

## **Chair's Report to BFA AGM, Friday, 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2021.**

Reading my report to you from last year's AGM we can reflect on how much more restricted we were in movement, and our ability to get things done. Since early 2021 we have seen several major steps forward in activities and actions stimulated by the BFA committee and the membership. Talking of membership, we're up from 378 last year to 493 this. Not bad.

Some of these activities will, of course, be highlighted in reports coming to you from other committee members, and I'd like to mention particularly the Vision (with a particularly well-attended meeting on Zoom in February), proposal for Hayes Place calming, prospects for tree-planting in the Avenues (thanks to Jerry Trenchard for coming out of BFA retirement to help!), protection of mature trees, and the success of retaining Green Flag status for Alexandra Park and Bloomfield Green. We offer our gratitude to all those taking these projects forward. The Covid-19 Help Line we initiated back in March 2020 (first in Bath) was wound up in June this year – again, thanks to all those who volunteered to help, even if you weren't called on. You should all note that we now have official "Playing Out" notices (and some high-viz jackets!) to enable us to shut off our roads for a community activity – ask Bob Hughes for details. Talking of community activities, it will be the BFA's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year, and the committee would welcome ideas and offers of help for a celebration.

As Chair I have a pretty easy ride, just keeping the Committee from getting over-excited in meetings and encouraging members to keep litter picked and drains unblocked in their streets. It has been good to co-operate with other residents' groups in the area, supporting the Widcombe Association with the decoration of the railway arches roundabout subway and helping to form the Friends of Lyncombe Fields; and liaising with the Bloomfield Road Residents' Association around traffic calming and pedestrian crossing proposals. We have contacted Beechen Cliff School on behalf of the other local associations encouraging them to re-start the regular communication meetings we used to hold.

We thank our local councillors, Alison, Shaun and Winston, for their welcome help and support. We know how busy they are. Your committee members are outstanding: Bob Hughes, our brilliant secretary; Gareth Somerset, editor of the entertaining and informative Bear Flat Flyer and now chair of the Bear Flat Charitable Investment Organisation (CIO); Timothy Cantell, convenor of the Planning and Transport, and author, with that group, of The Vision; Clyde Hunter and Thelma Grimes, co-chairs of Friends of Bloomfield Green; Judith Eversley, organiser of the Food Group, Carols in the Park, and our website; Cat Lewis, our social media co-ordinator; Mark Richardson, our treasurer and commercial liaison person; and, formerly, Helen Cooke and now James Gibson, our Membership Secretaries. Our warm thanks to them all, and an especial thank you to Helen, standing down after a good stint. And while we thank people, let's not forget the waste and recycling collectors, who have soldiered on and given us a surprisingly uninterrupted service in spite of crew shortages owing to illness, and also the shops who remained open throughout the pandemic, and the commitment of their staff.

We do have a talented group of enthusiasts to run the BFA, and it's a real pleasure to be associated with them. I'd like to take this opportunity, though, to encourage others to come forward and become involved. You would be welcome to talk to any of us about what's involved – we'd love to have more younger folk with us, and we've been glad to welcome Cat Lewis and James Gibson this year.

Nick Francis, Chair.

