



CARA News

Autumn 2017

Issue number 3

The Circus Area Residents Association (CARA) was formed many years ago to represent the views of local residents and local businesses within our catchment area, as set out on the map on our website. CARA enables its members to make their voices heard on issues that affect residents.

From the Chairman's laptop

Welcome to our third issue of CARA News. Due to the popularity of the first two issues, and with so much going on, we have expanded into four pages. As last time, we are distributing a copy to all homes within our catchment area, not just CARA members. So, if this copy was put through your front door, you are eligible to join CARA – only £7.50 per household per year, with details at the foot of this Newsletter. Your support enables us to work on your behalf to improve things in our community, alongside our adjacent residents associations. Equally, we could be open to local businesses sponsoring the production of the Newsletter – does that interest you? We could include a quarter page or half page advert in recognition of your support. Contact one of the Committee by email if you would like to discuss.

You will see new dates for your diary in this Newsletter – do come and join in, at social events and the 'business' meetings. As a Residents Association, we exist only to represent you, and other people living locally. There are various opportunities to meet up, to be sociable or to raise issues that concern you. Do come along – you will be made very welcome.

Take a look at our new website: www.carabath.com. We hope you will agree that it is simply stunning. Stunning and simple to navigate to find what you need. What we need are more photo images of CARA events – if you take a good one, please email a copy to Sam Brown, our Committee member with a focus as our website creator and administrator. Sam is also responsible for our Facebook and Twitter accounts – become a Follower to keep up to date with news, views, events and other relevant things happening in and around CARA. We are also keen to hear your views of what you think would be helpful information.

On the website, you will find a list of eateries, art galleries and museums within, or adjacent to, the CARA catchment area. One of our three new Committee members, David Simon, compiled this very helpful list. David and his wife Lucy own an art gallery, and so David has adopted a business focus on our Committee.

We have spent a lot of time over the last 15 months concerned about the rapid growth of party houses, the disturbance they cause to neighbours and the fact that many do not have planning consent nor have to abide by fire or other regulations. There is a longer article in this Newsletter. We would be very interested to hear your point of view or specific examples of relevant issues that affect you.

The Council has a very important consultation out until 2nd October on the reduction of Councillors from 65 to 59 coupled with the size and distribution of wards across the Council. This is important for us living in the centre of Bath. We currently have only 10% of the current Council, and yet Bath and our World Heritage status brings in 4.5m visitors a year to B&NES. It seems only fair that the city has increased representation on the Council. Do you agree? Your views can be expressed at consultation.lgbce.org.uk and via www.lgbce.org.uk

With my thanks to everyone involved in the production and distribution of this Newsletter. We all hope that you enjoy reading it and learning more about what the Committee are doing on your behalf. Do you have any new ideas for action or concerns? Just email one of the Committee and we will explore how best we can help.

Barry Gilbertson, Chairman CARA, 2016-18

Update on our three priorities for 2017/18

1. **Traffic management.** CARA seeks to achieve the optimal traffic volume for local residents. For some years, we have sought to reduce car traffic and eradicate coach traffic. We met recently with Mark Shelford, the new Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways, and presented him with a report, including our latest survey data, calling for coach traffic management in The Circus area. Mr. Shelford recognises the problems that coaches cause and is supportive of the aims set out in our paper. As a result, Mr. Shelford plans to present a trial Traffic Management Scheme (TMS) – that would remove coaches from The Circus area - for approval in the B&NES budgetary process for 2018-2019. If approved, we should see new traffic controls next summer.
2. **Air pollution.** Many residents will be aware that air pollution is a major problem in our community. Much of the work around improving air quality is out of our hands, but we have (alongside other residents associations in Bath, led by the Federation of Bath Residents' Association (FoBRA)), raised the profile with local, regional and national government. Recently, however, B&NES was named in the Government's new Air Quality Plan for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) as one of 29 local authorities with illegal NO₂ pollution. Following its inclusion in the national Air Quality Plan, B&NES is seeking feedback on air quality across Bath in preparation for the development of an updated Bath Air Quality Action Plan. To participate in the consultation (4th September 2017 to 26th November 2017), please visit: www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/environment/pollution/air-quality.
3. **Enforcement.** Enforcement is a key priority: for example, getting our Council to enforce poor or illegal parking; addressing waste collection and scattered litter problems; and improving street sweeping. Earlier this year, we secured 5 new litter-bins and maintained the weekly refuse collection. More recently, we have:
 - a. Persuaded B&NES, with the very helpful and much appreciated intervention from one of our local councilors, Lizzie Gladwyn, to add two 20 mph 'repeater' signs in Gay Street (one in each direction). The aim is to increase awareness of the lower speed limit and to improve road and pedestrian safety.
 - b. Persuaded B&NES to convert two obsolete 'Doctors' Parking' zones to 'Resident only' parking. The spaces are at the top of Gay Street (by the post box) and in Rivers Street Mews.



