



CARA Bulletin

Spring 2022

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.

The last two/three months have been overall a busy period for your CARA Committee in attempting to push forward our agenda relating to the key priorities highlighted in our last "CARA News", namely:

- Improvements to the parking 'regime' for residents throughout our CARA catchment area.
- Implementation of the best aspects of B&NES Council's "Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy", including that relating to the introduction of a Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) concept within our catchment zone.
- Continued monitoring and improvements to our streets and areas of our 'public realm' in general.

The occasional frustrations evidenced in driving forward any priorities on behalf of our CARA members and our neighbourhood in general have been exacerbated by the issue of availability, during this recent period, of key officers.....and appropriate resources within the Council's structure.

In fairness the above situation, frustrating though it may be on occasions, is both partly a result of the on-going impact of Covid on particular Council departmental resources alongside the additional demands from central government as a result of greater ongoing requirements for informed information flow and more local consultation processes (often necessary in order to 'capture' more available central government funding).

Within the context of the above the danger of 'consultation fatigue' has been raised with key individuals within the current B&NES administration whilst still recognising the need for focused and meaningful consultations on key matters of real importance to our community.

All of the above being said, we 'mere mortals' (that's your Committee!), although occasionally frustrated, remain completely undeterred in pushing ahead on our collective agenda and delivering on the priorities and targeted improvements on behalf of our neighbourhood (See more under "Update on our priorities").

It is probably worthy of note and acknowledgement that your Committee representatives, during the last quarter, have remained assiduous in pursuing the interests and priorities of our residents association via such 'mechanisms' as, for example:

- On-going communications with our four ward Councillors (two representing Kingsmead Ward and two representing Lansdown Ward) to encourage improvements for our CARA area.
- Regular meetings/interfaces with Counc. Manda Rigby - Cabinet Member for Transport (also responsible for parking services).
- On-site meeting with Counc. Lucy Hodge, to establish the feasibility of gaining additional funding for improvements to the Julian Road area.
- On-going communication with the B&NES Parks Department to initiate necessary maintenance of the Circus trees.
- On-site meeting with B&NES Neighbourhood Environmental Services to discuss public realm improvements in Margaret's Buildings and other areas of our CARA catchment zone (see updated map below later).
- On-site meeting with B&NES Highways Maintenance Department to jointly co-ordinate and progress the repainting and refurbishment of the lamp posts in Margaret's Buildings and Saville Row.
- Off-site meeting with Tom Boden, of the National Trust, to establish on-going communications in respect of their future intentions for usage of the Assembly Rooms.
- Meeting with the new Head of Heritage Services responsible for Bath Film Office and its activities and the Fashion Museum (until March 2023 when the Assembly Rooms revert to the National Trust).
- On-going communication and liaison with the newly appointed B&NES Director of Sustainable Communities (responsible for the effective implementation of the Council's "Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy" and a lot more besides!).
- On-going monitoring of key planning and licensing applications that might adversely impact upon residents in our CARA catchment area.
- Liaison with and monitoring of the Milsom Street Quarter review, of which George Street (the northern side) within our catchment is part.
- Other meetings of consequence continue, when appropriate, to be held at senior levels within the B&NES structure to assist in promoting both the concerns and aspirations of our CARA membership.

In summary, much happening but also much awaiting some required input and decisions, in some cases, from relevant Council departments. It should be noted that a number of new key appointments within the B&NES Executive, relatively recently made, may well assist in 'turbo-charging' some of the important decision making processes that both CARA and some of our more immediate neighbouring resident associations are eagerly awaiting.

Finally, but of course by no means least, I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to Stephen Taylor who relatively recently resigned as a member of our CARA Committee as a result of relocating out of our CARA catchment area.

Stephen's involvement in our many and inevitably varied Committee discussions always brought a sound and effective contribution to our meetings.....for which I know that both myself and my Committee colleagues were always appreciative. Our thanks to Stephen are most appropriate for his always steady and helpful contribution.

With best wishes and a Happy Easter!

Malcolm - Chairman

Update on our Priorities

1- Traffic management. In respect of the Council's "Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy" the additional consultation undertaken in December of last year was actually extended, in terms of its closure date, into January 2022.