THE BEAR FLAT ASSOCIATION

Statement of Income and Expenditure for year ending 30th September 2021

	2021	Prior year 2020
Income - Membership Fees	£1,800.00	£1,373.00
Income - Donations	£200.01	
Income - Advertising	£250.00	£300.00
Angus Buchanan Memorial Fund	£145.00	
Income - Bloomfield Green play equipment	£500.00	£500.00
Total Income	£2,895.01	£2,173.00
Expenditure -		
Printing costs		£(242.96)
Hall and equipment hire for meetings	£(103.59)	£(28.00)
Don Grimes Wild Flower Project	£(35.40)	£(150.00)
Mikron Theatre on allotments	£(256.00)	
Artist Popup in Rolfeyes		£(943.33)
Gore Project		£(956.80)
Membership software	£(75.00)	£(75.00)
Website hosting	£(103.81)	£(8.34)
FOBRA membership	£(75.00)	£(50.00)
Insurance	£(100.80)	£(89.60)
Defibrillator maintenance		£(200.00)
Donation to Bath Preservation Trust		£(100.00)
Grant to Widcombe Association for subway artwork	£(500.00)	
Grant to Friends of Lyncombe Fields	£(200.00)	£(180.00)
Grant to Bear Flat Environment	£(250.00)	
Costs of equipment for Playing Out	£(215.40)	
Covid-19 helpline costs	£(43.65)	£(150.85)
Other expenses	£(125.45)	£(271.74)
	£(2,084.10)	£(3,446.62)
<b>Surplus of Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>£810.91</b>	<b>-£1,273.62</b>
<b>Balance Sheet at 30th September</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
Balance at Cooperative Bank	£4,896.14	£4,404.38
Balance in Paypal a/c	£514.15	
less Accrued Expenses	£(478.92)	£(678.92)
less Membership Fees paid in advance	£(600.00)	£(205.00)
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>£4,331.37</b>	<b>£3,520.46</b>
Surplus funds brought forward	£3,520.46	£4,794.08
Surplus/(deficit) of Income over Expenditure for year	£810.91	£(1,273.62)
<b>Surplus funds carried forward (see Note)</b>	<b>£4,331.37</b>	<b>£3,520.46</b>

Breakdown of Funds	Angus Buchanan Memorial Fund	Don Grimes Memorial Fund	Bath In Bloom Fund	Bloomfield Green Play Equipment	General Funds	TOTAL
Brought forward at 1st October 2020	0	£1,325.86	£200.00	£500.00	£1,494.60	£3,520.46
Income in the year	£145.00			£500.00	£2,250.01	£2,895.01
Expenses in the year		£(35.40)			£(2,048.70)	£(2,084.10)
Carried forward at 30th September 2021	£145.00	£1,290.46	£200.00	£1,000.00	£1,695.91	£4,331.37

Treasurer's Report for the year ending 30th September 2021

The main income for the Association are membership subscriptions which have increased significantly to £1,800 thanks to increasing numbers of households joining the Association during the pandemic.

We made a number of grants during the year, including £500 to the Widcombe Association for the artwork in the subway, £200 to the Friends of Lyncombe Fields and £250 to Bear Flat Environment, a charity that has been recently established to manage local projects, starting with the restoration of the fountain at the Gore. We also invested in some equipment for the Playing Out initiative, so that streets can close to enable local children to play in them. The result was a surplus of income over expenditure of £810.

At 30th September 2021 we had a total bank balance of £4,896, which is held in accounts with the Cooperative Bank, as well as £514 in our Paypal account.

Our funds (or reserves) at 30th September 2021 totalled £4,331, of which the amounts shown above are designated for the Don Grimes Memorial Fund, Bath In Bloom and Play Equipment, which all relate to Bloomfield Green and the Angus Buchanan Memorial Fund. The General Funds that are not designated for any specific purpose amount to £1,695.

For any queries please contact me at markrichardson.home@yahoo.co.uk

Mark Richardson, ACA

11th October 2021

Treasurer

# BFA FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS 2020 / 2021

- Income from membership fees rose by 31% to £1,800 in 2020 / 2021
- The surplus of income over expenditure for the year was £810 (compare with 2020, a loss of £1,273)
- Total reserves at 31 September 2021 were £4,331
- Of these total reserves £2,635 are restricted in the sense that they can only be spent on specific projects (£145 – Angus Buchanan Memorial, £1,290 – Don Grimes Memorial Fund, £200 – Bath In Bloom and £1,000 Councillors Fund for play equipment on Bloomfield Green)
- This leaves unrestricted reserves of £1,696 at 31 September 2021
- At 31<sup>st</sup> September we had £4,896 of funds with the Cooperative Bank and £514 in our Paypal account

# MAJOR ITEMS OF EXPENDITURE IN 2020 / 2021

- Items of expenditure over £150 were –
- Grant to Widcombe Association for subway artwork £ 500
- Cost of Mikron Theatre event on allotments £ 256
- Grant to Bear Flat Environment £ 250
- Cost of equipment for Playing Out initiative £ 215
- Grant to Friends of Lyncombe Fields £ 200

# PROSPECTS FOR 2022

- Our unrestricted reserves are expected to increase to over £3,000 this year
- There are a number of potential projects under discussion but no significant commitments so far
- The costs of running the organisation, which includes insurance, communications, membership system, website hosting etc amount to around £500 a year

## **Planning and Transport Report 2020-21**

### **Vision**

The Bear Flat Association published a vision for improving Bear Flat Centre: to stimulate debate and spark more ideas – and to get everyone working together to make a better centre. We want to improve our Local Centre as a place to shop and to visit, particularly to lessen the impact of traffic and improve the environment. We are grateful to the residents and traders who have sent in comments, and ideas for what could be done.

#### Follow up

- Hayes Place We put forward options and consulted on them. Then Winston put in a bid on our behalf under the B&NES Liveable Neighbourhoods programme in May.
- Wellsway/Bloomfield Road We have drawn up a statement of the principles we'd like to see followed. This will provide a point of reference for when two initiatives come forward:
  - o The Liveable Neighbourhoods bid for lower Bloomfield Road; and
  - o The WECA A367 Corridor Study.
- Tree planting. The Council is already wanting to plant trees on arterial roads, like Wellsway and Wells Road. We've also suggested spots for trees on other roads and initially some new trees will go in this winter in the Poets.

### **Casework**

We objected to the scheme for the corner of Wells Road and Wellsway, adding a storey above Fidelis. We said this would make the block unduly prominent and out of scale with its setting, and marring views north from upper Wellsway.

We renewed our objection to the felling of an oak off Maple Grove when a second bid came in. We also objected to the conversion of a leafy garden to a parking area on Bruton. And we're currently resisting the loss of two beeches prominent on Chaucer.

Beechen Cliff School abandoned any idea of using their Lower Field for parking.

We helped The Good Bear get consent for outdoor tables on Hayes Place, and Mauro has just had continuation for a further year. Also on Hayes Place and nearby, we did a parking survey and found many over-stays – so we are pressing for better enforcement, for the benefit of traders and residents.

We responded to B&NES consultations the local plan, on an associated transport document, and on parking permits.

**FOOD GROUP**, officially Hayes Place Ltd, a society for community benefit

### **Annual report to the BFA AGM**

Many of the Food Group's activities were put on hold during the pandemic, as reported this time last year. So when it came to this summer, running a successful refreshment stall at Mikron Theatre on the Bloomfield Allotments felt like a welcome first step on the return to normality.

As a group we have kept together during the enforced lull, via Zoom and – when permitted – face-to-face. We used the time to reach a decision about the future of Hayes Place Ltd, the legal entity responsible for our community food activities. It had been set up to undertake community projects, but it turned out not to be powerful or flexible enough when a potential project - the pop-up shop in February 2021 - was in prospect. The new Charitable Incorporated Organisation, Bear Flat Environment, has now come into existence with additional powers, include the ability to apply for grant funding and enter into legal contracts. We concluded that HPL had come to the end of its useful life.

At a special general meeting on Friday 23 September 2021, the management committee (Board) agreed to dissolve HPL and transfer its assets to Bear Flat Association for use of the BFA food group. The food group's remit matches the legal purpose of HPL - to organise events and facilitate activities promoting local food to the benefit of the community. In practice therefore nothing will change, except that we won't have the additional reporting and accounting requirement and there is no need for a separate Treasurer.

As events and activities open up (always with the caveat that these depend on Covid-19 case rates), we now intend to:

- re-start the monthly community tea party from November
- organise Carols by Torchlight in Alexandra Park in mid-December
- provide catering for Bear Flat events as they resume in 2022 (e.g. Gathering on the Green, Mikron Theatre).

There is however no immediate prospect of re-starting the community market. First, no-one has come forward to take over from me as market organiser (offers of help gladly accepted!). Second, income from table rents paid by stallholders was declining even before lockdown: new stallholders were not coming forward to replace people who had moved on. Third, and most recently, the manager at The Bear, Danny Boyd, has launched a craft market on alternate Saturdays to bring coffee-time trade to the pub, making it hard for us to announce the re-opening of our market and café. We'll wait and see.

Judith Eversley  
October 2021

## **Friends of Bloomfield Green report for BFA AGM 221021**

The continuing pandemic has meant that 2021 has been another difficult year for the Friends, but we have risen to the challenges again.

Let's briefly look at the highlights of the past year, and our ambitions for next year.

