

Camden Residents Association Annual General Meeting 2021 Minutes

Held on: 12th November 2021, 7.30 pm

Venue: Museum of Bath at Work, also via Zoom

Chaired by: Jeremy Labram, CRA Chair (JL)

Technical Assistant: Robert Williams, Website Manager, CRA Committee

Attending: 35 plus 4 on Zoom

Item (Note: questions raised during speakers' sessions are included under the Q&A section 8.)	Speaker
<p>1. Welcome and Introductions</p> <p>1.1 The Chair welcomed all participants to the AGM, those attending in person and on line, and outlined the agenda for the evening</p> <p>1.2 JLL stated that the meeting would be recorded through the Zoom platform; no objections received</p> <p>1.3 The meeting comfortably reached the required quorum of 20 by 7.30pm.</p> <p>1.4 The curator of the Museum of Bath at work, Stuart Burrows, also welcomed guests and gave a summary history of the building, including how the building had been built as a Real Tennis court in the 1770's; see https://www.bath-at-work.org.uk</p>	<p>JLL</p> <p>SB</p>
<p>2. Chair's Report (summary available on the CRA website here)</p> <p>2.1 Chair thanked the 2020/21 committee for their work over the year, as well as all the volunteers who have contributed so many hours of work on the Camden Meadow</p> <p>2.2 Camden Meadow (as highlighted last year in the AGM), now a self-managing spin-off from the CRA, is showing great progress thanks especially to John Long and John Lindup; permission has just been granted by the Council for the use of power tools on the land, an indication of the co-operative relationship that has been developed with the Council and its confidence in the work of Friends of Camden Meadow.</p> <p>2.3 Street Party: we have just applied for permission to close the street in order to hold a street party to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, on Sunday 5th June 2022; there will be a lot to consider and if anyone would like to help with the planning, please let us know.</p> <p>2.4 Liveable Neighbourhood: we are all aware that Camden was not successful in the bid for selection to the next stage of Liveable Neighbourhood (LN) proposals, but as the Chair described, in case "we were overlooked" in the process, there are 11 main reasons why Camden should still be considered to become an LN. The detail is here.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longevity of traffic related problems - an issue for over 30 years • The scale of the problem & potential benefits to many, including Larkhall & Claremont • Our very narrow pavements in some places, which are frequently and dangerously encroached upon by vehicles • The number of start-stop single lane sections, which create pulses of traffic • Camden Road was "redesigned" 200 years ago – not for this volume of traffic • Estimated 600 bus pinch-points per day – more than on any other route • Unloading on very many stretches of the road is hugely dangerous • Rampant speeding: the temporary VAS signs halved the number speeding • Even all the other RAs think we're the worst case! • We're not the A4, an A road or even a B road, we're a neighbourhood • We are one of the boundary points of the CAZ area, with numerous ANPR cameras on our streets – couldn't they be used to help us and define what traffic is using our roads? 	<p>JLL</p> <p>See Q1 below</p> <p>See Q2</p>

