

PARISH LIAISON MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting held

Thursday, 16th July, 2020, 5.30 pm

Councillors: Councillor Andrew Furse (Chair), Councillor Dine Romero (Cabinet Member), Councillor Rob Appleyard (Cabinet Member), Councillor Tim Ball (Cabinet Member), Councillor Neil Butters (Cabinet Member), Councillor Paul Crossley (Cabinet Member), Councillor Kevin Guy (Cabinet Member), Councillor Sarah Warren (Cabinet Member), Councillor David Wood (Cabinet Member), Councillor Sally Davis, Councillor Duncan Hounsell, Councillor Eleanor Jackson, Councillor Hal MacFie, Councillor Alastair Singleton, Councillor Andy Wait, Councillor Karen Walker and Councillor Karen Warrington

Parish Representatives: Cllr Dawn Drury (Chair of ALCA), and representatives of Bathampton PC, Camerton PC, Chew Stoke PC, Clutton PC, Combe Hay PC, Compton Dando PC, Corson PC, Dunkerton PC, Englishcombe PC, Freshford PC, Peasedown-St-John PC, Priston PC, Publow-with-Pensford PC, Radstock TC, Shoscombe PC, Stowey Sutton PC and Wellow PC

Also in attendance: Will Godfrey (Chief Executive), Mandy Bishop (Director – Environment Services), Peter Capener (Bath and West Community Energy), Dave Dixon (Community Engagement Manager), Sara Dixon (Locality Manager), Mark Hayward (Community Engagement Officer), Chris Head (West of England Rural Network), Bruce Laurence (Director of Public Health), Chris Major (Assistant Director, Highways and Transport), Sgt Jon Raisey (Police), Claire Thorogood (Head of Contracting and Performance), Marie Todd (Democratic Services Officer) and Jane Wildblood (Corporate and Community Sustainability Manager)

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:

Cllr Richard Samuel

Cllr Joanna Wright

Alan Butcher – Clerk to Chelwood Parish Council

Jean Fossaceco – Clerk to Shoscombe Parish Council

Trudi Gilbank – Clerk to Farmborough Parish Council

Lottie Smith-Collins – Clerk to Saltford Parish Council

3 URGENT BUSINESS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There was no urgent business.

4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 October 2019 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

5 PARISH LIAISON MEETING - TERMS OF REFERENCE

At the ALCA Annual General Meeting held in June, it was recommended that an additional point be added to Terms of Reference under clause 5.3. The clause says:

Items that are not relevant for Parish Liaison will be those:

- That relate to a single, or small number of parishes
- For which other, effective channels of communication exist
- That are day to day operational issues
- That need to be addressed immediately

The Parish Liaison Meeting is asked to agree to add a new sentence at the end of clause 5.3 that states:

“other than important items raised by a single parish or a small number of parishes that are agreed by the Parish Liaison agenda setting group will be included on the agenda.”

RESOLVED: To agree to amend the terms of reference for the Parish Liaison Meeting as set out above.

6 UPDATE FROM THE COUNCIL

Councillor Dine Romero, (Council Leader), stated that when the Covid-19 crisis and the lockdown began the Council worked hard to put in place all the support needed by local communities. Clear communication was key at this time to ensure that issues were shared, and relevant information was provided. Any significant issues which arose have also been brought to the attention of the relevant Government Minister.

Financial issues are now a concern and two tranches of additional support funding have now been received from central Government totalling around £10m. There will also be a share of the £5billion fund for local government. This will cover 75% of lost revenue funding predicted for this year. However, there is still a significant shortfall in income from commercial rents and leisure services which will not be covered by this funding.

A number of webinars have also taken place to communicate with local communities. These covered a variety of topics such as financial recovery, young people, slavery, and climate emergency. There will also be a webinar regarding the hospitality sector.

Councillor Romero thanked all those people in the local communities who have provided much needed localised support along with all those that have been working in the compassionate communities hub.

Will Godfrey, B&NES Chief Executive stated that this has been a very difficult and testing period for the organisation. He thanked Council staff for all the work they have done and also thanked the local Town and Parish Councils and their communities for dealing so well with the challenges that have arisen. Everyone has been focused on continuing to provide the best services that they can. New skills have been learnt during this time and it is now important to make preparations for the winter months.

