

Minutes of the Committee Meeting of Camden Residents Association 17th January 2018

Present: Jeremy Labram, Nigel Sherwen, Nigel Pollard, Gloria Goodsell, Julie Platt, Stephen George, Janet Anderson

Apologies: Deeplali Gaskell, Chris Smith, Nancy Coppock

1. Ward Boundary changes

Jeremy explained the proposed changes to the ward boundaries, which would mean the Walcot ward losing the Bathwick area south of the river, and gaining part of Fairfield Park. The Hedgemoor area would become part of Abbey ward. This would result in our area being covered by 3 wards and 6 councillors.

The changes, intended to reduce the number of councillors and make them more fairly representative, were considered to be reasonable. The new boundaries were discussed and it was felt that any boundary would cut through communities. No one thought it would make much difference to the functioning of the CRA, and it was decided to make no comment to the Council's consultation.

2. The future aims of the CRA

Jeremy outlined what he thought should be the future aims of the CRA

- Pollution
- Rat running
- Speeding
- A pan Bath solution to traffic problems

These, he suggested, should be of highest priority.

Then there could be

- Wild Camden
- Hedgemoor Park

Nigel P pointed out that the green areas themselves made a contribution to reducing pollution. But he agreed that the main focus should be on road issues.

Julie was in favour of a more holistic approach, taking in Wild Camden and Hedgemoor Park. Steve pointed out that, going back some years, the litter-picking initiative had been very successful, the pigs on Wild Camden had been very popular, and now the wild flower meadow scheme. He had had several responses to his idea of a gardening club which was an attempt to kickstart the enthusiasm for the scheme.

It was generally agreed that all this was important for the fostering of a feeling of community in Camden and for making it a better area in which to live.

Julie suggested the idea of a summer party on Camden Lawn. There was a problem in that it is not easily accessible. Other venues and possible dates were discussed but it was thought best to discuss this further at another meeting.

Jeremy went on to outline possible changes to our strategies.

- Extending the area covered by the CRA to other roads and more residents
- Contacting and working with other groups from Fairfield Park, London Road, Larkhall and Lansdown
- Working with groups such as CycleBath, Fobra and Larkhall Transition

These were all agreed to be good ideas, and it was agreed that, particularly in this year our focus should be on traffic issues.

It was thought sensible to set up a sub-committee on traffic issues. Julie pointed out that there had been one meeting of people who had signed up as interested in traffic issues. This had included some very committed people who had offered particular areas of help. They had so far been very under-used. They needed to be kept informed and engaged.

It was agreed to get together a larger group, including some members of the committee.

3. FoBRA

Jeremy pointed out that we represent a very small area of Bath and perhaps could use the strength of FoBRA to further our aims.

He was overwhelmed by the number of documents and consultation papers generated by FoBRA and the Council.

Steve said we must be very selective about how we connect to local issues, and FoBRA was not appropriate for everything. For example, the recent problem of parking spaces meant we had to mobilise people quickly. Most people don't even know about FoBRA. It is a very useful body, but we must be very selective about what issues we get involved in.

It was agreed to rotate attendance at FoBRA meetings among members of the committee.

4. CRA patches

Jeremy pointed out that there were large gaps in our coverage of the area. Overall we had some 38% of email addresses. Julie said she would refine the list showing which addresses were to be covered by which committee member

5. The website

Jeremy explained that ideally we would like the website to be more proactive. We should be able to post information and news and invite people to comment. And at the moment it takes several days to get content added. And residents are unable to give feedback.

One method could be to invite people to subscribe by giving us their email address. Then they would be prompted by email when anything new was put up on the website.

Steve questioned whether we would have enough fresh news to interest people, and suggested a link to a Facebook page might be a simpler solution. Nancy had also suggested this. Jeremy said that this too might be possible. A Facebook page would be very easy to set up and we could have a feed from the website. People who 'liked' the page would then get a notification when anything new was put up. Jeremy pointed out that at present we had no way of knowing the number of hits on the site, but that this might give us an indication of how much active interest there was.

Julie said that if we were intending to interact with residents, this would be an entirely new role for the CRA, and will involve a considerable amount of work for at least one person.

It was decided to get together those of the committee who were interested (Jeremy, Nancy, Julie and Janet) to look at the technical aspects of improving the website.

6. The CRA report and how to publish it.

We have the possibility of presenting the report to the Council on 7/02. Jeremy is away on that date but Cr Richard Samuels has kindly agreed to read a three minute presentation, which Jeremy will write. It looks as though we might be invited to make a more detailed presentation at a later date.

7. Report from the Friends of Hedgemoad meeting.

Nigel P said that there were a disappointingly small number, some 10 or 12, at last week's meeting, but that the Council seemed quite focussed on doing what they could, for example by putting up historical board.

8. Wild Camden

9. Finance

Nigel P reported that this year we had received £135 in subs, £61 in donations, and a £500 grant, totalling £696. We had spent £27.

10. AOB

Gloria explained how she had carried out two surveys of Belgrave Crescent to see if the residents were in favour of a one way traffic system. In the second survey, out of 50 questionnaires only 16 replies were received showing 7 for and 9 against.

Nigel agreed to a small reimbursement for the cost of printing.

It was mentioned that there was now a sign preventing traffic turning left at the bottom of Margaret's Hill.

The lane closures on the London Rd in March for roadworks were also noted. It was presumed that this would cause extra traffic in Camden, but we thought we could do little about it.

11. Date of next meeting

It was agreed to look for a date in about 1 month