

Friends of the Avon New Cut (FrANC)
Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 7th October 2013

Attended by: Sara Worth (Chair), Roy Gallop (Vice-Chair), Derek Hughes (Secretary), Elizabeth Payze (Treasurer), Ed Hall and Chris Hanmer (Committee Members).

1. Welcome

Sara welcomed the meeting attendees.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received from Margaret Fay (Committee Member).

3. Minutes of the last Meeting

The minutes of the last FrANC Committee Meeting held on 4th March 2013 were accepted as read by those present.

4. Matters Arising

The following matters arising from the previous meeting were discussed:

- **Guided Walks:** since the last meeting, Chris and Sara have each been involved in assisting Guided Walks run by St. Mary Redcliffe Primary School. Both felt that they could offer suggestions as to how these walks for school children could be improved in future (e.g. a group of 60 children at a time is too many!). More recently, they were involved in jointly leading a Health Walk for NHS Bristol around Bathurst Basin and Redcliffe, which had been well received by those taking part. It was noted that two people from the Southville Centre had attended this walk. There was some discussion as to whether or not the Southville Centre were also planning to run guided walks in future, which would be in addition to those run by M-Shed and FrANC. Liz volunteered to contact the Southville Centre to find out if they are planning to do this.
- **Liaison with M-Shed:** the possibility of FrANC joining up with M-Shed to offer a joint Guided Walk service had also been discussed in previous meetings. Ed reported that there were currently only three guides, including himself, who were involved in running the M-Shed guided walks, and that number of attendees on a walk was extremely variable, ranging from 2 – 25 people. Ed now only leads the walk around the New Cut. It was agreed that for the foreseeable future it would be better for FrANC to provide an independent guided walk service, primarily for local schools.
- **Guided Walk Feedback Forms:** in Margaret's absence, Derek reported that she was no longer involved in collating feedback forms from the M-Shed walks, but that she was prepared to draft a similar form for use on FrANC Guided Walks. It was agreed that the Committee should take up Margaret's offer to do this, and that the feedback should comprise three simple questions, along the lines of (i) *How do you rate the Walk?*; (ii) *What was the main highlight of the Walk?*; and (iii) *What would you change about the Walk?*
- **Bristol99:** in support of the *Bristol99* Project, FrANC organised a successful Medicinal Herb Walk around the New Cut on 5th June, led by Iain Stewart, which was attended by 15 FrANC members (Derek has since completed a Wild City feedback form on the walk for Helen Adshead).

- **Travellers Camp on Coronation Road:** Ed said that he is in contact with Richard Hawkrige, the Bristol City Council (BCC) Acting Streetwise Co-ordinator, Neighbourhood Anti-Social Behaviour Team, who is responsible for dealing with this. Apparently the “camp” behind the wall near the *Harvest Energy* Service Station on Coronation Road is still being used, with two tarpaulin tents erected, despite ASBOs having been served on the vagrants. The ASBOs appear to have been ineffective, as timely evidence of trespass has to be provided to the police before they can be enforced, and some ASBOs are due to expire shortly. FrANC had been asked by Richard to help form a working party to remove part of the wall behind which the vagrants congregate, so that they are visible from Coronation Road. This suggestion has since been dismissed on health and safety grounds, and is unlikely to happen as there is no money to fund the £10,000 cost of removing the rubble. Ed has also referred the matter to Carol Donovan, who is the BCC officer responsible for combating graffiti and fly tipping, and has also reported instances of hedge clippings from two houses on Coronation Road being dumped on the riverbank. Chris has also reported graffiti on Vauxhall Bridge and Goal Ferry Bridge to BCC.
- **Clearance of rubbish between Bedminster Bridge and Bath Road Bridge:** the last FrANC meeting held on 17th April had been attended by Eric Dougall (Estate Services Officer, Harbour Office), who is responsible for the upkeep of the riverbanks along the New Cut. Although Eric had given a commitment at this meeting that the rubbish on the riverbank between Bedminster Bridge and Bath Road Bridge would be removed by May Gurney, this activity has now been rescheduled for February 2014 because much of the rubbish has since been concealed by growing plants and vegetation. Sara offered to contact Eric to confirm exactly when the May Gurney riverbank clean-up will occur, to co-ordinate any possible involvement by FrANC. The removal of buddleia from the stone walls bordering the route of the Harbour Railway adjacent to Cumberland Road is another matter that needs to be discussed with Eric.
- **Harbour Railway Maintenance:** since the last Committee Meeting, Sara, Derek and Ed had met with Chris Ecclestone, whose responsibilities include running the Harbour Railway and the upkeep of the railtrack. Chris had asked for assistance from FrANC to help with railway maintenance, including the control of vegetation along the railtrack (e.g. the rampant buddleia) that might otherwise affect operations. Sara offered to contact Chris to find out whether he still wants help from FrANC, and exactly what help is required.
- **FrANC appearance on Shepherd’s Way Radio Show:** this has not been pursued to date, mainly because of radio show’s preference of a live interview instead of a pre-recorded interview, and Derek and Sara’s unavailability on the dates offered because of work commitments.
- **Other FrANC Events:** in addition to the Medicinal Herb Walk, two other FrANC events have been successfully completed since the last meeting – a “Literary Lives – Real and Fictional” Walk on 7th July, led by Roy Gallop (with assistance from Mark Steeds, Marie Clifford and Pete Townsend) and a rescheduled Bat Detecting Evening on 18th September, led by Angus Tillotson.

