

Friends of the Avon New Cut (FrANC) Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 17th July 2018

Attended by: Sara Worth (Chair), Derek Hughes (Secretary) and Margaret Fay, Ed Hall, Chris Hanmer, Angie Tonge and Tim Wickstead (Committee Members).

1. Welcome

Sara welcomed those present to the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received from Tess Green (Vice Chair), Roy Gallop (Committee Member), John Smith (Member) and Steve Fay (Treasurer).

3. Minutes of the last Meeting

The minutes of the last FrANC Committee Meeting held on 10th April 2018 were approved by those present, with one correction: in section 5.2, the first sentence beginning with “Chris said that...” should be replaced with “In Chris’ absence, Derek reported that...” as Chris was not actually present at the meeting!

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Action 17-04-03: this action has now been superseded by events; further explanation of which can be found in item 6 below.

Action 17-04-07: this action has been completed and is discussed further in item 7.1 below.

Action 17-05-04: Joe McKenna from *ParkWork* has quoted a total cost of £2250 for the installation of a perimeter fence around Butterfly Junction which includes some localised landscaping. This cost estimate can be broken down into Materials (£750), Trees/Shrubs (£300) and Labour (£1200).

Action 18-01-05: Sara said that she had nearly completed the list of the names and contact details of Bristol City Council (BCC) Officers and others who FrANC are currently involved with. Chris offered to provide her with contact details for Sarah Murray from The Underfall Yard, which will complete the list.

Action 18-02-01: this action has been completed and is discussed further in item 5.2 below.

Action 18-02-03: Sara reported that she still had to discuss the possible storage of FrANC “equipment” in M-Shed/L-Shed with Andy King, although our preferred storage location would be the new scout hut for the 255th Bristol Channel Sea Scouts close to Gaol Ferry Bridge.

Action 18-02-04: Sara, Ed, Chris, Tim and Derek reported that they had successfully led the Beavers and Cubs from the 255th Bristol Channel Sea Scouts on a FrANC “Treasure Hunt” on a very warm Monday evening on 25th June. During this event the scouts were asked to identify 15 “treasures” (i.e. photos of landmarks) along a trail starting and ending at St. Philip’s Church on Coronation

Road, which encompassed Gaol Ferry Bridge, the New Gaol, Bathurst Basin, Merchant's Row, Prince's Wharf and Gaol Ferry Steps. The evening was described by the above FrANC members as "quite chaotic but enjoyable" and special thanks were given to Ed who had provided the historical background to each of the "treasures" encountered. It was noted that a considerable amount of paperwork had been produced to support this event, as it had been necessary to print around 60 copies of the two-page "Treasure Hunt" leaflet prepared by Derek. The leader has suggested that a donation to FrANC funds is going to be made.

5. Events Planning for 2018

5.1 Big Butterfly Count 2018 at Butterfly Junction

Derek reported that this event was due to start this coming Friday (20th July) and will run until 12th August. Instructions on how to take part will be emailed to the FrANC membership beforehand via *MailChimp*. As in previous years, Derek said that he would like to attach a FrANC Survey Form and Butterfly Identification Chart to the email, but it was not clear whether it is possible to do this when using *MailChimp*. If that is the case, these documents will be stored on the FrANC website so that they can be downloaded via a link embedded in the email.

5.2 Boat Trip up the Avon Gorge and New Cut

The "preferred" date (4th August) of the Avon Gorge/New Cut Boat Trip, together with booking instructions, was circulated to the FrANC membership by Derek via FrANC's *MailChimp* account on 17th April. Details of the Boat Trip have also been published on the FrANC website, though according to the *Bristol Community Ferry Boats Ltd.* website this trip is now fully-booked. It was reported that Roy, Tess and Tim have booked places on it as representatives of the FrANC Committee.

5.3 Tour of Thomas Ware & Sons Tannery

Chris said that she would contact Barry Knight, the Sales Manager for Thomas Ware & Sons, to book a suitable date in September. This would probably be on either a Tuesday or Wednesday evening as Barry is usually only available mid-week. Any monies collected from tour participants will be donated to charities supported by Barry, so FrANC will receive no income from this event.

(Post-Meeting Note: the date for this tour will be Tuesday 25th September starting at 6:00pm.)