The summary consultation/advisory process, issued by the Council prior to the commencement of that most recent consultation indicated that the months of January and February 2022 were scheduled for:

"..... analysis of findings from [the] consultation process by Council and officers..... and more in-depth co-design work by the Council and officers for those Liveable Neighbourhood schemes that might be appropriate for implementation for potentially early Summer 2022."

The current status, following a number of key discussions in recent weeks, is as follows:

- As previously indicated to members, 15 priority "Liveable Neighbourhood" schemes have been selected for further potential progressing and scrutiny by the Council and its officers.
- Our own CARA catchment area has been included within a 'groupage' of traffic improvements defined as "Kingsmead and Lower Lansdown" as one of the 15 selected schemes (Note: our CARA catchment area actually extends into both the Kingsmead and Lansdown wards - see map later in this CARA News).
- It has been determined that 4 trial areas where design work will be undertaken, prior to additional public consultation are: Whitchurch and Queen Charlton, Southlands and Weston, Church Street and Prior Park Road, Royal Victoria Park and Cork Street/Tennyson Road.

(Editorial note: It might be perhaps fairly determined that the above four areas selected as the initial tranche for traffic improvements are not representative of fully-fledged "Liveable Neighbourhoods" in terms of their characteristics but nonetheless are appropriate for attention in terms of their current prevailing traffic issues).

- A first but general introductory meeting was held by Council officers and Council appointed consultants, attended also by Lansdown/Kingsmead's ward councillors in mid-March, to commence discussions relating to the Lansdown-Kingsmead "Liveable Neighbourhoods" grouping.
- A date for the first detailed co-design meeting, anticipated as being now in May, for scrutiny and discussion of the Kingsmead - Lower Lansdown "Liveable Neighbourhood" / traffic improvement measures is currently keenly awaited and continues to be regularly progressed by your Committee.
- Our own CARA aspirations for a meaningful and more substantive "Liveable Neighbourhood", contained within the Council's constructed Kingsmead-Lansdown 'grouping' we would hope might secure initial implementation in September/October of this year.....following further appropriate consultation.

2- Parking. Members will be aware, following our e-mail reminder to all members in January, that the B&NES new parking 'regime' was implemented from the 6th January, 2022.

Of particular interest to your CARA Committee and many of our members and local residents was, amongst other aspects of the new parking regulations, the effectiveness of the implementation of the new hotel/guesthouse 'regime'. This we determined was probably appropriate to monitor in terms of the effectiveness of its implementation.

To that end CARA initiated, in conjunction with two neighbouring residents associations, a monitor on hotelier adherence to the newly announced system of requiring hotels/guesthouses to utilise Charlotte Street car park rather than our residents' streets, once their prevailing permits expire.

In summary, certain apparent anomalies which might suggest the existence of 'bespoke' parking arrangements relating to some hotelier(s) within our catchment area have been identified..... which do not appear to be in conformance to the new parking 'regime' regulations.

CARA has been and continues to be involved in discussions on this matter with senior Council representatives in order to attempt to both regularise and obtain a better understanding of this more than disappointing apparent anomaly. We will inform members of any further developments on this matter as our discussions continue on an issue, which left unresolved, will certainly partly delay the benefits that the new parking regulations were intended to provide to local residents.

3- Public Realm. The most recent weeks have been a particularly productive and busy time in terms of CARA's various initiatives to monitor and improve aspects of our public realm. Such action and initiatives include:

- Following CARA's own sensitive pruning of the lower canopy of the Circus trees in December, prior to our "Carols in the Circus" event, the continual progressing/chasing of B&NES to clear a large amount of branch debris from the upper-branch canopy has resulted in that work being undertaken earlier this month (see images below).



- On-site meetings between our Committee Member/CARA Secretary Sabrina, who has particular responsibility for the public realm, and Counc. Lucy Hodge has resulted in some Council funding and resources being allocated towards improvements in Julian Road.

