



CARA News

Autumn 2020

The Circus Area Residents Association (CARA) represents the views of local residents and local businesses.

CARA:

- **C**onnects you with your community.
- **A**rranges a calendar of social events. Meet your neighbours and make new friends.
- **R**epresents the collective interests of its members on local issues.
- **A**dvises and updates members on news and issues. We issue regular e-Bulletins and twice-yearly Newsletters.

Note from our Chairman

Welcome to our latest issue of CARA News.

With apologies for stating the obvious, the last six months have been abnormal and challenging for our CARA members as well as for many of our neighbours and residents.

We sincerely hope that our "Coronavirus Community Response" services, as detailed on our website, have helped to some degree to re-assure residents that a support mechanism exists for those who might need it. In the continued uncertain Covid-19 scenario we will continue to offer and maintain those support services as long as they may continue to be required (<https://carabath.com/community-coronavirus-response>). Please do not hesitate to use them or recommend them to others for whom they may be of help. Our very particular thanks go to all those individuals and local businesses who volunteered with their ongoing support for the CARA Coronavirus support structure.

Throughout recent months, as you will see within this edition of CARA News, we have not been inactive in other areas! We have continued to engage, whenever possible, with our Council to encourage those improvements to key aspects of our community life which we believe to be to the benefit of our members and our neighbourhood as a whole.

As mentioned below, our Council is now embarked upon its "Liveable Neighbourhoods" consultation process - do have your say! We, as your CARA Committee will continue our on-going work on such important matters as the potential introduction of a Low Traffic Neighbourhood in order for us, in due course, to refer it to yourselves as part of our own CARA consultation process. We will also be responding to our Council's overall "Liveable Neighbourhoods" strategic policy document.

A busy, challenging but your Committee believes a potentially rewarding year ahead!

With best wishes to you all.

Malcolm - Chairman.

Update on our priorities for 2019/20

1. **Traffic management.** Traffic Management is a key priority area for CARA. This reflects an intent to address the above-average car movements largely 'rat-running', excessive coach traffic volume and congestion in the area with resultant high pollution levels.

- a. **Coach ban.** CARA has previously reported that B&NES Council introduced a bus restriction (including coaches) in The Circus area effective May 2nd 2019.

This means that bus/coach access to the CARA catchment area is limited to 'authorised buses' only. The only authorised buses are the red hop-on hop-off tour buses, that are regulated as a bus service, and the only permitted coaches are those directly accessing commercial premises within our residential area. No buses/coaches are allowed to 'sightsee' or to park.

Since the ban came into operation, it has taken some time for coach firms and coach drivers to become used to the new traffic regulations. Although we saw continued coach activity over summer 2019, our survey data showed that (pre-Lockdown) coach numbers were down by 85% to 90%. Although pleasing, we continue to work hard to ensure that the traffic regulations are respected. We try to identify all coaches that enter the area, record their details and liaise with the coach firms to advise them formally of the traffic arrangements and request that they use alternative routes for their visits to Bath. For those firms that persist in using our residential area in defiance of the ban, their details are submitted to the Police for action to be taken.

- b. **Investigating a Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN).** Last year, CARA sought members' views on their appetite for the introduction of an LTN in the CARA catchment area. LTNs are one route to enhancing local air quality and traffic management within appropriate catchment areas. They may be defined as: "*Groups of residential streets, bordered by main or distributor roads (the places where buses, lorries, non-local traffic should be) where 'through' motor vehicle traffic is discouraged or removed. There are lots of ways you can make a low traffic neighbourhood but the main principle is that every resident can drive onto their street, get deliveries etc but it is harder or impossible to drive straight through from one main road to the next*".

B&NES is looking to introduce LTNs as part of its Liveable Neighbourhoods initiative – see below. As part of this, CARA is working with B&NES on early-stage planning of a local LTN scheme. At present, there is no formal plan in place, solely the concept, and members will be kept fully advised of developments so that they can continue to have their say on the issue.

2. **Parking.** Parking is a key priority area for CARA to benefit both our members and other local residents. CARA has had some good success to date. We continue to work hard for our members and other residents in our catchment to increase the permanent parking options exclusively available to them throughout our residential area. Recent developments and ongoing discussions in this area are:

- a. **More Permit Parking spaces.** In the last two years, we have secured 'Residents Permit Parking' spaces across all three terraces of The Circus with others in surrounding streets. We now have 50 'Resident Permit Parking' spaces across our catchment area. However, this still represents only 12% of our on-street parking capacity. As such, we are speaking with B&NES with the request to double this parking provision to 25% of on-street capacity.
- b. **New ban on inner Circus parking.** Earlier this year, B&NES removed parking around the entire inner ring of The Circus by 'double-yellow line' restriction. We believe that the aim to deter destination parking will, in combination with our other parking initiatives, ultimately improve parking availability to the benefit of members and other local residents.
- c. **Visitor Parking permits.** Since 4th March 2019, residents have, under a 12-month trial scheme, been able to apply for electronic visitor parking permits that they can use for their guests to park in the Lower Lansdown Central Zone. Residents are eligible for up to 100 hours per annum of visitor parking permits. We are in discussion with B&NES to make this scheme permanent and to increase the number of hours under the scheme.
- d. **Control/reduction of 'Hospitality' parking permits.** Currently hotels/guest houses have access to multiple 'hospitality' parking permits (one permit per bedroom) that allow their guests to park on the streets

and in 'Residents Permit Parking' spaces. These permits increase materially the competition for parking spaces. We are speaking to B&NES about the control/reduction of these permits (introduced without consultation a few years back). We believe that they should only be valid in car parks and park & ride parks.

