

Local news update

from our Ward Councillors, Brian Webber and Manda Rigby

First, the commercial. We represent different political parties. We may not agree on all issues, just as we do not always agree with our respective parties on every issue. However, we intend to work together to further the best interests of the ward.

Second, the big picture. Whatever one's view of the Council's choice of priorities, the reality is that all services are subject to severe budgetary pressures. Desirable improvements will be slower, and they will need the help of the business community, which is also experiencing difficult times. We should never 'sell out' to commercial interests, but we should seek to be receptive and encouraging to private investment.

Cleansing - Though there have been some problems in Grove Street, the cleansing and rubbish collection services are generally to a good standard in the PERA area. The co-operation and vigilance of individual residents have helped a lot. As many residents occupy small apartments, it is essential that weekly rubbish collections are maintained.

Transport - The return of limited bus services over Pulteney Bridge has been a sensible compromise. Rat-running by vehicles heading for Cleveland Bridge affects many streets, but there is no obvious solution which will not inflict greater inconvenience on residents or merely displace the problem from one street to another. Speeding vehicles are a serious safety concern for some residents, but the physical measures (e.g. raised tables, build-outs, repeater signs) needed to calm traffic could be controversial.

Anti-social behaviour - The Police response to anti-social activities in Henrietta Park has been good, but it does depend on residents reporting incidents. Though the PERA area is on the periphery of the 'late evening economy', it is not immune from its

unpleasant features. There has been some progress in tackling its abuses, but more remains to be done.

Planning developments - Looking a little outside the PERA area, the improvements to the High Street should commence later this year. While the enlarged Waitrose store may bring benefits, many residents will regret the loss of the Mall and its characterful small shops. Duck Son & Pinker's premises have been sold, and their refurbishment should bring some attractive new businesses. The tiers of vaults extending to the river's edge and the tunnel under Bridge Street to the Victoria Art Gallery also have exciting potential.

The Rec - However, the main issue affecting the PERA area is the future of the Rec. The consultation last May was much criticised. However, even if it is discounted, all the evidence from previous public debate and consultation indicates that opinion in the city is generally in favour of retaining professional rugby on the Rec. A new stadium would be better than what is there at present, but obviously it must respect and preserve the city's wonderful architecture and setting. The Council, with its planning authority hat on, must be resolute in ensuring that the city's heritage has precedence.

How any stadium is used is also vital, not just to its near neighbours, but to the amenity and character of the city as a whole. Therefore, it is essential that any deal between the Trust and the prospective developer/lessee is subject to full and open consultation with all interested parties to ensure appropriate safeguards are included.

PACT (Partners And Communities Together)

At the last meeting, held in January 2012, presentations were given by Avon and Somerset Police about begging and recent crime statistics. The three main areas for persistent begging are Milsom Street, Kingsmead Square and the area around the Podium. The Police asked for our help in reporting incidents of begging as this can, and has, led to ASBOs being issued to repeat offenders.

With regard to antisocial behaviour generally the Police reported that their initiative to crackdown on this in the period leading up to Christmas (Operation Eutaxy Plus) has meant there were fewer incidents of antisocial behaviour reported and fewer arrests.

BANES reported on their street cleaning initiatives, which include the investment in new electronic machinery and a new city centre depot for their storage and charging. The new Glutton machines, which operate like a giant vacuum cleaner are being deployed more and more in the city centre.

The next Partners and Communities Together (PACT) meeting is on **Wednesday 18th April 2012 at 6.30 p.m. at the Guildhall.** Residents' priorities to be discussed at that meeting include nuisance caused by seagulls and vehicles parking on pavements.

Useful contact numbers

Neighbourhood Police Team

0845 456 7000 or 101

(for reporting incidents including begging, anti-social behaviour, suspicious behaviour etc.)

For emergencies only please continue to call 999.

Council Connect

01225 394041

(for reporting missed waste collections, litter (including excrement and vomit and bin emptying), street lights out of action, dangerous paving, graffiti etc)

Fir Trees at the Rec

Despite frequent requests to the Chairman of the Trustees, Cllr David Dixon, we are no further forward in having them cut back to hedge height, or removed and the area tidied up. Until recently, a man was sleeping rough underneath them.

The groundsmen struggle to maintain the area - it's impossible to use a strimmer and the undergrowth is thick with rubbish (and worse).

The cricket pavilion is a listed building but is sadly dilapidated - crumbling masonry, broken guttering, holes in the walls. Men often sleep rough on the verandah with associated debris, vomit and ...

We should be proud of every area of our World Heritage City.

Bath Business Improvement District (BID)

This began on 1st April 2011 and is in place for 5 years.

Bath traders and businesses pay an additional 1% on top of their business rates as a levy. Five BID Rangers are now in place whose role is to provide street deep cleans in the city centre and assistance to local businesses with local problems.

The marketing group organises promotional events such as the Christmas lights switch on, the Christmas market and Bath in Fashion. A smart phone App for the city is in production and should be launched in the next couple of months. Andrew Cooper is BID Manager and he can be contacted on 01225 396458 (andrew.cooper@futurebathplus.co.uk).

PERA Committee

Chairman Nigel Websper
nigelwebsper@gmail.com
Telephone: 01225 336430
Mobile: 07860 525 405

Deputy Chairman Carole King
caroleking@btinternet.com
Mobile: 07776 221392

Membership Secretary Cindi Cooper
cindicooper@btinternet.com

Treasurer Doug White
whitemail9@btinternet.com
Telephone: 01225 484500

Secretary Sally Brown
Sallybrown2000@yahoo.com

Committee Members

Roy Hatch
royhatch@35bromptonroad.com
Telephone: 01225 466439
Mobile: 07710 094615

Peter Turner
peter@bedros.plus.com
Telephone: 01225 331215
Mobile: 07715 159511

Caroline Greenwood
David.greenwood12@btinternet.com
Telephone: 01225 337393

Caroline Greenwood
David.greenwood12@btinternet.com
Telephone: 01225 337393