Any new actions from the above matters arising have been added to the actions from the previous meeting, which are listed in Table 1. Actions that have been completed or been withdrawn since the last meeting are also noted in Table 1.

5. Memorial for John Purkiss

- It is intended to plant a hawthorne tree in memory of John Purkiss next to the FrANC bench at the start of the Chocolate Path adjacent to Cumberland Road.
- Ed has identified the species of hawthorne tree – *crataegus oxycantha plena* – that is considered to be the most suitable. For planting, we need to obtain a potted tree (easier to transplant), and which is about 4ft – 5ft in height. The tree should ideally be planted some time between November and February.
- Two possible sources for this particular tree were mentioned: (i) Landcare (Old Chapel Lane, Chipping Sodbury – Richard Clutterbuck has the name of a contact there) or (ii) Chew Valley Trees (contact is the owner, Dave Scarfe). Ed was actioned to source, select and purchase a suitable tree on behalf of FrANC.
- We want to plant the tree next to the FrANC bench, and FrANC will provide any necessary labour to clear the preferred site beforehand. Chris was actioned to contact Eric Dougall to notify him of our intentions, and to find out if we need any special permission from Eric or another BCC officer (e.g. Tree Warden) before the tree can be planted.
- A metal plaque is also needed, preferably one that is vandal-proof. Liz was actioned to contact Mo Mulligan, who installed the FrANC bench, to help source this. It was agreed that, if necessary, the plaque could be installed subsequent to the tree planting ceremony.
- It was agreed that the words on the plaque will be as follows:
In Memory of John Purkiss (1945 – 2012)
The first Friend of the Avon New Cut
- It was also agreed to schedule the tree planting ceremony on the same date as the AGM, and it will be performed once the AGM has finished. A tentative date for the AGM was set for the afternoon of Sunday 8th December, to be held at Spike Island Arts Centre on Cumberland Road. Exact timings will be confirmed in due course.
- Liz suggested that it would be prudent to install a rabbit guard around the base of the tree.
- Liz also reported that Jane Purkiss had advised that she and John's sons would not be present at the ceremony, but had requested that they be notified after the tree had been planted.

6. Wild City Project

6.1 Avon New Cut Wild City Budget – Final Spend

- Prior to the meeting, Derek had circulated a report from Helen Adshead (BCC Wild City Officer) summarising recent Wild City activities involving FrANC (guided walks with St. Mary Redcliffe Primary School, Boat Trip for U3A and CLASS, and work on CLASS-researched History Booklet). Although Chris had also established links with the history and geography departments of St. Mary Redcliffe Secondary School, there had been too much happening at the

school during the summer term for them to consider also taking on a New Cut Project.

