

Minutes of the Committee Meeting of Camden Residents Association

24th June 2019

1. Present:

Jeremy Labram, Bob Williams, Gloria Goodsell, Janet Anderson, Chris Smith, Caroline Groome, Frank Benyon

Apologies: John Long, Nigel Pollard

2. Minutes of Last Meeting

- a) The last committee meeting minutes were approved
- b) Matters arising. Chris reported that he was still independently litter picking his area. Caroline said that she too was litter picking in UHP and regularly found needles and other drug paraphernalia and said that she would report this to the Parks department.

3. Chairman's Report

Jeremy reported back on the 'Camden Question Time' event at which all the candidates had agreed to consider the nine initiatives which we had put forward regarding improvements to traffic in our area. Members of the Committee were still expected to follow up on initiatives originally assigned to them.

Debra from 12 Prospect Place seemed to be very keen on improving the look and cleanliness of the street and had campaigning experience. Jeremy had since been in touch with her.

Jeremy pointed out that by now we should have seen the first signs of the CAZ infrastructure being implemented, but nothing had been seen.

4. Meeting with the Walcot councillors Richard Samuel and Tom Davies

Richard and Tom had kindly agreed to attend our committee meeting to discuss what we as residents might do to work with the Council to address traffic issues on the Camden Road and the adjoining streets.

This was particularly in the light of a recent accident on Tuesday June 18th outside Malvern Villas at which several cars were badly damaged and one pushed up over the pavement onto the stone gateway of one of the houses. A pedestrian could easily have been seriously injured. This had resulted from a truck approaching from the eastern end of Prospect Place at speed, passing the first of the parked cars at a narrow point with no clear view of oncoming cars.

Jeremy pointed out that our report said that the road had two problems, a speeding problem at quieter times, and a congestion and pollution problem at rush hours. The accident was an example of the former.

There had been a trial in May of a vehicle activated sign at Camden Crescent, and initial analysis showed there was a considerable reduction in speeding when the sign was in operation, particularly of the speeding by the worst offenders. There were five times fewer drivers driving over 30 mph. These signs cost about £3000 and are solar powered. This required some immediate action to reduce the risk of a similarly caused accident.

Looking more broadly, Richard said that as residents we must decide whether 1) we want to make the existing flow of traffic work better or 2) we want to make access more difficult.

We must consider it as an area as a whole, as yet to be defined, and that parts of Bath such as Weston, Oldfield Park and Bear Flat were also lobbying hard. If this was to be a low traffic neighbourhood, the request must come from residents.

Stopping the road being used as a rat run could be an answer, as per the CRA Report. He suggested a time restricted access on to Dead Mill Lane from the A46. Another suggestion was perhaps making Bennett Lane and Gays Hill one way. And a way might be found of tackling the rat run from Upper Hedgemoad to Thomas St.

Buses could be given clear priority. There was a case for moving the bus stop at the western end of Prospect Place a little further to the west which was challenged by Jeremy as if anything bus drivers had the best view of the road ahead and therefore could decide most easily whether they could go or give way.

A contributing factor was illegal parking beyond the bays which reduced visibility further as well as reducing the size of passing places. To stop this it was suggested that it might be possible to build out protective areas beyond the bays, perhaps with flower planting.

Another idea was to reduce the stretches of longer sections of two way traffic with wider pavements, though there could be a problem a traffic backing up at busy times.

Discussions moved on to the concept of a low traffic neighbourhood. In essence this has to make the journey for through traffic so awkward that very little outside traffic would use it. To visualise this, Jeremy suggested thinking of it as a road block on Camden Road which might be permeable to buses. It would also need to be a bigger plan than simply Camden Road.

The process was summarised as: proposal, gaining residents' support, implementation.

It was agreed that we would approach Jo Wright, cabinet member for traffic, who was charged with bringing together traffic initiatives across the city.

We could also write to the Chronicle about the recent accident, pointing out the dangers of our road being used for such heavy through traffic.

Richard confirmed that the CAZ would be in place by 1st Jan 2021.

The A350 linking the M4 to the south coast ports was likely to be upgraded, rather than an A46/36 link built.

Richard mentioned the problem of displacement of traffic, and the concerns he had about the proposed traffic lights on Queens Square causing displacement of traffic through residential areas such as Lansdown. His priority was to reduce traffic not displace it.

5. Wild Camden

Frank spoke about having read through the historical information from Stephen George about Wild Camden and our relations with the Council on the matter. It was established that the Council had undertaken to cut back the grass part of the site every April. Caroline confirmed this had happened this year, and that they did sometimes come in from UHP and carry out some tree pruning. There were also larger aspirations about rediscovering a water feature and tree lopping.

Frank said that they had heard nothing from the Council since he and Jeremy had met Mark Cassidy some months ago. It was clear that the Council were only prepared to carry out minimum maintenance since the site had no public access. But we needed to know exactly how often and what they would do.

Jeremy had asked Steve why the documentation indicated that effort had reduced since 2013 and Steve had explained that establishing a wild flower meadow was a long term project. He did not wish to carry on running the project and hoped the committee would do so.

We agreed that Frank would try and meet the council once more to confirm existing arrangements. However there was insufficient desire from the Committee to get involved in a larger scale project at this stage. If Steve felt sufficiently motivated he could be invited to address the next committee meeting directly. JL to convey this news.

6. Committee and AGM

The AGM was to be on 21st November 2019

Janet said that she would be retiring.

We agreed to continue contact with Debra with Francois Louw, who might be interested in joining the committee and JL would make contact with Steve Kamlish, our new Snow Warden (now done).

7. AOB

- a) Jeremy reported back on the FoBRA drinks reception
- b) Caroline reported on the preparations for the FoHP fete on 21st July

8. Dates of committee meetings

It was agreed that Janet would try to fix a date for the next committee meeting during the first week in Sept. Further dates were 8th Oct and 17th Dec

The AGM was scheduled for 21st November.