

Friends of the Avon New Cut (FrANC)
Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 10th April 2017

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

1. Welcome

Sara welcomed those present to the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received from Ed Hall (Committee Member) and Steve Fay (Treasurer).

3. Minutes of the last Meeting

The minutes of the last FrANC Committee Meeting held on 23rd January 2017 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. Progress on *Actions 16-04-02* and *16-04-04* is reported in item 6 below. Additional comments were provided concerning the remaining actions, which are summarised below:

Action 16-03-11: no progress since last meeting – Derek will write to the supplier of John Purkiss' plaque, Brunel Engraving Company, to see if the black lettering on it can be renewed. A recent photograph has been taken of the plaque which shows that the back lettering has virtually disappeared due to weathering.

Action 16-04-06: Roy reported that he had spoken with Elaine Beckett of the 255th Bristol Channel Sea Scouts during the riverbank clean-up held on 11th March. At present the scouts' activities are mainly concerned with raising funds to rebuild their scout hut beneath Coronation Road, which FrANC cannot help with directly. However, three of the scout leaders are now on the FrANC contact list and will be kept informed about our future activities.

Action 17-01-01: Roy reported that, to date, he had been unable to locate any individual photos of the "Boat Race" held to mark the anniversary of the start of the digging of the New Cut. However, he had found a laminated A2-size poster entitled "Celebrating Gaol Ferry Bridge", dated October 2004, which featured many photos of paper boats being launched from the bridge. Roy also provided another similar poster, dated June 2004, called "Crossing Vauxhall Bridge" – another event marking the start of the New Cut excavations in which local people were photographed crossing the bridge in as many different ways possible. Both of these posters have been added to Sara and Derek's FrANC archive.

Action 17-01-02: no progress since last meeting. Derek said that details of Ed's "Exploring the Cumberland Basin" Walk would be added to the FrANC website shortly, and also circulated via email to the FrANC membership.

Action 17-01-03: no progress since last meeting re. "Origin of River Frome" Walk.

Action 17-01-04: Tess reported that no Greater Bedminster Section 106 funding would now be released until September 2017. Also, although 15% of this funding was supposed to be allocated to “local partnerships” it was unclear what would happen following the Mayor’s decision to abolish Neighbourhood Partnerships.

Action 17-01-05: Sara reported that she had written to Bob Walton and had received a reply, thanking her for FrANC’s support for the bid for Avon Quay House to be used as a “...creative / learning / well-being resource for the community”.

5. Review of “Responsibilities of Committee Members/Group Leaders for Clean-ups”

A procedure entitled “*Responsibilities of Committee Members and Group Leaders for Clean-ups*” was drafted following discussions during the previous Committee Meeting and is shown in Attachment 1. Following this meeting, the procedure was tried out at the two Clean-ups held on 11th February and 11th March and was considered to be an improvement. Consequently, the Committee Members present agreed that this way of working should be adopted for all future FrANC Clean-ups.

Derek was concerned that it is not always possible to ensure that all volunteers receive a proper Health & Safety (H&S) briefing beforehand, given the large number who turn up and the fact that some invariably do so after the scheduled start time. It was proposed that as all volunteers would now be assigned to a Group Leader then it should be the Group Leader’s responsibility to ensure that the volunteers under his/her direction were reminded of any particular hazards identified during the H&S briefing when on-site.

Chris suggested that we should also encourage volunteers to work in pairs, and that if a particularly bad area of litter is encountered then more volunteers should be assigned to tackle it, to avoid people becoming disheartened.

It was also recognised that there is a social element to FrANC Clean-ups, and that we should accept that some volunteers enjoy chatting as well as litter-picking!

It was also noted that, although Phil Cass is named in Attachment 1 as having completed the “Health & Safety Training for Bristol City Council (BCC) Community Groups” course, he has had a shoulder problem for some time and is therefore currently unable to take on the role of Group Leader.

6. Status of Events Planned for 2017

6.1 York Road Riverbank Clean-up on 22nd April

Following the three Clean-ups completed so far this year (on 14th January, 11th February and 11th March), this additional Saturday morning Clean-up will tackle the riverbank between the Banana Bridge and Bath Bridge. Committee Members were asked to meet at the Banana Bridge at 9:50am, and it is intended to organise refreshments afterwards at Harry’s Café. Derek said he would circulate details to the FrANC membership via email and the FrANC Website.

6.2 Walks/Talks

- **“Exploring the Cumberland Basin” Walk (Ed Hall)** – this is FrANC’s contribution to this year’s *Bristol Walk Fest* and will be led by Ed Hall. Ed is intending to run this walk on four dates – Thursday 4th May (10:15am),

Wednesday 10th May (1:30pm), Wednesday 17th May (6:15pm) and Thursday 25th May (1:30pm). Preferably, two FrANC Committee Members should accompany Ed on each walk to act as stewards, who would also be responsible for completing signing-in sheets, collecting money (£2 per head) and distributing FrANC leaflets. Sara asked all Committee members to notify her of their availability to support Ed on the above dates. Two FrANC high-visibility jackets will be provided for the stewards to wear.