- Some of the worst, but admittedly not all, of the potholes in our CARA street network have been repaired as a result of representations to the Highways department.
- Following representations from local residents and a number of member-businesses in Margaret's Buildings the excessively large litter bin has been replaced by the original style smaller 'solar' bin, as a result of on-site meetings organised by CARA with appropriate Council officers.
- Joint/matched but capped funding has been agreed between CARA and traders in Margaret's Buildings for re-planting and maintenance of the four 'font' planters in that particularly popular pedestrian passageway. [Editor's note: Beware of excessive alliteration, it can be catching!!].
- The commitment by the Council, following approaches from CARA, for the repainting/refurbishment of lamp posts in Margaret's Buildings has been chased..... delay of arrival of the replacement lantern fittings is currently stalling the work being undertaken. (Requests from our local Italian hairdresser Figo, for the lamp posts to be stripped and coloured red, white and green have been politely rejected..... with no irrevocable damage to international relations!).
- Preliminary, but at this stage very general discussions have been initiated with the National Trust in order to liaise with them with regards to achieving public realm improvements both to external aspects of the Assembly Rooms themselves as well as to the 'piazzetta' external to the building's front facade..... this 'piazzetta' apparently being part of the Assembly Room's curtilage.

Realistically, detailed discussions with the National Trust are more likely to occur in the last quarter of this year and throughout 2023. The Assembly Rooms are a significant aspect of the architectural topography of CARA's catchment area and as such our Chair has requested the N.T. to make a presentation to members and other interested individuals/parties later this year.....perhaps at our September AGM.

- FixMyStreet - Bath.
Many members will be aware of the FixMyStreet website, <https://www.fixmystreet.com/>, but for those who may be unaware.....please, if you see any public realm issues that need reporting then we would encourage you to use it. That way we can all contribute towards improving the quality of our public realm.

All you have to do is enter a location where an issue occurs on a map, enter details of the problem that needs actioning and it will get referred to the appropriate Council department for actioning..... and they will, as part of the process, provide notification of outcomes.

CARA Social Events and Dates for your Diary

CARA LADIES' SOCIAL EVENING

The last Thursday of every month at the Hall & Woodhouse in Old King Street, Bath. The Potting Shed area is a comfortable area reserved for our exclusive use.

Please feel free to bring your friends. There is no membership fee..... just buy yourself a drink at the bar (and of course our Chair should be in attendance!).

Any queries, contact: Jackie Hampton. (Mobile 07843336290)

GEORGIAN GARDEN DRINKS PARTY

For this year's evening event, date to be very soon confirmed, it will be held as previously in the delightful surroundings of the Georgian Garden in Gravel Walk. More details for the arrangements to follow.

MICHAEL BUBLE - LIVE AT THE ROYAL CRESCENT

(Friday 15th July and Saturday 16th July at 5pm)

Just to remind members that the Michael Buble concerts this summer and the immediate beforehand preparations will obviously also have some impact on our catchment area. CARA has requested the organisers to circulate all appropriate residents within our area with full details of the concert timings and preparation activities. We have also requested a 'hot-line' contact number to be provided in any information sheet provided.

CARA - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2022

Although this is a considerable time away, it is the intention to hold our CARA - Annual General Meeting on **Thursday evening of the 29th September 2022** at a suitable venue to be confirmed nearer the date now scheduled.

Memberships and Subscriptions

Our CARA Treasurer, the excellent custodian of all our figures, financial and in terms of membership numbers, confirms that our residents association now has its highest membership numbers for at least the last twenty years..... and probably even longer!

As you are probably aware, 1st April was the start of the new membership year for CARA, with the £7.50 annual subscriptions being due from that date.

Most members are already paying subscriptions by standing order and therefore, with our thanks, need take no further action in respect of your annual CARA membership fees.

Members not paying by standing order can pay by BACS into bank account 30-90-54 no 56601468, alternatively by cheque made out to: Circus Area Residents Association, by setting up a new Standing Order on your online banking or by using the form on our CARA website or on the form below. (If using online banking please be sure to use your address as a reference for ease of us identifying the payment and the account details are the same as the above).

If you elect to pay your annual membership subscription by cheque, please send your cheques and complete Standing Order forms to: Mike Richardson, 10 Crescent Lane, Bath BA1 2PU.

CIRCUS AREA RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION (CARA) Membership Form

I wish to join CARA.

Name _____
Address _____
Telephone _____ E-mail _____

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 on this order and on 1st April each year to 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.

CARA Committee 2022

Our email addresses are on our website www.carabath.com

Malcolm Baldwin	Chairman / Traffic	Sabrina Earnshaw	Secretary / Public Realm
George Feiger	Vice Chairman / Planning	Rosie Tunstall	Social Secretary
Mike Richardson	Treasurer	Karen Baldwin	Community Care / FoBRA

