

Friends of the Avon New Cut (FrANC) Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 11th April 2016

Attended by: Sara Worth (Chair), Tess Green (Vice-Chair), Derek Hughes (Secretary) and Margaret Fay, Roy Gallop and Chris Hanmer (Committee Members).

1. Welcome

Sara welcomed the meeting attendees.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received from Richard Clutterbuck, Ed Hall and Angie Tonge (Committee Members) and Steve Fay (Treasurer).

3. Minutes of the last Meeting

The minutes of the last FrANC Committee Meeting held on 15th February 2016 were approved by those present.

4. Matters Arising

The matters arising from the previous meeting may be found in the list of Actions contained in the minutes of that meeting, the current status of which is summarised in Table 1. Additional comments concerning some of the actions are given below:

Action 15-04-05: Roy reported that the planning of his proposed “Coal Mining Industry Heritage Walk” was essentially complete. This will be a daytime, two-hour walk that will start at Dame Emily Park and end at The Ashville pub, with a break for refreshments in between. The walk will be advertised as a FrANC event (with the usual fee of £2 per person) but members of U3A will also be invited to attend. Roy said that the proposed date of the walk would be announced at John Penny’s “*Illustrated Talk on the History of Bristol Docks*” at the Southville Centre on Thursday 21st April.

Action 15-04-08: Roy has confirmed with Doveton Press that the proofs of the FrANC book entitled “*A Celebration of the Avon New Cut*” are still available for reprinting, and that with additional funding extra pages could be added to bring it up to date. It was suggested that this could be a project for next year.

Action 16-01-04: Roy advised that the date of Peter Andresen’s Geological Walk (from the Cumberland Basin to beneath the Clifton Suspension Bridge) would also be announced at John Penny’s talk on 21st April. Derek noted that Peter’s new email address is peter@andresen.me.uk (*Post-meeting note: the date of Peter’s Geological Walk will be Thursday 16th June*).

Action 16-01-05: the FrANC General Meeting had been held as planned on Sunday 3rd April but the turnout had been a little disappointing, with Committee Members outnumbering ordinary FrANC members by 7:4.

Action 16-01-06: Sara reported that FrANC’s application for £1,000 of surplus 2015 Local Nature Reserve (LNR) funding to be used to produce a revamped FrANC website had been successful (see item 6 below).

Action 16-01-07: Derek reported that he had written to Paula Spiers to obtain her views on the setting up of an LNR stall at the Bristol Festival of Nature event on 11th/12th June and was awaiting a reply.

5. Progress on Tasks relating to HLF Project

- **York Road Riverbank Clean-up:** Sara reported that, since the last meeting, five FrANC Clean-up sessions had been completed along the York Road riverbank between 29th February and 5th April, with a sixth session planned for Thursday 14th April. It had been necessary to organise these sessions on weekdays instead of weekends, owing to Sara and Derek's availability, so the numbers of FrANC volunteers attending had been fewer than would normally be seen during Saturday morning Clean-ups. After starting from Bedminster Bridge, progress had been slow but steady and it was estimated that perhaps two more Clean-ups would be necessary in order to reach the Banana Bridge. Sara and Derek were actioned to organise additional Clean-up sessions in the coming weeks (with at least one being on a Saturday), the objective being to ultimately reach Bath Bridge.

Sara noted that *Volunteering Matters* (formerly known as Community Service Volunteers or CSV) had finished cutting back the trees and vegetation, though some parts of the edge of the pavement bordering the riverbank were still overgrown with ivy. Also, although Joe McKenna, the ParkWork coordinator, had offered the services of his volunteers to help with the rubbish clearance, attempts by Sara to contact him to fix a date had been unsuccessful. A member of the University of the West of England (UWE) Student Union had also expressed interest in helping, but finding a suitable date when sufficient numbers of the student volunteers would be available was also proving to be difficult.

Sara also mentioned that during one of the York Road Clean-ups she had been approached by Sarah Allen from Avon Fire and Rescue, who had offered to explore the feasibility of using the removal debris from the New Cut riverbed as a training exercise for firefighters. Sara said that she had also contacted Chris Whale from a local Caving Club (at Tess' suggestion) that was involved in the removal of rubbish from the riverbed some years ago. Sara noted that efforts to engage *Highline Access* in this task – the company recommended by Eric Dougall from the Council's Markets and Estate Office – had proved to be fruitless. Sara added that she had set up a meeting with Eric on 20th April to discuss the issue of riverbed debris clearance and other matters, and invited other Committee Members to attend if interested.