- **Tour of Thomas Ware & Sons Tannery** – in response to *Action 16-04-04*, Chris reported that she had made further contact with the tannery's Sales Manager, Barry Knight, who will also lead the tour. The tour must be held on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday evening because of Barry's availability, and he has requested by way of a fee that a donation should be made to a charity that the tannery supports in India. It was agreed that, to cover this, the £2 per head that is normally levied for such FrANC events will instead be given to the tannery. Chris was asked to propose two possible dates for the tour to Barry – either Tuesday 4th July or Thursday 6th July – and to agree a start time (***Post-Meeting Note: subsequent to the meeting, Tuesday 4th July was agreed as the date for the tour.***)
- **Plants and Trees Walk around the New Cut** – Richard Bland (Bristol Naturalists' Society) will lead this walk on Sunday 25th June. Chris, Roy and Tess said that unfortunately they expected to be away during that weekend.
- **Tributaries of the New Cut Walk** – Stephen Mason has agreed to lead this walk, which is provisionally scheduled for some time during the third week of October. Sara said that further meetings will be held with Stephen in due course to agree the content of the walk, which is expected to primarily follow the course of the Malago river.
- **Bedminster/Southville Colliery Site Walk** – in response to *Action 16-04-02* Roy reported that, whereas it had been intended to tie in this walk with the *acta Community Theatre* show entitled "*Blood on the Coal*", it appeared that funding for this stage production is now unlikely to materialise. Roy still proposed, however, to go ahead with the Colliery Site Walk in October. As well as the FrANC membership, Roy would like to invite members of U3A (University of the Third Age) and CLASS (Continued Learning at South Street) to attend this daytime walk. (***Post-Meeting Note: a date in early October would be preferable to avoid clashing with the proposed "Tributaries of the New Cut" Walk.***)
- **Origin of River Frome Walk** – Derek reported that he had not yet contacted the Environment Agency's Melvin Wood, the walk leader, to find out more about the walk content, but would do so before the next meeting.

7. FrANC Website – Photo Review

As was noted during the previous Committee Meeting, the photos on the new Website are currently essentially those that were displayed on the old Website and should be brought up to date (e.g. by replacing some of the old litter-picking photos with more recent ones showing volunteers wearing the new FrANC high-visibility (hi-viz) vests).

It was agreed that Sara, Chris, Richard and Derek will meet on Wednesday 10th May at 3:00pm to conduct a "Photo Review" that will start the process of updating the photographic content of the Website.

8. Increase in Rough Sleepers on New Cut Riverbank

Sara noted that recently there had been an increase in the number of rough sleepers along the New Cut riverbank, as evidenced by the proliferation of tents appearing in God's Garden (which is privately-owned).

Sara has written to Richard Hawkrige (BCC Streetwise Co-ordinator) whose "intention is to try and obtain an injunction that would apply to individuals and also to "Persons Unknown" and cover the whole of Avon New Cut". However, there has been no progress by Richard since he first proposed this course of action in February this year. Sara reported that in her last correspondence with Richard on 6th April she had expressed her disappointment in the lack of progress made on this matter, which was first raised with him in November last year.

9. Any Other Business

- **Removal of Rubbish from New Cut Riverbed** – Sara reported that she had met with Deputy Harbour Master Tony Moore to survey the rubbish on the New Cut riverbed between Gaol Ferry Bridge and Vauxhall Bridge. Tony had observed that it may be difficult to remove rubbish at low tide because of the risk of damaging the keel of the boat he is proposing to use on the exposed rocky riverbed, but it may be possible to retrieve some items when the tide is higher. Alternatively, we could approach Chris Whale from a local Caving Club who has also offered to help.
- **Deadline for publication of revised FrANC Leaflet** – our "Friends of the Avon New Cut" leaflet was revised last year but has not yet been published. Derek was asked to ensure that the updated leaflet is available by the end of April for distribution to those who will attend the four *Bristol Walk Fest* walks in May. The cost of printing the leaflet will be covered by money left over from last year's Heritage Lottery Fund grant.
- **Contributions to next FrANC Newsletter** – the publication date for the next edition of our Newsletter is provisionally the end of April (all contributions welcome!). It was suggested that this could include a contact number for people to ring if they are concerned about rough sleepers on the New Cut.
- **Questionnaire for Parks Groups** – Bristol Parks are currently developing a *Volunteering & Community Engagement Strategy* and Becky Belfin, who is now a Parks Development Officer, is seeking feedback via two questionnaires – one for Parks Groups, and the other for Parks Volunteers. Sara offered to complete the "Parks Groups" questionnaire on behalf of FrANC.
- **Zipper Bags for big boards** – we have a number of A1-sized display boards that trace the history of the New Cut and FrANC (as were used during last year's *FrANC Fest* event). Sara suggested that we purchase one or more large zipper bags in order to protect this artwork.

