

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Bear Flat Association, held on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2013, 7.30 pm at the Methodist Church Hall, Bruton Avenue, Bath**

**Present:** Clyde Hunter (Chair), Mark Richardson (Treasurer), Wendy Lovell (Membership Secretary), Diana Lockwood (Secretary), Virginia Williamson (Food Group), Gareth Bunn (Transport Group), Tim Cantell (Planning Group), Jane Allan, Julian David (Alexandra Park Forum), Don Grimes, Gareth Somerset (History Group) and about 40 members of the Bear Flat Association.

**Apologies:** Richard Ingram, Derek Le Page, Charlotte and Rupert Taylor, Nigel Locke, Lesley Baker,

Item	Notes	Action
	The Chair welcomed everyone and outlined the agenda for the evening.	
1.0	<p><b>Chair's report:</b> Clyde Hunter reported that all the projects that had been highlighted at the previous AGM, with the exception of neighbourhood planning, have been progressed. This is still on the agenda, but currently not felt to be pressing (TC will report on this later in the meeting). The Chair said that, unlike most other residents' associations, Bear Flat Association was not formed to fight a particular development threat.</p> <p>Good links have been established with neighbouring residents' associations (Widcombe and Greenway). We have also joined the Federation of Bath Residents' Associations (FoBRA).</p> <p>The Chair said that the Association needs to get more people involved in helping with events and projects. This would not necessarily involve being on the committee.</p> <p>CH reported that currently 192 households belong to the Association.</p>	
2.0	<p><b>Transport:</b> Gareth Bunn drew attention to a traffic survey that he had distributed at the meeting and requested that attendees complete it and return to him during the evening.</p> <p>The transport group has carried out traffic and parking surveys in the area during the year. The group have identified transport and parking issues that affect the area and had been in contact with B&amp;NES about them. The issues identified- are: commuter parking in the avenues, parking in Alexandra Park, parking near junctions, time-limited parking not being enforced, especially in Holloway and Hayes Place.</p> <p>In 2014 B&amp;NES will start consultation on what residents of Bear Flat want, with a view to taking action during 2015. The Association will need to gather evidence to submit to B&amp;NES. Questionnaires will be given to each household in February / March next year.</p> <p>GB outlined a proposal to help access to businesses on Bear Flat by installing parking meters in Hayes Place, Bruton Ave and the lower end of Shakespeare Avenue. These would be free for the first 90 minutes. There was a discussion about this and it was pointed out that parking meters would not help people who live there.</p> <p>GB reported that the planned maintenance work in the avenues has taken over 1 month, and there are still some patches that have not been</p>	

resurfaced. It was reported that this was due to people leaving cars there that prevented access for the contractors.

It was pointed out that there is no parking for residents on Wells Road and not enough spaces for those who want them on the avenues. Permit parking will make this worse.

In terms of the issue of parking in Alexandra Park which is preventing park users from finding a parking space: this has been exacerbated by recent construction work at the school which is due to be finished this term, but is also due to the school not having enough parking on site for staff and 6<sup>th</sup> formers. This matter has been raised with the school, but a solution is yet to be found.

3.0

**Planning:** Tim Cantell reported on the main issues that the group had addressed during the year.

**Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).** The Article 4 direction came into force in July – there have been no planning applications in this area since this date. Bear Flat has not been included in the HMO licensing area, despite our request that it should be included.

**Spaces:** we are keen to protect open spaces in the area, and seek to improve them.

- ✦ Bog triangle / the Gore at the junction of Wells Road and Bloomfield Road. The old WCs have been filled in, and the railings have been stored at our request. We are working with the council and utility suppliers to try to move the data cabinets which now spoil the view.
- ✦ Hayes Place: issues have been identified around pedestrian safety, traffic and parking and we are working with the Council to address these.

The Planning group submitted comments on the B&NES Placemaking Plan about the Bloomfield open space and Beechen Cliff lower playing field.

**Assets:** the list of community assets is now on the BFA website.

**Neighbourhood Plan:** it has been decided not to draw one up for this area for the time being because a change of administration might mean that these are no longer a priority.

**Planning:** the Association successfully objected to the wall being demolished outside Tesco on Wellsway. We also objected to an application for a studio flat at 94 Holloway, and development of 2 new dwellings at Pows Wood in Chaucer Road – but these were approved.

TC Thanked all those in the planning group and those who have responded to requests for comments during the year.

He also asked local residents to keep an eye open for any planning issues that need looking at.

Julian David asked about the Jubilee fountain at The Gore, and whether the Association is being proactive in campaigning to get it working again? TC replied that this has to be done in partnership with Elm Place residents, who have a covenant for that area.

