



CARA News

Winter 2018

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 latest issue of CARA News. Due to the popularity of the earlier colour-printed issues, and with so much going on, we have continued our four pages format. As last time, we are distributing a copy to all homes and businesses 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. 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.

We need more photo images of CARA events – if you take a good one, please e-mail a copy to Richard Brown at mailbox@rbrown.co.uk.

Please come, and tell your friends to come, to **Christmas Carols in The Circus**: Friday 21st December at 7.00 pm on The Circus green. Come along and join in the Carols with The Salvation Army providing the music. No need to book; just turn up. There will be a mulled wine stall provided by The Circus Restaurant with all profits to The Salvation Army Christmas Appeal. We will have the Circus Trees illuminated again this year to enhance the festive feeling and so that you will be better able to see those pesky tree roots to make it safer for everyone. If you live on or near The Circus please put some lights in your front window, or perhaps even your Christmas Tree to enhance the atmosphere.

Talking business, 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. You would be surprised how little it costs, perhaps £50 for a half page. Contact one of the Committee by e-mail if you would like to discuss.

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 e-mail one of the Committee and we will explore how best we can help.

Barry Gilbertson, Chairman CARA, 2016-2018

Update on our priorities for 2018/19

1. **Traffic management.** CARA seeks to achieve the optimal traffic volume for local residents. Since at least 1999, we have sought to reduce car traffic and eradicate coach traffic. In 2013, CARA agreed with B&NES a Traffic Management Scheme (TMS) restricting coaches and traffic that, regrettably, was never implemented by the council.

Since 2013, CARA has worked on traffic management and, last year, our efforts were rewarded with another proposed trial Traffic Management Scheme (TMS) banning coaches from the CARA area, restricting Gay Street to one-way traffic (to reduce 'rat-run' traffic) and introducing loading restrictions in George Street (to facilitate traffic flow).



Over the last year, we have worked with B&NES on implementation of the TMS. Progress has, unfortunately, been slower than expected but, until recently, the TMS was moving forward in its entirety. Unfortunately, due to objections from councillors outside of our area, the TMS will proceed initially as a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) banning coaches from all of the CARA area. The proposals to restrict Gay Street to one-way traffic and introduce loading restrictions remain, but will follow at a later date. B&NES is awaiting Dept. of Transport approval to the road signage and will then arrange installation for the coach ban to be in January/February.

2. **Air pollution.** Air Pollution has an adverse effect on health, particularly respiratory health. As such, at the CARA AGM in May, CARA members agreed for CARA to focus on Air Pollution as a priority. This coincides with the requirement for B&NES Council to achieve compliance with Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) limits 'in the shortest possible time' and by 2021 at the latest.

Earlier this year, B&NES consulted on its initial plans for a Clean Air Zone (CAZ) covering a large part of the centre of Bath. Following feedback, B&NES has consulted again on its final proposals with regard to the CAZ. In broad terms, B&NES has proposed a Class D CAZ with the intent to charge drivers of all higher emission vehicles to drive in the city centre by the end of 2020. The charge for higher emission cars will be £9 per day. It is important to note that, as it currently stands, there is no discount on the charges for residents of the CAZ. A copy of CARA's submission to the Council consultation is available on the CARA website.

The Council must reach a final decision in December 2018. We shall communicate to our members and other local residents in due course as we hear more.

3. **Party houses.** CARA, working with FoBRA, and our local Councillors, worked hard to get the Council to hold a Scrutiny Day, where the whole issue of party houses was discussed in an open forum. CARA was represented very well by Aline Tayar. The Leader of the Council is now working with Central Government towards a change in planning law to make short term holiday lets a separate planning use class. This change would give all local planning authorities better opportunities and obligations to regulate and monitor the providers and the properties. Also, of course, it would give residents the chance to object when planning consent is sought. We will keep you posted with any update news.

Other local issues

- **More Resident Parking Places secured.** CARA has negotiated with B&NES to secure more permit parking spaces in the CARA area. This has led to the introduction, from October 1st, of 'Residents Permit Holders Only' bays in The Circus across the whole of the North and South-East terraces (roughly 15 more spaces) and additional 'Residents Permit Holders Only' bays in Bennett Street (roughly 4 spaces). These spaces will operate Monday to Saturday between 8.00 am and 7.00 pm. We hope to secure more resident spaces; in this regard, B&NES is reviewing all permit types and expects to put, amongst others, the case for 'hospitality' parking permits out to public consultation in early 2019. We shall advise more in due course.