5.4 Talk on the Origin of the River Frome

Derek offered to contact Melvin Wood from the Environment Agency to arrange a suitable date for this talk, preferably mid-October. It was agreed that the Southville Centre would be the most convenient venue, and Derek will also check availability of rooms and booking fees. In correspondence last year Melvin Wood indicated that his "fee" for delivering this talk would be a donation to WaterAid, so it is unlikely that FrANC will make a profit on this event also.

(Post-Meeting Note: the date for this hour-long talk will be Thursday 25th October starting at 7:30pm. The Osborne Room in the Southville Centre has been booked for this event at a cost of £48 which covers a two-hour slot starting at 7:00pm to allow for setting up/taking down time and a post-meeting Q&A session. We will also need to provide our own projector and screen, otherwise an additional fee of £25 + VAT will be charged!)

6. Status of Proposal for Butterfly Junction Perimeter Fence

It was reported that, since the last Committee Meeting, Derek has written a formal proposal for installing a perimeter fence around Butterfly Junction. The proposed work also includes (i) the removal of construction debris and weed trees, (ii) replanting the landscaped perimeter with pollinator-friendly trees and shrubs and (iii) the repositioning of the Butterfly Junction Interpretation Board so that it lies approximately halfway along the new perimeter strip adjacent to the MetroBus busway, where it will be more visible to passers-by. *ParkWork* are named in the proposal as the preferred organisation for carrying out this work and the funding required for its completion is quoted as £2500, i.e. slightly more than the *ParkWork* estimate of £2250 mentioned under Action 17-05-04 above.

The proposal has been circulated to Committee Members for awareness and also to two potential funding sources – the John Laing Charitable Trust (JLCT) and Hotwells & Cliftonwood Community Association (HCCA). Sara was pleased to report that to date we have been awarded grants totaling £1500 towards the overall cost from both of these organisations - £1000 from the JLCT and £500 from HCCA. Special thanks are due to two FrANC members who were instrumental in helping us obtain these awards – David Batchelor, who initially suggested that we approach the JLCT, and Christine Smart, who also serves on the HCCA Committee.

Sara also reported that she had contacted Eric Dougall (BCC Markets & Estate Service Operations Manager) who had advised that we should seek approval for the installation of the perimeter fence from Chris Ecclestone (BCC Operations Manager, Working Exhibits which includes responsibility for the Bristol Harbour Railway). Sara and Derek met with Chris at Butterfly Junction on 3rd July to discuss the proposed work. Chris was agreeable to the perimeter fence installation but also mentioned that it was his intention to have the new crescent-shaped planting adjacent to the MetroBus busway (shown right) removed, as this was supposed to be the location of the Harbour Railway platform at the new Butterfly Junction terminus behind A-Bond building. The impending removal of this pollinator-friendly planting is the reason why Action 17-04-03 is now considered to be superseded by events, as any further discussions with Dr. Nick Michael regarding its suitability would be meaningless. Instead, Sara and Derek agreed with Chris that when the plants are dug up they can be used to supplement any new planting introduced during the installation of the perimeter fence.



There was further discussion regarding other possible funding sources to raise the £750 - £1000 still needed to cover the cost of the proposed work. The Bristol Naturalists' Society was mentioned, though Margaret advised that they do not have much surplus funding at present for donations to deserving causes. Tim has also had promising discussions with the treasurer of the Hotwells Pantomime and the manager of the Riverside Garden Centre and had also approached Cleeve Nursery, but unfortunately they are in the process of selling up. Other possibilities were the Avon Wildlife Trust, the Quartet Community Foundation and Councillor Mark Wright (who may be able to advise whether any S106/CIL funds are likely to be available). Derek also offered to raise awareness of the proposal among the FrANC membership.

7. Support to events for other organisations

7.1 *Bristol Goodgym*

Sara reported that she had been in contact with Shona Buchanan, who is the organiser for *Bristol Goodgym* runs on Tuesday evenings. Sara had agreed with Shona that 15 – 20 people from *Bristol Goodgym* will turn up at 6:45pm on Tuesday 14th August to spend 45 minutes clearing litter from the Gaol Ferry Bridge slipways on Coronation Road. FrANC will provide the litterpickers and rubbish bags needed for the clean-up and Sara and Derek will transport them to Gaol Ferry Bridge. Ed and Chris also offered to help.

