

**Friends of the Avon New Cut (FrANC)  
Minutes of Annual General Meeting held at the Nova Scotia Public House –  
23<sup>rd</sup> September 2010**

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**Present**

John Purkiss (Chair), Sara Worth (Vice-Chair), Tracy Whale (Treasurer), Derek Hughes (Secretary), Martha van der Lem, Paul van der Lem, Liz Payze, Angie Tonge, Adrian Mantle, Roy Gallop, Kean Lamb, Andrea Harrington, Richard Clutterbuck.

**Apologies**

Tess Green, Margaret Fay, Ed Hall, Pat Fung, Ben Barker, Joan & Lewis Semple, Rosie & Pete Tomlinson, Neil Addicott, Stephen Mason, Chris Hanmer.

**Minutes of the AGM held on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2009**

The minutes of last year's AGM were reviewed. One correction to the Finance report was noted by Tracy Whale; the funds in hand should read £4,345.19, instead of the figure of £4,845.19 as stated in the minutes. Apart from this typographical error, the minutes were accepted as being correct (Proposed: Roy Gallop; Seconded: Paul van der Lem).

**Report on the past year**

- The Chair presented a report on activities in 2009-10. A copy of this report is attached to these minutes<sup>1</sup> (see Attachment 1), and thanks were expressed to everyone who had helped during the year. The report was accepted by the meeting attendees.
- The Chair asked those present to identify their highs and lows of the year. It was generally agreed that the two guided walks and the Boat Trip had been the most popular, and it was noted that the Clarendon Bench installed by FrANC at the beginning of the Chocolate Path adjacent to Cumberland Court appears to be well used. Some concerns were raised, however, about the amount of litter on the Chocolate Path and the aggressive behaviour of some cyclists, as observed by FrANC members, when approaching pedestrians. It was agreed that this would be monitored during the coming months.

**Finance report**

- The Treasurer presented the financial report for 2009-10 (see Attachment 2). Income amounted to £1,893.00 and expenditure totalled £4,588.52. Income included a grant of £1,000 from the Quartet Community Foundation, plus £458 from the Greater Bedminster Community Partnership (GBCP). Significant items of expenditure included the purchase of the Clarendon Bench (£1,011) and the design and installation of the FrANC Website (£2,009). It was noted that the cost of the Website had been covered by the Quartet Community Foundation grant,

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<sup>1</sup> The report presented by the Chair has been amended to include the item on "Have your say on £15000 of Local Money", which was mentioned during the AGM. There is no news to date on whether FrANC's suggestion, submitted by Margaret Fay, has been successful.

plus money left over from the New Cut 200 celebrations. The balance carried forward at the end of 2009/2010 was £1,649.67.

- The report was accepted (Proposed: Angie Tonge; Seconded: Sara Worth).

### **Election of Committee for 2010-11**

The following people were unanimously elected (Proposed: Paul van der Lem; Seconded: Tracy Whale):

- John Purkiss (Chair)
- Sara Worth (Vice Chair)
- Derek Hughes (Secretary)
- Liz Payze (Treasurer)
- Roy Gallop (Committee Member)
- Adrian Mantle (Committee Member)

Prior to the AGM, Tracy Whale had asked to stand down from the post of Treasurer, as had Tess Green, Angie Tonge and Martha van der Lem from their roles as Committee Members. A vote of thanks was given to all of these people for their past services to FrANC, especially to Tracy and Tess who have both served on the FrANC Committee for the past four years. The contribution that Tess made as Chair during the first three years of FrANC's existence was particularly noted.

It was agreed that Liz and Derek would replace Tracy and Tess as bank account signatories.

