

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

TUESDAY 16 APRIL 2019

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

Apologies: Alasdair Barron, Amie Berkovtch

Present: Richard Samuel
Walcot Ward Councillor

Residents Approximately 45 present

1. Chairman's Report

Charles Draper said that the Agenda was as listed apart from the Rec Development which was dealt with in his report. (Copy attached)

After delivering his report the Chairman said that there were two ideas which might be pursued:

- (i) A community speed watch campaign which would pass on information to the police who would then contact the drivers.
- (ii) Setting up an anti-idling zone, particularly for commercial vehicles, and putting up signs.

Both suggestions were generally considered worth pursuing.

2. Financial Report

The Treasurer, Sylvia Ayers, gave her report and circulated the 2018 Accounts for acceptance.

In January 2018 a donation of £183 was received from our now former Councillor Richard Samuel which has funded our 5 year Email account. Annual subscriptions brought in £239, £17 less than in 2017. Unfortunately it was not possible to raise any funds from the Summer social because it was cancelled. The Autumn questionnaires and hall hire for local project meetings used up nearly all this income and left a total loss of £300 over the year. Because of this, it was thought necessary to consider raising membership fees which will be dealt with later.

In 2018, 26 new members joined the Association, 32 down on the previous year, but with 91 renewals, 21 more than last year. The final total was 117 members, only 11 less than in 2017.

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:

Pat Asher, Sylvia and Ken Ayers, Alisdair Barron, Amie Berkowitch, Charles Draper, Valerie Hayward, John Mudford, Nola Wright and Manda Rigby, who would stand down if elected in the May Council election.

The Committee members were duly re-elected.

4. Summer Social Plans

The Social is held each year on August Bank Holiday Sunday at the Boating Station. For the past few years the number of children attending has fallen and the cost of an entertainer is expensive. The Chairman wondered whether the members had any suggestions for alternative arrangements.

After some discussion, it was generally agreed that the Boating Station was an agreeable venue and the social should continue to be held there but without an entertainer.

5. Membership fees

The Association's funds were going down and it was thought necessary to increase the current membership fee of £2 per person. Most of the other Residents' Associations charge a fee of £5 per household but this approach for us would disadvantage households where only one member joined

It was suggested that the membership fee should be £3 per person from next year, with the option to make a donation if wished. This was agreed.

6. Any other business

There was a discussion about how representative decisions taken at meetings could be when such a small proportion of the community attended or were members. It was agreed that this problem was inevitable, but all were urged to encourage their neighbours to join and have their say.

Because of boundary changes, Richard Samuel would no longer be our Councillor after the election and the Chairman thanked him for his support over the years. Richard Samuel said that he had enjoyed working for the Association and had dealt with quite a few difficult planning applications and the Cleveland Pools development.

There being no other business, the Chairman declared the AGM closed at about 8 pm.

The Chairman then began the Hustings by inviting six prospective candidates for Bathwick Ward Councillor who had attended (listed below) to make their opening statements. This was followed by a lively Q&A session which closed at 9:15.

Michael Coffey, Green Party

Johanna Everitt, Labour

Martin Grixoni, Conservative

Dr Y Kumar, Liberal Democrat

Manda Rigby, Liberal Democrat

Evan Rudowski, Bath & NE Somerset Independent Group

BERA AGM Tuesday 16 April 2019 – CHAIRMAN'S REPORT.

This is my report on what your committee has been doing over the past year.

Our biggest issue was once more the **Cleveland Pools**. At last year's AGM, we were faced with the CPT's rebid, and also had the much more welcome alternative proposals from the Cleveland Pools Immediate Neighbours. It was agreed that we would look at conducting some kind of Poll on this issue over the whole Estate, and that led to the Opinion Poll we conducted last summer. This was quite an undertaking. We prepared an appropriate letter and set of questions with the help of Councillor Richard Samuel. We used the Electoral Register to find out how many Electors lived at each address on the Estate, and then delivered that number of questionnaires to each address, colour coded so we could group responses by street. We were very pleased to get a total of 222 responses out of the 674, a response rate of 33 %. Two thirds of the responses said the CPT's plans would not be good for the Estate. We also received a great wealth of comments. We put all this material together, and sent it to key BathNES Cabinet members, the HLF, CPT and others.

