



MEADOWS NEWSLETTER

February 21, 2016

Number 12

Dates for your diary:

9th March – next Green gathering 7pm at Rising Sun, Bath

22nd March Public Scrutiny meeting 10 – 4:30 Guildhall Bath

Hello,

The next few weeks before the Scrutiny meeting need to be busy ones if we are going to make an impact. Unfortunately the Gather meeting last week had a small attendance due to half term. Please can everyone come to the next one on 3rd March so that we can really work together with as many people involved as possible. Meanwhile, we all need to be sending out letters, tweeting, facebooking and putting up posters so that we make the campaign as visible as possible before the event. I have attached some letters that have been sent out already which can be used for inspiration – volume is needed!

I am very happy to see a picture in the Chronicle today of Ben Howlett being egged by students.

<http://www.bathchronicle.co.uk/BREAKING-NEWS-protesters-arrested-Bath-MP-Ben/story-28774658-detail/story.html>

Finally, does anyone know the man in the orange boxer shorts? He would be great on the campaign ☺

<http://www.bathchronicle.co.uk/pictures/GALLERY-A46-underpants-protester-returns-rally/pictures-28774537-detail/pictures.html#17>

GATHER MEETING 18TH FEBRUARY

Minutes of Gather meeting 18/2/16– many thanks to Judy B for taking the minutes.

Chair Emma A

Minutes for Gather meeting 18th Feb 2016-02-19

Chair: Emma Adams

Phil Raby from the Mayor for Bath campaign spoke to the group, outlining the advantages of having a mayor for Bath and the potential we have as a large group to vote for change. In terms of our meadows campaign, we are pretty certain to get the park and ride with Tim Warren as council leader; a mayor that was of another political persuasion or an Independent could stop it (there was a discussion about whether this is possible). All the politicians from all parties are against an elected mayor, but they are bound to put candidates forward if the referendum votes in favour of a mayor.

Phil told the group that with regional devolution coming down the line, a strong leader for Bath would be better than having politics centred on Bristol. An elected mayor 'guarantees there is a possibility for change' - if things stay as they are we will get the Tory park and ride. The mayor would have control over £400 million budget for BANES. At the moment the council have no vision (no

arguments here...)

The candidates we know about at the moment are Dave Dixon, Richard Hall and Tim Nugent. There is a very heartening interest by one of our own very perceptive and committed campaigners. Wouldn't that be amazing! Watch this space.

Sian and Fiona gave feedback on their Common Mission Statement and key messages and there was a discussion about which way to go forward. Basically, Bathampton Meadows Alliance do not want to work with the council and recognise that they are trying to narrow their large enemy (us) into one point of contact, diminishing us into a controllable element. We must all continue to act as individuals making as much fuss as we can, while our speakers prepare their arguments for Scrutiny. We only work as a noisy inconvenient persistent group of individuals....that is what has got us this far.

It is time now to make a massive noise about the timing of the Scrutiny Day. Please email all the councillors, bombard them, write to the Chronicle. I have invited the Chronicle to come and talk to us and report on the campaign and will let everyone know, so if you want to come along there will be an opportunity. We want Democratic services to extend the day into the evening so that more of the working age campaigners can attend. Your help and support is vital. Here are the councillors email addresses for you all to copy and paste. We know all the arguments against the park and ride now....there are so many.....let rip!

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Petitioning:

One further plea for action- petitioners required every Saturday for an hour or two, or as long as you are able to do. Please contact Susanne Hagen. We got 350 last Saturday and every one adds to our strength.

Comms Group Update: Our next event.

As many of you know we are going to collect signatures at the Bath Half Marathon. A very large group is needed. Please give your time. You can contact Judy Bailey jk.bailey@icloud.com if you are able to give some time and I will start to get a picture of the sort of numbers we can expect. Personally I find petitioning really good fun and enjoy persuading the public. If you are still reading all these newsletters etc you are obviously obsessed (!) so come along and talk people round.

SCRUTINY DAY - 22ND MARCH

Please see the link from BaNES about the Scrutiny day.

<http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/latestnews/public-scrutiny-day-examine-range-integrated-transport-solutions>

SULIS PROJECT

All the photographs from this project are now on the website:

<http://www.sulisproject.com/savebathamptonmeadows/k6n5ufqdkudf4xn5col5qynkhlxr83>

It would be good if we can get up as many in the form of posters as possible so that they are visible. Susanne H has posts/boards which can be used to make banners. Please can you contact Susanne if you have a good place to put up a board.

