



**Note of the meeting of the Bath City Forum
held on Wednesday, 20th September, 2017
in Council Chamber - Guildhall, Bath**

Meeting Attendance

In Attendance
Councillor Patrick Anketell-Jones
Councillor Rob Appleyard
Ashley Ayre
Lisa Bartlett
Councillor Colin Blackburn
Adrian Davies
Dave Dixon
Roger Driver
Councillor Bob Goodman
Sally Harris
Mark Hayward
Caroline Kay
Robin Kerr
Chris Mordaunt
Rosie Phillips
Councillor Joe Rayment
Leslie Redwood
Residents
Dr Christopher Roche
Councillor Dine Romero
George Samios
Councillor Shaun Andrew Stephenson-McGall
Harry Tedstone
Councillor Peter Turner
Virginia Williamson

Apologies Received from
Jeremy Boss
Councillor Fiona Darey
Councillor Andrew Furse
Michael Hill
Gareth Lloyd
Penny McKissock

Councillor Michael Norton
Councillor Lin Patterson
Councillor Christopher Pearce

1. Statement for the outgoing Chair

Councillor Bob Goodman opened the meeting and explained that due to taking on a Cabinet role he would not be able to continue as the Chair of the Bath City Forum.

Councillor Goodman made a series of points through his speech as outgoing Chair:

- The Forum will gain more teeth and must never be considered to be a talking shop.
- The Forum will continue to receive his support as the link in the Cabinet and the new Chair now has a platform to take the agenda of this Forum forward.
- The support received from Jo Farrah, Rosie Phillips and B&NES Officers had proven valuable as had the cross party support from Joe Rayment, Dine Romero and Colin Blackburn.

2. Nomination of the Chair

Ashley Ayre explained there had been one advance nomination for the position of Chair received for Councillor Colin Blackburn. This nomination was submitted by Robin Kerr and seconded Councillor Bob Goodman.

No other nominations were put forward from the floor. The forum agreed to carry out the vote by a show of hands.

The majority of the forum voted in favour of Councillor Colin Blackburn taking on the role of Chair.

3. Nomination of Vice Chair

The Chair explained that there had been one advance expression of interest received for the position of Vice Chair, this was for Rosie Phillips.

No other nominations were put forward from the floor. Rosie Philips self-nominated and was seconded by Chris Roach.

The forum agreed to carry out the vote by a show of hands.

The majority of the forum voted in favour of Rosie Philips taking on the role of Vice Chair.

4. Fire Service Update

Adrian Davies from Avon Fire and Rescue presented a report for August 2017 that covered activity and incidents for the Bath area.

Questions

Robin Kerr – At the previous meeting the question was raised “how many of the 48 party houses in Bath have been inspected by the Fire Service?”

Response – The details will need looked into and a response will be circulated. (This was sent by e-mail to forum members on 9 October 2017)

Councillor Bob Goodman – What is the approach to buildings with more than five floors?

Response – The Fire Service has a record of these buildings and treat them in the same way they would high rise buildings.

Caroline Kay – What plans are in place for museum buildings?

Response – There are already many buildings that have salvage plans in place, those that do not are encourage to work with the Fire Service to get these into place.

Councillor Shaun Stephenson-McGall - What work is taking place with the Universities around river safety issues?

Response – The Fire Service are working on getting pro-active message out. The Student Community Partnership has an agenda item on the river at the October meeting.

George Samios – Are there any high rise buildings in Bath that have cladding on them? And have the Schools in Bath been checked for safety issues?

Response – Berkeley House in Snow Hill is the only building in Bath that is classified as a high rise and does not have cladding issues. The cladding used in Grenville Tower has been used by industry across many types of buildings. There is confidence that all schools are safe, none are high rise and all have escape routes.

Ashley Ayre – Since Glenville the Council and Curo have had contact with the DCLG. The Council no longer hold any social housing stock in B&NES but has had conversations with providers about cladding issues, although some renovation work has taken place; the materials used were non-flammable.

The Councils estate and heritage buildings have been checked and safety checks were already in place. Work with private landlords where there is cladding are working with Property Services in line with guidance from the DCLG.

Councillor Dine Romero – On low level buildings that have cladding which have been converted into homes, are there regulations that change?

Response – There is more stringent legislation in place.

Councillor Dine Romero – Where the Fire Service fit smoke alarms into people homes they arrive in fire appliances, is this the best use of resource?

Response – Crews that are carrying out this work arrive in appliances as they need to be always available for emergency call-outs. Additionally the public see the fire crews as the face of the service and whe carrying out home visits there are at times other issues that are picked up and sign posted by trained crew members.

Councillor Shaun Stephenson-McGall – Has the recent issues involving senior officers and governance in the service had a knock on effect to front end crews?

