in the late 19th and in to the 20th century which suggests that it was dairy cattle that occupied the fields in those days.

During lockdowns the fields have acted as a safe space for people to enjoy their daily exercise with great views back to Bath & ample room to socially distance. Gates are open to reduce the risk of contamination from touching gates. The arrival of the cattle & sheep is signposted so dog walkers can avoid them.

Our highlight for 2020 was a visit from Channel 4’s George Clark who filmed in Bathwick Fields for Episode 3 of “George Clark’s National Trust unlocked” which can be found on the Channel 4 on demand player.”

And a bit more local history –  
**This milestone at top of Bathwick Hill** is a recent discovery.



The Bath Archaeological Society agrees that this definitely looks like a boundary stone on the original Bathwick parish boundary. However, it could be even older as it also looks very like some of the wall stones on Claverton Down. In addition, an extract from the Bath Chronicle of 1869 (also attached) describes the ceremony of the "beating the bounds" of Bathwick, and in the article there is mention of stones at the top of Bathwick Hill which marked the extent of the parish



**A reminder:** Annual Subs £5 per household are due March 17<sup>th</sup> and can be paid online to our bank account or by cash to our treasure. Details are on the web site under **Membership** or deliver to 5, Sion Place, Bathwick Hill with your name and post code as a reference. For new members include a phone number & email please.