

1. Chairman Robin Kerr welcomed all to the meeting after tea and coffee had been served. Every one introduced themselves and asked to fill in the attendance form. Cllr Dine Romero Leader of BANES Council was introduced.

2. Dine Romero: Dine said that the key principle of the new council was to deal with the Climate Emergency. They had studied the CAZ proposals from the previous administration and generally kept them the same. She informed us of the Council's presentation about Low Traffic Neighbourhoods next week, which was now sold out. The objective was to get cars off the roads and to increase public transport including Wiltshire's initiative called The Wiltshire Whippet whereby buses would come into the Bath area calling into a string of car parks on the way, picking up car-drivers who had left vehicles there. She reminded the meeting that a staggering 48% of patients at the RUH come from Wiltshire*. The ban on lorries over 18 tonne crossing Cleveland Bridge starts in February. So far there is not real research into what difference this will make and where it will make the difference, it is expected that much will divert onto the A350 which will have increased traffic.

Moving on, she warned that she and members of the Council could not talk about the planning for the Rec as it might mean there were legal implications at a later stage. On Climate Change she pointed out that 60% carbon emissions in Bath is through housing so there must be energy saving measures, particularly in listed buildings.

Lastly she felt something must be done about Airbnb and student housing, as the council does not receive any Council Tax from either of these, perhaps a new class of use should be introduced by the Government to force owners to seek planning approval first. The Council is lobbying MP's and Ministers and is trying to work with the Universities. Perhaps the student accommodation could be built on University land**. The planning policy appears to be lagging behind what is happening.

[Post Meeting Note: This statement by Cllr Romero has inaccuracies, as, although B&NES does not receive any Council Tax from students, it does from Airbnb properties. However, Airbnb properties reduce the long term residential housing stock, which could be one reason for seeking a separate Use Class for them.]

Dine then took Questions and Answers

In answer to what was the wider traffic plan, she said that they hoped to remove all but essential vehicles from the centre of the City.

It was pointed out that unless there is a larger plan all that happens is that cars are displaced to outer areas, as is happening with the work at Queen Square. Perhaps traffic should be stopped from entering all parts of the City. Dine replied that much of the traffic originates within the City, thus making Park and Rides ineffective.

It was suggested that the increase in the number of PBSA (518 in the pipeline and 912 at planning application stage) was probably based on figures forecast by Knight Frank in support of the re-submission of an application to build 80 student bed spaces in the Locksbrook Road site. Knight France forecast a 28% rise in student numbers in five year. This forecast conflicted with the 2019 views of the Vice Chancellors of both Universities that student numbers had reached a plateau.

*Also known as 'Link & Ride'

** The 'Oxford Model' by which universities are required to 'consume own smoke' if they want to build extra teaching space

She was asked whether analysis was being carried out while the work on the Cleveland Bridge was undertaken, in the hope that this could justify a continuing ban on heavy vehicles once the work is done.

She was asked whether the council has actually done anything about the Climate Emergency Declaration of Intent. Dine said she would look into this before the Consultation is discussed on 13th February.

With respect to Climate/Nature emergency the river and canal serve two purposes, a linear park for nature and flowing to the sea removing pollution. The Canals and River Trust are keen to stop pollution of micro plastics and heavy metals going into the rivers. What did the Council intend to do to mitigate this. Dine replied that reducing waste like cigarette butts going down the drains would help.

It was pointed out that in Newbury the Environment Agency and Canals and River Trust were trying to stop a plastic pitch which would pollute the river.

It was noted that the Queens Square work was already affecting the primary School in Julian Road, so would this be monitored, as a classic case of displacement. How will the Council deal with this?

Finally there were questions about the Democratic Deficit - Bath City Forum had not succeeded and had tried to be both a Parish Council and an area forum. Dine said she was in discussion with NALC (National Association of Local Councils) who were talking with other Cities with Charter Trustees and wanted to remove these. When the Council knows the results they will try and find a solution to replace the BCF and resolve the problem of a lack of statutory lower tier – like a Parish Council. She will get back on this.

Dine left after asking whether she can come again, to cover subjects she had not addressed, and questions she had not fully answered. The Chairman thanked her for taking the trouble to come, and welcomed another visit.

