

## **Chair Report to AGM 2023**

### **Two New Groups**

This has been a good year for RCV with rising membership numbers and the formation of two new and successful groups in Riverside: the Gull group and the Garden group. Both these organizations were initiated by RCV but are independent of it and members of the groups do not have to be RCV members. They do, however, pass reports of their activities to the Committee and they have a good relationship with Pinnacle Property Management.

Gavin Hambry, the Gull Group organiser, and his colleague Lindsay Whitmore have had particular success this year. The Council Gull Officer now recognises the need to make Riverside in his own words a 'gull-free zone' by judicious use of netting, and this will be done without harm to gulls in the process.

Garden Group leader Hilary Lees works well with Will Taps, MD of Landscapers SW who are responsible for maintaining our Park and public areas, and the group has agreed (amongst other things) with Will a new planting plan for the river bank between the orange destructor bridge finial and the stone bench and also the wild garden area which should give some welcome colour in the area.

Hilary and Gavin both now serve on the main RCV Committee.

### **The Dripping Tap**

The application for licensing of a Vertical Pub (no proper food) with live music for many hours a day was enough to spur Riverside residents Ian Quekett and Lindsay Bray into action, swiftly forming as they did 'Protect Bath Riverside' and - assisted by RCV - persuade more than 100 householders to lodge objections. Eventually the landlord decided not to go ahead with the plan for a pub and the premises is now planned to be a dental surgery. This still leaves a 1400 square feet section of the ground floor available, which is unfortunately thought to be too small for a restaurant – which many residents would like to see – and one has resident suggested a Co-op branch but we believe that the Co-op has already turned down this site because of refrigeration problems.

### **Who runs Riverside?**

The answer in short is Crest Nicholson. The MD of the Bath Riverside Estate Management Company is Mark Foyle who is also the MD of Crest Nicholson SW. This constitutes a potential conflict of interest which should be addressed. Further, there is no representation for residents or scope to give their opinions. Lindsay Bray, who was a principal player during the Dripping Tap saga has now joined the RCV Committee and has volunteered to pursue this matter – building on the excellent work done by Gareth Lloyd who has now sadly resigned from the RCV Committee as he is moving elsewhere.

## **E-on Q and A**

Last year E-on held an open meeting at the Energy Centre for Riverside residents to ask any questions they might have about how the Energy Centre supplies the hot water that heats our homes. Paul Brett went better equipped than most with a comprehensive list of questions, some of which took over a year to be answered. You find Paul's questions and the very interesting answers on the RCV website.

## **Bus gate and future parking regime in Stothert Ave**

Only last week did B&NES Transport Development and Policy Manager Claire Nimmo reply to various letters of enquiry from me, Councillor June Player and Pinnacle Manager Francesca. To speed matters up Claire Nimmo has now taken over the design of the new camera installation for the bus gate, and when Drawings are ready, Crest will contract out the works. I personally have no faith, therefore, that this will be completed anytime soon.

As far as the parking regime is concerned, you will know that a poll of all residents found that Residents parking was by far the favourite choice among respondents. I wrote this week to Claire Nimmo to confirm our choice and remind her of her promise to allow us, the residents, to choose our parking regime. When I received an out-of-office reply, I went to her superior, the Director of Sustainable Communities Sophie Broadfield who relied immediately saying she would 'pass it on to the parking team'. So a victory of sorts.

## **Gasworks Site**

St William, developers for the Gasworks site, held a mini exhibition in Casia one afternoon in early September '23. The design has been improved since it first saw the light of day – the buildings have been lowered in height using several stratagems and as they incorporate several finishes are more interesting and attractive. There is now some imaginative landscaping with suitable space for large canopy trees to flourish.

Photo voltaic panels will be fitted on all roof tops where possible and an air pump system will provide energy. The ratio of car spaces to dwellings will be approximately 0.33 (cf Riverside .7). All parking spaces will be provided with EV charging.

There is provision for a nursery but alas no community centre or building that could be used for the purpose.

The revised plans may now be commented upon on on line in the B&NES planning portal.

## **Summer Party 2023**

As you know – the summer party was a great success which raised £700 for charity. You can find more under 'Events' on the website. Congratulations to Andrew Vickers' entertainment sub-committee for providing us with a great afternoon.

## **And Finally...**

As I near the end of my period of office, I would like to register my **thanks** to those who have played their part on the Committee during that time, but have now left us: Ali Penfold, Flo Penfold, Cate Lewis and Gareth Lloyd.

I would also like to point out that we have 4 vacancies on the Committee. Among the skills we seek are someone with moderate IT and editorial skills who could take over the website and/or take on the role of communications manager, and someone to keep an eye on planning applications which might affect us. But the main thing is we would like to see people who are keen and would attend monthly meetings. If this appeals to you, you might like to come to the next committee meeting and put your toe in the water. Just have a word with any of the committee members here tonight.

If you have any questions arising from this report, please ask them at question time!