Response – There is a feeling at grass roots level when the media are reporting negative news that this affects to image of the service as a whole.

There is a team investigating the issues and the findings will be shared. A new appointment has been made and we hope to see a positive impact as a result of this.

The important thing to remember is that the crews always strive to deliver a first class emergency service.

Shaun clarified that the local authority sees the recent news as a governance issue and is not related to the emergency service provision.

Caroline Kay – The cladding issues in Bath have been helped by the use of Bath Stone over many years. The use of Bath Stone was not only used for aesthetics but has been shown that it helps when there are fire hazards.

Councillor Colin Blackburn – Their report shows that there has been an increase in the number of call outs, how does this affect delivery of service for front line crews?

Response – Crews plan other duties but when call levels do rise the priorities have to change and rescheduling of other duties has to take place.

5. Police Update

Chief Inspector Steve Kendall provided an update to the meeting:

- Neighbourhood teams are working with partners to meet the challenges in local areas. Cluster zones, Neighbourhood Sergeants and dedicated points of contact have been put in place to create a strong team that can deal when demands change.
- The Police are facing financial challenges and are working with the PCC to look at the funding issues and staffing level for the longer term. Where there are lower levels of resources this does have an effect on how incidents are dealt with.
- There has been an 8.4 per cent rise in reported crime across the Avon and Somerset force area - that figure is 8.2 per cent in B&NES. Calls for police assistance are up 8.8 per cent. 38,784 calls were made to police in B&NES last year; the force had seen a “considerable number of requests.”
- Bath is generally a very safe place to live and work but there is a drugs issue in Bath as there is in every city across the country. Bath remains a safe place but the police service is facing significant challenges.
- The City Centre Team is working alongside agencies on issues such as mental health, missing persons and homelessness issues.

Questions and responses:

1. Cllr Dina Romero – Could you let us now about the levels of hate crimes locally?
Response - Hate crime has increased across the force as it has nationally...there's no specific trend in B&NES. There is a strategy to deal with hate crime. The desire is to reduce it through education and other ways. There has been no reaction to hate crime being linked to the terrorist activity locally as seen in other places in the country.
2. Cllr Dina Romero – Could you let us now about how the Police are working with people who suffer with mental health issues?
Response – 1 in 4 people suffer an episode of mental health during their life. The Police have been trained to recognise the signs and use care pathways as a method when people arrive in custody. This more compassionate approach has seen a reduction in the numbers of people with issues being processed through custody in the conventional way.

3. Cllr Shaun Stephenson-McGall – The media has reported that the PCC has said that £1.1 million in savings has to be found, what will this look like and will this mean service cuts?

Response – The PCC has committed to projection of neighbourhood resources, the reductions need to be looked at the detail will need to be worked out. There is a PCC meeting in Bath next week where this question could be asked.

4. Rosie Phillips – Six months ago action was taken on the open drugs market and organised crime, what has been the impact on the city?

Response – The team continues the fight on drug crime and activity does continue. The figures do show that drug offences are 56% down in the local area despite the increase in burglary offences. There is continued awareness around the issue of outsiders coming into vulnerable communities and operating from their homes.

5. Cllr Peter Turner – Although the public like to see the Police on patrol, what is the effect of technology such as CCTV and how is this helping the Police?

Response – There are areas where developments need to continue and this will require investment. 4G/WIFI has given officers greater ability to stay mobile and not have to return so often to the office. The internet has also brought fresh challenges in the way it is used to commit crime.

6. Cllr Joe Rayment – After there have been Police raids do we see a reduction in the levels of drug trade on the street?

Response – Where leads are followed up and intelligence is gathered provides the public with the signal that the issues are being addressed. Where we do take dealers out of the chain they soon become replaced by someone new. Bath does continue to remain a safe place to live.

7. Leslie Redwood – Thank you for the service that you are providing. What has been the impact of the removal of a city centre operational base?

Response - The people of Bath and my colleagues would like to have kept that police presence and Manvers Street facility. The closure was duly part to finance and this was not possible.

Police patrols do remain in the city centre and a station of sorts off the Lower Bristol Road; if it were to be possible we would like somewhere closer to the city centre. Is it possible in the current financial climate? Who knows? We don't have that facility that we once had and we do miss it.

8. Member of the public – What is the position from the Police on homelessness?

Response – The police work with our partner agencies and look to protect the vulnerable. Some members of the street community have made a lifestyle choice.

6. Minutes of the previous meeting 24.07.17

The Chair asked that the minutes of the meeting on 24 July be agreed.

Councillor Joe Rayment agreed the minutes were an accurate record and no objections were raised by any other forum members.

7. Unregulated Holiday Lets in Bath

It was noted that interests were declared by Cllr Colin Blackburn and Sally Harris who both have connections to properties in Bath.

