



*Bishopston, Cotham & Redland
Community Partnership*

Notes of the Cotham Forum Meeting held at Cotham Parish Church Hall on Monday, 10th June, 2019

The meeting was attended by approximately 35 people including ward councillors, representatives of local community organisations and BCP CP Committee Members.

Roger Gimson welcomed attendees and explained that the meeting would be informal with community groups giving updates on their activities followed by an open forum for questions.

Roger explained that the police had sent their apologies for not being able to attend the meeting. PCSO David Said is now on long term sick leave. Issues requiring police attention should be reported directly to the police.

1 Community Group Updates

Friends of St. Andrews Park

- Jo Corke circulated a leaflet giving information on the group and contact details
- Next year will be the 125th anniversary of the opening of the St. Andrews Park and commemorative activities are planned, including a Victorian themed event on May Day – 7th May 2020.
- Pantaloons Theatre Company are presenting “Sense and Sensibility” in the park from 7.00 – 9.00 pm on Sunday, 23rd June – tickets can be booked on line.
- Applications made for CIL funding have not been approved.
- Café. Fay has been granted a licence for a further three years to run the café in the park. This followed a campaign / petition by local people to persuade the Council to grant the license to Fay. The campaign has helped to improve the Council’s tendering process so that quality of service is given greater priority over price.
- Jo reported that the park had scored well on most criteria in a recent City Council’s local green space consultation exercise and has been formally designated as a Local Green Space

High Kingsdown Community Association

- The Community Association have obtained estimates to repair the communal wall bounding the High Kingsdown development and are now raising funds to meet the cost.
- Current activities include improving flowerbeds and planting small trees. Efforts to erect a notice board are on hold because of the need to obtain planning permission.

Kingsdown Conservation Group

- The Group has 80 – 100 members and meets monthly, particularly to discuss planning applications affecting the area. Applications made by the university and hospital are often difficult to resist although the campaign to stop the hospital’s plans for a large multi storey car park on Eugene Street was successful.

BCR Street Scene

- Street Scene have been successful in obtaining funding for tackling graffiti, rubbish, etc in the Gloucester Road area under the High Street Clean Up initiative.
- Pavements will be jet washed and trade bins cleaned in June under the City Council’s Clean Up initiative.

- Working parties of volunteers will be busy on Wednesdays and Saturdays in June clearing litter, removing fly posters, etc. in Gloucester Road
- There are signs that Bristol Waste Company are showing greater interest in removing graffiti.
- More action might be taken by the police with regard to fly posting and graffiti were more incidents to be reported. It is important for people to report incidents on - line to both the police and the City Council (search for "Report a Street Issue" on the Council website).
- A number of comments were made by attendees relating to illegal flyposting, graffiti, etc. – the posting of illegal boards advertising block paving in high up / hard to reach places on the Downs and illegal posters advertising music club events at the top of St. Michael's Hill. The clubs cannot be prosecuted as posters are put up by proxies acting for the clubs (but sanctions could be applied to clubs, including temporary closure).
- Jo Corke reported that the City Council had been very helpful providing bags for residents who gathered leaves that might block drains.
- It was reported later in the meeting that Bristol Waste Company are acquiring new equipment to clear graffiti including higher up graffiti.

Gloucester Road Enterprise and Trade

- Martin Hunt (GRE&T - Gloucester Road Enterprise & Trade) explained that Gloucester Road Traders had been active for over thirty years in promoting Gloucester Road and combating the difficulties faced by high streets. The Traders Group work with residents and the City Council to address issues such as parking and late night trading.
- The Group welcome the valuable work being done by the Street Scene group but recognise that it is also up to traders to work together to sweep the streets near their premises and to tackle litter and graffiti.
- Membership fees are modest but this means that there is only limited funding for special events. Events include the Gloucester Road Food Festival which is held each May and December in the middle part of Gloucester Road, making use of pavement frontages. It is hoped to extend the Festival to the bottom section of Gloucester Road, making use of the frontages on the Promenade.

Bishopston and St. Andrews Parking Group (BOSA)

- Mike Broussine reported that progress in addressing the traffic, parking and air quality problems in Bishopston and St. Andrews is slow as it is difficult to persuade the City Council to do anything because of the lack of resources and a seemingly low political priority.
- BOSA have recently developed a new website and are planning to conduct a survey of 4,000 households to gauge attitudes to traffic, parking and the possibility of resident parking.
- Mike thought that a city wide conference to consider the challenge of commuter parking and air quality in residential areas would be a good idea.
- Working with other areas facing similar problems was important.
- Comments following on from the BOSA presentation covered a range of related issues – the dangers posed by cars speeding in Egerton Road, Sommerville Road and other roads, the need for 20mph roundels and other traffic calming measures, community speed watch (but carries a danger of being threatened), initiatives to encourage children to walk to school (e.g. School Streets Bristol which closed roads close to schools at dropping off and picking up time), making requests to the police to carry out speed checks, and the good news that 20 mph speed limits are to remain in place following consultation.