3. **The Circus lawn (care and maintenance).** At the AGM in May 2019, members expressed concern about the general condition and appearance of the Circus lawn. This is in addition to the lack of meaningful management of the London Plane trees that were planted in the very early 19th century. The Committee is reflecting on our options for work to be done. Understandably, the lawn receives a high amount of 'footfall' and ensuring access to the centre of the lawn, under healthy and safe trees, is important. The Council has no budget to carry out any work.
4. **Public realm.** CARA continues to promote sensitive maintenance of the public realm. A recent example was the road reconstruction and resurfacing in The Circus (June 2019) recommended to the Committee by one resident, pursued with the Council and implemented, to the benefit of all.

Other local issues

- **AGM.** On 9th July, CARA held its Annual General Meeting 'virtually' using the Zoom application. The Chairman, Barry Gilbertson, presented a report on CARA's many activities over the last year.

The new committee elected was Malcolm Baldwin (Chairman), Richard Brown (Vice Chairman), Mike Richardson (Treasurer), Rosie Tunstall (Social Secretary), George Feiger, Sally Rothwell, Stephen Taylor and Ron Temperton.

Our thanks go to committee members who retired at the AGM; Barry Gilbertson, Bernard Horn and Anne Love.

Typically at our AGM, CARA members identify priorities for the coming year. Unfortunately, due to the 'virtual' nature of the meeting this year, we were unable to obtain members' views on their priorities. However, we intend to hold a members' meeting, if possible under restrictions for public gatherings, at a later date in 2020 to determine priorities for 2020-21. Should recently announced government restrictions in relation to 'assemblies' persist, we will endeavour to look at other means of canvassing member's views on our ongoing priorities and indeed on all other areas of importance.

- **Liveable Neighbourhoods consultation – Have your say.** Residents are being asked for their views on B&NES Council's ambitious proposals for liveable neighbourhoods which will improve air quality and health, encourage more walking and cycling and reduce vehicles in residential areas. Liveable neighbourhoods are an important part of the council's plan to tackle the climate and ecological emergency and to improve health and wellbeing across the area.

B&NES has developed three strategies which it now wants views on. The three strategies would form the basis for liveable neighbourhoods. They are:

- Low traffic neighbourhood (LTN) strategy
- Residents' parking schemes strategy
- On-street electric vehicle charging strategy

Residents are being asked what they think about the plans in an on-line consultation that will run until Wednesday 14 October.

Have your say

For full details of the proposals and to comment, please visit: <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/liveable-neighbourhoods-consultation>

Please respond by Wednesday 14 October 2020.

- **CARA Litter Pick.** CARA volunteers undertake occasional litter picking gatherings to help keep our neighbourhood clean. Our next litter picks, on Sunday 27 September and Sunday 4 October, coincide with the 'Great British September Clean'. We meet on the paved area at the front entrance to the Assembly Rooms at 9.30 a.m. for about 60 minutes, or so (this will give us considerable space to ensure appropriate social distancing prior to setting off in couples and small groups). Our previous litter picks have been a great success.

Would you be interested in joining us? All equipment including day-glo tabards, sacks, gloves etc. will be provided. E-mail: Sabrina at sabrinaearnshaw@gmail.com. See you there!

CARA social events

- CARA typically has a full and varied social calendar led by the monthly 'Ladies social', the annual Georgian Garden Summer Drinks Party, a Christmas lunch party and the ever-popular 'Christmas Carols on The Circus green'.

Unfortunately, due to current Coronavirus restrictions and ongoing uncertainties, we are unable to provide any dates for social events in the foreseeable future. However, rest assured that our Social Events team is ready to work quickly to organise events as and when the situation on social gatherings becomes clearer and it is safe to hold such gatherings.



CARA Committee 2020/21		Our email addresses are on our website www.carabath.com	
Malcolm Baldwin	Chairman/FoBRA	Sally Rothwell	Licensing/Public Realm
Richard Brown	Vice Chairman/Traffic	Stephen Taylor	Planning
George Feiger	Traffic	Ron Temperton	City Centre Action Group
Mike Richardson	Treasurer	Rosie Tunstall	Social Secretary

CARA membership is open to all. The cost is only £7.50 per household/business per year. A membership application form can be found below – please join us! The more members we have, the more influence we have in improving our CARA catchment area for all of our residents.

CIRCUS AREA RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION (CARA) Membership form

I wish to join CARA.

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ E-mail Address _____

STANDING ORDER INSTRUCTION FORM

Please complete details to instruct your Bank/Building Society to make a standing order payment. We will do the rest.

To the Manager, Bank/Building Society _____
Postal Address _____ Post Code _____

Name of Account to be debited _____

Sort Code _____ Account Number _____

Please pay to the credit of CIRCUS AREA RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION LIMITED at Lloyds TSB Bank plc, 47 Milsom Street, Bath, BA1 1DN, Sort Code: 30 90 54 Account No: 56601468 on receipt of this order and on 1st April each year the sum of £7.50. I will inform the Bank/Building Society in writing if I wish to cancel this instruction.

Signature _____ Date _____

Please cut out and return the form to Mike Richardson, CARA Treasurer, 10 Crescent Lane, Bath, BA1 2PU

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) - Data Protection Act 2018. Please note that, in order to communicate with members, the personal details above are kept on our records. We do not disclose this information to any 3rd party.