

Friends of the Avon New Cut (FrANC)
Minutes of meeting held at the Southville Centre on 16th July 2009

1. Present

John Purkiss (Chair), Sara Worth, Angie Tonge, Martha van der Lem, Paul van der Lem, Margaret Fay, Roy Gallop, Adrian Mantle, Richard Clutterbuck, Stephen Wickham, Alison Leaf, Derek Hughes (minutes).

2. Apologies

Tess Green, Tracy Whale, Ben Barker, Ed Hall, Pat Fung, Chris Hanmer.

3. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 18th May 2009 were agreed as correct.

4. Matters arising

There were no matters arising from the last meeting.

5. Treasurer's report

In Tracy's absence, John reported that FrANC's current bank balance is unchanged from that stated at the AGM - £4,845. However, some of this money has already been allocated to fund to following:

- (1) Purchase and installation of a bench on the New Cut – this has received the support of the Docks Manager. There was some discussion concerning the location of the bench, as although it will be sited on the Chocolate Path it must be in a position where it will not impede cyclists and pedestrians. A site visit was therefore proposed, to be held on Monday 27th July starting at 7.30pm. John has sent off for a catalogue of benches and will bring this along to the site visit. FrANC will also be responsible for installing the bench (John knows someone who can do this) which will need approval from Bristol City Council. It was suggested that we should include a plaque on the bench commemorating the 200th anniversary of the completion of the New Cut, and also fund a litter bin to be located next to the bench. £900 has been allocated from our Lottery Grant to cover this, and the deadline for completion is the end of this year.
- (2) The deposit and balance for the Boat Trip on 6th August still has to be paid, and the accounts include £142.50 received from advance ticket sales.
- (3) The New Cut 200 funds allocated for printing and promotion have not been completely spent. It was agreed that any remaining funds should be used for reprinting the FrANC general leaflet.

6. Riverscapes Project

FrANC's contribution to the South Bristol Riverscapes Project was discussed in depth at the last meeting, which had included a presentation from Helen Adshead. John felt that not many decisions had been taken at this meeting. However, Adrian reported that he had reviewed FrANC's objectives with Helen and they had concluded that we have already completed many of the tasks that we had been set. These objectives, and the tasks completed by members of FrANC in order to meet them, are listed in Table 1.

Alison reported that she had completed a survey of the mammals that inhabit the New Cut, and would prepare a report on the results of the survey for FrANC as a contribution to Task 3.5.5.

Two other items concerning the Riverscapes Project were discussed:

- Another *Wild Waters* event is to be held at the CREATE Centre from 17th-18th October 2009. The organisers were disappointed at the attendance at last year's event and will try to advertise it better this year. It was decided that FrANC do not want to have a stand at this year's event but will provide some leaflets.
- Information about FrANC is required for the Riverscapes website. **John** offered to prepare some suitable material based on the contents of the various leaflets published by FrANC.

7. Bristol Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) System

This was discussed during the last meeting on 18th May, and a draft statement had been drawn up by Tess Green summarising FrANC's position regarding the West of England Partnership's BRT proposals. Stephen reported that as a member of the Civic Society he had presented a study of the impact of the BRT to English Heritage, who were particularly concerned about its potential impact on the Underfall Yard buildings adjacent to the New Cut. Following the last public consultation in November 2008, the BRT planners had claimed that English Heritage had been consulted about their proposals, though it was not clear to what extent these claims were true.

It was thought that another round of public consultation was due shortly, but those attending the meeting did not know whether this had actually begun. **Stephen** said that he would contact Bob Fowler (Group Manager Major Transport Projects, Bristol City Council) to find out the current status of the BRT project. **John** offered to check with **Tess** as to whether she has sent her draft statement on FrANC's position to the West of England Partnership.

Derek reported that he had investigated the West of England Partnership's website, which contains details of the bid that they have submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT) to fund the development of the "Ashton Vale to Temple Meads rapid transit route". The bid, or "Major Scheme Business Case", for the "Programme Entry" stage of the project was submitted in March 2009, and the website address is

www.westofengland.org/transport/rapid-transit/ashton-vale--temple-meads-bid-submission

The information displayed on the website home page is shown in Figure 1.

