



**Note of the meeting of the Bathavon North Forum  
held on Tuesday, 3rd September, 2019  
in Bathampton Village Hall - 29 Holcombe Lane, Bathampton BA2 6UL**

**Meeting Attendance**

<b>In Attendance</b>
Councillor Hugh Baker
Dave Ball
Bathford Parish Council
Moira Brennan
CLr Catherine McCarthy
Catherine Gregory
Wendy Christine Chambers
Bathampton Parish Council
Batheaston Parish Council
Charlcombe Parish Council
Claverton Parish Council
Swainswick Parish Council
Dave Dixon
Ethan Doble
Peter Fear
Will Godfrey
Councillor Kevin Guy
Alison Harper
Mark Hayward
Rob Kendall
Andrew Lea
Friends of Bathampton Meadows
Northstoke Parish Meeting
Maureen Millbank
Mark Minkley
Adam O'Loughlin
Residents
Councillor Dine Romero
Paula Spiers
Councillor Sarah Warren
Victoria Wells

<b>Apologies Received from</b>
Matthew Crovetto

Mike Plows
Gavin Usher

## 1. Introductions and Welcome

Hugh Baker welcomed everybody to the Bathampton Village Hall for the first meeting of the Bathavon North forum since January 2019.

Introductions were given by all attendees.

## 2. AGM

Hugh Baker explained that he had taken on the role of Chair of the Bathavon Forum for a number of years and continued to Chair the meetings for Bathavon North when it was agreed that the area would split into two separate forums, the Bathavon North and the CAM Valley.

This meeting will be the final meeting that Hugh will Chair the meeting. The request has been made for a new Chair and a Vice Chair which at present no nominations have been made.

The meeting was asked for any volunteers but there was not anyone willing to agree to take on the role.

The request was made that if anyone wishes to put themselves forward, they should e-mail Mark Hayward [mark\\_hayward@bathnes.gov.uk](mailto:mark_hayward@bathnes.gov.uk)

Kevin Guy explained that his colleague Sarah Warren who had not yet arrived at the meeting had spoken about taking on the role of Chair.

Dave Dixon explained what is involved in the roles and felt that the level time that was needed to commit to the roles was not particularly great.

The question was asked “if nobody takes on the role will the forum be allowed to continue to meet?” – Dave Dixon explained that the forum will continue with meeting being chaired by an officer of the Council.

**ACTION** – Council Officers will discuss with Sarah Warren if she wishes to take on the role of Bathavon Forum Chair.

## 3. Police Update

Neighbourhood Police Team Sergeant Adam O'Loughlin was present to update the forum on the local policing arrangements and what has been happening with reported crime in the local area.

Since last addressing this forum in January show changes have taken place in the structuring of neighbourhood teams. The team that cover the Bath Outer Area is fully staffed for the first time in a while. The details of the team can be found on the forces updated website -

<https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/your-area/bath-city-outer/>

Adam explained that the crimes which are reported are measured in two ways, the data reported is based on either rolling or the calendar year.

- Crime overall is up 10% which is 110 extra reported incidents
- The incidents include; 2 Drug offences, 2 additional residential burglaries and a number of criminal damage incidents.
- Crime does remain low and is below the national and force wide averages.
- Antisocial Behaviour incidents are up by 11% or 84 incidents, this also reflects a lower than average against force wide numbers.
- Detailed information of reported crimes in the Bath Outer Area can be explored on the forces website - <https://www.police.uk/avon-and-somerset/CS219/>

The local police are keen to make sure that their engagement agenda is taking place. Activities such as neighbourhood watch and community speed watch are examples of how communities can be effectively involved.

There is a need to refresh the understanding of what it is that the community want to see from the local resources the police have, there is and awareness that speeding still remains an issue in this area.

#### Questions

1. How does a community know if they have a working neighbourhood watch group?  
Response: Neighbourhood watch is a really important community tool and each scheme that is set up needs to feed in a local report to the police through their coordinator. The police will have a record of all active groups in the area.
2. There have been changes to the local boundaries, which police localities are taking responsibility for are areas such as Claverton that seem to have fallen to a district not connected to the local area?  
Response: There are local arrangements that have been put in place to deal with the anomalies that have occurred and Bath Outer is looking after those areas.
3. Is Warley Weir being covered by the local policing team?  
Response – Yes, this site is the local team's responsibility. There is awareness of the issues that occur with chaotic parking on the A36 and Ferry Lane in the summer months. Next summer there will be a proper plan in place to deal with the issues, work will take place with the fire and ambulance services to ensure they have an understanding around access to the site.
4. Where there are parking issues on roads that are not directly associated with yellow lines, what rules are being followed to deal with the problems?  
Response: The police try to take a pragmatic view where issues crop up. If there are repeated reports made about persistent offenders then these drivers will be dealt with. The local authorities are responsible for issues that are caused due to yellow lines. The forces website has details of how to report incidents - <https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/contact-us/>

#### **4. Fire and Rescue Update**

Due to operational reasons Avon Fire and Rescue were unable to send a representative to this meeting.