Other local issues

- **Website.** In July, CARA launched its new website at www.carabath.com. The website includes a news page, an events diary and other local information for members. It also provides a platform for potential newcomers to see why they should join CARA. Do take a look at the new website and let us know what think.
- **Party houses.** A 'party house' in Bath is usually located in the city centre, often in a five-storey Georgian terrace, and probably in a Listed Building – an important part of our heritage. There are at least 48 party houses in the centre of Bath, each one offering more than 10 bed spaces, regularly more than 15 and sometimes as many as 20 bed spaces in one house. Imagine living next to a house which has, almost every weekend, up to 20 partygoers, coming to our City to celebrate. Often the celebration is a hen party, sometimes a stag party and occasionally a family celebration. So what can be done? Four things need urgent action: all party houses must apply for a change of use to the correct planning class – they are not residential but commercial businesses; all party houses should be subject to the same fire, health & safety regulations as hotels, guest houses and B&Bs – regular fire inspections as a minimum; all party houses should pay business rates – some do not even pay Council Tax as it is claimed that no-one lives at the property and; the Council need to protect their Residents from noise disturbance and anti-social behaviour especially at late hours and enforce the return of these properties to their residential status in residential areas, rather than losing much needed housing in the centre of our City. The change of use requirement allows neighbours and other affected residents to express their view on whether planning permission should be granted. In short, the key question that our Councillors and the relevant Council Officers must ask themselves is: "would you like to live next door to a party house?"

- **Trees in The Circus.** The remaining 5 London Plane trees in The Circus date to the very early 19th century and were planted thanks to the financial contribution of many Circus owners at that time. The trees are now at record heights and their dominance over The Circus buildings (and, to some, their mere presence) has created much debate over the years. Indeed, in 1961, Bath Parks Committee considered, but voted against, removing the trees despite the City Planning Officer noting that they were 'out of scale'. CARA has asked B&NES to inspect the trees and to undertake management to ensure their continued health. The works are to be undertaken this summer.
- **Royal Victoria Park.** Royal Victoria Park has been recognised by the Green Flag Award Scheme as one of the very best parks in the world. It is amongst a number of UK parks and green spaces that have received the Green Flag Award – the mark of a quality park or green space. This international award, now into its third decade, is a sign to the public that the space boasts the highest possible environmental standards, is beautifully maintained and has excellent visitor facilities.
- **Gravel Walk.** Residents whose properties back onto Gravel Walk will soon learn that vehicular access arrangements are changing, not least due to weight restrictions being imposed over an underground electrical sub-station. Remember, please, that Gravel Walk is not a car park. Contact our Chairman for details.

Recent CARA social events

- **Theatre Royal backstage tour:** In June, CARA members had a fascinating 'Behind the Scenes' tour of The Theatre Royal. There were stories of ghosts and a lucky butterfly.... The event concluded with an excellent lunch at the adjacent Garrick's Head.
- **Georgian Garden Summer Drinks Party:** The Prosecco flowed as people enjoyed the best of a British summer in the rose scented Georgian garden. The annual Summer Drinks and Canapés Party was the perfect opportunity to catch up with old friends and welcome new members to our favourite 'secret' venue behind The Circus.