- Helen had reported that currently there is a budget of £3,500 available, originally earmarked for a Wild City Riverside Festival, plus £1,350 for Boat Trips. As Wild City will finish at the end of December, any money not spent by then will be lost to the Project.
- The ideas proposed by Helen for spending the remaining budget were:
 - (i) another Interpretation Board next to Bath Road Bridge, which would complete the set along the New Cut. FrANC would be required to provide the historical material for the board, and Helen had suggested that this could be extracted from the research that CLASS have been doing, with Roy's involvement;
 - (ii) running the New Cut Project with another year group at St. Mary Primary School, which would involve FrANC members assisting with three further guided walks between now and the end of the year;
 - (iii) further Boat Trips, possibly for the primary school class doing the New Cut project, or Redcliffe Nursery (parents and children) or another "target group", such as the residents of a local care home (Claro Homes) or the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) centre near Bedminster Parade.
- The above suggestions were discussed by the Committee, but the general feeling was that the support that FrANC was expected to provide was too much at this late stage of the Wild City Project, particularly as most of this support would have to be provided by the Committee members themselves. Also, it was difficult to see how FrANC would benefit from connections with organisations such as the RNIB or Claro Homes, who look after adults with mental health issues.
- Consequently, the following alternative suggestions were made by the Committee, which were considered to be of more immediate practical benefit:
 - (a) refurbishment of the three original Interpretation Boards at Butterfly Junction, Vauxhall Bridge and Goal Ferry Bridge, all of which have either been damaged by the elements or marked by graffiti;
 - (b) either the repair of four of the Bat Detectors owned by BCC that are currently not working, or the purchase of additional Bat Detectors which would be held in FrANC's custody, but could be loaned to other groups/organisations to use as required;
 - (c) the purchase of two portable microphones for use by FrANC members when leading future guided walks;
 - (d) a donation to FrANC to cover the cost of future Riverbank Clean-ups, especially as it is likely that FrANC will be doing more of these in future. Within the next year or so, our Clean-up activities will be extended to include both sides of the river between Bedminster Bridge and Bath Road Bridge – the area of the New Cut of particular interest to the Wild City Project, and from which we would like to encourage more volunteers to come forward in future;
 - (e) the provision of litter bins on either side of Langdon Street Bridge (i.e. the "Banana Bridge") – there are currently no bins on either York Road or Clarence Road;
 - (f) the current status of the CLASS booklet on the history of Redcliffe and Bedminster is that, although the research material is available, publication by the end of this year is unlikely owing to the ill-health of

Roy's partner, Ken Griffiths, at Fiducia Press. Roy would very much like Ken to finish editing the book, once he is well enough to do so. As £500 of the Wild City budget had been allocated to partially cover the publication costs, Roy would like this money to be put aside so that it can be spent when needed. The booklet will be very much of interest to local schools, as it will cover the rapid development of the Redcliffe and Bedminster areas following the completion of the New Cut.

- Derek was actioned to write to Helen, to propose the above alternative suggestions for spending the remaining Wild City budget.

6.2 New Cut Management Plan

- Chris has been liaising with Ollie Roberts, the BCC officer who is responsible for producing the New Cut Management Plan. The most recent meeting was held on 7th June, and was attended by Chris, Derek, Ollie Roberts and Eric Dougall from the Harbour Office.
- Since this meeting, Chris has sent photos to Ollie for inclusion in the final draft of the Plan, and has written twice to him requesting an update on its status. The Plan is reported to be "90% finished", but we are yet to receive the final draft which we would like to review before it is published.
- The Committee were disappointed at the length of time – nearly three years – that it has taken BCC to produce a Management Plan that is still only "90% complete" – especially as it must be in place before the New Cut can be proposed as a candidate for Local Nature Reserve (LNR) status.
- Derek was actioned to comment on our dissatisfaction with progress on the publication of the Management Plan in the letter he will write to Helen Adshead about the Wild City budget.

7. Operational Matters

- **Autumn Newsletter** – Sara said that she planned to progress this – with the help of the Committee Members residing on the north side of the Cut – in a couple of weeks, when she was on holiday. The Newsletter would include the date of the AGM and the subsequent tree planting ceremony in memory of John Purkiss.

8. Treasurer's Report

- Liz reported that the FrANC accounts had been independently audited for the period from 1st June 2012 to 31st May 2013 by Andrew Yearsley, ACA, of Bishop Fleming Chartered Accountants. A copy of the accounts, which covers all transactions during the above period, is presented in Table 2.
- Total income amounted to £1335, most of which came from two items – a total of £850 received from donations following John Purkiss' funeral, and a grant of £461 received from the Bedminster Community Fund (via Ben Barker) on behalf of BCC. Total expenditure amounted to £691.31, the biggest items being the cost of insurance cover for FrANC activities (£196.76) and "volunteer expenses", i.e. for refreshments following riverbank clean-ups (£205.75). Another major expenditure item had been the one-off purchase of three extended-reach litter-pickers (£112.76).
- The balance brought forward from the previous financial year was £834.25, which gave a balance of £1477.94 to be carried forward at the end of

2012/2013. Excluding the £850 donation from John's funeral, however, expenditure would have exceeded income over the financial year by £206.31.