10. Date of the next Committee Meeting

- The date of the next FrANC Committee Meeting is **Tuesday 11th July 2017**, to be held at 88 Cumberland Road starting at 7:30pm.
- Note that Table 1 includes any new actions raised at this 10th April meeting.

Derek Hughes
Secretary, Friends of the Avon New Cut

Responsibilities of Committee Members/Group Leaders for Clean-ups

(1) One Week before Clean-up

- All Committee Members to advise Sara of their availability at least one week before date of Clean-up.
- Based on availability, up to four Committee Members to be appointed by Sara as Group Leaders to lead Clean-up teams. Eligible Committee Members are those who have completed Bristol City Council's "Health & Safety Training for BCC Community Groups" course (i.e. currently Sara, Derek, Chris, Ed, Richard and Tess). Phil Cass, a member of FrANC, has also completed this course.

(2) On day of Clean-up

- As well as Sara and Derek, at least one Committee Member to volunteer to help transport Clean-up equipment (wheelie bin, litter-pickers, hoops, gloves, hi-viz vests, rubbish bags and recycling bags, sharps bottles) to work site (minimum of 3 people needed).
- Four Committee Members to be present at work site 10 minutes before start of Clean-up, with responsibility for the following tasks to be split amongst them:
 - Making sure volunteers SIGN IN properly on Attendance Sheet and receive health & safety briefing. Volunteers also to be made aware that they must SIGN OUT at the end of the Clean-up, or if they leave the work site before the Clean-up finishes. Two copies of the Attendance Sheet to be circulated amongst volunteers to expedite this.
 - Issue hi-viz FrANC vest to each volunteer, with reminder to return it when Clean-up finishes.
 - Issue litter-picker and protective gloves (if needed) to each volunteer, with reminder to return them when Clean-up finishes.
 - Issue rubbish or recycling bag to each volunteer.
- Each volunteer to be assigned to one Group Leader.
- Each Group Leader to be provided with a "Sharps" container.

(3) During Clean-up

- Group Leaders to monitor the whereabouts of the volunteers that they are responsible for during Clean-up, and to keep their working group together.
- Group Leaders to ensure that any volunteer who decides to leave early is instructed to return their hi-viz FrANC vest to Sara and to SIGN OUT on the relevant Attendance Sheet.

(4) At end of Clean-up

- Group Leaders to ensure that all Clean-up work finishes promptly at designated time (usually 12 noon).
- Group Leaders to ensure that remaining volunteers return their hi-viz FrANC vest to Sara and SIGN OUT on the relevant Attendance Sheet.
- Group Leaders to advise volunteers of arrangements for refreshments and invite them to join in.

Attachment 1

Action No.	Description	Actioned by	Status
16-03-09	Ask Stephen Mason if he is prepared to lead a walk next year looking at the tributaries of the New Cut	Sara	<i>Completed</i>
16-03-11	Clear overgrown vegetation around John Purkiss' Memorial Tree and investigate how to repair faded lettering on Plaque	Derek	<i>In Progress</i>
16-04-02	Contact <i>acta Community Theatre</i> to discuss involvement in proposed Bedminster/Southville Colliery Site Walk	Roy	<i>In Progress</i>
16-04-04	Contact Thomas Ware and Sons Ltd. to arrange evening talks/tours around tannery for FrANC Committee and members	Chris	<i>In Progress</i>
16-04-06	Contact 255 th Bristol Channel Sea Scouts to establish links and find out how FrANC can best support them in future	Roy	<i>Completed</i>
17-01-01	Find out if any photos exist of the "Boat Race" that was held to mark the anniversary of the start of the digging of the New Cut	Roy, Tess	<i>In Progress</i>
17-01-02	Publish details of "Exploring the Cumberland Basin" Walk in next FrANC Newsletter and on FrANC Website	Derek	<i>In Progress</i>
17-01-03	Contact Melvin Wood (Environment Agency) to find out more about his "Origin of the River Frome" Walk	Derek	<i>In Progress</i>
17-01-04	Investigate application process for Greater Bedminster Section 106 funding and find out how much of 2017 budget remains	Tess	<i>In Progress</i>
17-01-05	Contact Bob Walton from Hotwells Community Centre to discuss possible use of Avon Quay House by FrANC	Sara	<i>Completed</i>
17-02-01	Committee Members to advise Sara of their availability to support Ed Hall as stewards during his <i>Bristol Walk Fest</i> walks	Committee	<i>New Action</i>
17-02-02	Publish updated "Friends of the Avon New Cut" leaflet by the end of April	Derek	<i>New Action</i>
17-02-03	Provide contributions to next FrANC Newsletter by the end of April	Committee	<i>New Action</i>

Table 1 FrANC Committee Action List