3. Minutes: The minutes of the meeting of 7th November, were adopted, proposed by Jan Shepley and seconded by Tony Miles. The Secretary then read out the Apologies.

4. Chairman's Report. This had been circulated previously. The Chairman reported on the Nora meeting in London last week, it has been rather useless, as the Officials were disinclined to make any comment on Short Term Letting other than "Ministers have no appetite to regulate"! Consequently, he has drafted a very persuasive letter for the Chairman of NORA to send to the Minister, Esther MacVey, which will be copied to all; and posted on our website. Ireland already has policies in place, and Scotland has announced it will follow.

The Council's Financial Plans. The Chairman hoped that everyone had been to see the draft response to the consultation, which was sent out on Monday. Any comments please send them to him by Friday morning. Mark O'Sullivan was pleased with the response but he had seen a number of issues reflecting planning, subtleties in relation with Council and Town and County Planning Act discussions on development plan. ie Plans which are not part of a development plan have less chance of success. The Corporate Strategy is not a planning document, so there needs to be a document within the Council's Planning portfolio for it to have any weight. He was asked to submit any proposed changes by the end of the week.

Housing. The Chairman asked whether there were any comments on the new draft **Housing Paper** which had been prepared by Graham Feltham.

Police and Crime. The Chairman was amazed by how long it is taking for the people apprehended in the drugs bust 6 months ago, to come to court. Others in the room commended about cases of drugs raids which have come to court more quickly, for instance Rosewell Court. Apparently Sue Mountstevens the Police and Crime Commissioner has no power over the CPS, which is where much of the delay occurs.

Double Glazing. The Chairman noted that he and his wife are applying for double glazing in a listed house; it will be interesting to see what happens.

Climate Change Consultation. The Chairman asked whether anyone had any comments on the draft response to the Council's Climate change consultation.

Trams. There is to be a Trams conference on 8th February and Fobra will be represented by Jeremy Labram.

Volunteers. Finally the Chairman reminded everyone that he was retiring at the AGM on 26th May and that anyone interested in taking over from him should talk to him as only one more meeting before the AGM.

5. The Rec and New Stadium update. Ceris Humphreys said that there was not much to report. Apart from the fact that there are three new applications to extend the temporary consent which was granted for 4 years which is an extra 3 metres on the West Stand. This was granted nearly 4 years ago with Historic England agreeing on the grounds 'there are no problems as it is going to be removed'. Now, quite worrying that they are asking for permission to extend the 4 years.

The date for the High Court hearing as to the validity of the covenants is now February 6th, apparently all is not necessarily as it seemed!

Ian Herve was worried that the temporary applications should be monitored as temporary would become permanent. At the moment the East Stand has to be removed each and every summer, applications had been put in to change this but they were withdrawn.

6. Planning Report. This had been circulated previously. Nick Tobin picked up on what Dine Romero had said about an Historic Centre of Bath. There is no delineation of an historic centre, but there were other different city centre descriptions that were each defined for specific purposes and although the council planners were reluctant to delineate, say, a future city centre that perhaps included the enterprise area, they had agreed to review this matter during the evolution of the Local Plan. With respect to purpose built student accommodation (PBSAs) with so many both in the pipeline (518) and with planning applications being put in for a further 912, if there proved not to be the need for them all, which looks likely, can they be re-used for any other form of accommodation than Airbnb? Could they be used as co-workers units, or could they be built with the infrastructure like plumbing already there*

7. Transport Report: This had been circulated previously. In the absence of Patrick Rotheram the Chairman spoke on his behalf. The Low Traffic Neighbourhoods workshop on 28th Jan is now full but some returned tickets have become available. Rachael Hushon commented on the CAZ plan that the prediction of traffic displacement was a fudge, because the counting of vehicles is being done street by street and not added up as a total. If the total came to over 500 the work at Queen Square might not be able to be sanctioned, but 150 here and 150 there was disingenuous. Marlborough Buildings has many roads leading on to it – there should be key points like the Marlborough Tavern junction. Fobra had already stated that it was against measure that caused excessive displacement

* As was done in the London Olympic Village.