The website documentation includes engineering drawings showing scaled plan views of the proposed route along the New Cut, and also an "environmental assessment scoping report" which considers the effect of the BRT on the wildlife and habitats of the Cut, including Butterfly Junction. Hardcopies of selected parts of the bid documentation that are of interest to FrANC have been obtained from the website, but so far Derek has had insufficient time to study them thoroughly. **Margaret** and **Martha** offered to review the information that Derek has obtained so far. It was agreed that if the statement on FrANC's position regarding the BRT has not yet been released by **Tess** to the West of England Partnership then this should be delayed until this review has been completed.

8. Clean-ups

Margaret has prepared and delivered a flyer to households along Cumberland Road, asking them not to dump green waste along the banks of the New Cut. She had been unable to deliver this to the residents of the flats in Perrin's Court as these are inaccessible to the general public, but it was pointed out that the management team who are responsible for the upkeep of the flats have their own procedure for the disposal of green waste which is dumped in a trailer.

Progress in cleaning up the river bed has been delayed because Bristol City Council has been unable to appoint a contractor who meets their safety standards. The Council has also stated its intention to clean up the river banks adjacent to York Road, opposite

ASDA and by the Jet Garage on Coronation Road and **John** will chase them (yet again) to get this done.

John had also noticed three ASDA shopping trolleys under Gaol Ferry Bridge, one of which has been subsequently removed. If notified, the Council will arrange for any trolleys dumped in the Cut to be removed and will charge the cost of this to ASDA. Any sightings of errant trolleys should be reported to Bristol City Council Customer Services – the telephone number to ring is 0117 922 2100. Roy reported that he had seen ASDA employees clearing litter from the boundary of the store's car park, which should help to reduce the amount of litter blowing across the road and into the Cut.

John also noted that he has a supply of a special cleaning fluid for the removal of any graffiti from the FrANC notice boards that are located around the New Cut.

The dates for future FrANC clean-ups will be decided at the next FrANC Meeting.

9. Events

The following past and future FrANC events were discussed:

- *New Cut 200 Celebration on 4th May* – it was felt that overall this had been an unqualified success. As some of those present had not yet seen the DVD of this event produced by Richard, it was agreed that a special showing would be made at the next FrANC Meeting (**John** to organise DVD player, projector, etc.). John reported that the Museum of Bristol had requested a copy of the DVD and it was agreed that they will be offered one as a goodwill gesture.
- *Herb Walk following AGM on 2nd July* – it was agreed by those who had taken part that this had been a very informative event.
- *New Cut Trek on 26th July* – this year's trek will be led by Roy and will focus on the Cumberland Basin area. The event has been widely publicised in the FrANC section of the Southville Centre website, in FrANC newsletters and via e-mail.
- *Boat Trip up the New Cut on 6th August* – almost all the tickets for this event, which is part of our New Cut 200 celebrations, have been sold – John currently has three left. It was noted that there have been several such trips during the past few months, but run by a different company to the one which is running ours.

10. Any Other Business

- John reported that the day after the AGM he had heard that an oil slick had been noticed in the Cut, which had been reported to the Harbour Master. Martha and Paul confirmed that recently there have been other sightings of oil slicks, but that their origin is unknown. Those present were asked to be vigilant and to report any future sightings of oil slicks to Bristol City Council Customer Services – telephone 0117 922 2100.
- John also reported that he had received a letter from the prospective Conservative MP for Bristol South, who wished to meet FrANC. It was agreed that this would not be followed up, as FrANC is a politically neutral organisation and would not wish to appear to be associated with any one particular political party.

11. Date and place of next meetings

- New Cut Trek on Sunday 26th July - meet at the CREATE Centre for a 10.30am start.
- Site visit to agree location of new bench on Chocolate Path on Monday 27th July - meet at the junction of the Chocolate Path and Cumberland Road at 7.30pm.
- Boat Trip up the New Cut on Thursday 6th August – those who have tickets for this event to meet at the ss Great Britain car park at 6.00pm *prompt*.
- Next FrANC Meeting on Thursday 17th September, 7.30pm at the Southville Centre. This meeting will conclude with a showing of the New Cut 200 DVD.