### **Planning for the next year**

The following activities were proposed for 2010/2011:

- Two riverbank clean-ups to be held, provisionally scheduled for the last Saturday in January (29<sup>th</sup>) and February (26<sup>th</sup>) 2011. The possibility of extending the south bank clean-up to include the railway track and adjacent Chocolate Path was discussed, and agreed. It was generally recognised, however, that it was not practicable to extend the north bank clean-up beyond ASDA and Bedminster Bridge because of difficulty of access.
- Bramble culling at Butterfly Junction on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> December – to be led by Ben Barker and John Purkiss.
- A Boat Trip, to be held in July/August 2011, which would include the New Cut and the Feeder Canal. Roy offered to investigate the feasibility of this, which is very dependent upon tide times.
- A "Flower Walk" along the New Cut.
- Another "New Cut Trek" led by Roy Gallop, to be held in May 2011. Roy suggested a "Privateers/Adventurers/Pirates" walk around the Bathurst Basin/Redcliffe Hill area, which is rich in local history.
- A "Bat Walk", which would consist of a guided walk one evening around selected areas of the New Cut to observe the indigenous bat population. The Chair reported that he had received an e-mail from a representative of the Bat Conservation Trust, Dan Merrett, concerning the "Bristol Green City Bats" scheme which is being run in the city this year (see Attachment 3). FrANC has been asked to register as a "bat-friendly Bristol Green City Bats group". Our involvement in this will be discussed further at the next Committee Meeting.
- "Wild City" Project – as noted in Attachment 1, during the last year FrANC assisted the City Council in a successful bid to Natural England to fund a new three-year

project called “Wild City”. This project will aim to encourage more people to enjoy the outdoors, especially those who are not normally inclined to do so, and will work with a range of communities and residents around seven key sites, one of which is the New Cut. Further details may be found in Attachment 4. There are currently five proposed actions affecting FrANC and the New Cut, the target completion date for the first two being September 2011. Ways in which these tasks can be progressed will also be discussed further at the next Committee Meeting.

### **Any other business**

- It was noted that the “Ballast Seed Garden” project (see Attachment 1) has now applied for planning permission, and that feedback can be provided on the Bristol City Council website. FrANC’s views on this project have already been registered by the Chair via e-mail.
- It was reported that the latest news on the Bristol Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is that the application for a Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) has been submitted by the BRT Project Team, but that no further progress is expected until after the results of the Coalition Government’s Comprehensive Spending Review are announced in October. A meeting, organised by the Neighbourhood Planning Network, was held on 14<sup>th</sup> July with members of the BRT Project Team and Councillor Gary Hopkins, at which the current status of the BRT Project was presented. The view of the BRT Project Team was that it was likely that there will be a Public Inquiry if the project goes ahead, but that if so this will probably be delayed until early next year<sup>2</sup>.

### **Date of next meeting**

- The next FrANC Committee Meeting will be held on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> November, starting at 7.30pm (venue TBA).

Derek Hughes  
Secretary  
Friends of the Avon New Cut

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<sup>2</sup> Subsequent to the AGM, the Secretary received a letter from Bob Fowler, a member of the BRT Project Team, concerning the current status of the TWAO application, in which it was stated that a decision on a public inquiry will be made by 10<sup>th</sup> January 2011.

## Attachment 1

### **Friends of the Avon New Cut (FrANC) Report on activities in 2009/10**

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This report covers the period from our last AGM (2 July 2009) to the date of our 2010 AGM (23 September 2010). Our activities were as follows:

#### **200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Following our major 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in May 2009, we completed our recognition of this significant landmark with a special boat trip up the Cut and the installation of a commemorative bench adjacent to the Chocolate Path.

#### **Themed walks**

- We organised 2 guided walks to discover wildflowers and herbs on the Cut.
- We promoted the Malago Trek and the Colliter's Brook Trek.
- Our own New Cut Trek this year took the form of another boat trip up the Cut, complete with a fascinating and informative commentary.

#### **Wildlife projects**

- A working party undertook maintenance work at Butterfly Junction.
- We assisted the City Council to prepare a bid to Natural England to fund a new three-year project called "Wild City". This was successful and will help us to further promote our case for the New Cut to be formally classified as a Local Nature Reserve.