<p>So, in summary – CAMDEN ROAD AREA IS NOT FIT FOR PURPOSE TO WHICH IT IS NOW PUT. COP26 wants to get everyone out of their cars – but can we think of another street that has such an opportunity as ours? As the snakes and ladders diagram shows – we came close to square 100, only to drop back down yet another “snake”, but we could be only one throw of the die away from getting back up that there!</p> <p>2.5 The Chair made the request to the Councillors to “think again”, and pressed the point without gaining any commitment.</p>	
<p>3. Treasurer’s Report</p> <p>3.1 Nigel Pollard (NP) explained that the CRA has suffered a small loss over the year due to lack of fund raising last year during Covid-19 restrictions, with outgoings including donations for the usual groups (Friends of Hedgemoor Park, Federation of Residents’ Associations etc), but that this is covered by reserves. The Current account now stands at £1,306.83, Savings account at £7,957.99</p> <p>3.2 Can the donation made towards the railings now be used for the wider Camden Meadow? To be discussed in the committee</p> <p>3.3 No questions were received. Chair thanked NP for looking after the accounts so well</p>	NP
<p>4. Election of Officers and Committee Members</p> <p>4.1 Chair introduced the candidates standing for election to the Committee as Officers and Members (available on the website); all were elected unopposed</p> <p>4.2 Thanks to member Jonathan Lobb who is leaving the committee for his help and contribution over the year, and welcome to new member Araminta Stokes-Rhys, of Camden Crescent</p>	JLL
<p>5. Guest Speaker – Councillor Richard Samuel, Deputy Leader of the Council, Economic Development & Resources & Walcot Cllr</p> <p>5.1 Richard Samuel (RS) explained that the impact of Covid-19 for the Council has been “absolutely huge” financially, losing £30m over 18 months, due to lost revenue from the heritage sites, commercial property rents, parking and unpaid rents in particular. £20m had to be cut from the budget, whilst income is not expected to improve until 2025, obviously impacting on what we can spend to get things done, whilst Brexit and other matters have pushed up building costs by about 40%</p> <p>5.2 Nevertheless, quite a lot has been done, such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refurbishment of the Camden Crescent railings, • repair of the Crescent arches which support Camden Road, • resurfacing of most of the wards in the Walcot part of Fairfield Park, and • resurfacing of the complete length of Walcot Street; and • new street lighting across much of Bath including Camden <p>5.3 Future matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In December a decision on whether to allow heavy good vehicles to return across Cleveland bridge is due, based on recent reports • residents’ parking charges will be based on CO₂ emissions of your vehicle, with diesel vehicles paying a surcharge on top; consultation on this has now closed and charges will be implemented in the new year <p>5.4 Credit to everyone involved with Hedgemoor Park which has been awarded the Green Flag - a standard to show the quality of the park. RS has also brokered a “marriage” to possibly bring bees to Camden Meadow, with a beekeeper in Belvedere</p> <p>5.5 First building in many years of 50 new council houses has been approved, including 20 units in Grosvenor House along London Road. Hoping to have built 100 homes with more affordable rents by the time of the next elections</p>	<p>RS</p> <p>See Qs on local matters & the LN below</p>

<p>5.6 RS also referred to the LN bid, on which Tom Davis had taken the lead as RS is a resident on Camden Road (potential conflict of interest), and handed over to Sarah Warren</p>	
<p>6. Guest Speaker – Sarah Warren, Deputy Leader, Climate Emergency and Sustainable Travel, Bathavon North Cllr</p> <p>6.1 Sarah Warren (SW) supported all of the Chair’s earlier points about Camden’s case, and explained that 48 applications from across Bath had been received by April, of which the Council has so far taken 15 forward to the next stage. Factors in the selection decision included: the number of households affected, whether the routes included routes to schools, the deprivation index and the recognition that as “beginners” it would be better for the Council to start with “relatively simple” ones and build experience before addressing larger and more complex applications, such as Camden, so it would be good to get some successes first. But Camden has not been forgotten, it’s just that the budget is not as big as our aspiration</p> <p>6.2 However, B&NES Council has applied to be one of the Government’s 10 “mini-Holland” schemes, [<i>interventions aiming to boost cycling and walking which are currently being trialed and proving successful in certain outer London boroughs</i>], which if successful will provide a pot of money to dedicate to expanding the LN scheme</p> <p>6.3 BANES held its first Climate & Biodiversity Festival in September, which she reported went well, with enormous local business enthusiasm. It may become an annual event. We are aware that the emphasis needs to be on energy efficiency in buildings, renewable energy & transport. Hope to see a bus change in bus services too (responding to a comment that large buses are often seen running empty)</p> <p>6.4 Consulted on the update to the Local Plan</p> <p>6.5 Chair asked if the LN decision on Camden could be reconsidered soon. SW: potentially within the next year</p> <p>6.6 RS added that residents parking zones may be extended to lower Walcot, as commuter parking often causes problems. On 22 Nov the Council will launch a website with an interactive map where residents can make comments on any aspect of traffic, such as the Snow Hill one-way traffic flow proposal. RS & SW encouraged everyone to respond. Consultation on the LNs begin, including public meetings next week and a review end of January</p>	
<p>7. Questions and Answers during the meeting, in order</p> <p>1. Camden Meadow: Will there be pigs again on Camden Meadow? John Lindup: the patch is not right for pigs at this stage, we are however looking at goats</p> <p>2. Volume of traffic on Camden Road: Is there a recognised standard measure of traffic flow by frequency and density etc that would be useful to BANES as a clear statistical base? RS: the problem is that Bath was built for horses and carriages, not cars. We were all made aware of how easily the city can become gridlocked last weekend when a blockage in the Avon Street car park area brought the city to a standstill</p> <p>3. What’s the timescale for those 15 successful LN bids? SW: Consultation is underway: the aim is to have 5 in place by the summer</p> <p>4. Climate emergency – why, as it’s an “emergency” can’t things be implemented quicker, can you give us anything more definite? SW: we are working flat out to try to move things forward, but it’s got to be through consultation, and getting the building blocks in place. Always a tension between speed and engaging everyone. This will be a different kind of consultation – bottom up, blank sheet of paper and invite people’s ideas</p> <p>5. Monies owed to the Council: what do the Councillors believe the Council should do about those debts, as otherwise the rest of us will have to pay. RS: I have instructed that debts should not be left on the books – either tenants will have to enter into payment arrangements with us or and if not prepared to do so then the Council will</p>	<p>Chaired by JLL</p>

