

Friends of the Avon New Cut Newsletter 9 – Autumn 2008



Celebrating Wild Waters

“Wild Waters” is a fortnight-long celebration of Bristol’s rivers and the Severn Estuary. Lots of activities are taking place from 4th to 19th October including guided walks, wildlife cruises, fungus forays, owl prowls, a Wild Water Family Fun Day and an exhibition at the Create Centre. Further details are available at www.wildwaters.org.uk.

The **Family Fun Day** is being held on Sunday 12th October, 10.30am to 4.00pm at the Create Centre. This free event will include interactive displays, live wildlife, face painting and the launch of FrANC’s New Cut Treasure Hunt.

Our **Treasure Hunt**, produced with financial support from the Greater Bedminster Community Partnership, will introduce people to some little-known features of the Cut and will provide an opportunity for you to highlight your own particular treasures of the waterway. Why not come along and have some fun?!



New Cut Local Nature Reserve

As part of next year’s celebration of the 200th anniversary of the opening of the Cut, we hope to see the New Cut formally recognised as a Local Nature Reserve. We have submitted our case to the City Council, and now await their decision. In the meantime, we continue to organise wildlife activities and awareness-raising events such as those described in this newsletter. We shall also be seeking support for our campaign from local people, local companies and a range of organisations with an interest in the Cut.

Forthcoming events

Discover bug life on the Cut

Sundays 14th and 28th September

10.30am until about 12 noon. Meet on the Coronation Road bank down the steps near Vauxhall Bridge. See over for more details.

Our next FrANC meeting

Thursday 25th September

Starting at 7.30pm in the Southville Centre. We shall be planning celebrations for next year’s 200th anniversary of the opening of the Cut and our campaign to have the Cut officially recognised as a Local Nature Reserve. All welcome.

Riverbank clean-up

Saturday 4th October

Come and help us clean up litter from the banks of the New Cut. Meet at Gaol Ferry Bridge at 10.00am. Wear strong shoes and warm clothing. Gloves and litter pickers supplied, plus free coffee and cake afterwards! Children are welcome to help, provided they are accompanied by an adult.

Wild Waters Family Fun Day

Sunday 12th October

10.30am to 4.00pm at the Create Centre (see details on the left of this page).

Butterfly Junction

Sunday 30th November

Join our maintenance working party at Butterfly Junction (adjacent to the Create Centre car park). We shall be cutting back brambles and other invasive plants in order to protect the rough grass upon which several butterflies breed. Meet there at 10.00am. Wear strong shoes and warm clothing. Bring gloves and tools if you have them. Free coffee and cake afterwards!

Discovering bug life on the Cut

Our new Bugs Group has been busy exploring the flat section of riverbank to the west of Vauxhall Bridge over the past few months. With the invaluable help of Tony Smith from the Bristol Naturalists Society, the group has begun to build up a fascinating record of wildlife on the site.

Species discovered so far include six different snails, several ground beetles, orange and harlequin ladybirds, and the lava of a spectacled moth.



Sam, Ben and Tony identify bug life on the Cut
Photo: Helen Adshead

The next expeditions will be on Sunday 14th September and Sunday 28th September. Both will run from 10.30am until about 12 noon. Meet on the bank down the steps near Vauxhall Bridge (Coronation Road side). Further details are available from Ben Barker (benbarker@blueyonder.co.uk)

Friends of the Avon New Cut (FrANC)

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See also www.southvillecentre.org.uk

If you are not on our mailing list and would like to be, please send your name, address, telephone number and e-mail address to FrANC's secretary John Purkiss (johnpurkiss@talk21.com) or leave a note for him at the Southville Centre.

News in brief

New Cut 200 celebrations

We have now fixed the date for our major celebration of the 200th Anniversary of the opening of the Cut. Note it in your diaries now – Bank Holiday Monday, **4th May 2009**.

Most of the activities will take place alongside the Cut on Cumberland Road and are likely to include street theatre, a jazz band, Morris Men, making birthday cards, our treasure hunt, Irish dancers and an Irish band (to celebrate the digging of the Cut by Irish navvies).

A photographic exhibition of people's favourite views and features of the Cut will be held in the Create Centre from 4th to 15th May, and other events are being planned for later in the year.

Bus Rapid Transit System

We are aware of a proposal to develop a Bus Rapid Transit system alongside the Cut, which is likely to have a detrimental effect on this invaluable wildlife corridor and might reduce or even obliterate the Chocolate Path. We await more precise details about the proposals and have been informed that a public consultation will take place this autumn. Watch out for details!

Reducing rubbish on the Cut

We still await action by ASDA to take effective measures to prevent bags and other litter blowing into the Cut from its car park, as the store's manager assured us he would do. The City Council's 'Waste and Streetscene Enforcement Officer' has promised to pursue this issue, and also to ensure the removal of rubbish dumped on the riverbank at the rear of the Jet garage and TES tyres on Coronation Road.

FrANC Committee 2008/09

It was great to see a good turnout for our Annual General Meeting and excellent wildflower walk in July. The following were elected to the Committee for 2008/09: Tess Green (Chair), Adrian Mantle (Vice Chair), Tracy Whale (Treasurer), John Purkiss (Secretary), Sara Worth, and Jo Young.