

Friends of the Avon New Cut Newsletter 22 – Autumn 2014



Photo: courtesy of John Sisk & Sons Ltd.

Although we have experienced a quieter summer in relation to group activities, members of FrANC have still been busy. You will see some of the activities that have been taking place by reading this Newsletter.

The picture opposite shows views of the New Cut and Floating Harbour taken from the top of one of the cranes at Wapping Wharf.

FrANC is a great organisation so please help us in our determination that it will thrive and grow.

Thank you for your support.

Forthcoming events

AGM on Sunday 16th November 2014

We have again decided to combine the AGM (and election of the Committee) with something extra that we hope you will find interesting. The Vice Chair of FrANC – and one of our most knowledgeable members – is going to provide us with an illustrated talk entitled “*The Lost Harbours of the Bristol Channel*”.

We have chosen the venue as the **upstairs room of the Nova Scotia pub** next to Junction Lock Bridge on the Cumberland Basin – so that those who so wish can enjoy a ‘beverage’ from the bar downstairs. The AGM will start at 2:30pm – the talk will commence by 3:15pm and we will finish by 4:15pm. We very much hope you’ll join us and share any ideas/hopes you have for FrANC over the coming year.

We will be seeking a new Treasurer for next year, and would like to recruit at least two other officers to serve as general Committee Members. If you are interested in taking on any of these positions, please contact the Secretary, Derek Hughes, on 01179 544888 or via the FrANC website (www.franc.org.uk).

At last year’s AGM we planted a hawthorn tree beside the FrANC bench on the Chocolate Path in memory of John Purkiss, a founder member of FrANC. Anyone who walks/cycles along the path will know that it is flourishing.

Butterfly Junction Maintenance on Saturday 6th December 2014

Come and join us at Butterfly Junction for some meadow management – ensuring the butterflies have the best chance of breeding in this beautiful spot. Wear sturdy shoes, bring your secateurs and gardening gloves if you have them. We’ll meet at 10:00am and aim to finish for complimentary tea and cakes by 12:30pm. This will hopefully be at the Create Centre as it is the weekend of the Christmas Fayre. There will be no grass cutting at this event as we have been consulting with those more knowledgeable than ourselves – meaning that a small area of grass was cut in September. December’s meeting will be to tackle the brambles!

Grow Wild

Bristol is one of five competitors for the Grow Wild competition with the winner receiving a lottery grant of £120K. They plan to spend the monies on transforming dull, abandoned areas into vibrant spaces. You can vote for Bristol up until 5th November by logging onto <http://vote.growwild.com/#>. You can also request some free wild flower seeds by logging onto the website.

Dates for Litter Picking 2015

Please put the following dates in your diary for Litter Picking next year – but we'll also remind you nearer the time via e-mail:

Saturday 24th January: South Bank

Saturday 28th February: North Bank

Saturday 21st March: opposite ASDA

It does look as though we have got some funding for some new litter pickers.....so book the dates above in your diaries and bring along a friend!

After negotiations with Bristol City Council (BCC) we had hoped that we'd found a way forward in tackling the rubbish down the riverbanks behind the garage at Coronation Road and also the bulk items along the riverbanks at York Road – but we were somewhat thwarted and at present are back to the drawing board. We won't be letting the matter drop....especially with Bristol's pending status as European Green Capital in 2015.

Application for LNR Status

At the conclusion of the Wild City Project, it was understood that an application for the Avon New Cut to be formally recognised as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) would be made by BCC at the beginning of this year.

There have since been some regrettable delays, due largely to changes within the BCC staffing situation – but we have been advised that all is now on target for a positive announcement by the end of the year. FrANC members should each take a little bit of credit for this achievement as, without the commitment shown to keeping the New Cut tidy and well kept, the application for LNR status would have been more difficult.



(a) Planning Application 14/04262/FB: New Camden Road Bridge (linking Coronation Road/Camden Road to Chocolate Path)

Summer with FrANC

We enjoyed two guided walks this summer – one coinciding with the Bristol Walking Festival when 30 members learned a huge amount from Iain Stewart about the medicinal herbs growing along The Cut. It has to be said that we didn't actually walk far as there was so much to see and sample within a few hundred yards of Gaol Ferry Bridge.

Our second guided walk was entitled "Geology of the New Cut". Our thanks go to professional geologist Peter Andresson and Roy Gallop for another very interesting walk and talk, which was again well-attended by 24 FrANC members and "guests".

One or two FrANC members have also been active over the summer months with some impromptu clean-up sessions along the pathways – but have been careful not to disturb nesting wildlife or plants.

Green Capital Funding

The Committee have applied for Bristol 2015 European Green Capital funding via the Neighbourhood Partnerships to install another Interpretation Board on the Chocolate Path where the sluices emerge from the Underfall Yard. This is part of a wider FrANC project, which will be the subject of a further funding application next year to the Bristol 2015 Small Grants Fund. Further details will be revealed at the AGM on November 16th!

And finally....New Bridges?

It is proposed to use BCC Cycle City Ambition Grant funding to build two new bridges across the New Cut, as illustrated below. Further details can be found in BCC Planning Applications 14/04262/FB and 14/04263/FB.



(b) Planning Application 14/04263/FB: New Langton Street Bridge (next to existing Banana Bridge)