

Action Notes from BERA AGM held by Zoom at 7.30 pm on 21 April 2021

Those Present included: Charles Draper (Chairman); (Cllr) Manda Rigby; (Cllr) Kumar Yuktesshwar; Nola Wright; Ric Jerrom; Valerie Hayward; Amie Berkovitch; Sally Galsworthy; Françoise Pace; Alasdair Barron; David Pendlebury; Marion Mason; Marion Harney; Wendy Judd; Matthew Judd; Wendy Powney; Fiona Carney; Alison Peach; Julia Draper; Jack Sparrow; Anita Winter; Barbara Barron; Paul Brightman; Hannah Rees; Sharon Lloyd; Storme Milton; Brian Chappill.

1. Charles welcomed those present to the first BERA Zoom AGM. It had not been practical to hold an AGM last year, and this one by Zoom was the only practicable way this year.
2. Charles then summarised his Chairman's report which had been circulated in advance. He said it was also worth noting the news that Bath Rugby had just said that their plans for the Rec no longer included an underground car park. This should also imply a less intrusive stand. Both aspects were good news. There were no questions.
3. Charles then introduced the financial report by Sylvia Ayers, our Treasurer, to whom we were, as always, grateful. There was then a short discussion about how the trees were funded, and Alasdair said a bit more about the wider prospects for the tree programme in Bath.
4. Charles summarised the various Council led transport initiatives that he had summarised in the note circulated in advance.
 - Manda said that training for the community speed-watch scheme to support compliance with the 20mph speed limit on the Estate would start again in May. Volunteers would be welcome; they should contact her (at [Manda Rigby@BATHNES.GOV.UK](mailto:Manda.Rigby@BATHNES.GOV.UK)) if they were willing to help. She added that Council decisions on the most controversial travel schemes were now expected in June.
 - Sharon and Storme said that they were both being made subject to charges or fines for their campervans under the CAZ regime. They had checked before it came into force and had been told their vehicles were OK, but had since discovered that the categorisations had changed, and they were now being caught. We agreed that this seemed unjust. Manda asked that they send the details to her; it was a DVLA problem, but she would try to help.
 - Marion Harney asked about the Riverline project's suggestion of an alternative cycling or pedestrian route through the Estate. Charles said he had told them that this seemed to be based on a misconception of the degree of connection to the river this might offer. Hopefully the second stage of the consultations would have a more practical approach.
 - David asked about vehicle access to Milsom Street which was now impossible for our residents with mobility problems. Manda said that the new Council leader was reviewing future plans on central streets access and security with the aim of striking a better balance.

5. Charles then summarised the note on parking issues in the Estate that he had circulated. He wanted to have a discussion of the issues raised, and then an indicative vote on two issues – the merits of a 7 -day regime for residents parking, and of making Forester Avenue one-way.
- Sally said that she and the other Forester Avenue residents were keen to make the road one-way (in the Powlett to Forester Rd direction), to ease parking and congestion, as soon as possible.
 - Sally also said she was part way through a big study of parking space availability on the Estate, and had several FoI requests with the Council. She would make proposals later in the year.
 - Ric pointed out that 7 day- a- week parking constraints would be needed once the Cleveland Pools opened.
 - Amie said they had noticed that during lockdown, parking space pressure on Rockliffe Avenue seemed to be less than before. If more people were at home, you would expect the reverse effect. This suggested that some of those with parking permits may not be genuine residents. The MiPermit system made it easy to change the registration of the car on a resident's permit. Manda said this was a good time to raise the issue as plans for the new system were being formulated. Sally pointed out that Bristol had a much stricter system for car identification.
 - Wendy Judd said that fire engine access was always a major issue with these debates.
 - Alasdair pointed out that the larger size of many modern cars exacerbated these problems.
6. We then had indicative votes on the main two questions. The intention was to count them afterwards using the video, but unfortunately this did not retain the electronic reactions many of us used. However, Charles (and doubtless others) made an estimation of the broad balance of voting at the time, which was as follows:
- Q1 - Would it be a good idea to move to a 7- day week parking permit system?
A1 – More Yes than No. Quite a few abstentions

Q2 – Would it be a good idea to make the top part of Forester Avenue one way, the preferred direction being Powlett Rd to Forester Rd?

A2 – There were some Yes's and some No's, but most attendees abstained.

Charles said it had been a useful process and would help future discussions on these issues.

7. Fiona Carnie then outlined her ideas for an Estate Community Art/Craft/Produce event to help build community spirit. Other Bath communities do similar things, but this would be just for the Estate. This would be a simple event with people using a table outside their house on a Saturday in summer to sell their wares or food or garden plants or offer a game for children to play. It would be low key, low level.

Others might like to wander round the Estate, see what is out there and chat to neighbours. Children might have their own stalls- it could be a good post lockdown activity. There could be a charity element. Fiona would coordinate publicity etc; she had prepared an outline flier. In discussion, issues raised included:

- Would we want to close one or more roads for safety/enjoyment? Would that seem welcoming to all in the Estate?
- What connection would it have with the usual Social at the Boating Station? Do we combine them in some way?

There was general agreement that we should do something along these lines, and the BERA Committee would agree further practical details with Fiona.

8. Charles said that he was very grateful to the current BERA committee for the work it did for the Association, but it had a major handicap in that it was not very representative of the Estate. Many young families lived here, but Amie was the only member of the BERA Committee with a school aged child. This made it difficult for our discussions to reflect the right balance of interests, however hard Amie tried to fill the gap. We needed more younger people to join. Membership need not be very demanding of time. The committee met every 2 months, typically for about 1 ½ hours in the evening. There were also emails in between. Individuals could get more involved in particular projects, but didn't have to. For now, he asked the meeting to re-elect the current committee, but he hoped everyone would encourage younger residents to consider joining the BERA Committee. The current committee was then re-elected. (*Afternote: Wendy Powney subsequently offered to join the Committee, and we were very happy to co-opt her accordingly*)
9. Charles then invited any other business:
 - Alasdair, supported by some others, suggested that we should have a look at the levels of pollution in the Avon and Canal, which bordered our Estate, from sewage being discharged into water courses, and what Wessex Water said about it. Valerie pointed out that this was a national problem. Charles said that BERA, as a small association, did best to focus on very local things it could do something about. This was not such an issue.
 - No other new issues were raised.
10. Charles then thanked everyone for taking part, and said that an action note on the main points would be circulated. Hopefully we would be able to meet in person for next year's AGM.