- **New electoral ward boundaries.** The Local Government Boundary Commission has proposed new ward boundaries for B&NES that will result in 28 of the current 37 wards having new boundaries. This will result in B&NES having 59 councillors (down from the current 65 under the current ward boundaries). In future, CARA residents will be in either Lansdown Ward or Kingsmead Ward, giving CARA access to four councillors rather than two currently. The current Abbey Ward will no longer exist. For full details of the Commission's final recommendations (including maps), please see: <https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/9913> and enter your post code to see the new electoral map showing your ward. The proposed new arrangements must now be implemented by Parliament. The draft Order provides for the new electoral arrangements to come into force at the council elections in 2019.
- **Car security.** There have been some recent thefts from cars in our area. Although no damage was caused to the vehicles involved, thieves were able to gain access utilizing the keyless radio signals from the car key fob. We have spoken to the Crime Prevention Design Advisor at Avon & Somerset Police on the matter and he has advised that storing car keys in a signal blocking bag, also known as a 'Faraday Bag', is a cost effective way (approx. £5-£15) to combat this offence. The bag is lined with layers of metallic material that blocks the signal and, some of the bags are even large enough to accommodate a mobile phone and credit cards to prevent them from hacking and fraud. Ideally, the key needs to be placed inside the bag from the moment you lock your car.

The Police are not allowed to recommend any individual companies that sell these products. However, there are 2 Police-approved initiatives that have tested numerous crime reduction products that Police Authorities can endorse. The two initiatives are: Sold Secure and Secured By Design.

- **Trees and Grass in The Circus.** The 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, the mere presence of the trees) 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'. Some minor tree management was undertaken earlier this year but we continue to ask B&NES to undertake more meaningful tree management to ensure that these trees remain healthy and safe to all. This includes minor raising of the lower canopy of the trees to allow views across The Circus. You may have noticed that where one of the Minerva Owls was located on the grass, the grass was completely worn away by viewers. We have secured a commitment from the Minerva charity organisers to reseed the immediate area in the spring. We are hopeful that we may be able to get a grant to reseed the whole of the grass area, and then rope off the area under the trees just as the Council have done to protect important trees in Royal Victoria Park.
- **HMO licensing.** From 1st October, all houses in multiple occupation (HMOs), with five or more occupants in two or more households, must be licensed. Landlords or agents responsible for HMOs that fall under the new definition will be committing a criminal offence if they fail to apply for a licence or a temporary exemption by the deadline.

In addition to this national requirement, B&NES has extended, from 1st January 2019, the scope of licensing to cover HMOs which house three or four people in two or more separate households in Bath City.

Failing to have an HMO licence is a criminal offence and is liable on summary conviction to an unlimited fine or a civil penalty of up to £30,000 per offence.

For further details, please visit: <http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/housing/houses-multiple-occupation>.

- **Volunteer opportunity.** Are you concerned about the speed of traffic in our residential area? If so, would you be interested in volunteering to promote road safety? Across the Avon and Somerset Police area, there are over 100 active Community Speed Watch groups operating in almost 350 sites. These groups give local people the opportunity to get actively involved in road safety with support from the local police Speed Enforcement Unit. A new group can be set up in any urban area governed by a 20, 30 or 40 miles per hour limit. CARA is considering whether to request a Community Speed Watch group for our residential area and is interested in hearing from members/other residents who may be interested in participating. Please e-mail Richard at mailbox@rbrown.co.uk if you would like to know more.

Future CARA social events

- **Christmas Carols in The Circus:** Friday 21st December at 7.00 pm on The Circus green. Come along and join in the Carols with The Salvation Army providing the music. No need to book; just turn up. There will be a mulled wine stall provided by The Circus Restaurant with all profits to The Salvation Army Christmas Appeal. Cash Bar. Charity collection.
- **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.
- **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).

Important Message

After three years on the Committee, with responsibility for leading all our social activities, **Jackie Hampton** is stepping down ahead of her move away from Bath. This means that we will have a vacancy on our Committee for a new Social Secretary. Could it be YOU? Are you a good social organizer? Do you like getting people together? Can you make friends easily? Please ping an email to our Chairman on barry@barrygilbertson.com if you would like to help us, and all CARA members with this vitally important role. Training will be given if required.

Well done, Jackie, please accept the thanks of everyone who has enjoyed the events that you organised.

CARA Committee 2018/19		Our email addresses are on our website www.carabath.com	
Barry Gilbertson	Chairman	Bernard Horn	Secretary
Richard Brown	Vice Chairman/Traffic	Anne Love	Waste
Malcolm Baldwin	FoBRA	Mike Richardson	Treasurer
George Feiger	Traffic	Ron Temperton	City Centre Action Group
Jackie Hampton	Social Secretary		

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