Robin Kerr provided a statement on behalf of FOBRA. This is attached and available on the Council website.

Harry Tedstone gave a presentation on behalf of BIGHA. This is attached and available on the Council website.

An additional statement from the FSB was submitted but was not read out. This is attached and available on the Council website.

Question and observations:

1. Cllr Rob Appleyard asked how we had got to the numbers that had been shown in the presentations. There appears to be an amount of cross over in the points made about party houses, the general problems in Bath with housing and high cost properties being taken out of the market.
Response – There are a mix of properties being taken out of the market half are larger properties and the rest are 1-2 bed apartments. The smaller properties make it harder for first time buyers and people in low paid jobs who need to rent.
2. Cllr Dine Romero felt there are similarities to the problems that HMO's bring to the city, planning is not covering the issues that are being raised and there needs to be changes in legislation by central government.
3. Cllr Dine Romero – A report has been written by Ben woods team, is this going to be circulated?
Response – Lisa Bartlett, Divisional Director – Development B&NES explained that the report that was written is an internal document that was being used by officers in-house, this is not a formal Council report that is being held back. Further work is required before a document will be ready to circulate.
4. Cllr Joe Rayment felt that people were opting to use Air B&B as it is a cheaper option for visitors. If noise is such a big issue why is this not being addressed? It appears the bigger problem is the lack of affordable houses that are being supplied to the city.
Response – Harry Tedstone explained that noise issues are not dealt with by the police and they refer people to the Council.
5. Chris Mordent, Housing Services B&NES explained that there are schemes in place that deal with the introduction of HMOs to the city.
Response - Harry Tedstone felt that where buy to lets are happening there has to be better management where the use changes to a HMO.
6. Chris Roche – It appears that owners of “party houses” have lower overheads and greater profits. What potential is there for the Council to raise funds from these properties?

Response – Ashley Ayre explained that B&NES Council have to gather evidence first and must act legally in how it operates, there are constraints on what revenue could be achieved. To change there needs to be a challenge to Parliament; national regulations are giving us the powers to make decisions.

7. Virginia Williamson – There are place in Bath such as Brougham Hayes where Air B&B is being advertised for rental on Facebook. It seems that we are so restricted by the way the class of use is set out?

Response – Lisa Bartlett explained that outside of London larger properties can fall outside and do need planning permission. There are examples of local applications that are being looked at presently. Where smaller properties enter the market there are no controls outside of London, this is where there is a need for new powers, the housing act has selective powers which exempt holiday lets at the moment.

8. Caroline Kay felt that we need to look further afield at what other cities are doing and lobby nationally for action.

9. Leslie Redwood felt that that there are number of cities across the UK that is suffering the same effects from unauthorised lettings as in Bath. Visit Bath supports change and recognises that presently there are lacks of tools that can be used around planning class.

Response – Harry Tedstone explained all BIGHA members operate safe, clean, legal and fair businesses. The city is soon to open a new casino that will see an increase in the stag market.

Actions

- It was agreed that the Bath City Forum will write to Wera Hobhouse, MP for Bath to lobby central government on the change in legislation, business rates issues and fire regulations for unregulated holiday lets.
- Lobby the LGA
- Review progress at a future forum meeting in about six months' time. Bring in others to the discussion where required.

8. Neighbourhood Portion of CIL

Dave Dixon explained that work had been completed the work that the Forum asked us were carry out.

It was agreed that the Criteria Guidance Notes, the Application Form and a record of all the projects will be sent to forum members. This information is also available on the Council website; any comments need to be sent to Mark Hayward by 4th October.

The Forum was asked for volunteers to work on CIL working group. The group will need to schedule meetings to take place ahead of Forum meetings.

Caroline Kay and Roger Driver offered to be involved in the working group.

Once the working group is in place it initially needs to take a look the twenty four expressions of interest and decide which of these to recommend to the Forum. There will be a rolling receipt of applications and the role of the working group is to filter out applications that do not meet the criteria for funding.

At the 27 November forum meeting the working group will put forward project recommendations for the Forum to agree in advance of these going to Cabinet.

Councillor Dine Romero asked that if a member of the working group has an interest in a project that has applied for funding; they are not involved in the recommendation.

9. Any Other Business

Bath City Forum - Transport Sub Group

Cllr Peter Turner explained that a discussion has taken place with Cabinet member Cllr Mark Shelford and he would welcome a group that could assist him with transport matters in Bath. Peter is willing to take on the duty of Chair.

Peter suggested that the group of six people from Bath be set-up, they will be non-political, action focused and passionate about transport issues. Representative volunteers to join this group are being sought.

Cllr Shaun Stephenson-McGall felt that the having only Bath people was at odds with the wider perspective. Shaun also felt the requirement for the group to be non-political was wrong.