#### **South Bristol Riverscapes project**

- We maintained our involvement in this project to improve waterways in the south of Bristol and involve more people in river support groups such as FrANC.
- We reprinted our educational Treasure Hunt leaflet, which has again been used successfully and beneficially by local families and local primary schools.
- Two of our members attended an otter surveying training day (otter tracks have since been observed at Cumberland Basin).
- One of our members assisted with the development of a Riverscapes website.

#### **Clean-ups**

- 35 volunteers assisted at 2 clean-up sessions, removing nearly 1 tonne of rubbish from the riverbanks.
- We continued to urge the City Council to clear debris from the riverbed – particularly on the Temple Meads to Bedminster Bridge stretch of the Cut – and to

clear litter from the steep riverbanks along York Road and in front of ASDA. Some debris has recently been removed from the riverbed.

- We alerted the City Council to a lack of maintenance on the Gaol Ferry Bridge footway and stone supports. Action was taken.

### **Awareness raising**

- We established our own website ([www.franc.org.uk](http://www.franc.org.uk)).
- We updated and reprinted our FrANC information leaflet.
- We published 3 editions of our newsletter.
- We sent regular e-mail bulletins to 140 contacts.
- We distributed copies of our book, information leaflet and wildlife leaflets.

### **Developments affecting the New Cut**

FrANC members attended consultation meetings and submitted their views on:

- The proposed Bus Rapid Transit System that will run alongside the Chocolate Path and Butterfly Junction. Some of our concerns have been addressed by the planners; others remain.
- Plans to install a tarmac cycle path and create a Ballast Seed Garden at “The Point” – a natural green space overlooking the river at Cumberland Basin.
- The future development of the General Hospital.
- Bristol City Council’s proposed Area Green Space Plan.
- The “Have your say on £15,000 of local money” competition run by the Cabot, Clifton and Clifton East Neighbourhood Partnership.

### **Thanks**

We are grateful to everyone who has supported FrANC during the year, and we thank City Council officers Kathy Derrick, Eric Dougall, Stacey Hobbs, Denise James and Steve Sparks and Councillors Beynon, Green, Woodman and Wright for their assistance. We also thank Awards for All, the Quartet Community Foundation, the Greater Bedminster Community Partnership and the South Bristol Riverscapes Project for their financial support.

## Attachment 2

### FrANC Accounts Summary 2009/2010

#### Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> May 2010

##### Income

Quartet Community Foundation	£1,000.00
Boat Trip Ticket Sales	£375.00
GBCP	£458.00
Book Sales	£40.00
Fiducia Press	£20.00

**Total Income** £1,893.00

##### Expenditure

Volunteer Expenses	£186.15
Room & Equipment Hire	£208.95
VOSCUR fee (2 years)	£20.00
New Cut 200 – 4 <sup>th</sup> May Celebration	£605.00
ANC Walks	£80.00
Boat Trip	£350.00
Clarendon Bench	£1,011.67
FrANC Website	£2,009.25
Leaflet Design/Printing	£117.50

**Total Expenditure** £4,588.52

**Balance Brought Forward** £4,345.19

**Balance Carried Forward** £1,649.67

## Attachment 3

### **E-mail from Dan Merrett, “Count Bat” Project Co-ordinator**

**From:** Dan Merrett [mailto:DMerrett@bats.org.uk]

**Sent:** 01 September 2010 15:19

**To:** [johnpurkiss@talk21.com](mailto:johnpurkiss@talk21.com)

**Subject:** Friends of Avon New Cut and the Bristol Green City Bats Scheme

Dear John

As you may have seen in recent Bristol Parks Forum updates, The Bat Conservation Trust (a national wildlife charity) has received funding from Active Bristol to launch a Bristol Green City Bats scheme in the city this year. Our key aims with the scheme are to work with community groups to

- find out more about bats using Bristol's green spaces
- help communities get more enjoyment from, and get more active in, their local green spaces
- provide advice on managing greenspaces in a bat friendly manner

We have produced a free Bat Pack for community groups that are linked to the city's green spaces that includes information on Bristol's bats, bat detectors and surveys, parks and bats, organising and leading bat walks and more. Because of the funding we are also able to provide free training this year for people from these community groups, and to run batty events in the city this summer/autumn. We have so far already worked with Walking for Health walk leaders in the city giving free training to 35 volunteer walk leaders on How to Lead a Bat Walk, led a bat walk for local deaf people in north Bristol and purchased 4 bat detectors for free loan to groups in the city involved with the scheme.