Future CARA social events

- **Ladies social:** CARA Ladies meet on the last Thursday of each month at Hall and Woodhouse. Starts at 6pm. No need to book; just turn up. Please feel free to bring your friends (CARA membership not essential).
- **September Drinks Social:** Friday 22nd September at 6.00-9.00pm at Hall and Woodhouse. Cost: £5 for a glass of Prosecco, or buy a drink of your choice at the bar.
- **Meet your Committee:** Friday 20th October at 6.00-9.00 pm at David Simon Contemporary Art Gallery, 4 Bartlett Street. A social evening with the opportunity to chat to committee members. Complimentary drinks and snacks. No need to book, but an indication of your likely attendance helps us to cater adequately. Please contact Jackie Hampton on jackie.hampton56@gmail.com.
- **Christmas lunch:** Sunday 3rd December 2017 at 12.00 for 12.30 pm at Woods Restaurant, 9/13 Alfred Street. Three-course meal including coffee and a glass of wine £40. Please contact Jackie Hampton on jackie.hampton56@gmail.com for more details/to book. This is a very popular event with around 40-50 people attending every year. Book early to avoid disappointment.
- **Christmas Carols in The Circus:** Friday 22nd December 2017 at 7.00 pm on The Circus green. Come along and join in the Carols with The Salvation Army providing the music. Mulled wine available. No need to book; just turn up. Bring a torch to read the song sheets. Charity collection. If you live in The Circus, then putting on your Christmas lights in a front window all helps to add to the ambiance.
- **New Year's Eve:** An informal gathering at Hall & Woodhouse from 6.00 pm. Whether you drop in on your way to another venue or spend the early evening with us, come and join in. Just let Jackie know you are coming.

Other local events

- **Bathscape Walking Festival.** This September, Bathscape Landscape Partnership is holding its first walking festival, to celebrate the landscape, heritage and views in easy reach of the city. From Saturday 16th to Sunday 24th September 2017, there will be a choice of 24 glorious walks. The walks range from a short easy stroll around Bath City Farm to the more challenging 20 mile Julian House Circuit of Bath Walk, and lots in between. All except one of the walks are free. For further information, visit www.bathscapewalkingfestival.co.uk or call 01225 477265.
- **Cinema screening.** In October, the Luna Cinema is bringing open-air cinema to the Royal Crescent lower lawn. Films to be shown are La La Land (Friday 6th October), Dirty Dancing (Saturday 7th October) and Beauty and the Beast (Sunday 8th October). All films start at 7:30pm. For further information, contact info@thelunacinema.com.
- **Museum of East Asian Art exhibition.** The Museum of East Asian Art (at 12 Bennett Street) is hosting a British Museum touring exhibition from 4th November 2017 until 22nd April 2018 entitled 'Dressed to impress: netsuke and Japanese men's fashion'. For further information on this and other exhibitions, see www.meaa.org.uk.
- **Volunteers needed:** In connection with its forthcoming exhibition highlighted above, the Museum of East Asian Art has special 'pop-up' volunteer opportunities available. It hopes to recruit plenty of volunteers to help it invigilate this special exhibition. New volunteers will be invited to join a special training workshop on either Saturday 30th September or Saturday 14th October (11.00 - 12.30). To find out more, please see www.meaa.org.uk or contact Jane Sparrow at j.sparrow@meaa.org.uk or on 01225 464640.

CARA Committee 2017/18		Contact
Barry Gilbertson	Chairman	<p>Click on our e-mail address links on our website</p> <p>www.carabath.com</p>
Ron Plant	Vice Chairman	
Bernard Horn	Secretary	
Mike Richardson	Treasurer	
Sam Brown	Social Media	
Richard Brown	Traffic Management	
Peter Davis	Membership Secretary	
Jackie Hampton	Social Secretary	
David Simon	Business focus	
Ron Temperton	City Centre Action Group	

CIRCUS AREA RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION (CARA) Membership form

I wish to join CARA.

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Email 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 _____

Full 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