Ashley Ayre explained that this is the Bath Forum and looks to represent resident's views from a Bath perspective. This forum needs to make decisions on what it wants to do for the city.

Cllr Colin Blackburn felt that the forum has a structure where sub groups have been set out but some of these have not really gone anywhere. There may be a need to review what is actually wanted going forward.

Chris Roche felt that sub groups need to allow representation of people with other links to the city.

Caroline Kay felt that transport is a topic with many areas that need to be covered and existing groups and linkages need to be looked at.

Cllr Joe Rayment felt that many issues are political and it is wrong to take into account political party membership when working to address issues. If the Chair of the transport group is from a political party then others on the group should be able to be from political parties. Where Bath&NES Ward Councillors are involved in subjects covered by the forum there is a role where working together to work out conflicts needs to happen.

Purpose of Bath City Forum

Cllr Dine Romero asked that the forum looks at what it is here for and what it is able to achieve. The sub groups that we have need to have a purpose and be clear on what they are being used for. The forum needs to avoid replicating work that is going on elsewhere. Additionally

there needs to be a route for recommendations to be taken forward to a regular slot at cabinet meetings.

Cllr Rob Appleyard explained that the Bath City Forum was set up to cover the deficit that exists between Bath and the remainder of North east Somerset. Outside of Bath, Parish Councillors are working at a local level with other area forums. Ward Councillors from Bath are attending the forum as an extension of the role they carry out as part of B&NES as a whole, this at time feels conflicting. There does need to be a clearer outline of what we are here to achieve.

Virginia Williamson endorsed Dines comments and added that the forum has potential to be successful; it needs a work plan and a greater level of advanced planning. Where presentations are being given, copies of these in advance would be welcomed. A separate workshop might be needed to get things working better. There needs to be a reassurance that discussion takes place on organic ways for the forum to work.

Robin Kerr asked why the student representative had not been replaced on the Forum. Ashley Ayre responded by explaining that a process is set out for co-opted members that leave and this will be followed.

Ashley Ayre explained that the governance model to Bath is different to the areas outside of the city. The forum does have advisory powers on spending of the neighbourhood portion of CIL and the Community Empowerment funds. Ashley attends the agenda setting meeting as the role of the Councils Senior Officer to the forum, the forum members are also represented and are encouraged to bring ideas on what needs to be covered. Last year a workshop was held on CIL and from that a process has been set up. This forum needs to decide what it wants to do and if there are different options required we can look at these.

Cllr Joe Rayment explained that the forums outside of Bath will see B&NES Councillors, Parish Councillors, Local Organisations and members of the public attend. The mixture of representatives for the Bath Forum are Ward Councillors and selected co-opted members (other individuals and organisations else can also attend). The membership when attending forum meeting are here to represent Bath even if they hold a wider role.

Action: It was asked that The Chair, Vice Chair and Council Officers look at the roles and responsibilities of the Bath City Forum and set this so that there is a clear document that references this.

Rosie Phillips asked that all suggestions for be e-mailed to Mark Hayward.

Cllr Shaun Stephenson-McGall suggested that Bath may wish to consider a community governance review, this happened in Norton Radstock and more recently in Swindon. It would be good to look at this on a future agenda with advisors on the legal matters that sit with this.

Outgoing Chair

Chris Roche asked that the forum pass its thanks onto Cllr Bob Goodman for his work as the first Chair of Bath City Forum.

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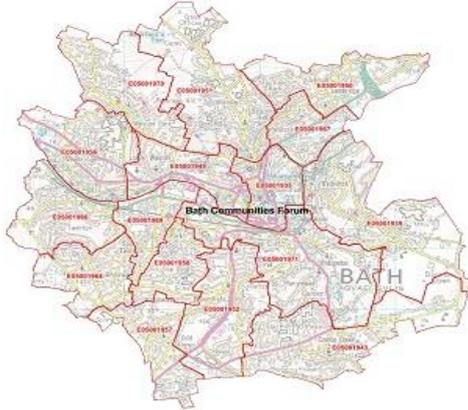
Bath & North East Somerset

Bath Communities Forum

Fire Service Summary

August 2017

Neighbourhood Map:



The Communities Forums are unique areas set up by the Local Authority. Each Communities Forum is made up of several Wards.