<p>have to take action. It's always tricky to balance one group's interest against another</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. What are the expected benefits and how will these be measured of the CAZ scheme? RS: clearly not everyone can win here. SW: no, we don't have any other than NOx levels reducing, which will be as a result of the national fleet modernizing as well as the possible effects of the CAZ over time. SW noted this and would consider further 7. Are there any plans for the Council to put power supplies [for electric cars] in street lampposts? SW: we are part of a scheme that aims to put rapid chargers in carparks; we're discovering that it takes a whole range of skill sets and we are finding that actually Bath has very limited spare electricity capacity. RS: The grid in Bath does need upgrading but as this is a financial matter for the power companies, they have to be able to justify the capital investment which won't happen until they can be clear the market has tipped in favour of electric cars 8. Is there a working group looking at the issue of electric vehicles in Bath? SW: no, to be frank we have just one Officer, but looking to increase that 9. Problem with refuse not being collected for one particular property on a lane between Camden Road and Arundel Road (as well as a query about sharing a post code with Beacon Hill) - not getting a response from the Council. RS to look into it [he has subsequently contacted the resident with a named contact at the Council] 10. Planter on corner of London Road and Snow Hill blocks the view of cars coming along London Road. RS: it has been raised but actually it's very difficult to move the 20 ton item but fortunately there have been no accidents recorded as a result of this planter since they were installed in 2014; a safety audit was conducted 3 years ago 11. Bollards appeared (7 or 8) along the road overnight – why and it's a waste of money. RS: it was a surprise to me too, 12. Vehicles passing over one particular speed bump on Camden Road with Bennett Lane causing house to shake and cracks appear/ get worse: RS: the speed bumps are not being effective. Tom and I want to see them replaced with something else, a series of safety measures including better speed bumps. Tom and I will be talking to Highways again. Resident has experienced a picture being knocked off the wall due to the shaking. RS to take up the issue again, and visit the shaking house! 13. Why can't we put flashing speed lights all along Camden Road? JLL: I've tried very hard to get funding for vehicle activated signs (VAS) from the Avon and Somerset Police Trust and eventually was told my bid was unsuccessful. But we're not giving up! RS: we agree that these issues are very frustrating, we try to work with the Highways staff to do things, but balancing across the area is very difficult 	
<p>8. Close</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8.1 The AGM came to a close at 9.30pm. The Chair thanked everyone and the speakers for attending 8.2 Next CRA committee meeting – 29th November 2021 8.3 2022 AGM Wednesday 23rd November, location to be advised 	<p>JLL</p>

23.11.21

Louise Coates, Secretary
Jeremy Labram, Chair