BUDGET

This week saw BaNES decide on budget cuts to public health (including chlamydia screening and HIV support), to education and to drug and alcohol misuses services. They have not yet confirmed where the rest of the 43m cuts will come from over the next 4 years, but they have confirmed they have put aside 9.7m for a dodgy park and ride on the beautiful approach into Bath. Here's a great letter from Alexis about the budget:

Dear Sir/Madam,

The BaNES Budget that is about to be agreed tonight is a large one that our thriving democracy is compelled to debate. In its 2016/17 proposal, Cabinet promises that its review, amongst other laudable aims, 'considered spending across the Council to ensure efficiency savings and income generation opportunities are maximised'. Does the Budget achieve this?

In particular, '£9.7m capital allocation to an East of Bath Park and Ride' fulfills these laudable criteria.

The benefits would be close to zero; despite the opaque nature of BaNES finances, it appears that £200k or so that it would receive in franchise revenue would be eaten up by maintenance costs of the site. It is doubtful whether 10-year government borrowing costs (a paltry 1.5% per annum) would even be covered.

What is more, the congestion and pollution (the positive externality) benefits of existing park and ride schemes are highly questionable; any gains for some areas result in losses at least as much elsewhere- for example lost bus services into Bath from West Wiltshire.

Whether or not this capital is borrowed (as outlined above), financed from existing cash flow, or from 'capital receipts' there is a huge opportunity cost.

From the existing cash flow would see spending on services down by over 10 times the £930K increase in council funding recently lauded by Ben Howlett as a boon to BaNES residents.

From capital receipts; these incur the sale of (potential) income earning assets. For instance, at current prices, £9.7m invested in secure homes for 100 families, would generate £1m in annual rent or Housing Benefit savings.

That £1m could then be spent with positive multiplier effects for the local economy: for instance the 45 full time adult care workers that could be afforded would help relieve bed blocking at the RUH.

The costs, both realised and potential, to this scheme are easily quantifiable, very large and very real for the taxpayers and families of BaNES. If the Council proposes to build on ancient Green Belt land, it owes it to its electorate to prove that those costs will comfortably be outweighed by the benefits so that its scarce resources are fully utilised. As yet, it hasn't.

Yours sincerely,

Alexis Pavlou.

16th February 2016

This letter has been really well received on FB - so far, it's reached 875 people; had 11 shares, 27 likes and 4 comments :)

Here is the url for the letter (in case you want to mention it in tweets)
<https://www.facebook.com/SaveBathamptonMeadows/posts/1663157990624602>

PETITIONING

Plans are now afoot to take the petition up to Downing Street. More details to follow However, we are not going to stop there! Please contact Susanne H if you can give up a few hours next Saturday (27th February) to help out with petitioning in town. Susanne also has a map with all the different Bath areas which have already been covered and those still to be covered. So if you feel that you can do some door-to-door canvassing please get in touch with her.

MEET BATH'S GREENS

A few of us went down to the Green gathering in the Rising Sun. This was a fun evening and there were loads of people there who were interested in finding out more about the plan to concrete over the meadows. The next one is 9th March so another date for the diary.



WHERE PEOPLE WHO LOVE THE ENVIRONMENT MEET
TO SOCIALIZE, NETWORK, AND EXCHANGE IDEAS.

2ND WEDNESDAY
OF EVERY MONTH
FROM 19:00

THE RISING SUN
3-4 GROVE ST.
BATH BA2 6PJ



NEXT EVENTS:

10 FEB | 09 MAR | 13 APR | 11 MAY | 08 JUN | 13 JUL

FIND US ON FACEBOOK AS BATH GREEN DRINKS OR VISIT WWW.GREENDRINKS.ORG/BATH

SOCIAL MEDIA

This has been widely shared on facebook:

Open Public Scrutiny Day on East of Bath Transport – Do they really want to involve the public?

As agreed at the November 12th Council meeting, B&NES are holding a Public Scrutiny day to discuss transport solutions for the East of Bath (including a Park & Ride).

They state: “This will be an opportunity for the public alongside key partners and professionals to work collaboratively in identifying alternative wider integrated transport solutions for the east of Bath area”.

B&NES recently announced that this meeting will take place between 10am – 4.30pm on Tuesday 22nd March – a time and day when most people are at work and thus unable to attend.

Has this been done on purpose? Do they really want to involve the public or is it simply another 'tick box' exercise?

+MEDIA

Great letter in the Chronicle this week.

<http://www.bathchronicle.co.uk/Park-ride-money-better-spent/story-28753951-detail/story.html>

It would be great if a few more people added comments

NEXT GATHER MEETING

Thursday 3rd March 8pm