As you know, despite our efforts, the CPT got their money from the HLF. This was disappointing, to say the least. We have continued to take part in the Liaison group the CPT have set up under a neutral chair. We have also told them that the way to try to re-establish some trust with local residents is to share their future implementation plans at the draft stage and be willing to change them where feasible to reflect local preferences.

The better news around Christmas was that the **Sydney Gardens** upgrade project, managed by the Council and supported by us and other residents' groups, also got their lottery funding.

Last October saw the Council's consultation on their **Clean Air Zone** charging proposals. When we saw that the Council envisaged at Cat D scheme that charged non-compliant cars in a geographical zone that almost invited non-compliant vehicles to use our part of the city as a dropping-off zone, we could see that it posed a question for us on the Estate. This led to our public discussion meeting on 8 November which Council officials were very glad to support. About 70 Residents attended. We concluded from this discussion that, on balance, that we should argue to be included in the CAZ, though the most important thing was to encourage our residents to comment themselves. As you will know, the Cabinet has now concluded that the CAZ should be Cat C (not charging private cars), and that it should include the Estate, which is welcome news.

Another important major planning issue is the **Rec**. We normally focus on issues that directly affect

our Estate. The current proposals for a short-term underground car park for about 700 vehicles would very much affect us by drawing even more vehicles past us into central Bath. We are also very concerned about the visual impact of the much taller structures envisaged. For these reasons, we intend to comment when these proposals come forward for planning approval in a few months' time.

One related issue is **flood risk management**, and the future of the radial gate next to the Rec. We have been warned by the Environment Agency that we can expect proposals to replace the Gate with a weir as the Rec proposals go forward; they say this will be as effective at managing the flow of water upstream of Pulteney Bridge.

Closer to home, we have had quite a struggle to prevent **coaches** waiting for or dropping off customers for the Rui Chinese restaurant either on Bathwick St, or at the Beckford Road bus stop, or even on our Estate. With much help from Councillors, and meetings with the owner and others, the problem is much reduced. It is part of the wider problem of coach management in this tourist city.

On the last 3 issues I mentioned, our interests have been closely aligned with those of the Pulteney Estate, and this is one of many reasons why we welcome the fact that we will be joining them in the **Bathwick Ward** following the 2 May election. I have yet to meet anyone in the Estate who doesn't welcome this change.

On **planning issues** within the Estate, we now have a couple of experienced members of our committee who can provide advice to individuals dealing with local planning applications that might affect them. We have also been ready to comment as an Association on planning proposals that seem to adversely impact our conservation area.

Two of the members of our committee are keen **cyclists**, and they have been adding their weight to efforts to improve cycling provision in the city, and also the more effective filling of potholes which are a nuisance for cars, but can be lethal for cyclists.

Also following an initiative from two of our committee members, you have have seen several places in the Estate where **new trees** are being planted by the Council, after local consultation with neighbours.

I mentioned earlier that we tended to focus mainly on issues of immediate relevance to our Estate. One reason that we can do that is because we are members of FoBRA, the Federation of Bath Residents Association. FoBRA are very active on a whole range of city wide issues, and enable us to understand them better and add our thoughts as appropriate.

I have mentioned members of our committee earlier. We can only exist as an Association and try and get things done because enough people on our Estate are willing to get stuck in and work together on them. My thanks to all for their efforts over the past year.

I have left two things until last as they are ideas we are thinking of pursuing if there is general support for them:

- Community Speed-Watch campaign, especially on Forester Rd
- Anti-idling campaign, particularly for commercial vehicles, following success of Bathwick St Mary scheme.