9. Events Planning 2013/2014

- Provisional dates were set for the following FrANC activities, to be held during the remainder of this year or in 2014:
 - **Butterfly Junction Maintenance** on Saturday 30th November 2013 – this will be scheduled slightly earlier than in previous years, as the AGM will now be held in early December. Derek was asked to check that Angus Tillotson will be available on this date to help cut the grass using the FrANC strimmer.
 - **FrANC AGM and Tree Planting Ceremony** in memory of John Purkiss on Sunday 8th December 2013
 - **South Riverbank Clean-up** on Saturday 25th January 2014
 - **North Riverbank Clean-up** on Saturday 22nd February 2014
 - **Clean-up of riverbank adjacent to ASDA Bedminster car park** on Saturday 22nd March 2014. Sara offered to write to ASDA to ask for their assistance during this Clean-up.

Other FrANC activities for next year will be discussed at the AGM. Roy suggested one such event could be a boat trip around the harbour on the *Matthew* as a tribute to Captain Woodes Rogers, who is apparently more renowned abroad for his exploits as a privateer than he is in his home city of Bristol.

10. FrANC Website

- Sara has enlisted the help of Chris Murray, a member of FrANC, in updating and maintaining the FrANC website. We are still very reliant on Chris in maintaining the website, however, but he has offered to run another tutorial session for Sara, Derek and Chris (Hanmer) to enable us to do this ourselves.
- Richard Clutterbuck has recently provided us with a memory stick containing digital photos taken of many FrANC events over the past few years, and it is planned to link these to the website.

11. Any Other Business

- No other matters were raised for discussion at the meeting.
- The new actions placed at this meeting have been added to those listed in Table 1.

12. Date of next meeting

- The next meeting will be the Annual General Meeting, to be held during the afternoon of **Sunday 8th December 2013** at Spike Island Arts Centre, start time TBA. This will be followed by the planting of the hawthorn tree in memory of John Purkiss.

Derek Hughes
Secretary, Friends of the Avon New Cut

Action No.	Description	Actioned by	Status
12-03-01	Distribute New Cut Management Plan, when available, to Committee Members.	Derek	<i>In Progress</i>
12-03-03	Provide names of school contacts for organising Guided Walks.	Helen	Withdrawn
12-03-04	Obtain copy of Guided Walk Feedback Form used by M-Shed (subject to their agreement).	Margaret	Withdrawn
12-03-11	Compile and publish FrANC Winter Newsletter 2013 (now updated to Spring Newsletter, to be worked on during 18 th – 22 nd March): Newsletter to be published before date of next FrANC Meeting	Derek, Sara, Margaret	Completed
12-03-12	Investigate Chestnut Fund and submit application for grant towards cost of items for Riverbank Clean-ups/Guided Walks.	Liz	Withdrawn
13-01-01	Suggest dates for Riverside Festival Boat Trips	Roy	Completed
13-02-01	Investigate cost of Commemorative Plaque and Metal Post for John Purkiss Memorial	Derek	Withdrawn
13-02-02	Propose suitable type of Hawthorn Bush for John Purkiss Memorial, where this can be purchased from and cost estimate	Ed	Completed
13-02-03	Inform Harbourmaster of our proposed Memorial for John and where it will be sited	Derek	Withdrawn
13-02-04	Review content of New Cut Management Plan (when available), provide feedback to Ollie Roberts (BCC) and Helen Adshead (Wild City)	Chris and Committee	Completed
13-02-05	Advise Chris that Roy is available to support her on Guided Walk requested by Bristol NHS (Health Walk) on 20 th June	Sara	Completed
13-02-06	Find out details of PA System used by BANES colleague	Sara	<i>In Progress</i>
13-02-07	Contact Lucy Gaze re. FrANC participation in Bristol.99 (suggest Medicinal Herb Survey), confirm what support is available	Derek	Completed
13-02-08	Contact St. Mary Redcliffe School to discuss participation in Bristol.99 via FrANC (Medicinal Herb Walk)	Chris	Completed
13-02-09	Contact Ian Stewart to find out if he is prepared to lead FrANC Herb Walk, and confirm date when he is available	Richard	Completed
13-02-10	Contact Angus Tillotson to confirm September date for Bat Detecting Walk	Derek	Completed
13-02-11	Meet BCC contact to discuss signage for shared cyclist/pedestrian access on Chocolate path, plus quality of surface	Ed	Completed
13-02-12	Supply electronic copies of FrANC photos downloaded onto memory stick	Richard	Completed
13-02-13	Compose letter to Mayor, BCC, etc. describing findings from Committee Walk between Bedminster and Bath Road Bridges	Sara, Ed	Withdrawn
13-02-14	Contact Niall Addicott re. FrANC appearance on <i>Shepherd's Way</i> (suggest interview on 22 nd March)	Derek, Sara	Completed
13-02-15	Contact Chris Ecclestone to discuss FrANC involvement in future of Harbour Railway	Sara	Completed
13-02-16	Use contacts at St. Mary Redcliffe School re. local Residents' Association on York Road (distribution of FrANC leaflets)	Chris	Completed