Cotham and Redland Community Sponsorship Group

- The Group has been set up to welcome and support a refugee Syrian family settle in Bristol. The Group is fund raising and looking for volunteers to help the family when they arrive.
- The Group is holding a Syrian Night (food, music, storytelling) from 7.00 – 10.00 pm on Saturday, 22nd June, at Cotham Parish Church. Tickets (£30) available from www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/a-syrian-night-in-bristol-tickets-62219585455

Bishopston Society

- Kevin Molloy outlined a number of events being organised by the Society on 20th June (National Clean Air Day) including activities at Boston Tea Party on Nevil Road, a free bike breakfast and an early evening walk. For more details go to <https://bishopstonsociety.org.uk/cab>
- The Society are also holding an event on Sustainable Transport at 7.00 pm on Tuesday, 1st October at the Quaker Meeting House on Gloucester Road.

The Noise Pages

- Andrew Waller explained that the primary purpose of “The Noise Pages” is to collect information on student noise issues which is also reported to the University of Bristol. Areas where the problem is at its greatest include Waverley Road and Chandos Road area in Redland. Over 200 people are on the Noise Pages email circulation list.
- Andrew described a University initiative to address student noise – Operation Beech is an initiative for the university to pay for police who will be mounting extra patrols. The initiative will be trialled from Wednesday to Saturday this and next week.

2 Updates from Ward Councillors

Councillor Anthony Negus (Cotham)

- Councillor Negus thought that the obstruction caused by rubbish and bins left haphazardly on pavements by students and people living in house in multi-occupation (HMOs) was a greater problem than noise.
- Councillor Negus regretted that there seemed an unwillingness to use enforcement as a deterrent against those responsible for noise disturbance. Noise created by students was a particular issue in parts of Redland, less so in Kingsdown where there were more foreign and mature students.
- Commercially organised student parties that sometimes lasted all night were of special concern– an organisation called Bumble was known to be involved. Large numbers of students attending parties in houses not designed to cater for such numbers carries serious health and safety risks.
- With students not paying Council Tax and the business rates from commercial landlords not going directly to the City Council it can be argued that council tax payers are subsidising both students (12% of the population) and landlords.
- Police were successful with a recent drugs bust in Kingsdown and arrests were made.
- Alison Bromilow asked what was happening with regard to the new HMO licensing regime which now requires all HMOs with three or more people sharing facilities to be registered and inspected. A legal challenge delayed the process but lists are now being compiled. To date no inspections have been made.

Councillor Cleo Lake (Cotham)

- Councillor Lake reported that the Council is trying to mitigate the adverse impacts of university expansion and agreed with the comments made about students and landlords. The Council had more to do to get to tackle noise and rubbish problems. The University also had a part to play and it seemed unfair that as a charity it did not pay full business rates.
- The forementioned Syrian refugee initiative was an excellent example of what could be done to support refugees.

Councillor Eleanor Combley (Bishopston)

- Councillor Combley reported that waste and recycling collections were being missed on a regular basis: residents must report such incidences.
- Retention of the 20 mph speed limit was very welcome news.
- A south bound bus lane proposal on Muller Road is to go ahead. To the credit of Council officers the proposals were amended following public consultation.

- Wetherspoons are to submit an amended planning application for the premises at 386 Gloucester Road, making changes which they hope will make the proposal more acceptable to the local community.
- The City Council are about to consult on whether the alcohol licensing of premises should continue to have regard to a cumulative impact area assessment.

Councillor Fi Hance (Redland)

- Parking and traffic / speeding problems faced by many areas in Redland Ward are very much to the fore but the 20 mph consultation has taken up highway officers time and currently Highways Department does not have the resources to consider and act on these problems.
- Councillor Hance also reported that (i) there is a planning application on the Nailsea Electrics site at the bottom of Berkeley Road, and (ii) after years of persevering it seems that it is not after all possible to install an electric point on Redland Green.

3 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Update

- Councillor Negus was critical of the CIL decision making process with too much time spent allocating relatively small amounts of money.
- The shortlist of schemes for the CIL Area covering our wards was agreed in early June. Shortlisted applicants have been notified and invited to submit detailed worked bids.
- Information on the list of shortlisted schemes and why these schemes were chosen does not appear to be publicly accessible, raising questions about the transparency of the decision making process.

4 Other Matters

- Bristol City Council are conducting consultations on the future of a number of recreational facilities, including Ardagh Bowling Green.
- Ardagh Community Trust had agreed to take over management of the tennis courts under a Community Asset Transfer, but following a change of leadership the British Lawn Tennis Association will now not be providing funds for 6 of the courts as previously agreed with BCC so ACT is currently in discussions again about the extent of the CAT.