

**BATHWICK ESTATE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Thursday 19 April 2018**

Present: Charles Draper, Sylvia Ayers, Ken Ayers, Valerie Hayward,  
Committee Members John Mudford, Ric Jerrom, Nola Wright

Walcot Ward Present: Richard Samuel  
Councillors (Apologies: Fiona Darey)

Guest Councillors Mark Shelford, BANES Cabinet Member for Transport and  
Environment, Peter Turner (Abbey Ward),  
Patrick Anketell -Jones (Lansdown Ward)

Residents Approximately 55 present

## **1. Chairman's Report**

Charles Draper reported on the main issues that had arisen over the last year. The full report is attached to the Minutes.

Charles Draper said that the biggest issue had been the Cleveland Pools (details in the report). The CPT is to set up a liaison group to address practical issues as the project proceeds. BERA will be represented on this group, while making it clear that it opposed their plans. BERA believed its objective should be to stop the CPT's proposals and enable something like the INs' but also thought it would be good to conduct a poll of the whole Estate on the issue.

Ric Jerrom of the Immediate Neighbours group spoke of its decision to develop and promote alternative proposals for the restoration of the pools. The INs were disappointed that the CPT was trying again, but was also aware that many of the fundamental problems of its approach remained. The INs recognised that the CPT had done good work in the early stages of the project; it was only later that the excessive scale of its ambitions became apparent.

Richard Samuels hoped that last year it might have been possible to enable the two sides to sort out their differences. In terms of the future, he had approached Councillor Paul Meyers to discuss the way forward. It was clear that the CPT will submit another application to the HLF which would be decided on by December. If the HLF did not approve the application, he thought the Trust will fold and the lease would be returned to the Council.

Patrick Anketell-Jones said that Councillor Fiona Darey had asked him to make the following points.

- If the project went ahead it would be a good facility for the City.
- She was not convinced by the business plans in terms of revenue.
- Residents had felt left out of the consultation process.

In general discussion several comments were made about the unwelcome scale of the CPT's proposals, including traffic impacts and over-massive development. A few residents said they were in favour of the development of the Pools as they thought it would be of benefit to the area. Charles Draper said this was why he was attracted by the idea of a poll of all of the approximately 1000 residents of the estate. He would investigate the practicalities with the Council, and consult further. This was generally supported.

## **2. Financial Report**

The Treasurer, Sylvia Ayers, gave her report and circulated the 2017 Accounts for acceptance.

Funds were now in a much healthier state as incoming funds were higher than outgoing expenses. Councillors Fiona Darey and Lisa Brett had made a donation of £200 toward the cost of the annual social which covered the cost of the Licence, invitations, the entertainer, and some of the refreshments. Including £256 from the annual subscriptions, the profit this year has risen from to almost £276, in contrast to last year's loss of £113.

A donation of £183 had been received from Councillor Richard Samuel which has funded the web site for the next five years.

Once again grateful thanks were extended to Nick Lennard, the Treasurer at St Mary Bathwick, for giving his services free in auditing the Association's Accounts.

The meeting agreed that the accounts should be accepted, and that Sylvia Ayers should continue as Treasurer for the coming year.

## **3. Election of Committee**

The Chairman introduced the members of the Committee who were standing for re-election. He mentioned that there were no representatives for Beckford Road/Beckford Gardens and Bathwick Street East. Pat Asher volunteered to represent Beckford Road/Beckford Gardens.

The Committee members were duly re-elected.

## **4. Traffic issues**

Councillor Mark Shelford gave a briefing on traffic issues in Bath.

### **Coach drop off for the Rui Chinese Restaurant, Bathwick Street**

There is still a problem with coaches parking outside the restaurant. The coach drivers are very reluctant to comply with the parking rules. It might be possible to withdraw their licences, but this could only be done if there was evidence from Enforcement Officers (parking wardens). He and Councillor Peter Turner are going to lunch at the restaurant and talk to the manager about all the options.

### **Proposed pedestrian crossing facilities on Bathwick Street**

The Council had turned this down. At present the capital programme is fully committed but Mark Shelford was willing to try again if we could demonstrate substantial local demand and a clear preferred option.

### **Parking strategy**

There were a number of aims including reduced tariffs for local residents and a new pricing strategy to make Park & Rides more attractive to deter vehicles from driving into the city centre.

### **Link Road**

The Council is working with WECA and the government to progress a feasibility study for the A36/A46 link road. A recent traffic study had shown that 23% - 26% of the cars and lorries using London Road are through traffic.

Weymouth and Poole are to become new container ports which will necessitate the building of a north-south trunk road and this may well help our through traffic problems.

### **Clean Air Zone**

The Council released its clean air strategy two weeks ago which includes Cleveland Bridge and the London Road in the controlled zone. It was looking at easing congestion by improving bus emission levels, setting up a study on trams and dealing with rat runs.

### **Development of Park & Ride**

The Council was looking into extension opportunities at Lansdown P&R which, in conjunction with improved signage on the A46 trunk road, should take traffic away from the east of the city by the interception of traffic from the M4.

### **Any other business**

Naomi Sani drew residents' attention to the Street Parties Group which is organising a party in Forester Avenue on Saturday 19 May. The Chairman asked her to email him details so that it could be posted on the BERA website.

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR BERA AGM 19 APRIL 2018

As you would imagine, our biggest issue over the past year has been the Cleveland Pools. This will need some discussion, so I will cover it last.

