

Friends of the Avon New Cut (FrANC)

Minutes of meeting held at the Southville Centre on 24 July 2008

1. Present

Margaret Fay, Roy Gallop, Tess Green (Chair), Ed Hall, Chris Hanmer, Derek Hughes, Adrian Mantle, John Purkiss (minutes), Angie Tonge, Martha van der Lem, Tracy Whale, Sara Worth.

2. Apologies

Paul van der Lem, Jo Young.

3. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 June 2008 were agreed as correct.

4. Matters arising

- The AGM and wildflower walk on 10 July had gone well. A suggestion that another wildflower walk be held on the Coronation Road bank next year was welcomed.
- Tess reported that someone had offered to run a herb discovery walk next year. **Tess** to find out more details, including what time of year would be best for such a walk.
- John reported that Colin Knight (Head of Transport at the City Council) had confirmed that FrANC will be consulted on the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route along the Cut in September / October this year. Adrian reported on the campaign to Save the Malago from a possible BRT route along its route – see www.malago.org

5. Treasurer's report

Tracy reported that we have £1,050 in the bank. £24 had been spent on bugs leaflets.

6. Local Nature Reserve Campaign

See attached action plan for details of progress to date.

- John had sent an initial “case for support” and details of FrANC’s activities to Sally Oldfield (details available from John on request).
- Ed had completed his mapping of access and observation points – and also noted the presence of invasive weeds in a couple of places along the Cut (giant hogweed opposite ASDA and Japanese knotweed along the York Road riverbank).
- The Bugs Group had held 3 productive sessions and discovered some unusual species. Alison Leaf is also planning to observe mammals on the Cut. The Cut’s potential for wildlife study and research was noted.
- **Ed** offered to contact the developers of the building site on Cumberland Road to see if we could use the hoardings for a mural depicting features of the Cut. **Margaret** to make further enquiries if necessary.
- **John** will set up an online petition if we consider it is required. Promotion of the petition to be via a postcard handed to commuters and other members of the public.
- **Helen, Jo** and **John** are organising events for “Wildwaters” fortnight (see next item).

7. Wildwaters fortnight (October 4 - 19)

Helen, Jo and John proposed that we hold a riverbank clean-up session on Saturday 4 October (10am at Gaol Ferry Bridge) and organise a New Cut treasure hunt as part of a

Wildwaters event being held at the Create Centre on Sunday 12 October. These proposals were approved and will be included in the Wildwaters promotional material. **Jo** will produce the treasure hunt, which will also be suitable for use at future FrANC events and with schools. **Helen** is planning to use it with a local school during the fortnight. **John** to organise printing / photocopying of the treasure hunt and seek funding.

8. New Cut 200 celebrations

Sara reported on plans developed so far. The event will take place on Monday 4 May 2009, probably from 12 to 7. It will gradually move along Cumberland Road from Gaol Ferry Bridge to the Create Centre.

- **Helen** is checking the availability of the Create Centre (including the café).
- **Roy** and **Tess** are pursuing the production of a specially brewed beer.
- **Ed** will contact the open top bus company and the ferry company regarding publicity.
- **John** will investigate potential sources of funding for the event, and pursue the plans for a photographic exhibition (including historical views and information about the Cut).

The next planning meeting is on Thursday 4 September, 7.30pm at 88 Cumberland Road.

9. Riverscapes Project

Adrian reported on the targets included in the Riverscapes project plan, and noted that we are already carrying out the majority of those listed for FrANC. Two actions will need our attention over the coming 12 months:

- To publish a leaflet aimed at local people on an aspect of interest to them (eg, historical, wildlife, river activity). This could possibly be the Treasure Hunt.
- Contribute to the production of self-guided walking leaflets. This could possibly include an idea put forward by Derek to plot viewing points and particular historical / wildlife features on a map that people can carry with them when walking round the Cut.

10. Any other business

- John reported that he had written to Nigel English (Waste and Streetscene Enforcement Officer at the City Council) to enquire about his progress with pressurising ASDA and TES Tyres / Jet Garage to clear up the rubbish on the Cut originating from their businesses. No reply received yet.
- We had received an e-mail from a resident of St Anne's proposing that FrANC should expand its remit to include the maintenance and improvement of the river immediately upstream from the New Cut and change its name to "Friends of the Tidal Avon in Bristol" (FrTAB). It was agreed that this is outside our interests and beyond our resources, and that stretches of rivers are best maintained by people living local to those areas. **John** to write and suggest he sets up a local river support group, and that FrANC could provide information and advice as appropriate.
- Lack of time again prevented us from discussing last year's reports on improving access / seating on the Cut. This item will be moved to the top of our next agenda.

11. Date and place of next meetings

- New Cut 200 planning on Thursday 4 September, 7.30pm at 88 Cumberland Road.
- FrANC meeting on Thursday 25 September, 7.30pm at the Southville Centre.

**Avon New Cut Local Nature Reserve
Action plan to gain formal recognition – progress to 24 July 2008**

What	When	Who	Progress
Contact Avon Wildlife Trust to find out criteria for recognition	June	Martha + Paul	AWT suggested another contact – John to follow up
Observe and record bug and mammal life on the Cut	June	Ben Alison + others	In progress. Demonstrates the Cut's good potential for study / research
Map existing LNRs and show the Cut fills a gap	June	John	Done
List walks, events and clear-ups we've organised over the past few years	June	John	Done and sent to Sally Oldfield with a summary of our case for recognition
Map access points and good observation points	June / July	Ed	Done
Plan a clean-up event on 4 October and an awareness raising event on 12 October	June / July	John Helen Jo	Planning in hand. Helpers will be needed on 4 October and 12 October
Prepare and distribute a postcard to promote the Oct events and an online petition	Aug / Sep	John Jo Roy	Tracy will help to distribute. Need to decide if a petition is still required.
Set up an on-line petition	Sept	John	Need to decide if a petition is still required.
Produce a FrANC newsletter devoted entirely to the Avon New Cut LNR	August	John	
Press release re October events + the importance of the Cut. Send to The Pigeon, Evening Post, radio and TV	Sept	John Helen	Contact person / people will be needed
Mural of Cut history and wildlife on developer's hoardings?	?	?	Involve Bower Ashton and/or Spike Island? Douglas Gill? Ed to contact developer + Margaret too if necessary.
Obtain letters of support from other groups, local Councillors etc.	?	?	