Attached is the latest Avon Fire and Rescue service report.

## 5. B&NES Council - The new administration's priorities

Council Leader Dine Romero provided the forum with a presentation on the priorities that she and her cabinet are addressing. This presentation is included with the forum meeting notes and is available on the Bathavon Forum Webpage –

<https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/neighbourhoods-and-community-safety/connecting-communities/bathavon-area-forum>

### Questions and discussion points

1. How are you intending to make improvements to public transport?  
Response: We have been working with the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) on a strategy that looks across the needs of the whole area. Once the strategy document is available we will be asking our communities to have their say on this with the aim of finding the right solutions for improvements.
2. How will you make improvements to public engagement?  
Response: We are aware of the mistakes that were made by the previous administration and how they had an impact on this local area. We are already working on the way that we set out Communication, Consultation and Community Engagement; it is important that how we frame the question that we are asking our communities is set out correctly. We have to ask ourselves if what we are asking people is really going to address the issue and shape the next steps of what we need to do. We have to use the mechanisms in our communities and work with parishes to time the discussions correctly.
3. There are issues for younger people within our communities that need to be addressed such as can free bus passes for public transport be provided to young people. There needs to be better opportunities to engage much earlier and by using places such as GP surgeries.  
Response: Dina asked “how can we attract your son to come along and engage with us?”  
It was suggested that by attending places like the college and asking that question would be a starting point.  
Response: Kevin Guy added that the proposal for all teenagers to be provided with free bus passes is being put forward at the Liberal Democrat Conference.  
It was suggested that affordable local buses could address problems such as the parking at Warley Weir. Where people are living without a car they must be provided with the right options so the work in helping address climate emergency and health issues becomes easier.
4. The climate emergency will require greater resources if parish councils are to deliver more. Presently most parishes only employ a clerk and maybe a litter picker. Ideas that come along often fade due to lack of available volunteers, the community need to know what parishes fund raising options exist.  
Response: It would depend on what sort of project that the community want to take on, it might be that the project may only require a short term post to get started. There may be options that can be explored for projects to draw in additional funds, an example such as the waterscape project has drawn in large amounts of funding. It is often the case that local projects will have reliance on grass roots help.

Response: Dave Dixon added that parish councils are in a position where they can employ staff. A parish decides how much the precept it will charge its community and this is not capped. In B&NES there are variances in the yearly parish precept amounts, this ranges from £0 to over £150.

Response: Kevin Guy explained that where a parish has a project that they can partly fund they can speak with B&NES Council to see what possible match funding solutions may be available.

The point was added that it is not always money which prevents communities from getting on with dealing with local issues. Where volunteers have been available for litter picking they have been stopped due to health and safety issues.

**ACTION:** Dave Dixon agreed to speak with highways to see what procedures need to be followed by volunteers.

Where grass verges have become unwieldy communities are prevented from mowing without the consent of B&NES Council.

Neighbourhood plans have a heavy reliance on volunteers and there are needs to be support from B&NES on areas such as dealing with disability issues and equalities.

Response: Dave Dixon explained that many neighbourhood plans centre on the assumption that it is all about planning issues. There has to be a broader focus of the future direction for the local villages.

**ACTION:** Details will be provided on what equalities training assistance is available from B&NES Council for parishes.

5. Climate change requires everybody to think differently about the differences that they can individually make.

The direct route into Bath along the London Road must be improved for cyclists by putting in place proper cycle lanes.

Taking the alternative route of coming over the toll bridge and along the tow path from Bathampton is safer but increases the journey time.

There are good practices on the continent that we should be looking to for improving cycling locally. Clearer markings that make cycling and walking a priority are just one idea.

Response: The cycle routes need to be joined up in a better way, there are presently some awful places on the route that make it difficult for cycling.

Sarah Warren explained that green cycle routes are something that she is working on with Joanna Wright; there is a real need to resolve these issues.

Sarah explained that the new consultation on the CAZ will be released shortly. There will be charging within the zone that should see some funding funnel into the provision for sustainable transport.

Mark Minkley explained that officers had looked at what has happened in Europe with ideas such as large scale bike parks. In Keynsham there is a planned trial for how the road space is laid out along the High Street. If this is a success then it could be used as an option for the London Road.

Councillor Romero offered to answer any further questions by email

[dine\\_romero@bathnes.gov.uk](mailto:dine_romero@bathnes.gov.uk)

## 6. West of England Nature Partnership

Sarah Warren explained that Mark Minkley had been invited to attend the Bathavon Forum to show the work that is taking place locally to address nature's ecology emergency that has been declared.