### **Green Flag Award 2021-22**

This month, the Green was awarded its sixth straight Flag. B&NES Parks Dept enters and wins these awards, but the presence of an active Friends group is an important factor. This year's Flag will in part be due to the new basketball/football equipment installed in the spring, considerably improving the Green's offering for older children.

The playground area remaining very popular and we hope to add more for younger children.

### **It's Your Neighbourhood**

This is a scheme started by Britain in Bloom, but now jointly run with the RHS. The aim is to clean, green and transform local green spaces, through annual assessments, mentoring and other support.

In our first year, we were classed as "Advancing", a great achievement for a first-time entry. In future years, we hope to introduce some of the assessor's suggestions from the assessment.

### **Bristol and Bath Parks Foundation**

We joined this organisation last year. They bring together a variety of groups from the two cities, providing the chance to learn from others' experience. We have made a presentation at their annual conference and taken part in two training sessions. The BBPF also raises funds for activities, and its 2021 grants includes three Bath spaces.

### **Increasing visitor numbers**

The Council believes that visitor numbers across all parks and greens are up 60% since the pandemic began. It's wonderful that 60% more people are getting mental and physical benefits from being out in the open air, but it does make it more of a challenge for Friends groups to keep their spaces as they would like them to be.

The most notable additional visitors were the Travellers last month who came only briefly, fortunately. We were kept well-informed by the Police and the Council, enabling us to pass on guidance to the community. The Parks Department is now looking at new gates and bollards that can better protect the Green.



Let's hope that 2022 will be best remembered for the first Gathering on the Green since 2019, and other events that we will be able to stage on the Green.

Finally, I'd like to thank a dedicated group of Friends who regularly turn out in all weathers and working within ever-changing Covid restrictions to keep the Green at its best, and my colleagues at BFA who help to publicise and support FoBG.

Clyde Hunter

201021



# Three highlights of the year



Awarded six years in a row!



Joined and helped with training

RHS **IT'S YOUR  
NEIGHBOURHOOD**

Awarded 'Advancing' status

# Looking forward to 2022

- Visitor numbers are up – we hope to welcome more
- Gathering on the Green
- New volunteers



... and thank you to our volunteers

# BFA AGM 22<sup>nd</sup> October: Bear Flat Environment

Foundation Charitable Incorporated Organisation  
Registered by Charity Commission 19 May 2021  
Charity Number 1194540

Trustees: Gareth Somerset – Chair  
Mark Richardson – Finance  
Timothy Cantell – Planning



# BFA AGM 22<sup>nd</sup> October: Bear Flat Environment



# BFA AGM 22<sup>nd</sup> October: Bear Flat Environment

Your ideas?

Supporting our Vision for Bear Flat Centre

THANK YOU

## **Bear Flat Environment – Report to the Bear Flat Association AGM**

I am very pleased to report that we have successfully set up a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) called Bear Flat Environment (BFE), the purpose of which is to provide the means by which our Association can raise funds through grants for projects that we want to pursue around Bear Flat. It will also allow us to place contracts through an incorporated organisation, rather than the current situation where this must be done through individuals.

Whilst the BFE is a separate entity from BFA, it will in all regards work alongside the BFA on local projects, being guided by the Association and its members. It is currently run by three trustees, namely me (Gareth Somerset), Timothy Cantell and Mark Richardson, all of whom are members of the BFA committee.

Our first project is the initial improvement to the Gore to rescue the Victoria drinking fountain from its current parlous state. We have acquired a grant through the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy scheme, to the sum of £5,000, to allow its initial restoration and the removal of the Wessex Water valve station. We are contracting Bath Stonemasons, a local business, to undertake the stonework, which we hope will start late October / early November. It has taken a long time to get to this point (we started discussions back in 2018) and I would like to thank Wessex Water and local architect Nigel Spragg for their assistance in getting us to this point. Once this initial work is complete it is our intention to continue with improvements to the Gore as part of our wider Vision for Bear Flat Centre.

If you have ideas for improvements to Bear Flat that might require fund raising, then do let the Association know. Our recently published Vision for Bear Flat Centre has ambitious ideas on improving our main street that may require such an approach.

Gareth Somerset

Chair, BFE

18<sup>th</sup> October 2021