The webinars referred to above can be viewed using the following link:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAc6JFBe_K5mugdUAHeF9w

The following issues were then discussed:

- All B&NES Council-run toilets have remained open during the Covid-19 crisis. The toilets at Waitrose in Bath are privately run but Cllr Dine Romero agreed to investigate when these will be reopened.
- There was some concern around a camping event planned to take place near the Chew Valley lake. Will Godfrey explained that the Council does not police such events but has a public health responsibility. Bruce Laurence, Director of Public Health, explained that the Council's Emergency Planning Events Team does liaise with the police about this type of event if there are concerns. Cllr Dine Romero stated that these concerns have been brought to her attention and that she would investigate the event. It was noted that gatherings of more than 30 people remain illegal and that the police should be informed if necessary.

7 UPDATE ON CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND THE RENEWAL VISION

Cllr Sarah Warren, Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and Neighbourhood Services, reported that a number of Town and Parish Councils have now declared a climate emergency. A great deal of progress has been made on climate issues and Cllr Warren has been made aware of a school's climate emergency network which shares good practice in this area. She asked Parishes who have declared a climate emergency whether they think this type of network would be helpful to enable them to share ideas. She had planned to hold a large event at the Guildhall to discuss climate change but, due to the Covid-19 crisis she has held a number of webinars instead which have been very helpful. There are a number of excellent groups and ideas in the area such as the "share and repair" groups. It is now important to identify the relevant learning points and take this project forward.

Jane Wildblood, Corporate and Community Sustainability Manager, reported on the following issues:

- The programme of work regarding the climate emergency is now getting back on track and there will be an update to the Parish Council toolkit on climate emergency. The community conversations have been very helpful.
- Covid-19 has had a negative impact on communities in terms of the local economy, travel and leisure. However, there have been some positive outcomes such as people cycling and walking more. It is now important to provide a programme of recovery and renewal.

- The renewal vision includes plans for a green recovery and will have the potential for action.
- This will be important to achieve the new vision for 2030 of becoming carbon neutral. One example of ways to achieve this is the provision of the “Green Homes Grant” which aims to make homes more energy efficient. This will also provide jobs which will help the economy.
- It is also important to shorten food supply chains and to provide food locally.
- Further webinars regarding the green renewal vision will take place.
- There will also be further engagement with the Community Forums to explain what the renewal vision means at parish level.

Peter Capener, Managing Director of Bath and West Community Energy (BWCE), gave a presentation covering the following issues:

- A brief outline of the Bath and West Community Energy not-for-profit organisation, including achievements to date and staffing information.
- How the organisation can help local community renewable energy projects. Local community groups close to BWCE get priority when applying for grants to its independent community fund.
- It is important to retain more funding to be spent in the B&NES area.
- The organisation offers a different way of doing business and aims to support local people.
- BWCE are committed to supporting Town and Parish Councils respond effectively to the climate emergency
- As a community enterprise it needs to manage its resources and match what it can offer to local needs
- It aims to develop a programme of work with all interested councils over the next few years
- It can provide a balance of free and funded support
- If Parish Councils are interested they can get in touch with Nick Bird on nick.bird@bwce.coop

A copy of the presentation slides is attached as *Appendix 1* to these minutes.

In response to a question Peter Capener explained that BCWE is a financially sustainable business which monitors its growth along with the number and range of its projects. The organisation can offer a wide range of experience and expertise.

8 REOPENING THE HIGH STREETS AND PLACES OF INTEREST

Cllr Neil Butters gave a presentation regarding reopening of high streets and places of interest, covering the following issues:

- The initial focus was on Bath city centre, as this had the largest footfall and therefore is the most challenging when introducing new access restrictions.
- The Council's Highways Team had to work quickly and without the full consultation period afforded under normal circumstances, to enable social distancing measures to be put in place in time for the re-opening of non-essential businesses on 15 June 2020.