7.2 **Environment Agency**

Sara advised that she had also been contacted by Charles Ikediashi from the Environment Agency (EA) who is requesting our help to run a “team day” on 11th, 12th or 13th September. Sara had suggested that the EA personnel involved could perhaps be used to help with the landscaping (or bramble culling) to be done at Butterfly Junction as part of the perimeter fence installation during the morning of this activity, followed by some litter-picking around The Point in the afternoon. The close proximity of the CREATE Centre would be advantageous as this would provide access to a café for lunch as well as toilet facilities. Sara said that she would check with Joe McKenna from *ParkWork* to see if he was agreeable to the participation of the EA in the proposed Butterfly Junction landscaping work.

(Post-Meeting Note: the date for this event has now been confirmed as Wednesday 12th September.)

8. Any Other Business

- **Rough Sleepers on New Cut Riverbank** – Sara said that she had recently noticed a large pile of rubbish (including a ballast sack) along Cumberland Road by God’s Garden. During the afternoon of Sunday 15th July, she and Chris spent two hours clearing one of the tents abandoned by rough sleepers, with the intention of adding this rubbish to the existing pile. However, in the event it was not possible for them to drag the seven additional bags of rubbish to the original pile so these were left at the top of the Gaol Ferry Bridge slipway opposite the New Gaol for collection by Bristol Waste.

Sara and Chris then noticed that the other “campsite” on the slipway on the other side of Gaol Ferry Bridge (opposite the “Anchorage” development) was also abandoned, but halted their attempts to clear it when they encountered human faeces and ladies’ tampons! Also present were discarded piles of clothing, books, furniture and two YoBikes. Sara has sent photos of all the rubbish to Bristol Waste and requested collection of the bagged items of rubbish and clearance of the abandoned “campsite”.

Sara also said that she had contacted Wessex Water, who are responsible for the culvert on Coronation Road opposite Camden Road, about the tents and large armchairs that have arrived above the storm drain (at least one item from this encampment has been discarded into the riverbed below). However, Wessex Water had advised that the land where the tents are located is actually owned by Bristol City Council, and that their removal is therefore not their responsibility.

- **SUSTRANS request for Guided Walk around Floating Harbour** – Sara has also been contacted by Helen Fisher of SUSTRANS, who asked if FrANC would help lead a guided walk for SUSTRANS volunteers around the Floating Harbour. It was agreed that, whilst we would be prepared to consider guided

walks around the New Cut, the Floating Harbour is outside our terms of reference! Ed suggested that Sustrans should instead contact Chloe Little from M-Shed (chloe.little@bristol.gov.uk), who may be able to help.

- **Status of FrANC Accounts** – our Treasurer, Steve Fay, provided a copy of the FrANC Accounts prior to the meeting and a summary of income and expenditure since our last AGM can be found in Attachment 1. The current balance of £2000.83 does not include the HCCA grant of £500 mentioned in Item 6 above, however, and excluding the grant of £1000 also awarded by JLCT the current balance would be £1000.83. Derek noted that, as in previous years, our main source of income (£186 from “donations” received from our guided walks) is less than our expenditure (£314 spent on providing tea/coffee and cake following riverbank clean-ups). If other costs such as those associated with running the FrANC website are also included, it was estimated that in reality we need to generate an annual income of around £500 to cover our expenses. Ed suggested that we should apply to the John James Bristol Foundation for a grant and offered to provide contact details (next date for grant applications is this coming October).
- **Compilation of Summer 2018 Newsletter** – it was agreed that a Summer 2018 edition of the FrANC Newsletter should be published by mid-August to inform the FrANC membership about recent events as well as those planned for the remainder of this year. Tim offered to help Derek compile the Newsletter and a planning meeting was scheduled for 31st July. Tim also felt that we should raise awareness of the environmental aspects of the New Cut among those who live on both sides of the riverbank, perhaps by conducting a leaflet campaign or delivering a copy of the Newsletter to all households.
- **New FrANC Chairperson still needed** – Sara noted that despite including a reminder in the last Newsletter that this would be her last year as Chair of FrANC, nobody from the FrANC membership had contacted her expressing an interest in taking on this important role. Sara advised that she and Derek are planning to move away from Bristol next year, which is another reason why she wishes to stand down. This also implies that at some stage next year a new Secretary will also be needed unless a suitable candidate can be found to succeed Derek before this year’s AGM. It was recognised that the number of tasks that the Chair and Secretary are currently involved with may seem a little daunting to potential candidates, but to some extent it would be up to the new Chair to define what level of personal commitment he/she is prepared to make and that the Chair’s workload could be eased by the delegation of essential tasks amongst other Committee Members.