- **Letters to Local Businesses:** Chris reported the following responses to date to the letters sent out to local businesses to raise awareness of FrANC and the various tasks being undertaken under the terms of the HLF grant:
 - *Fowlers Motorcycles* – a letter has been received from Stephanie Fowler containing a cheque for £60, to be used to cover the cost of tea and cake for volunteers after a Clean-up. In the same letter, Stephanie also offered a £50 subsidy towards the cost of post-Clean-up refreshments (tea/coffee and sandwich) at Harry's Café. It was agreed that these generous contributions from Fowlers will be acknowledged in the next FrANC Newsletter;
 - *St Mary Redcliffe & Temple School* – the school has offered to provide a room, free of charge, in which to hold the planned Celebration Event in September, and are keen to be involved in some way;
 - *City & Country* (the company currently redeveloping Bristol General Hospital) – awaiting a response;

- No response received to date from *Bart Ingredients Company Ltd.* and *Robins & Day* (Peugot Dealership).
 - The *SB Automotive Academy* (located in Princess Street, Bedminster) was also mentioned as a community-minded local enterprise that may be worth contacting.
- **Benches:** Sara reported that she was still awaiting feedback from the relevant Neighbourhood Partnerships about the preferred locations for the two new benches that are to be installed between Bedminster Bridge and Bath Bridge. Derek had also produced a voting slip which can be used by people to select which two of the four possible locations they prefer – and the reasons why. These voting slips were distributed at the FrANC General Meeting on 3rd April, but unfortunately because of the low attendance only 22 votes (from 11 slips) were returned. The voting slips will also be circulated amongst those attending John Penny’s talk at the Southville Centre on 21st April.

Sara said that she was still awaiting pricing details for the particular style of bench favoured by the Council (the bench has to have a raised arm in the middle to deter rough sleepers), but she felt that the budget available from the HLF grant should still be sufficient to fund the cost of two benches.

Sara added that she was also investigating the possibility of having litter bins installed at either end of the Banana Bridge. Tess said that, as far as she was aware, each year Councillors are allowed to request two litter bins for installation somewhere within their wards. It was therefore suggested that Sara should contact the relevant Councillors (e.g. Charlie Bolton and Stephen Pearce in Southville ward) to find out if this is still the case.
 - **Leaflet Design:** after some discussion, it was agreed that a separate leaflet describing a self-guided walk around the New Cut will be designed, instead of incorporating this into an existing FrANC leaflet. Attempting to combine both leaflets was considered to be impracticable because it would entail severely condensing the amount of information contained in the existing FrANC leaflet. The design of the new leaflet would also be consistent with the appearance of the new FrANC website (see item 6 below). It was suggested that a “Leaflet Design Workshop” should be organised in due course.
 - **Interpretation Boards:** Derek reported that the content of the two Interpretation Boards to be installed at Bathurst Basin and Bath Bridge had been agreed at the second (and final) workshop held on 24th February, which had been attended by Roy, Tess and Richard. The projected cost of the Bathurst Basin board had increased, however, because of the need to pay a total of £328 in licence fees to Bridgeman Images and the Reece Winstone Archive to cover the use of the proposed artwork – a Samuel Jackson painting and a black and white photograph of the lock gates. These additional costs could be partially recovered, however, by opting not to have a spare copy of each Interpretation Board printed, in which case the total cost should be only slightly above the £4,400 budget.
 - **Celebration Event:** as mentioned previously, it is intended to hold this in September after the staff and students of St Mary Redcliffe & Temple School return from their summer holiday. It was suggested that perhaps a Painting or Photography competition could be held, the subject being the New Cut and its wildlife; however, in order to engage students, this would have to be organised in advance of the summer holidays (N.B. depending on their ages,

some students do not attend school much after Easter, except to take exams).

Two names were mentioned – Helen Adshead and Ruth Worsley – as people who FrANC have been involved with in the past in running school projects concerning the New Cut. Sara offered to contact Helen and Ruth to find out if they were currently involved in any such projects that could be linked with FrANC's HLF Celebration Event.

6. New Website

As noted in item 4 above (Action 16-01-06), we were successful in obtaining a grant of £1,000 of LNR funding to cover the development of a new FrANC Website. Sara said that the next step will be for us to meet with Sam Thomson (Vice-Chair of the Bristol Parks Forum) who will be responsible for finding us a UWE intern who will carry out the Website design.

