

BERA Planning Meeting - 19th September 2023

Mark TG

Sally G

Ric J

Danielle S

Manda R

Guest: Joanna Haylock, 9 Hampton Row

Apologies: Alasdair B, Wendy P, Amie B, Toby, Chris Meehan

1. Planning application, 53 Rockcliffe Road. Ref: 22/05081/FUL

Latest proposal by the applicant is that trees will be planted in Wraxhall to offset the fact that they cannot plant enough on site (10 small trees onsite and 22 trees offsite)

This combination of on-site planting and offsite compensation gives a BNG of 9% which, as stated in the BANES planning policy should be, in itself, grounds for refusal "It will be unlawful to issue a planning approval for any qualifying project that does not secure 10% BNG". However, a 9% figure may not mean will not automatically mean it fails.

Mark pointed out that a route to contest planning may exist as the Conservation officer has not yet been consulted about a development in a Conservation area.

Target decision is 29th September.

2. Planning application, 10 Hampton Row. Reference: 22/03817/COND

This development consists of 5 buildings with a potential of 10 flats. There are currently people in two of the properties with cars being parked on site. This is despite there being planning infringements in the construction and no planning granted for the tarmac drive.

This is all enforceable, and the council is looking to move to enforcement, however a lack of enforcement officers means progress is slow.

Key date: 4th October – end of consultation

Action: Ask Amie to coordinate with Ric and prepare a letter of objection for BERA – Manda to approach Roman Lettings to explain the situation and discourage them letting the properties.

3. Beckford Gardens curb drop

Three houses have dropped their curbs in order to park on their gardens, despite not having planning permission.

Manda said that the Council has very little chance of getting this investigated as there are so many bigger issues for the hard-pressed enforcement team to address (see item 2 for example) and also that they would very likely get retrospective planning permission if they applied anyway.

Behaviour change seems to be the only route. Possibly piggy back on the clean and green initiative and reiterate that we live in a conservation area - alongside the environmental impact of not having drainage.

4. Clean and green

All agreed that this is a great initiative, we just need a date and then Manda can get the Banes teams involved too.

Action: Wendy to set a date for Clean and Green

Pavement cleaning

Council don't do this specifically, so it would rely on individuals taking the initiative. Suggest it could be an aspect of the Clean and Green Initiative.

Action: Make it a community initiative (as above)

5. Fobra – Ric and Sally attended.

Major complaints about the town centre noise and cleanliness

Successfully reduced the height of the Dick Lovett estate

WECA main road routes to be objected

Contractors not making good after works (do not need to make like-for-like)

Democratic deficit. Parish councils don't exist in Bath so in place the council listens to local residents' groups instead. This makes Bath residents vulnerable, but also means the Council has more responsibility and there are less layers of bureaucracy.

Action: We do need members to go to these meetings as they are worthwhile (Sally)

6. Cleveland Pools

The pools are trying to encourage people to do drop offs at the end of Beckford gardens. (Drop-offs currently happening close to the pool.)

Generally, it has not been too noisy, but there has been a significant increase in footfall on Hampton Row.

Estate fun day (free) in April or May

Action: CPINS next meeting, Tuesday 14th November (Manda can't attend).

7. Trees

The general situation re the state of trees on the Estate is good/excellent.

All trees, including the three recent replacements this spring are healthy and continue to establish well. In the case of birches their establishment is less vigorous than average, but this is no surprise since the soil type on the Estate is satisfactory but not the best match for that species. The rowans are carrying very heavy berry counts, which should be good for birds this winter, and some trees have been spectacular during the year - especially the flowering cherries and red hawthorns - and we look forward to autumn leaf colours.

Credit to Mel Clarke for establishing and running the WhatsApp Tree Team - currently comprising 11 members - and building it up. The group continues to meet regularly and functions well and supportively with initiatives coming from all members. More details are given in Mel's helpful [Tree Team](#) report.

The 'net' is that proper maintenance of all the pavement trees (plantings and pre-existing trees) has been delivered, the great majority of it by Estate Residents, this year.

For the future,

- 1) Contact will be renewed with the Parks Department to discuss a list of items regarding future tree work.
- 2) Alasdair would like to step down from the trees lead, if a suitable replacement can be found.

Action: Mark to explore possibility of asking Mel Clarke to step into Alasdair's shoes.

8. Swifts

Thanks to Ed Haysler for handling nest box implementation this year, Wendy for payments, Stewart Owen RSPB for invaluable advice and caller kits, and to all those in the Estate who have supported the project by purchasing boxes.

Group Chair, Charles Draper supplied the following input,
Our aim is to:

- Build on the success of last year
- Install more swift-friendly nesting spaces on the Estate
- Set up and run a simple swift sightings reporting system
- Encourage wider involvement/interest by our residents.

It's planned to send a note out via the Estate WhatsApp Group early next week to encourage new participants to come to our meeting, at 7.30pm, on Thursday Sept 21, in the Sydney Gardens Pavilion.'

A recent Telegraph [article](#) charts the need for integral boxes.

AOB

Nice message from Patrick and Viv of Forester Lane who have been struggling with an Airbnb next door – abridged version below:

*After the last BERA meeting I decided to put some anti Airbnb posters up!
A few weeks later we received a letter from the owners that we decided was not worthy of any response.
They appear to have ceased the Airbnb this month and moved towards private rented accommodation. This is very good news for all sorts of personal and political reasons .
I believe that directly or indirectly they picked up the temperature/feelings about Airbnb from the BERA meeting. This has without doubt contributed to their decision to cease the Airbnb business.*

While it's still early days I would really like to extend our thanks to BERA for the support received (just listening to our concerns was so helpful) BERA is influential and not to be underestimated!

Action: Danielle to add the issues of Airbnb to the next meeting agenda. Invite Patrick, Ellie, and Dickon (an Airbnb owner) to look at ways to balance supporting responsible ones with opposing irresponsible ones.

Next meeting: Weds 22nd November