Tim said that he might be prepared to consider taking on the role of Chair provided he was not “tied to a computer” and that it did not prevent him from planning holidays where he and his wife could be away from Bristol for extensive periods of time. It was pointed out that this would be possible with the support of a competent Vice-Chair who would be prepared to run Committee Meetings and progress issues in the Chair’s absence.

Sara and Derek are currently also the custodians of the equipment used for riverbank clean-ups (including litterpickers, protective gloves, rubbish bags and high-visibility vests) which is transported to each clean-up in a wheelie bin. Ed offered to take over the custodianship of this equipment at a future date. Ideally a second wheelie-bin is needed to ease transportation of the equipment, and Chris offered to contact a Cumberland Road neighbour who may have a surplus bin available for this purpose. A new “home” also

needs to be found for the FrANC leaflets, books, posters and spare Interpretation Boards that currently reside at 88 Cumberland Road.

10. Date of the next Committee Meeting

- The date of the next FrANC Committee Meeting is **Tuesday 2nd October 2018**, to be held at 88 Cumberland Road starting at 7:15pm.
- Note that Table 1 includes any new actions raised at this 17th July meeting.

Derek Hughes
Secretary, Friends of the Avon New Cut

Action No.	Description	Actioned by	Status
17-04-03	Identify Butterfly Junction seed mixes from PB drawing and confirm with Dr. Nick Michael that these are acceptable	Derek, Sara	<i>Superseded</i>
17-04-07	Contact Paul Becker from <i>Bristol Goodgym</i> re. possible Tuesday evening riverbank clean-up task later this year	Sara	<i>Completed</i>
17-05-04	Obtain quotation from <i>ParkWork</i> for provision and installation of perimeter fence around Butterfly Junction	Sara	<i>Completed</i>
18-01-05	Prepare list of names/contact details of Bristol City Council Officers and others who liaise with FrANC Chair	Sara	<i>In Progress</i>
18-02-01	Circulate “preferred” date of Avon Gorge/New Cut Boat Trip (4 th August) and booking instructions to FrANC members	Derek	<i>Completed</i>
18-02-02	Circulate details of Action Greater Bedminster’s Public Forum meeting on 17 th April to FrANC members	Derek	<i>Completed</i>
18-02-03	Talk to Andy King (M Shed/L Shed) and Elaine Beckett (Sea Scouts) about possible storage location for FrANC “equipment”	Sara	<i>New Action</i>
18-02-04	Assist leaders of 255 th Bristol Channel Sea Scouts in organising a History/Wildlife Tour of the New Cut	Sara, Tess, Derek (plus Ed ?)	<i>Completed</i>
18-03-01	Provide Sara with contact details for Sarah Murray from The Underfall Yard	Chris	<i>New Action</i>
18-03-02	Circulate details of this year’s <i>Big Butterfly Count</i> at Butterfly Junction to the FrANC membership	Derek	<i>New Action</i>
18-03-03	Agree date for tour of Thomas Ware & Sons Tannery with Barry Knight	Chris	<i>New Action</i>
18-03-04	Contact Melvin Wood to agree date for <i>Origin of River Frome</i> talk and book room in Southville Centre	Derek	<i>New Action</i>
18-03-05	Raise awareness of Butterfly Junction perimeter fence proposal with FrANC membership	Derek	<i>New Action</i>
18-03-06	Finalise date and arrangements for Environment Agency Team Day and check that these are acceptable to Joe McKenna	Sara	<i>New Action</i>
18-03-07	Provide contact details for John James Bristol Foundation	Ed	<i>New Action</i>
18-03-08	Prepare and publish Summer 2018 edition of FrANC Newsletter by mid-August	Derek, Tim	<i>New Action</i>
18-03-09	Contact Cumberland Road neighbour to find out if surplus wheelie bin is available for transporting equipment to clean-ups	Chris	<i>New Action</i>

Table 1 **FrANC Committee Action List**

Income

Sale of books	28.00
Walks & Events	186.00
Donations	
Grants	1,000.00
Total Income	<u>1,214.00</u>

Expenditure

Clean-ups	313.95
Walks & Events	20.00
Website	40.87
Publicity	
Litterpick Grant Spend	
Total Expenditure	<u>374.82</u>
Balance Brought Forward	<u>1,161.65</u>
Balance Carried Forward	<u>2,000.83</u>