With regard to the content of the new Website, the following items were briefly discussed:

- the photos that are currently accessible on the existing website need to be sorted out and we need to decide which ones to keep;
- instead of having photos accessible via a *Flickr* account, as is currently the case, it would be better to have them stored within the Website itself;
- as well as containing an archive of photos and videos (e.g. video of 2009 New Cut Celebration), the Website should also include a repository of FrANC documentation (e.g. Constitution; Minutes of AGMs, General Meetings and Committee Meetings; Newsletters; Management Plan) that is accessible by all FrANC members;
- the Website should contain documents that can be downloaded and printed by the FrANC membership (e.g. FrANC Treasure Hunt, Information Leaflets);
- the Website design should enable details of forthcoming events (e.g. Walks, Talks, meeting dates) to be publicised and easily loaded onto it by designated Committee Members;
- the Website should contain a section describing the history of the New Cut.

An action was placed on each Committee Member to consider what content, features and functionality they would like see incorporated into the design of the new Website.

7. Any Other Business

- Roy said that he and Mark Steeds were due to meet with the Underfall Yard Trust shortly to discuss a possible link-up with the Long John Silver Trail. It was noted that the new Underfall Yard Visitor Centre is now open, as is the *Pickle* café. The possibility of involving the Underfall Yard in the HLF Celebration Event was mentioned (though geographically it is located at the opposite end of the New Cut to St Mary Redcliffe & Temple School).
- Roy also announced that the “Wonky House” will be open during the Southville Arts Trail on 14th/15th May, where publicity material for FrANC, Patchwork and the Long John Silver Trust would be on display.

8. Date of next meeting

- The next Committee Meeting will be held on **Tuesday 7th June** at 88 Cumberland Road, with Committee Members asked to arrive at 7:15pm in time for a 7:30pm start. No further Committee Meeting dates were scheduled at the meeting.
- Note that Table 1 includes any new actions raised at this 11th April meeting.

Derek Hughes
Secretary, Friends of the Avon New Cut

Action No.	Description	Actioned by	Status
15-04-05	Develop proposed Guided Walk around Bedminster/Southville (Coal Mining Industry Heritage)	Roy	<i>In Progress</i>
15-04-06	Draft preliminary designs for new Interpretation Boards at Bathurst Basin and Bath Road Bridge	Derek, Roy, Tess, Ed, Richard	<i>Completed</i>
15-04-08	Contact Doveton Press to find out if the original proofs of the book "A Celebration of the Avon New Cut" are available	Roy	<i>Completed</i>
16-01-01	Write article on BCC Health & Safety Training Course for next FrANC Newsletter	Tess	<i>Completed</i>
16-01-02	Contact John Penny to request further details concerning title and content of Illustrated Talk to be held on 21 st April	Richard	<i>Completed</i>
16-01-03	Contact <i>The Pigeon</i> to ask whether any of their readers have movie footage (e.g. home movies) that feature the New Cut	Ed	<i>Completed</i>
16-01-04	Confirm date of Geology Walk with Peter Andresen	Roy	<i>In Progress</i>
16-01-05	Book upstairs meeting room in <i>Nova Scotia</i> for FrANC General Meeting (preferred date/time: Sunday 13 th March at 2:00pm)	Sara, Derek	<i>Completed</i>
16-01-06	Submit an application for £1,000 of LNR funding to be used to build a new FrANC website	Sara	<i>Completed</i>
16-01-07	Contact Paula Spiers to obtain her views on setting up an LNR stall at the Bristol Festival of Nature event on 11 th /12 th June	Derek	<i>In Progress</i>
16-01-08	Compile FrANC Newsletter, to include details of General Meeting on 3 rd April and other events planned for 2016	Sara, Chris, Margaret	<i>Completed</i>
16-02-01	Organise additional Clean-up sessions to clear entire length of York Road Riverbank of rubbish	Sara, Derek	<i>New Action</i>
16-02-02	Acknowledge York Road Riverbank Clean-up refreshment contributions by Fowlers Motorcycles in next Newsletter	Sara, Derek	<i>New Action</i>
16-02-03	Contact local Councillors to find out if they are entitled to request the installation of two litter bins in their wards each year	Sara	<i>New Action</i>
16-02-04	Contact Helen Adshead / Ruth Worsley to find out if they are involved with any schools projects that could be linked with planned HLF Celebration Event in September	Sara	<i>New Action</i>
16-02-05	Consider content, features and functionality to be incorporated into design of new FrANC Website	Committee	<i>New Action</i>

Table 1 **FrANC Committee Action List**