- Following feedback from the town and parish councils of Radstock, Midsomer Norton and Peasedown St John, and having learned the lessons from phase 1 in Bath, and with footfall levels being lower, a decision was taken not to progress the social distancing measures in these areas.
- Keynsham Town Council voted to trial a full closure of Keynsham High Street with effect from Monday 13 July, between 10 am and 6 pm.
- Generally, the access restrictions have worked well with only a few teething problems.
- The restrictions have achieved the objective of providing greater space for social distancing as a response to the pandemic. Some members of the public have suggested that having a car-free environment is generally a nicer experience.
- There have been a few issues which are still being worked through, including Post Officer/Parcelforce collections and deliveries, utility service providers, removal of barriers and access onto Lower Borough Walls.
- The Police are aware of some issues regarding driving in pedestrian areas or not adhering to traffic signs and these locations will be added to their patrol plans; if Police then identify any issues they or the Council will educate and enforce.
- The access restrictions have affected where vehicles driven by or carrying disabled people can park. Although it has taken a small number of disabled parking bays out of use, Blue Badge holders can also park on single or double yellow lines for up to 3 hours.
- You can make your views and opinions known by using the Council's Liveable Neighbourhoods website (<https://bathnesliveablestreets.commonplace.is/>) where people are encouraged to record their views on what sort of improvements are needed across the area to help with walking and cycling.

There have also been issues regarding an influx of visitors to rural areas during the pandemic;

- The pandemic situation, warm weather and related lockdown measures have all led to an increase in the number of visitors to these locations and there have been problems with vehicles parked in a manner that causes safety problems/obstruction.
- In some locations the Council has put in place temporary parking restrictions and Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTROs) to enable enforcement.
- Each location where problems occur requires its own solution and the Council has worked with the Police to find the best way of dealing with them.
- It is expected that the Government message advising against the use of public transport will soon be changing.

A copy of the presentations slides is attached as *Appendix 2* to these minutes.

Sergeant Jon Raisey reported that the Police are working to prevent contravention of the road closure orders. Delivery vehicles should not be reversing up the street and the Police are patrolling the central areas. If people are able to take photographs of any vehicles who are flouting the regulations this would be helpful to help with enforcement.

Sgt Raisey confirmed that there has been heavy footfall in a number of rural locations in the area and this has presented challenges. He stated that the temporary traffic regulations have helped, however, if one area is closed off people often simply congregate in a different location.

The Chair thanked the police service for the work they have carried out during the Covid-19 crisis.

The following issues were then discussed:

- Cllr Karen Warrington asked whether there are plans for further Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) to prevent irresponsible parking e.g. in the Chew Valley area. Chris Major, Assistant Director, Highways and Transport, explained that the Council has a forward programme of TROs to work through and that if areas are added to the programme they will be taken forward. Cllr Neil Butters warned that sometimes parking restrictions can lead to problems in other nearby areas, for example, when restrictions were enforced on the A36 this led to people parking their vehicles in front of houses in the nearby village.
- Cllr Rob Appleyard stated that, to ensure social distancing is maintained the Council has erected barriers to make this easier for residents. Some people have been resistant to these measures; however, it is very important to maintain a safe environment for everyone, particularly those who have been shielding. It is important that people feel confident to return to the high street.
- Cllr Eleanor Jackson pointed out that the solution for one area is not necessarily appropriate for another area. She thanked officers for listening to the concerns of those in the Radstock area. She suggested that hedges should be cut back to allow more space on the pavements. Cllr Neil Butters asked people to inform him of this and he will raise the issue with officers. Pavements could also be made "one-way" on each side of the road which would help social distancing when pavements are narrow. Although, it was acknowledged that not everyone would obey the one-way rule.
- Cllr Hal MacFie stated that the road closure in Keynsham was monitored mainly by shops on the High Street. Dial-A-Ride vehicles are allowed to use the road. It is important to encourage people back to the local shops. Licensing of outside spaces was becoming easier which will help the local economy.

9 RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

Cllr Rob Appleyard, Cabinet Member for Adult Services, thanked all the local groups that have helped vulnerable people in their local communities. The resilient communities hub was set up very quickly and has so far received 6,800 telephone calls, distributed over 300 emergency food parcels, supported over 500 people and has around 1,300 volunteers. This service has been incredibly helpful to those people who have been shielding and has improved mental health and wellbeing. The good practice built up between different agencies during this time needs to be

retained going forward as it represents extremely effective cross-agency working. The Council, Virgin Care and the CCG have all been involved, along with local voluntary organisations. The Chair thanked all those who have been involved in providing this service.