Mark Minkley explained that the work that is taking place to address issues with the climate and ecology has to have links into local communities.

Two presentations were given which explained the work of the West of England Nature Partnership and Bathscape.

Link to both of the presentations:

[WEN Partnership](#)

[Bathscape](#)

- Points that were included in the presentations:
- Waterscape and Bathscape are the most well-known initiatives
- The Bristol and Avon area has a number of partnerships
- The Festival of Nature which is held at Green Park in Bath attracted over 4,000 people earlier this year.
- Bathscape covers the green heritage site area.
- Ash dieback is a serious disease that is killing ash across Europe. Ash is a very important tree in the UK both ecologically and culturally so this disease is causing great concern about the damage it will do. There has been a meeting in Avoncliff that has explained that 20% of tree cover could be lost by this disease and there has to be an understanding of what action needs to be taken to deal with this.

## Questions and discussion points

1. How much engagement has taken place with children?  
Response over the summer there have been over 500 children involved in initiatives. The city nature challenge smartphone app has proved to be a success. We are listening and looking to refine the process for future engagement.
2. What happened in schools?  
Response: We have carried out school visits and this is a critical strand of the work which has been supported by Bath Spa University.
3. Northstoke is a small rural parish that has only 50 dwellings that would like to know how they go about contributing to the wider scheme. There appears to be a lack of detail of parish implications at the action plan level, land owners and interested people seem to have been missed.  
Response: Areas that are covered were set out in the funding conditions from the HLF, this state delivery of a green setting of Bath (Bathscape). There are other areas of work that we are delivering on such as public rights of way.

## 7. Making the most of Community Forums

Dave Dixon explained that the Bathavon North Area Forum has had difficulty in attracting enough interest to make it effective. The turnout tonight is a great improvement on previous meetings and the largest for this forum area.

The agenda for this meeting noted the purpose of the community forum and suggestions for future agendas that were submitted in advance of the meeting.

*Purpose of the meetings –*

- *Be a clear alternative to the Parish Liaison meeting*
- *Bringing together representation from the parished areas that are adjacent to the Bath City Boundary.*
- *To raise and discuss common issues that are facing these areas that are mainly rural in nature.*
- *Avoid duplication of issues that are covered at other Council meetings.*
- *Meetings to be open access and promoted to the public.*

*Future priorities and topics for the Bathavon North Forum (these are all suggestions which have recently been submitted)-*

- *Closure of Print Services, what alternatives have been put into place for Parishes that used the services?*
- *What plans are there to secure Bathampton Meadows?*
- *A presentation from B&NES, as the client for Connecting Devon and Somerset (Not Gigaclear) on the provision of rural fast broadband.*
- *Implications of the B&NES Climate Emergency in more rural areas. Oil is relied on for heating and cooking, public transport does not serve the areas well and housing stock is old. What other opportunities are there for contributing?*
- *The creation of paid positions that work with the local Bathavon North community on environmental initiatives.*
- *Priorities for highways*
- *Litter and recycling*

Points that were noted from attendees at this meeting:

Meetings need to be:

- Useful and effective in some way.
- Not just a talking shop, be issue led.
- Situated at local venues
- Avoid duplication of parish liaison meetings
- Make use of video links
- Be an open meeting to all the community (residents, parishes and other groups)
- Recognise that volunteers attend and are hard to come by
- Include plenty of time for networking
- Tap into ideas at an early stage and draw these out
- Consider different times / days , could we have a Saturday morning session
- Include local issues such as the meadows and the links

- Look at issues such as public transport
- Big issues need to come to forum early
- There needs to be an understanding of when a topic is early engagement and when it is consultation, this forum could do this
- The forum can fill the gaps that need a voice in the community, building the relationships is key to this
- There has to be a mixture of mechanisms to get the message out that these meetings are happening. A mixture of radio, press (including the local look magazine), social media (including mail chimp), noticeboards (including GP surgeries) and parish and council newsletters.
- Limited the number of topic at each meeting allowing a greater amount of time for topics, single issue meetings would be the preference.
- Invite CCG representatives for health and wellbeing issues
- Link to climate emergency, interest is high.
- Meetings should be 3-4 times per year.

Dine Romero explained that this is a forum that has to be two way as B&NES can't do this on their own, there need to be input of community issues and those issues that are most relevant.

Sarah Warren explained that the choice to have this community forum is a choice and we can adapt to make it meet the local area's needs.

Dave Dixon explained that the CAM Valley forum is taking place on 18<sup>th</sup> October at Freshford Village Hall. This meeting has put the majority of its agenda over to climate emergency. This is an open public meeting and anyone at this meeting are welcome to attend if they wish to.