We are now writing to Bristol Parks Forum groups across the city and we hope that Friends of Avon New Cut will join in and register as a bat-friendly Bristol Green City Bats group. The level of involvement is entirely up to the group – it can be as little as just registering and receiving the free pack, or if the local community is interested we can plan to run a bat walk or other batty event, training, or loan bat detectors to the group to find out more about their local bats or run their own walks. The work is fully funded thanks to Active Bristol and the Heritage Lottery Fund and will be at no cost to the group.

The scheme is part of the Bat Conservation Trusts Count Bat project and has been trialled successfully in London where over 40 groups have so far signed up since it's inception last summer. You can find more information on the scheme at [http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/green\\_city\\_bats.html](http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/green_city_bats.html) . There is also a link from this page to register your group as a Bristol Green City Bats group. Alternatively you can contact me directly at this email address to register your interest.

I hope that through this funding the Green City Bats Project will allow us to build an active bat-friendly network across the city benefitting the community groups, local people and our local bats. If you have any queries then feel free to contact me or you can register directly by following the 'register your group' link found on the aforementioned Green City Bats webpage.

Thank you for your interest and I hope to hear from you.

Regards,

Dan

**Dan Merrett**

**Count Bat Project Co-ordinator**

Direct tel.: 07761 942393

Main switchboard & bat helpline: 0845 1300 228

Email: [dmerrett@bats.org.uk](mailto:dmerrett@bats.org.uk)

Bat Conservation Trust, 15 Cloisters House, 8 Battersea Park Road, London SW8 4BG

## Attachment 4

### **Wild City!** (with notes from John Purkiss in *italics*)

Bristol City Council has succeeded in its bid to Natural England for a new three-year project called **Wild City**. The Council will employ a full-time Project Officer to provide support to groups including FrANC.

**Wild City** will aim to encourage more people to enjoy the outdoors, including those who face social exclusion or have little or no contact with the natural environment - perhaps because they lack the confidence to get out and enjoy natural places or have few opportunities to do so. The project will work with a range of communities and residents around seven key sites:

- The New Cut
- Northern Slopes
- Hengrove Park Mounds & Hawkfield Meadow
- Stoke Park
- Callington Road Nature Reserve
- Eastwood Farm Local Nature Reserve
- Lamplighter's Marsh.

*One of the targets of **Wild City** is to set up 3 new Local Nature Reserves by September 2013. We must make sure the New Cut is one of these!*

### **Proposed Wild City actions affecting FrANC and the New Cut**

<b>Project milestones</b>	<b>Target date</b>
To deliver one new interpretation panel for the Avon New Cut, with a target of working with 5 volunteers to produce panel, and a target of 1500 to access / read panel through project period. <i>To be sited near to Bedminster Bridge or the Banana Bridge.</i>	Sept 2011
Target of 5 local community group members to volunteer to receive training on leading walks / working with communities / working with school groups in relation to the Avon New Cut.	Sept 2011
Deliver one boat trip per year in vicinity of Avon New Cut, with a target of up to 80 people attending, of which 25 people will be from priority communities to take part per year. <i>The Bhageera only holds 55 passengers!</i>	July 2013
To deliver an Avon New Cut Wild Waters event, with a target of 800 people to attend the festival. <i>FrANC to help organise this event in 2012 or 2013.</i>	July 2013
To deliver 15 Wild City Outdoor Learning sessions (5 per year), together with provision of teacher support through 15 support mentoring sessions, involving 1800 young people and teachers. <i>This could include a session on the New Cut.</i>	July 2013