Dave Dixon, Community Engagement Manager, explained that the team realised early on that they would be swamped by the number of calls to the hub if they did not receive help from partners at community level. Without this help the service could not have been provided.

People needed help with things such as replacement hearing aid batteries, food shopping and collecting medication. A short film has been produced to show the work carried out by the team entitled "No Wrong Door". This can be viewed using the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3mJYCpdryII>

Many issues arose during the Covid-19 emergency involving health, safeguarding and financial concerns. A centralised client-based system was created. The aim was to identify underlying, and often multiple, issues within households and to help people to become self-reliant and resilient. The hub has been very effective and a great deal of knowledge has been gained in a short period of time. It is important to retain and share this knowledge going forward.

Bruce Laurence, Director of Public Health, stated that the B&NES area was fortunate not to have too many cases of the virus. However, it is important not to become complacent, to continue to wash hands, test, isolate when necessary and maintain social distancing. It is now important to keep cases low to avoid a local lockdown. The Council is setting up ways to manage any outbreaks and it is important that the public do their bit. Large events should be avoided, and officers will be available to help with any outbreaks in local communities.

Cllr Rob Appleyard noted that this has been a very complicated and fast-moving area of work and he thanked Bruce and the Public Health Team for the great job that they have done over the last few months to deal with the crisis.

10 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was noted that the next Parish Liaison Meeting will take place on Thursday 22 October 2020.

The meeting ended at 7.15 pm

Chair(person)

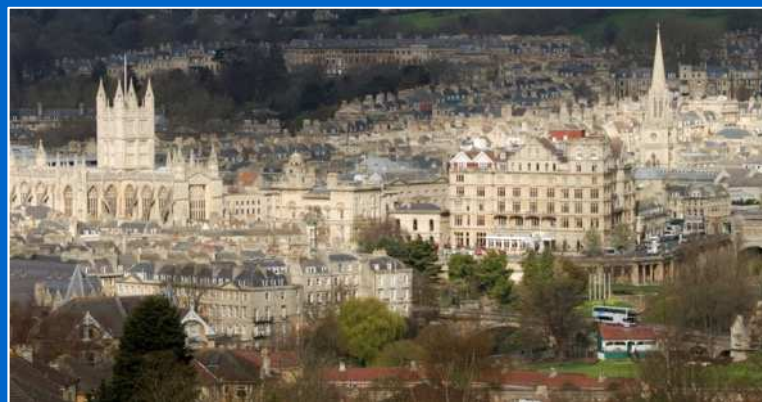
Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services

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Supporting Town & Parish Councils

Page 9



Peter Capener – MD, Bath & West Community Energy

July 2020



Bath & West Community Energy

Established 2010 to deliver ...

**“Clean Local Energy, Community
Owned for the Common Good”**

A Community Benefit Society

One member one vote

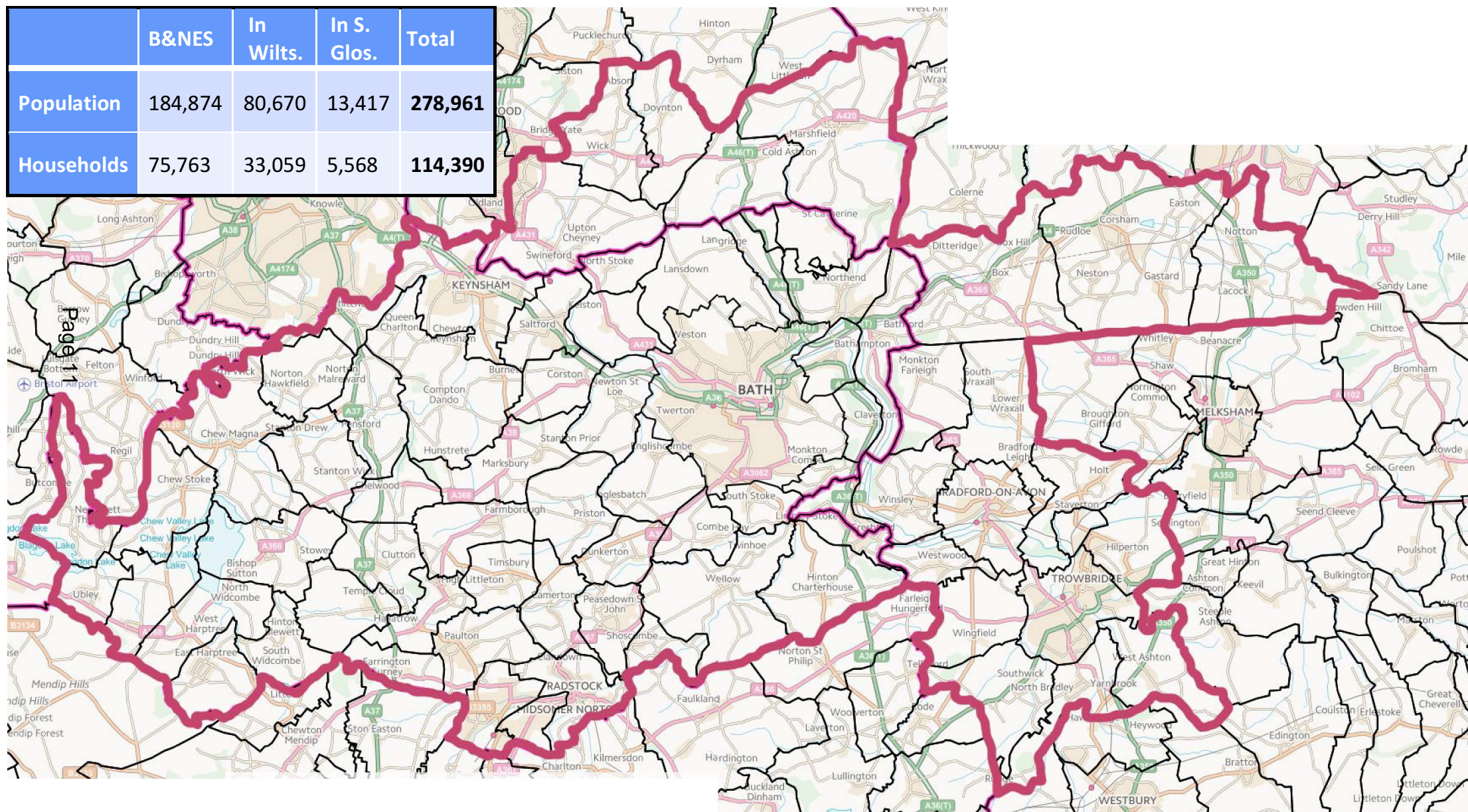
Asset lock

Not for profit

BWCE's area of interest



	B&NES	In Wilts.	In S. Glos.	Total
Population	184,874	80,670	13,417	278,961
Households	75,763	33,059	5,568	114,390





Since 2010, BWCE has ...

Raised £20 million - community fundraising and debt from ethical bank, Triodos

Currently just under 1,000 members & bondholders

Installed 12.35MW – enough to power 4,000 homes

Page 12



Donated over £200,000 through our Community Fund



Underpinned by our growing Supporters Network



BWCE Team

NICK BIRD

Communications and
Community Outreach
Co-ordinator



35 years experience in
community development,
outreach and training

ALEX LOCKTON

Development Co-
ordinator



15 years experience in renewable
energy installation and formerly
MD of renewable energy
company

ALISON TURNBULL

Project Manager



20 years experience in renewable
energy project development and
more recently in community
energy projects

PETER CAPENER

Managing Director



35 years experience in
sustainable energy and formerly
CEO of national energy charity

A different way of doing business ...



Who Owns?

Community enterprise

Who Controls?

Members

Who Benefits?

Community



How we can help your community ...



**Are you interested in
renewable energy projects
developed for and on behalf
of your local community?**

Page 15

In your area we can ...

- Scope out potential energy projects
- Build local awareness (e.g. public meetings, talks, workshops)
- Seek external match funding
- Develop, own and operate community renewable energy projects
- Support local people to invest in local projects
- Maximise local community benefit

Local community groups close to our projects get priority when applying for grants to our independent community fund

So 'What Next'

- BWCE are committed to supporting Town and Parish Councils respond effectively to the climate emergency
- As a community enterprise we need to manage our resources and match what we can offer to local needs
- We aim to develop a programme of work with all interested councils over the next few of years
- We can provide a balance of free and funded support
- If you're interested get in touch with Nick Bird on nick.bird@bwce.coop



**Bath & West
Community Energy**
Generating local energy

Helping Parish Councils develop community owned energy projects which provide real community benefit



Bath & North East Somerset needs to significantly increase the amount of energy generated from renewables

- B&NES Council declared a Climate Emergency in March 2019 and many B&NES Parish Councils have followed suit.
- In October 2019 a B&NES Council report set out ways to move towards carbon neutrality by 2030. This could involve installing solar PV on 50% of existing homes, 116 football pitches worth of solar PV on commercial roof space and ground mounted sites and 28 large wind turbines.

How can communities control, own and benefit from renewable energy in their area?

- Parish Councils can play a critical role in delivering local renewable energy projects through developing plans and mobilising community support.
- Commercial ownership of renewable energy projects will deliver the reduction in carbon emissions we need. However, this won't prioritise local accountability, community resilience and local community benefit.

How can Bath & West Community Energy (BWCE) help Parish Councils?

- If projects are owned by the community through Bath & West Community Energy, then local people can have a stake and surplus income can be redistributed back into the community.
- We can help you scope out the most appropriate energy projects to tackle your local emissions, including energy project feasibility studies
- We can work with you to develop community owned renewable energy projects e.g.
 - Rooftop solar installation for non-domestic properties of an appropriate size via our Community Solar 2020 project
 - Ground mounted solar projects
 - Wind projects
 - Community owned electric vehicle charging and car club networks
- We can support you to seek external funding and local community groups can apply to our independent Community Fund for environmental or fuel poverty initiatives.
- We can help you develop a local identity for your renewable project and help you maximise local community benefit.
- We can support you with local awareness raising (e.g. public meetings, talks, workshops) about the energy transition and how we can tackle local energy challenges.
- We can help you to join a growing network promoting community energy solutions across B&NES.



Summary



- Community energy offers an approach that can underpin change by building trust, consent and active participation
- Join a growing network promoting community energy solutions across B&NES
- BWCE are one of the leading community energy groups in the UK with a proven track record and existing work underway with a number of local parish councils
- Use our expertise, experience and strong community model in support of your local action
- 30th July – Climate Action Planning Day – run by Centre for Sustainable Energy on behalf of Avon Local Councils Association

Nick Bird – nick.bird@bwce.coop – 07517 100889

Pete Capener – pete.capener@bwce.coop – 07775 781331

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Parish Liaison Meeting 16th July 2020

Cllr Neil Butters
Joint Cabinet Member for
Transport Services

Safe Re-opening of High
Streets and Places of Interest

1

Update on how pedestrianisation of High Street during pandemic has worked/not worked.

The initial focus was on Bath city centre, as this had the largest footfall and therefore is the most challenging when introducing new access restrictions.

The Council's Highways Team had to work quickly and without the full consultation period afforded to us under normal circumstances, to enable social distancing measures to be put in place in time for the re-opening of non-essential businesses on **15 June.**

Access Restrictions from 15 June 2020:

York Street, Cheap/Westgate
Streets/Upper Borough Walls –
10 am to 6 pm.

Milsom Street – bus gate – 10 am
to 6 pm.

Following feedback from the town and parish councils of Radstock, Midsomer Norton, Peasedown St John and having learned the lessons from phase 1 in Bath, and with footfall levels being lower, a decision was taken not to progress the social distancing measures in these areas.

However, Keynsham Town Council voted to trial a full closure of Keynsham High Street with effect from Monday 13 July, between 10 am and 6 pm.

Generally the access restrictions have been working well since their implementation, despite a few teething problems - which is understandable given the timescales and limited preparation time.