	<p>Ian Halsall reported that he had made contact with Wessex Water about the Gore and they had seemed positive about helping the community.</p> <p>JD requested that BFA should take responsibility for maintaining the railings leading from Alexandra Park down to Holloway. CH said that we would discuss this at our next meeting.</p>	
4.0	<p><b>Film group</b> – CH reported that Helene Law (convenor of the Film Group) could not be at the meeting, but drew attention to the forthcoming screening of The Untouchables next week.</p>	
5.0	<p><b>Communications:</b> CH thanked Virginia Williamson for producing the Bear Flat Flyer to enthusiastic applause from the audience.</p>	
6.0	<p><b>Food Group:</b> Virginia Williamson reported that the proposed community shop at Hayes Place has not happened, but Cate Mack is now running the Bear Pad as a cafe and outlet for locally produced food.</p> <p>Hayes Place Limited has been established as an Industrial and Provident Society which aims to promote local food, and to help engender a sense of community. A community market ran very successfully in July in the Methodist Church Hall, and 6 more will run on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday each month from September to February. VW expressed thanks to the Methodist Church for providing a venue for the market.</p> <p>Some of the profits from Hayes Place events go to the Bear Flat Association, but Hayes Place runs as a separate legal entity.</p> <p>We have been asked to provide a candidate for the local Co-operative committee.</p> <p>VW asked members to let the food group have suggestions and ideas e.g. fish delivery on Bear Flat, bulk ordering of wholefood.</p> <p>VW said that apple pressing and pasteurising equipment is available through Bath Organic Growers.</p>	
7.0	<p><b>History Group:</b> Gareth Somerset reported that there are currently 6 members of the history group and meetings are very informal. The group aims to research the history of the area, to present it in an accessible way, and to receive any information that is relevant to the area. A website has been set up with some documents, and an image gallery at <a href="http://bearflathistory.com/">http://bearflathistory.com/</a></p> <p>The group always welcomes new information, documents and photos</p>	
8.0	<p><b>Treasurer's Report:</b> Mark Richardson reported that as at 30<sup>th</sup> September the Association had £914 income during the year. After the deduction of costs this gave a surplus of £408 for the year. We currently have £663 in the bank. He said that suggestions for someone willing to act as auditor would be welcome.</p>	
9.0	<p><b>Future Plans:</b></p> <p><b>Bloomfield Open Space:</b> Don Grimes reported on plans to form a Friends of Bloomfield Open Space to address issues such as parking in the allotment car park, the provision of waste bins, and seats / benches in the park. Anyone interested in being on committee or just being involved</p>	

should contact Don.

**Carols in the Park:** Virginal Williamson and Judith Eversley are planning a Carols in Alexandra Park event on Friday 13th December from 6.30 pm. The Bowls club have agreed to open for the evening, and mulled wine will be on sale. Korean students will sing a Korean carol and we hope that the Beechen Cliff school choir will also sing. Judith Eversley + Simon will organise the music and Geoff Ditchum has agreed to conduct . Any profit from the evening will be given to the Disaster Emergency Committee for Syria.

**Business Group Proposal:** Diana Lockwood reported on plans for a Bear Flat Business Association. This would aim to support local businesses, not just those on the main road, but also those running businesses from home.

It has been suggested that the group could look at improving signage in the area, work with the Council to improve the streetscape and improve access to businesses. It could also facilitate communications between businesses, and with local residents.

An initial meeting of those interested will take place before Christmas, and street reps will be asked to canvass businesses on their patch to find out who might be interested.

Diana is currently looking into how to produce an online business directory to be attached to the BFA website. Anyone with the expertise in doing this is asked to contact Diana.

10.0 **Election of the committee:** the committee stood down and Julian David presided over the election of the committee for 2013-14. He and thanked the outgoing committee for the work done during the year.

Officers of the Association were elected as follows:

**Chair:** Clyde Hunter, nominated by Jane Allan, seconded by Thelma Grimes.

JD asked for volunteers for the post of Vice Chair: Dr Graham Joy of Hayes Place was proposed by Rachel Kerrison, seconded by Gareth Bunn, and elected unanimously.

**Treasurer:** Mark Richardson, nominated by Wendy Lovell, seconded by Thelma Grimes.

**Secretary:** Diana Lockwood, nominated by Mark Richardson and seconded by Jane Allan

**Membership Secretary:** Wendy Lovell, nominated by Diana Lockwood and seconded by Clyde Hunter

All group conveners are invited to attend committee meetings and other members may be co-opted during the year.

11.0 **AOB:** Peter Payne (Chaucer Road) expressed concern about the purpose of the Association. He said that whenever concerns are raised about issues

on Bear Flat the response is always to 'organise a petition', or 'do the work yourselves'.

Clyde Hunter asked where these responses came from, because it was not from the Association. PP said that he did not know.

PP said that the BFA should be lobbying the council, rather than having carry out improvements themselves. CH said that is what was being done and cited the example of the Transport Group bringing forward consideration of local traffic issues by a year.

Judith Eversley reported that in the case of the overhanging trees in Kipling Avenue, the council had worked with local residents to enable them to deal with tree pruning.

Cllr Bellotti said that the aim is to encourage local residents to work in partnership with the Council. He is not aware of anyone being told to do it themselves, but pointed out that the Council cannot do everything, and is keen to avoid rises in council tax.

Cllr Hall praised all those contributing to local community, and noted that Alexandra Park would not have been awarded green flag status without partnership working.

Mike Douglas (Beechen Cliff Road) suggested that when local residents get mailshots from B&NES saying there have been consultations, they should query exactly who was consulted, as this is often not as comprehensive as it might be.

CH agreed that this is good practice.

The meeting closed at 9 pm