Community Fire Safety Activity:

Total of last Three months

April 2017 - June 2017

Home fire safety visits	93
Education Institutions visits	0
Off Station Community Events	11

Fire Incidents:

	Jul 2015 - Jun 2016	Jul 2016 - Jun 2017	Change
Deliberate vehicle fires:	20	9	-11
Deliberate small fires:	38	68	30
Deliberate large non-vehicle fires:	19	13	-6
Accidental dwelling fires:	48	45	-3
Other fire incidents:	57	80	23
Non-fire incidents:	192	263	71
False Alarm incidents:	673	734	61
Total number of incidents attended:	1047	1212	165

Station Managers report:

Work continues ensuring High Rise properties in Bath are properly assessed following the Grenfell fire including working with Owner/Occupiers to ensure compliance via Technical Fire Safety Officers. These checks are now being progressed to the various University Campus's which whilst may not fall under a "High Rise" designation, do however include 5 or more floors, dry risers and other key aspects contained in a High Rise property. Alongside this work any of Bath's historic properties which contain a Heritage or Historical element are being asked to provide Salvage planning details which will be captured and stored on the appliance data terminals. This will assist crews to mitigate historical loss at incidents within these premises. It is foreseen that this piece of work will remain ongoing for some time due to the historical make up of the city.

National Campaign Theme:

As the nights start drawing in Avon Fire & Rescue Service are working with universities, the police and key agencies to deliver safety messages concerning water, fire and personal safety.

How to contact us:

Fire Station: Bath
Station Manager: Gareth Lloyd
Station Address: Cleveland Bridge
 Bath
 BA2 6PU
Email: Gareth.Lloyd@avonfire.gov.uk
Telephone: 01179 262061

Local Contact:

Watch Manager Tom Coombs, Bath Fire
 Station. 01179 262061 ext 8120,
 thomas.coombs@avonfire.gov.uk

In an emergency: 999 or 112
For non emergenc 01179 262061

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Party Houses in Bath – FoBRA statement for Bath City Forum

I want to paint a picture for you of “partying” in central Bath, two years hence. 67 large houses in the city are no longer inhabited by families, who would be quietly going about normal life and looking after their neighbourhood. This is because these 67 will be “Party Houses”, empty during the week, but erupting into a blaze of noise, bad behaviour and fire danger at the weekend by offering just under 700 beds for Hen and Stag Parties. It’s very good business for the owners because the Hens are prepared to pay a lot, and these Party Houses are untaxed, unregulated, unlicensed, free of planning approval or much in the way of overheads, and the law on them is so weak it can largely be ignored; but, on the other hand, it’s terrible for the neighbours; and central Bath has been inexorably ‘hollowed out’ by a combination of Airbnb and Party Houses (like Florence or Venice, and, in the UK, York and Brighton), though the disruption of Party Houses is much worse than from short term lettings. That’s what it will be like in 2019 unless we do something about it. In 2014 we had 23 of these Party Houses with 10 or more beds – some as many as 20: now we have 50, and more are in the pipeline. Is this what we want?

Bath is a beautiful place to spend the weekend, with plenty of pampering, great shops and things to do. The problem is that the partygoers habitually celebrate into the small hours and even go in for lewd behaviour, such as naked butlers or blow-up genitalia tied onto the front entrance door. The behaviour is often visible, either through the windows (no curtains!) or in the garden. With a hen party, almost always there is much drinking, dancing to loud music and a lot of candles – a potent recipe for a serious accident as well as the noise and the terrible disruption.

Here’s what neighbours say: *“We are isolated between two houses which are empty all week, depriving people of making these lovely houses their permanent home.”* *“One guest said: ‘We’ve hired this house and we can do what we like.’”* *“I’m not a killjoy but the regularity and inevitability of the whole procedure is extremely depressing.”* *“Luckily my bedroom is at the front of the house but I feel incredibly sorry for the residents on the ground floor.”* *“If they had said ‘We’re going to let it to hen parties every weekend’, we would have complained, but we didn’t, because nobody knew.”* *“I think it’s incredibly unfair that, essentially, what’s happening is a very lucrative business that they have no licence for.”*

There are not many applicable regulations, and the law is confused. Bath’s party houses would normally be occupied by one family or perhaps several families if the building is divided. So, the number of properties available for people to call their home is decreasing - by at least the current 50 party houses so far. The sense of community is greatly diminished. The Council says it is proud of the 10,000 people who live in the centre of the City, which is Council policy, and the Placemaking Plan,

calls for another 1150 homes in Bath, as it is good for Society, for security and for the maintenance of these great houses that constitute part of the attraction of our World Heritage Site. However, numbers must be nudging down to 9,000, as the Party Houses are not now used for living, but partying. Some might say that opposition to party houses is just rich residents being mean-spirited, trying to preserve their quiet quarter of Bath. However, the opposite is actually the case: central Bath houses are usually flatted and often occupied by families or individuals on modest incomes who buy or rent their house and want to preserve the buildings. They, like all of us, have a right to quiet enjoyment of their homes.