Table 1 **FrANC Committee Action List**

Action No.	Description	Actioned by	Status
13-03-01	Contact Southville Centre to find out if they are planning to run Guided Walks around the New Cut.	Liz	<i>New Action</i>
13-03-02	Draft feedback form for FrANC Guided Walks.	Margaret	<i>New Action</i>
13-03-03	Contact Eric Dougall to confirm when May Gurney Bedminster Bridge – Bath Road Bridge riverbank clean-up will occur, and co-ordinate any possible involvement by FrANC. Also discuss removal of buddleia from Harbour Railway stone walls.	Sara	<i>New Action</i>
13-03-04	Contact Chris Ecclestone to find out if/what FrANC assistance is required for Harbour Railway maintenance activities.	Sara	<i>New Action</i>
13-03-05	Source, select and purchase hawthorne tree (<i>cratageus oxycantha plena</i>) for John Purkiss Memorial Tree Planting Ceremony	Ed	<i>New Action</i>
13-03-06	Advise Eric Dougall of FrANC's intention to plant a hawthorne tree as a memorial to John Purkiss, where it will be sited, and find out if we need any special permission from Eric or another BCC officer (e.g. Tree Warden) before the tree can be planted.	Liz	<i>New Action</i>
13-03-07	Contact Mo Mulligan to help source metal memorial plaque for hawthorne tree.	Liz	<i>New Action</i>
13-03-08	Write to Helen Adshead with FrANC suggestions for final spend of Wild City Budget, plus FrANC views on current status of New Cut Management Plan.	Derek	<i>New Action</i>
13-03-09	Write and publish Autumn 2013 FrANC Newsletter	Sara, Chris, Margaret	<i>New Action</i>
13-03-10	Contact Angus Tillotson to find out if he is available for Butterfly Junction maintenance (strimming) on 30 th November 2013	Derek	<i>New Action</i>
13-03-11	Contact ASDA for assistance with Riverbank Clean-up opposite ASDA car park on 22 nd March 2014	Sara	<i>New Action</i>
13-03-12	Contact Chris Murray to arrange FrANC Website maintenance tutorial	Sara	<i>New Action</i>

Table 1 FrANC Committee Action List (Concluded)

Friends of the Avon New Cut

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st May 2013

Income

J Purkiss donations	£850.00
G B Partnership Funding	£461.00
Guided Walk	£24.00
Total Income	£1,335.00

Expenditure

Volunteer expenses	£205.75
Room & equipment hire	£84.00
FrANC website	£62.04
BCTV (Insurance)	£196.76
Equipment (Litter Pickers)	£112.76
Guided Walk (Mark Steed)	£30.00
Total Expenditure	£691.31

Balance brought forward £834.25

Balance carried forward **£1,477.94**

Independent Examiner's Report

I have examined the Group's accounts for the year ended 31st May 2013. In the course of my examination of the records provided, no matter came to my attention which gave me cause to believe that the Group has not kept proper and accurate accounting records.

Name: Andrew Yearsley, ACA

Address: 18 St Stephens Court, Undy, Caldicot NP26 3PR

Date:

