

## **Friends of the Avon New Cut (FrANC) Minutes of Annual General meeting held in the Education and Meeting Room at The Underfall Yard, Cumberland Road on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

### **Present:**

Tim Wickstead (Chair), Tess Green (Vice Chair), Steve Fay (Treasurer), Ed Hall and Roy Gallop (Committee Members), Lewis Semple, Stephen Mason, Chris Hanmer, Angie Tonge, Margaret Fay, Phil Cass, Joanne Weston, Anthony O'Neil, Elizabeth Jackson, Cynthia Palmer; and guest speaker, Ian Mock (BART).

### **Apologies:**

Joan Semple, Sara Worth, Derek Hughes, Jacqui Furneaux, Sarah Morris.

### **Minutes of AGM held on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2018**

These minutes were accepted as a true record. Proposed: Chris Hanmer; Seconded: Anthony O'Neil

### **Finance Report**

We are in good financial health in terms of providing refreshments for volunteers. The treasurer's report and final balance of £1290.64 was checked and signed by Joanne Weston. It was accepted by those present. Proposed: Ed Hall; Seconded: Chris Hanmer

### **Report on past year** (attached below this report)

Tim Wickstead (Chair) read a brief account of the year's activities which, thanks to others' support, had gone beyond the promise of a year ago to ensure that, as a minimum, four litter picks and two walks were offered. A list of all the flowers and shrubs identified in our three surveys was handed to those present which included four questions to which responses would be welcomed: Is this level of FrANC activity acceptable? Is it sustainable? What other things could/should FrANC be doing? Do members feel they are suitably in touch with events?

### **Change to the Constitution** (to be added to website)

Six small changes proposed to the Constitution to make it less ponderous were passed unanimously.

### **Election of committee for 2019-20**

Tim Wickstead (Chair)

Ed Hall (Committee Member)

Tess Green (Vice Chair)

Roy Gallop (Committee Member)

Steve Fay (Treasurer)

### **Items raised during discussions during the meeting**

- Need to improve signage/directions to the venue
- Arrange for selling copies of our book *A Celebration...* via our website
- Use Bristol Naturalists newsletter to publicise FrANC events; links offered with U3A
- Send direct appeal to subscribers for help with specific tasks
- Noted that Tess Green keen to hand over role of Vice Chair to younger person
- The word committee felt to be off-putting so alternative ways of securing support requested
- Mark next year's rubbish piles with a FrANC notice claiming it's our work
- Offers of some impromptu smaller scale clearances

### **Talk**

Ian Mock of the Bristol Avon Rivers Trust gave an illustrated talk on the important and varied work coordinated by BART drawing on the resources of many local bodies.

**Annual Report from Chair.** Thank you to all for coming and to Andrew Blayney of The Underfall Yard for letting us use this space without a fee. A year ago we promised a slimmed-down programme, four river bank clean-ups and two guided walks. These have been completed...and more can be reported:

**1 away-day litter-picking session** was arranged for a team from Frank Knight coordinated by the Underfall Yard; our reward for helping: use of this room and 10 new litter-pickers

**1 article** explaining the work of FrANC was accepted in full by *Southbristolvoice*.

**1 campaign** was launched by Ed Hall contacting the Council about the state of the bridges on The Cut. We have no news to report on repairs to the Chocolate Path nor on the survey in March when the walls of The Cut were inspected

**2 summer boat trips** by Bristol Ferry Boats up The Cut were advertised and we were well represented among the passengers; I hope you have read Roy and Tess's article describing the experience.

**2 guided walks** – much appreciated by those who attended - were led by Ed Hall as part of the Bristol Walks Fest in May

**2 newsletters** have been published via mailchimp – one with some photographs but no anchors, the second with anchors but no photographs; learning in progress.

**3 Wild Flower surveys** were held in April, June and September – the results are before you

**4 Committee Meetings** will have taken place.

**4 students from UWE** in the field of Conservation Studies have supported our work with questions and small scale research.

**4 River bank clean-ups** followed by coffee; a very good turn-out for three of the four when weather was particularly fine.

**5 members** have undergone BCC's Health and Safety training – thank you to Cynthia, Ed, Joanne and Barney

**At least 6 links** have been made: for example with FOBB (Friends of The Bathurst Basin), supporting their objection to a proposed rebuilding of the Marchioness jetty; with Ben Barker and *My Wild Bedminster*; with the Environment Agency and Defra asking whether they could offer a day of activity supporting us; with a U3A group in the city enquiring about any walks we offer; with the Bristol Parks Forum, offering our leaflets at the stall at Bristol's Festival of Nature; with the Underfall Yard and Chris Ecclestone of The Harbour Railway

**147 subscribers** receive our messages.

Looking ahead there are **3 concerns**:

- Our committee needs more support.
- The website costs us money each year; new members use it to join; we need help in keeping it up to date. Thanks to Bridget Everett who has helped promote our activities on Facebook.
- The Butterfly Junction project, installing fencing and benches, was completed after the last AGM and seems to be working well. We did not organise any survey of butterflies this year and have yet to confirm when the meadow can be mown.
- Galferry slipways and God's Garden looking poor (post-meeting report: Council? cleared God's Garden 18.11)

I ask **4 questions**:

- Is this level of activity acceptable to you?
- Is it sustainable?
- What other things could/should FrANC be doing?
- Do members of FrANC feel they are suitably in touch with what is going on?

Thank you to all members of the Committee who have supported the Chair this year, including Derek who continued until the move; both he and Sara have been an email away with support when needed.