So, what is to be done? Firstly, the law needs to be strengthened: at present there is only one example of Case Law which applies, and two refused Planning Appeals, the problem being that these places do not fall clearly into a planning use category; by default they are treated as C3 (residential), but they are clearly not being used for normal residential purposes. There is case law for treating them as a 'special'; but this is not satisfactory in the long term, and the law needs to recognise it as a defined use. I am pleased that our new MP is aware of the problems and is already taking some action. The National Organization of Residents' Associations has briefed the Ministry on this problem, and will be taking part in discussions with them later this month. Selective Licensing may offer another route to control, but it needs detailed investigation. Moreover, there are good examples to be found abroad, notably in Amsterdam.

Secondly, the frightful fire hazard, which Party Houses are, needs to be brought in line with the regulations which apply to hotels, B&Bs and HMOs. Party Houses do not, at present, have to be inspected or comply with fire regulations, not least because most are operating unlawfully, without the correct planning consent. Of this lack of formal notification, Avon Fire & Rescue Service were unaware, but have now been alerted, with details of the large Party Houses in Bath – we don't want another Grenfell Tower!

Thirdly, the owners and operators of Party Houses need to pay business rates, because they are obviously operating as a business, presumably making a profit from the very high costs (and very low overheads) of renting a party house.

Lastly, the Council has to play its part by recognizing the problem. They say they receive few complaints from neighbours, but this is largely because neighbours dare not blight their properties with an official complaint or no one will buy it. The Council must either take action to require owners to apply for planning permission, thereby ensuring that other planning, building, and fire regulations are obeyed, and providing a chance for neighbours and statutory bodies to have a chance to oppose it; or introduce Selective Licensing.

The key question our Councillors and Council officers should ask themselves is "Would YOU want to live next door to a Party House?"

Robin Kerr, FoBRA Chairman, final, 11th Sep 17

The rise and rise of the unregulated holiday rental market

Are we sleep walking into the erosion of what makes Bath beautiful and pricing out our workforce at the same time?

Definition

A property use for the sole purpose of a holiday rental, where the owner is absent and the property is registered at the Land Registry for Residential use only rather than commercial.

Page 16 Bathnes - “Short Term Rental Market”

Avon Fire and Rescue – “Short term Letting Premises”

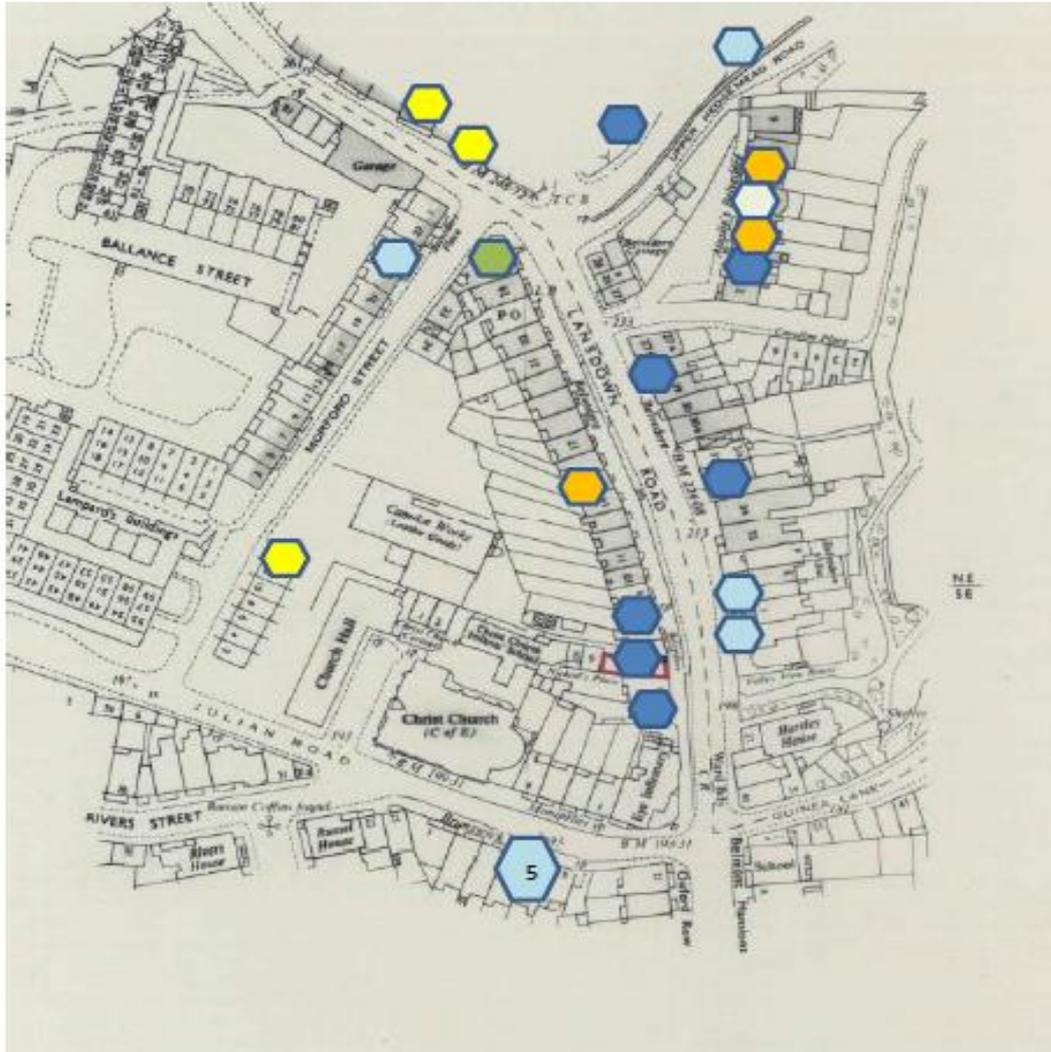
Barcelona – “Illegal Tourist Rentals”

Amsterdam - “Illegal hotels”

How many unregulated tenancies are there in Bath?

	Combined
Visit Bath	71
Booking.com	48
BASCA	45
Home and away	248
Air bnb	300+
TripAdvisor	471
Homes to Go	1752 (from 65 providers)

Belvedere



- Holiday Rental House**
- Holiday Rental Flat**
- Holiday Rental Flat with owner occupier above**
- B & B Residential House**
- B&B Commercial**
- Planned holiday rental**

Estimating the Correct Figure

- For the purposes of this talk I am suggesting the figure of 900 short term holiday rentals in Bath and 450 in the BA1 area.
- Total number of households in Bath 45000 and rising by 466 per year
- The density ratio of short term holiday lets to households is around 2%
- New York the density is 1.2%

Why has this happened?

- Market Forces – tourist choice
- Change in tax breaks for Buy to Let
- No pensions – substitute income
- Asset Rich cash poor
- Hotel Futures Report 2015
- "Permitted Developments"
- Lack of joined up thinking and understanding of what makes Bath beautiful – “Bath is fast becoming a Georgian version of Disneyland”
- Growth of power of OTA (online travel agent)

What is the Impact?

Staff Shortages across hospitality , restaurant, social care and transport sectors

- National living wage and Bath living wage are poles apart
- First bus reporting staff recruitment issues. Bus drivers being bussed in from 40 miles away in Oxford
- Complaints by some guests and residents on level of service in restaurants
- Residents forced to move elderly residents from once highly regarded nursing homes due to poor standards of care
- Payment of travel costs to maintain staff retention in retail and restaurant sector

Secondary Impact

- Un level regulatory playing field - ensuring safe clean and legal
- Un level taxation regime
- Un even distribution of contribution to paying towards cost of “keeping Bath Beautiful”
- Money being sucked out of Bath that would otherwise contribute to destination Marketing and Keeping Bath Beautiful by OTA s
- Loss of small office space due to “permitted developments” of office space
- Affect on Independent / Individual Businesses – “the gems of Bath that make its jewels shine”
- Breakdown in community relations with lack of respect of well-being of neighbours and increase in complaints of anti social behaviour
- Parking issues / Rubbish collection / Increased homelessness?
- **A “rub” is happening between resident and tourist for the first time**

Place-making Policy

Sustainability baseline / issues / characteristics of the area	Suggested evolution without the plan
<p data-bbox="233 419 942 558">High house prices and a lack of affordable housing make it difficult to attract people to the area and to retain key workers.</p> <p data-bbox="233 632 958 929">Lower quartile house price in Bath and North East Somerset are more than 9 times the lower quartile resident annual earnings. Nearly half the overall need for affordable housing in B&NES is concentrated in Bath City.</p> <p data-bbox="233 1003 923 1193">Of the households in need, newly forming households unable to afford to buy are the dominant group in Bath & North East Somerset.</p> <p data-bbox="233 1210 958 1346">Achieving an appropriate mix of decent, affordable homes will need to be a priority in any new development proposals.</p>	<p data-bbox="1012 419 1769 609">Without the pro-active planning represented by the Plan, it is unlikely that B&NES will be able to provide enough affordable housing to satisfy future requirements.</p> <p data-bbox="1012 684 1754 929">Without the Plan, the market led development approach may result in inappropriate uses take up the key regeneration sites in Bath resulting not meeting the Council's economic and housing objectives.</p> <p data-bbox="1012 1003 1686 1193">With the improvements in the Building Regulations the sustainability of new houses is likely to improve</p>

Statistics from House of Commons 2014

- The number of working people relying on housing benefit to boost their income has doubled in five years, at a cost of billions of pounds to the taxpayer, a new analysis has disclosed.
- According to the House of Commons statistics, 478,000 people with jobs claimed housing benefit in 2009/10, rising to an expected 962,000 this year. On current trends, the number of claimants will increase by a further 276,000 to 1,238,000 in 2018-19.