Item No.	Objective	Tasks completed by FrANC to meet Objective
3.5.1	Run an awareness-raising event to discover more of the wildlife and history along a forgotten stretch in Bedminster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The FrANC New Cut 200 Celebrations held on 4th May 2009 are considered to be a significant “awareness-raising event”, attended by around 3,000 people. The distribution of the leaflets created to publicise this event included the residents of York Road and the Redcliffe flats. • The current FrANC Chair, John Purkiss, has continually lobbied Bristol City Council to clean up the Bedminster Bridge to Temple Meads stretch of the river. • A suggestion received 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, is considered to be outside FrANC’s interests and beyond our resources. FrANC are, however, prepared to provide information and advice to residents local to this area should they wish to create their own organisation with objectives similar to those of FrANC.
3.5.2	Organise two activities to support designation as a local nature reserve along the New Cut	Four activities have been completed – a Treasure Hunt, Bug Hunt, Bird Walk and Herb Walk.
3.5.3	Undertake at least 1 clear-up	Since the start of the Riverscapes Project, FrANC have completed several clean-ups of the New Cut.
3.5.4	Undertake at least 1 community walk	The New Cut Trek organised by FrANC is an annual event – the next one will be held on 26 th July 2009.
3.5.5	Monitor wildlife and produce a report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife data is available from the already-completed Bug Hunt and Bird Walk. • Wildlife information collated by FrANC is available to download from the Southville Centre website. • A Mammal Survey has been completed by Alison Leaf, which will be documented in a report for FrANC. • FrANC have encouraged the City Council to plant trees along areas of the river bank that have been cleared.
3.5.6	Publish a leaflet aimed at local people on an aspect of interest to them (e.g. historical, wildlife, river activity, ‘their river’)	The Treasure Hunt leaflet has already been produced and widely distributed – additional copies are required to replenish stocks.
3.5.7	Contribute to the production of audiotrails in (Task) 1	The Audiotrails Oral History training day run by Helen Adshead was attended by two members of FrANC (Richard Clutterbuck and Pat Fung). Further training requirements will depend upon what type of audio equipment is purchased in order to obtain verbal records from local people about how the different riverscape areas have changed over the years.
3.5.8	Contribute to production of self-guided walking leaflets in (Task)1	The Treasure Hunt leaflet that has already been produced is a “self-guided walking leaflet”.
3.5.9	Contribute to creating Malago place markers in (Task)1	Jo Young from FrANC is assisting Helen Adshead in the creation of information boards (place markers) that will mark the underground route of the Malago river.

Table 1 Status of Riverscapes Project Objectives for FrANC



West of England Partnership



westofengland.org » Transport » Rapid Transit

Ashton Vale- Temple Meads bid submission

Major scheme business case submission to Department for Transport (DfT)

In March 2009 the West of England Partnership submitted a major scheme business case submission (a 'bid') for funding for the Ashton Vale to Temple Meads rapid transit route.

The DfT's process for considering major schemes for funding is in three stages:

- **Programme Entry** – making an initial case for the scheme to DfT setting out what the scheme is, what the economic case for the scheme is and how the scheme is planned to be funded and delivered. The submission to DfT is formally referred to as a 'Major Scheme Business Case' or is known as a bid.
- **Conditional Approval** – is applied for once all the necessary statutory powers have been granted for a scheme. This involves obtaining planning permission and other legal consents (for example listed building consents) to build and operate the scheme. In the case of the Rapid Transit Scheme it is envisaged that a Transport and Works Act Order will be sought. This is an application made by the Local Authorities to the Secretary of State for Transport, which, if approved, results in an Act of Parliament authorising the scheme.
- **Final Approval** - is applied for once contracts have been agreed to build and operate a scheme and works on the ground are ready to commence.

Read the full major scheme business case.

These documents include preliminary plans used for the purpose of assessing the scheme for Programme Entry.

The next stage of work involves developing plans for the rapid transit scheme in detail, undertaking a full Environmental Impact Assessment and preparing the required legal documents for a Transport and Works Act Order.

Rapid transit - Ashton Vale to Temple Meads (2009)

Programme Entry

travel+

Figure 1 Information on West of England Partnership website home page