Essentially, they have achieved the objective of providing greater space for social distancing as a response to the pandemic. Some members of the public have suggested that having a car-free environment is generally a nicer experience.

We have had one test of the ‘Application for Access’ system which was to bring an Outside Broadcast van into York St for filming by ITV West Country’s “This Week”, for an interview with Cllr Paul Crossley.

Having identified some constraints with regard to social distancing, dropped-kerbs and parking - and after discussion with various teams - the application was signed off and granted.

As indicated, there have been a few issues that we are continuing to work through, albeit some have been resolved. These are as follows -

Post Office/Parcelforce collection and delivery: the TTRO includes an exemption for Post Office vehicles, but initially officers were unaware that Parcelforce were part of the same group.

Following discussion with Parcelforce, we are now aware that they work under the Universal Service Agreement, which allows us to provide access - where other collection and delivery services don't. There remains some work to understand this in greater detail.

Utility Service Providers: to date, we have suggested that access is permitted for emergency utility incidents only, eg: gas leaks, and that repairs and planned works would be achieved under our 'Application for Access' system.

Further work and consultation with utility companies is required as part of this ongoing work and in advance of the more robust security project being put in place. (HVM!)

Removal of Barriers: there have been some instances where drivers have taken to either removing the barriers personally to gain access, or driving up on to the footway and around. The protection measures we are currently considering and putting in place over the next few weeks should stop such incidents.

17

Access on Lower Borough Walls: it was decided that street traders in the south of the city should also adhere to the restriction and access before 10 am or after 6 pm. This was largely accepted, but some drivers realised that the rising bollard was controlled mainly by ANPR, allowing them continued access after 10am.

We have now removed the vehicle 'white list' and instructed CCTV staff to consider access requests via the intercom only. We have not heard of further problems, but officers have observed vehicles entering Beau St travelling the wrong way down the street to gain access to shops.

BID Rangers have helped to highlight the access restrictions to businesses and we have asked the Police to monitor this during routine city centre patrols. We will continue to monitor the situation and consider further interventions where necessary.

The Police are aware of some issues regarding driving in pedestrian areas or not adhering to traffic signs and these locations will be added to their patrol plans; if Police then identify any issues we/they will educate and enforce.

The access restrictions have affected where vehicles driven by or carrying disabled people can park. Although it has taken a small number of disabled parking bays out of use, Blue Badge holders can also park on single or double yellow lines for up to 3 hours.

We understand there are usually disabled parking bays available at most times in the larger city centre car parks. However, we are also looking to provide some temporary disabled bays in roads away from those that are restricted - although there are limited opportunities for doing this.

You can make your views and opinions known by using the Council's Liveable Neighbourhoods website (<https://bathnesliveablestreets.commonplace.is/>) where people are encouraged to record their views on what sort of improvements are needed across the area to help with walking and cycling.

There have been many comments in support of restricting access in Cheap Street, Westgate Street and Milsom Street - in a similar way to the current temporary restrictions. We will undertake a review of the feedback we've received in due course.

How can we manage the influx of visitors to our rural communities for walks and wild swimming – noting particularly the impact of increased parking and safety?

The pandemic situation, warm weather and related lockdown measures have all led to an increase in the number of visitors to these locations and there have been problems with vehicles parked in a manner that causes safety problems/obstruction.

In some locations the Council has put in place temporary parking restrictions and Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTROs) to enable enforcement.

Such temporary restrictions are suitable for short periods but do not work so well for the current situation where they can place significant pressure on resource levels, impacting the Council's ability to enforce these and existing restrictions effectively.

Whilst yellow line road markings are an alternative, they are not particularly suitable as a temporary measure as they give the impression of being permanent, they'll have gone in without consultation, and there isn't any easy way of removing them without leaving a scar on the road or causing some damage to the surface.

30

Each location where problems occur requires its own solution and the Council has worked with the Police to find the best way of dealing with them.

Will Government's lockdown direction to not use public transport be permanent locally?

“I can say categorically that when the Government advice shifts to being more positive about travelling on public transport, WECA will reflect that. It has committed to targets for public transport use in JLTP4 and the Bus Strategy.”

Andy Strong, Transport Ops Team