

Friends of the Avon New Cut (FrANC) Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 2 June 2006

Present

Tess Green (Chair), Stuart Lees, John Purkiss (minutes), Tracy Whale.

Apologies

Jo Young.

Matters arising from meeting held on 11 May.

1. Responsibilities of committee officers

The roles and responsibilities of the chair, vice-chair, secretary and treasurer were clarified. It was noted that we need to find a suitable person to audit our accounts at the end of the first year of operation. **ACTION: All** to seek a suitable person.

2. Constitution

The constitution had been adopted subject to the addition of a clause regarding insurance cover, should this be necessary. It was agreed that advice would be sought from the National Council for Voluntary Organisations or equivalent body.

John reported that he had checked with NCVO and the Charity Commission. He advised that should FrANC ever wish to take out insurance cover against liability for trustees acting in breach of trust, we could only do so if the constitution specifically allows for this type of insurance. He proposed that in addition to the four powers already identified, the Executive Committee of the group shall have the power to:

- Take out insurance policies to protect the Charity when required, including indemnity insurance for the Trustees.
- Do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the achievement of the objects.

The proposal was seconded by Tess and was agreed unanimously.

Future meetings

It was agreed to hold committee meetings every other month (ie. bi-monthly) and to make them open for FrANC members to attend if they wish to (although they cannot vote). Should issues arise that require a decision between meetings, they would be resolved by e-mail or phone if possible – or an extra meeting could be called.

Bank account

It was agreed to open a bank account at NatWest on North Street, and that the officers be approved signatories of cheques (2 to sign each cheque). **ACTION: Tracy** to obtain details and an application form.

Future activities

The attached list of activities put forward by people attending the meeting on 11 May was considered and priorities discussed.

It was felt that items 10 and 17 are ongoing activities. The top 5 remaining activities for the committee were identified as:

- Establish the Cut as a “Local Nature Reserve” – item 7 (which will include 6)
- Themed walks – item 5
- Clean-ups – item 1 (which will include 2)
- Newsletters – item 9
- Involve businesses – item 11.

The committee recognised that other FrANC members may give a higher priority to other activities, so it was agreed that we should seek to set up project groups focussed on:

- Arts (items 12, 13 & 15)
- Green energy (item 14)
- Access and traffic (items 3 & 4)
- Development (item 15).

Each project group should be co-ordinated by a committee member or other person approved by the committee, who would regularly report to the bi-monthly committee meetings. Activity / group co-coordinators were agreed as follows:

- Local nature reserve – John (with Ben & Matthew if they are willing)
- Themed walks – all
- Clean-ups – John initially
- Newsletter and e-mail group – John initially
- Businesses – all
- Arts – Stuart
- Green energy – Tess
- Access and traffic – volunteer needed
- Development – volunteer needed.

Litter

Charlie Bolton (local Councillor) had been offered some litter bins by the Council, to go on Coronation Road, and Kathy Derrick (Bristol Living Rivers Project) had been offered some deer netting to go on a trial stretch of railing alongside the Cut. This had sparked e-mail correspondence between several FrANC members and a suggestion that (a) ASDA be approached with a suggestion that we all work together to reduce and clear litter on the Cut and (b) a plastics recycling unit be placed near to Gaol Ferry Bridge. **ACTION:**

- **John** will e-mail to Charlie to confirm that we would like to see more litter bins on the Cut and are happy to take part in a site survey.
- **John** will write to ASDA on FrANC's behalf with copies to Councillors on both sides of the Cut, Southville Community Development Association, Bristol Living Rivers Project, and Bristol City Council's Clean & Green project.
- **Tess** will contact Charlie to say that we do not wish to see a plastics recycling unit on the Cut because, if the units at supermarkets are anything to go by, they will attract even more litter.

Next newsletter

It was agreed that the next newsletter would include items on the Heritage Heroes award and the Colliters Brook walk, a request for people to get involved in the proposed project groups, a request for help with producing and distributing the newsletter, and a reference to our pages on the Southville Centre website. **ACTION: John** to e-mail a draft to Tess, Tracy and Stuart before finalising it.

Any other business

Stuart reported that the developer of houses, shops and a hotel on the land between the Industrial Museum and the Old Gaol has proposed to get involved with an art installation / installations in the area. **ACTION: Stuart** to obtain more details.

Date of next meeting

Thursday 10 August, 7.30pm at the Southville Centre.

Ideas for future activities and events identified at FrANC meeting on 11/5/06

1. Continue with clean-ups. Identify large items of hard-to-reach rubbish that may need to be removed by people with specialist equipment (eg. the fire brigade or the South Bristol Caving Club). Remove graffiti.
2. Maintain contact with the Harbour Master and keep him informed.
3. Increase public access to the Cut by improving the Gaol Ferry Slipway and the sitting area adjacent to Vauxhall Bridge. Consider provision of wheelchair access to these areas. Caution was expressed that increasing public access could be detrimental to wildlife on the Cut.
4. Continue community action to reduce traffic speed on roads alongside the Cut. The support of City Councillors could be sought on both sides of the Cut.
5. Continue with themed walks – history, wildlife and trees were suggested.
6. Engage more groups who are likely to have an interest in the Cut and/or the Ashton Junction Wildlife Partnership, eg. Bristol Naturalists Society, Sustrans.
7. Work to establish the Cut as a recognised “Local Nature Reserve”.
8. Encourage the BBC (or other media company) to produce a wildlife documentary of the Cut.
9. Continue to produce newsletters and ensure that people living adjacent to the Cut are kept informed.
10. Communicate with supporters via a FrANC e-mail list.
11. Establish contact with businesses that operate alongside the Cut and involve them in FrANC activities. Involve the Spike Island arts project in arts activities.
12. Develop Jo’s proposed project of involving school children in collecting images of buildings and specific shapes visible along the Cut and putting them on ceramic tiles glazed with mud from the riverbanks.
13. Develop Matthew’s idea of producing some arts installations including a large, colourful ceramic cockerel to commemorate the famed Coronation Chicken.
14. Investigate ways in which green energy might be generated from the Cut, eg. by harnessing the tide or using the outflows from the tributaries.
15. Keep an eye on planning applications that may affect the Cut, and alert people to potential conflicts of interest.
16. Hold awareness raising events, eg. on bridges (especially when morning and evening commuters are crossing them), street parties, etc.
17. Obtain funding to carry out improvements and run events.