8. Charles Draper – Dark Skies.

Charles spoke as Chairman of the William Herschel Society, but Speaking as Chairman of Bath Starlit Skies Alliance, formed in 2017 from local environmentalists, astronomers, the Commission for Dark Skies, and other residents to encourage the reduction of light pollution in our part of the world. Why?

1 – Preserve the Wonder of the night sky. Key part of our natural surroundings.

2 – Health and Wellbeing. Natural day/night cycle of light has key link to our physical and mental health. Much evidence that artificial light disruptive in many ways, as highlighted in CMO England report for 2017.

3 – Increasingly clear that artificial light is damaging to wildlife, particularly eating, breeding and navigation of birds and insects, as you may have seen from press reports of scientific studies last November. Artificial light brings many benefits, but also potential harms. Needs to be right type of light, in the right place, at the right time. LED revolution has potential to be of real help, but can also be misused.

Our aims – best solutions for Bath and its surrounds. Welcome dark sky parks and reserves etc in rural areas - but needs something more tailored here.

What have we done? Two Conferences (2017 and 2019) involving wide range of local interest groups, authorities and politicians to broaden support and generate practical ideas.

Have produced half-hour long educational film for professionals in the built environment field – see it on our website, and on Youtube.

The film also includes our 5 Star External Lighting Guide, also summarised in the cards now being circulated.

We have also sought to build on useful good practice example of new Dorothy House car park lighting scheme in an environmentally sensitive area.

What are we doing now?

We are pressing BANES Council to do more. New LED Street lighting scheme mainly an improvement, and Bat Corridor Lighting guidance on the River another good step. Have discussion going with Councillor Sarah Warren, urging the Council to:

- tackle light pollution as wasted energy, and thus part of their climate change emergency plan, and additionally because of the wildlife impacts, which they are also trying to address
- offer more light pollution guidance on their website

We are also pressing the University of Bath to address their own light pollution issues. We have offered them a free survey provided by one of their alumni, who is the MD of the lighting consultancy that fixed Dorothy House. Recent Our Shared Future initiative should help.

BPT supportive, and Barry Gilbertson has offered a presentation to his WHS

Steering Group. Wera Hobhouse a strong supporter.

CPRE have long been key ally, and helpful with their Night Blight Map. They have now started their own Starry Skies campaign for the Avonside area. We are working with them on this and other initiatives.

What can you do?

- Encourage your members to look at the best practice guidance available and apply it themselves
- Identify any sources of bad light pollution in your neighbourhoods and work with neighbours to find solutions
- Support our efforts with the Council and University

We would also be delighted to have more join our Alliance, particularly if you have time and skills to offer on particular issues (eg technical advice, marketing, website management). If you can help, or would like to discuss any of the above, please contact me at charles.draper@starlitskies.org.uk.

Resources*

* Bath Starlit Skies Alliance - <http://starlitskies.org.uk/>

Commission for Dark Skies - <https://www.britastro.org/dark-skies/>

CPRE Avonside - <http://avonside.cprelocalgroups.org.uk/>

Central Government Light Pollution and Planning- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/lightpollution>

Insect Extinction - <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/nov/22/lightpollution-insect-apocalypse> CMO England Report 2017 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/chief-medicalofficer-annual-report-2017-health-impacts-of-all-pollution-what-do-we-know>

At the end of Charles's talk there was discussion. Beechen Cliff School has flood lights around its pitches and around new buildings; the Greenway RA is in discussions as it impinges on their lives. It was mentioned that part of Bath is in the Cotswolds Area of outstanding natural beauty and yet planning with respect to light is not good only guidance.

Wellow is a good place to see the Milky Way!

9. Winter Party. There is still time to buy a ticket or more for the Winter Party on 12th February at the VAG. Please do pass the invitation on to your RA members it is not just for Fobra members. Email fobrasecretary@gmail.com

10. AOB.

Tim Kaner from the University of Bath wished to make it clear that the University had nothing to do with the Knight Frank statement that student numbers would increase by 28% and he read out the following.

'The projected student numbers in figure 14 and table 9 illustrate very strong growth over the next five years, however, the model used to produce this projection is based on recent trends and does not take into account other limiting factors such university capacity and university student number growth plan'

He was keen that this was reflected in the minutes.