What the government say is the 30% percentile

LHA room category	BRMA	
	Bath	Bristol
Local Housing Allowance rates from 1st April 2017		
<small>All LHA claims are updated annually on 1st April. The rates for 2017/18 are shown below:</small>		
Shared acc Page 25		
1 bedroom	£135.74	£124.83
2 bedrooms	£167.23	£151.50
3 bedrooms	£189.86	£181.01
4 bedrooms	£291.90	£242.33

What other factors do we need to take into account?

- Brexit – the staff we have we need to keep
- Welfare reforms (Local Housing Allowance and Benefit Cap)
- Rent and Rates increases
- DMP suggests Bath needs to sort out its infrastructure (including transport) before encouraging any more tourists
- Will the Casino encourage stag parties/ the wrong type of tourist?
- Cost of maintaining World Heritage status.
- Tax Break changes in buy to let market

What can we learn from elsewhere?

Amsterdam	Venice
Berlin	San Fransico
New york	Bournmouth
St Ives	York
Stonehenge / Orkneys	Barcelona
Barcelona	Bruge
Bruge	London
Paris	Liguria

What is the “ask”

1. **To work collaboratively in the Best Interests of Bath** – putting differences aside.
2. Set up **scrutiny Committee** to analyse the facts and find out what the facts and issues are – Use Brighton and an example
3. Council to release the internal report on the “ **air bnb affect**”
4. **Consult with the groups most affected** who are not represented on the Bath City Forum – those working in our low wage economy.
5. Consider the pros and cons of **selective licencing** as a way of ensuring
 - a) all holiday accommodation providers work to the same level playing field to be safe , clean and legal; and
 - b) at the same time contribute in equal measure to” keeping Bath Beautiful”
6. Decide what is the optimum number of tourists Bath needs to ensure both the well-being of its residents and the ability to provide quality services across all sectors – **in essence make it a great place to live work and visit**

Party Houses and AirBNB Ian Plain Federation of Small Business.

The issue of party houses and airbnb in bath is a complicated issue, it is obvious that they are catering to a need, but as a business organisation our concerns are for our members and the wider hospitality industry and retail industry in Bath

It is clear that these are 2 separate but linked topics.

Party houses first, It is clear to us and the courts that these are Businesses and should be treated as such, That is they should be subject to the correct planning laws, Inspections and Business rates that "official" Establishments have to adhere to. The loss to the city in business rates income is in the region of £2000 to £3000 per house.

Inspections are important and should be part of the initial planning process and then there after, As far as we know there has been no fires at any of these houses but time will tell. Health and safety at these properties is in some ways more important than a normal hotel or Guesthouse as guests are invariably intoxicated so what would normally be a difficult but safe exit may not be so for a group of intoxicated guests. It may be that the houses are inspected in the same manner as a small event venue.

We as a business group do not want to stifle entrepreneurs, and a whole business has grown up round this market but it cannot be on the backs of at the detriment of other Bath Businesses

AirBnB is a "disruptive" business and sometimes that is good, I myself run a business that was once called "disruptive" now it is the norm,

But the same as mentioned before about Party Houses there need to be some control. This has already happened in London with a limit of 90 days for full houses and overseas in Barcelona for example.

It is clear that Flats and Houses are being bought and used solely as AirBNB in Bath and this is as with Party houses causing issues for neighbours and people looking for homes. Again the properties need to be inspected and Taxed appropriately, The lost revenue to the city is unknown But for example on the night of the 13 Oct there are 116 listings in total of which 28 were whole houses.

We will ignore rooms to let at this point and look at the houses, the rate for a whole 2 bed house in Bath seems to be £170 to £250 per night, based on 3 nights a week and 38 lettings a year that's approximately £22000 a year. and in the majority of cases no business rates being paid. We have also noted especially over this summer both large and small student accommodation being used for AirBNB, This has a direct effect on our members. I will ignore Green park as that is of a higher enough profile already.

Smaller private student accommodation buildings being used as Hostel/B&B accommodation, It is not hard to find them on AirBnB a quick search found for example a 7 bed HMO being used as a "Hostel"/B&B over the summer. One reviewer even complained that a student was still in occupation. These need to be inspected. Also this use needs to be taken into account at the planning application stage for new HMOs as at the moment application always assume students don't have cars which is a fallacy but people coming to visit over the summer do and do cause issues for neighbours. It is not clear if these are paying council tax as they would have been exempt if still student accommodation, The loss of revenue to the city is hard to calculate as is the loss to hoteliers in the city.

Bath needs to be vigilant and get a sensible and legal policy in place before it gets totally out of hand and small hoteliers start to struggle

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