Some of the other issues are transport related, and will be covered by Mark Shelford later; I will just touch on them in my report so we can discuss them later with him.

We have now mostly put in place our planning issues advice service, led by Amie Berkovitch. This provides help and advice for residents often dealing with nearby planning applications for the first time. When the concerns affect the character of the Estate we comment as BERA. Thanks to Amie for her work on this.

One longstanding problem that seems to be getting worse rather than better is the derelict houses at the end of Hampton Row. The landowner is undertaking some renovations that have planning permission but cause structural problems for neighbours, and he seems also to have very dubious work practices on site that cause their own problems. Richard Samuel is pushing the Council to do more here.

One of the issues we have pursued for some years is the need for a safe pedestrian crossing of Bathwick St opposite St Johns Road. We have just heard back from the transport department that they don't think this is feasible. I for one am not convinced by this; perhaps Mark can address it later.

Another transport related issue has been the ongoing saga of coaches bringing customers to the previous Crown Inn (Now Rui), which is clearly very popular with the Chinese tourist market. The Coaches park or wait in Bathwick St, adding to already excessive congestion, or at the Beckford Road bus stop, and sometimes even in our Estate. This is an acute local example of a Bath wide problem. Our neighbouring Councillor, Peter Turner, has shown great determination to fix the problem, and Mark Shelford has already brought about some signage improvements. More from Mark on this later.

The Sydney Gardens restoration project, led by the Council, with a Steering Group composed of local Councillors and Residents Associations, and the Friends of Sydney Gardens, is going well, and is on schedule to apply for (and get) its main block of funding later this year.

One broader issue is the Ward Boundary Review by the Local Government Commission. This was driven by the Council's decision a couple of years ago to reduce the overall number of Councillors. The draft proposals coming out of the review included reversing the illogical lumping of our Estate into the Walcot Ward, and instead putting us back into Bathwick, with the river reverting to its natural boundary role. We strongly supported this move. I know other wards were much less happy with the proposals for them, so we may see further draft proposals, but as long as our move back into a Bathwick Ward is confirmed, we should be content.

As a Committee we meet every couple of months, wherever possible with our

Councillors, Fiona Darey and Richard Samuel. I am grateful for the support of both over the past year, though regrettably Fiona has family issues that have required her to be much less active over the past 6 months. I also thank the committee for their work.

We derive much benefit from our membership of FoBRA, the Federation of Bath Residents Associations. Robin Kerr as Chair and his leadership team provide very helpful expertise, and communications, and a spur to the Council to address the problems over air quality, transport, housing, waste services etc that face us all. We get a regular stream of updates and proposed feedback to the Council via this route. I share most of this with our Committee, but I try to avoid filling your email in boxes with this stuff unless it is really important for us locally.

I'll stop at this point for any questions you have on these issues, other than the transport items for Mark later.

Now to Cleveland Pools. You will recall that at last year's AGM you voted overwhelmingly (after a debate) that we should continue to object to the CPT's plans because they did not take adequate account of local concerns over noise and traffic impacts on our estate. We opposed the granting of planning permission at the Council Planning Committee the next day, as did the group we now call the Immediate Neighbours, but planning permission was nonetheless granted, though the Chair commented that she was surprised at the apparent lack of effort by the Trust to engage with residents. This was followed by two meetings with the Trust over the summer where we tried to explore compromise solutions. The most promising was a non-heated water approach that assumed far smaller visitor numbers. The CPT's consultants (and subsequently the HLF) concluded this was not financially viable, though it pretty clearly the only credible compromise available based on the CPT's plans.

The CPT submitted their plans unchanged to the HLF; we and the IN's objected. We were pleasantly surprised when in December the HLF declined to fund them at stage 2 (last year 90% got through at that stage). We then made overtures to CPT and Council about finding a compromise way ahead. The Immediate Neighbours developed their own alternative proposals for the future use of the Pools. We also tried (unsuccessfully) to find out from the HLF why they had turned the CPT down.

But the CPT decided to try again with their approach, apparently with HLF support, and last month delivered the leaflet you will have seen, saying that the time for opposing the scheme has now passed, and setting out various actions, presumably intended to address the reasons that the HLF turned them down. One of these was the establishment of a liaison group on practical issues as the project proceeds. We told the CPT that we would continue to oppose the project, but we would take part in the liaison group, and not use that as a forum for opposing the project.

Meanwhile the INs have produced and circulated this brochure on their alternative

proposals. We think it is rather good, and we should support it. The INs have also met Councillors Warren, Gerrish, and Myers to discuss all this. It is clear from these discussions that the Council has its own doubts about the CPT project, and is interested in alternatives, but only if they include the means of delivery.

So, what should we as BERA do?

- We think our objective should be to stop the CPT's proposals and enable something like the INs. We did not think it would be sensible or practicable to try to set up a rival CPT type organisation (unless anyone feels like volunteering!) The means of delivery would need to be either a Sydney Gardens type arrangement (Council lead supported by a Friends organisation that we could set up) or a repurposed CPT with a different set of objectives, governance and probably personnel. HLF funding would still be needed, but on a much smaller scale.

- We should continue to lobby the various interested parties about the merits of the CPIN proposals in contrast to those of the CPT. We have already found potential allies who can help us here.

- We also see attractions in strengthening our voice by conducting a poll of the whole Estate, based on the rival leaflets.

I will now ask Ric Jerrom, as the IN rep on our Committee, if he wants to add anything before throwing open the discussion.