

## **BATHWICK ESTATE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION AGM – CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2019**

This is my report on the activities of the Association during 2019. It was drafted in April 2020, when the Coronavirus emergency is disrupting most aspects of normal life, including our ability to hold an AGM. But otherwise the report makes no attempt to predict or consider how the emergency might affect the other matters set out below.

The year began with the disappointing news that the **Cleveland Pools Trust** had received the funding they sought from the HLF to proceed with their scheme to restore the Pools. The CPT's steps since then have included establishing more effective arrangements for engaging with our Residents, and more particularly with the the Immediate Neighbours. The atmosphere of these meetings has been an improvement on previous events. Most of the discussion has been about how disruption to our community can be minimised during the construction phase; the plan to maximise the use of the river for transporting materials is key here. One important detail; the CPT are willing to discuss offering the Immediate Neighbours some kind of benefit, such as discounted entry tickets, as a good-will gesture in the light of the disruption and noise that they would face. The CPT had a question as to whether others in the Estate might seek similar benefits, as this could impact on the commercial viability of any offer. I have told them that they could expect that the CPINs as currently defined would be the main area where this would be expected. But once the nature of the offer was clear, it may be that some other residents e.g.at the top of Rockliffe Avenue might seek similar benefits.

The better news was that the **Sydney Gardens Project** also received its HLF funding, and the Steering Committee on which Councillor Rigby and I sit has continued to be a useful way of ensuring the implementation remains suitable for our residents.

We took an increasing interest over the year in the plans for the development of the **Rec**, with our concerns focused on the traffic that would be generated by the proposed underground car-park, and the impact of the physical profile of the proposed stadium on sight-lines across Bath.

Our efforts to try to **curtail coaches waiting** to pick up customers from the Chinese Restaurant (Rui) on Bathwick St, Beckford Rd, or even in the Estate, continued, including a meeting organised by Councillor Rigby with Mandy Bishop, BathNES Environment Director. It became clear from this that the only effective solution will be through the Council developing and implementing an effective Coach Strategy. The Council say that is there intention if they can get the funding.

We welcomed the Council's decision to extend the proposed **Clean Air Zone** to include our Estate, as we had requested. We intend, after our discussion at the 2018 AGM, to set up Anti-Idling and Speed-Watch schemes within the Estate, as the CAZ scheme allows for, and have made a start on the latter.

Towards the end of the year, we were very pleased to see the plans to impose a 18 tonne weight restriction on **Cleveland Bridge** for Health and Safety reasons while plans for its repair were developed and funding sought. Even before the year ended we began to see the benefits in reduced lorry traffic along Bathwick St and Beckford Rd.

Thanks to the efforts of one of our Committee Members, you may have seen several **new street trees** around the Estate which have been planted by Council staff, after consultation with neighbouring residents.

At our **AGM** last year, we devoted as much time as we could to hustings for the Bathwick Ward before the BathNES Council election in May. We had a lively debate; 6 of the candidates took part,

including the two who were elected. This also marked the point at which our Estate returned to its rightful place in the Bathwick Ward.

We had our **Summer Social** event at the Boating Station once more, on Sunday 1 September, thanks to the Hardick family, and were pleased that Wera Hobhouse MP joined us for an enjoyable afternoon.

We have continued to be active members of the **Federation of Bath Residents Associations (FoBRA)**, which provides a very useful forum for debating issues of concern to city residents, and, just as importantly, a means of exerting collective influence. We have also now joined the national equivalent, the National Organisation of Residents Associations, (NORA) which gives us direct access to useful analysis and information, while also strengthening their hand.

My thanks to the members of our **Committee** for their work in 2019, and particularly to Sylvia Ayers, who continues to look after our accounts, membership, and meeting room bookings with great dedication. One thing we tried and failed to do over the year was to get more recruits to join our Committee, and if possible to replace me as Chairman, as other commitments mean that I am no longer able to lead significant campaigns. I hope to return to this topic later in 2020.

*Charles Draper*

Chairman

13/04/2020