Ceris Humphreys reported that the 'Our Shared Future' meeting had prompted a public comment that certain groups were commonly under-represented at such meetings in Bath. She noted FoBRA had made big strides on inclusivity in recent years, but highlighted the need for us to continue to look for opportunities to be more inclusive and more representative.

Alisha Lobo said that FoBRA should encourage the young and look at underrepresented people in Bath. **Paul Roles** said that Rosewell Court RA was on Facebook and he did most of his communications that way.

John Rushton said that their RA has asked Tesco for electric charge points and they are now putting them in at the rear of the store.

It was felt that Dine has brushed off the tourist tax, the Council needs a strategy re tourists, it should not be left to Visit Bath who will have a new Chair shortly, the Destination Management Plan has not been reviewed since 2007. There is still no coach strategy.

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Future dates:

Meeting

10th March 2020 at Widcombe Junior School

AGM

26th May 2020 at Widcombe Junior School

Winter Reception 12th February at the Victoria Art Gallery

FoBRA Attendees – Meeting 21st January 2020

Barnes	Neil	Sion Hill and Summerhill Road RA	Treasurer/FoBRA Treasurer
Bellamy	Terry	Macaulay Prospect	Representative
Clark	Colin	Bathwick Hill	Representative
Coates	Louise	Camden RA	Representative
Crowsley	Paul	Sion Hill and Summerhill Road RA	Representative
Draper	Charles	BERA	Chairman
Du Bose	Van	St James's Square	Representative
Edwards	Nola	Foxhill RA	Chair
Feltham	Graham	LOPRA	Chairman
Herve	Ian	PERA	Representative
Humphreys	Ceris	PERA	Representative
Hushon	Rachael	Lansdown Crescent	Representative
Kaner	Tim	UoB	Representing Bernie Morley
Kerr	Robin	LCA	Chairman/FoBRA Chairman
Lobo	Alisha	University of Bath SU	Representative
Little	Stephen	Royal Crescent Society	Treasurer
Miles	Tony	UOPRA	Representative
O'Sullivan	Mark	Greenway Lane Area Resident Forum	Representative
Rowlandson	Kirstie	UOPRA	Secretary/FoBRA Secretary
Robertson	Megan	Bath Spa SU	Vice President
Roles	Paul	Rosewell Court	Chair
Rushton	John	Sydney Buildings HA	Representative
Sandford	Paul	UOPRA	Chairman
Scott	Debra	Camden RA	Representative
Shepley	Jan	Widcombe Association	Representative
Sinclair	Sylvia	St James's Square	Secretary
Tobin	Nick	ABCRA	Chairman/FoBRA Vice Chairman
Wrigley	Michael	Widcombe Association	Representative
Wright	Nola	Bathwick Estate	Observer

Observers

Barron	Alasdair	BERA	Observer
Beckett	Katina	Entry Hill	Observer
Edwards	Rowan	Snow Hill RA	Observer
Flinn	John	Bath Recreation Ltd	Observer/CEO
Heywood	Peter	Future Weston	Observer/Convenor
Kidd	N	Entry Hill	Observer
Price	Stella	Entry Hill	Observer
Wilson	Dominic	Entry Hill	Observer

Apologies

Baldwin	Malcolm	CARA	Representative
Davison	Morny	Catharine Place	Representative
Draeger	Justin	Cavendish Road	Chair
Franklin	Theresa	Cavendish Crescent	Representative
Greenwood	Caroline	PERA	Observer/Committee member
Hallam	Liz	LOPRA	Representative
Isherwood	Nicola	RCS	Chairman
Labram	Jeremy	Camden RA	Representative
Lockwood	Diana	Hensley and Egerton	Representative

The Federation of Bath Resident's Associations
Minutes of a meeting held at 6.30 on 21st January 2020 at Widcombe Junior School

Prof Morley	Bernie	University of Bath	Representative
Nesbitt-Larking	Jazz	Bath Spa SU	President
Pimental-Reid	Emilio	Cavendish Road	
Reynolds	Adam	Cycle Bath	
Rotheram	Patrick	Vineyard RA/FoBRA	Transport Lead
Richardson	Rob	Avondale and Osborne Roads	Chair