

THE ROYAL CRESCENT SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER

Issue No. 54

Autumn 2004

Contents

Chairman's Notes.....	page 3
Annual General Meeting.....	page 4
Presidential Change.....	page 5
Railings & Ha-ha Restoration.....	page 7
Social Events.....	page 8
John Wood – Father of the Crescent.....	page 10
The Old Grey Box.....	page 12
Royal Crescent Hotel.....	page 12
Jane Austen Festival.....	page 13
The Search for An Editor.....	page 13
Crescent Lawn Company Ltd.....	page 14
Bath History Festival and Heritage Open Days.....	page 15
B&NES Local Plan.....	page 16
Threat to Green Belt.....	page 17
Tour Buses.....	page 19

Advertisers

Please support the advertisers in this or any other issue, not forgetting to mention the Newsletter when you do so. We are constantly looking for new advertisers to help defray the production costs, so if you or anyone you know have anything to publicise please let us know.

*Published by The Royal Crescent Society
22 Royal Crescent Bath
email: altcar@nildram.co.uk*

<i>Hon. President:</i>	<i>Michael Daw</i>
<i>Hon. Vice-President</i>	<i>The Rt. Hon. The Earl of Stockton</i>
<i>Chairman:</i>	<i>Stephen Little</i>
<i>Vice-Chairman:</i>	<i>Tim Forester</i>
<i>Treasurer:</i>	<i>Jennifer Bereska</i>
<i>Secretary:</i>	<i>Ian Woodhouse</i>
<i>Editor:</i>	<i>Vacant –it could be you!</i>

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

I regret that this edition of the Newsletter is not up to the standard of recent editions, as we are again in an interregnum between editors following Stephen Conlin's departure from the Crescent. A circulated appeal, reproduced later in this Newsletter, for a volunteer replacement produced a deafening silence, but I remain hopeful that one will be found soon. Meanwhile I shall attempt to fill the gap, with thanks to those who have contributed items for this issue.

As agreed at the Society's AGM, a regular feature of the Newsletter is to be a report on the activities of the Crescent Lawn Company, which holds the title to the Lawn, Railings and Ha-ha on behalf of the Society's members. This will be written by the Company Secretary, a post which Jenny Hardisty has kindly taken over from Michelle Little. Information on, and application forms for, becoming a member of the Company can be obtained from either her or myself.

In January there will be a Public Inquiry to consider the B&NES Local Strategic Plan. Various changes to the original version have been proposed and they can be seen on the B&NES website (www.bathnes.gov.uk) or at the Guildhall and Central Library. Any representations, objections, etc must be made by 30th September. Later in this issue you will find a statement from the Beech Avenue Resident's Association about the threat to the Green Belt, and an article from the Bath Chronicle on the same subject.

If you wish to be involved in the planning of Greater Bristol (including B&NES) Transport strategy up to 2031, you can take part in a survey which is currently being conducted. For further details see www.gbsts.com, or email info@gbsts.com.

Comments are also invited on the proposals for the Bath Half-Marathon on Sunday 20th March next year. These include the full closure of roads, rather than one carriageway, and more parking restrictions on the day. Further details can be found on www.runninghigh.co.uk, email racedirector@runninghigh.co.uk, tel. 01225-422165.

STEPHEN LITTLE (tel: 310180, email altcar@nildram.co.uk)

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Society's thirtieth Annual General Meeting was held on Sunday April 24th at the Royal Crescent Hotel, chaired by our President, Sir John Barraclough. Some 20 residents attended, as did local Councillor Andy Furse.

Various items were discussed, the most notable being the continuing problems of the Lawn and car parking for Crescent residents and their visitors compared with other Zones outside the central area. Councillor Furse explained that, if we were to be integrated with Zone 7, we may encounter problems with intrazone parking by Lansdown commuters who are also in Zone 7 but may wish to park nearer the city centre. He added that B&NES are likely to be monitoring the situation for a further six months and so we cannot be hopeful of a solution this year. However, the Society will continue to monitor the situation and lobby the appropriate representatives.

Trespassing on the Lawn, the lighting of barbecues and the leaving of litter continue to be problems. B&NES do an excellent job of clearing the litter each morning, only for more litter to be left as the day progresses. There is not an immediate solution to the problem of trespassing. Security patrols were suggested, but income from the present level of Lawn subscriptions would be insufficient to finance this. It is hoped that the ha-ha ditch, which will be deeper than at present, will act as a deterrent.

The policy for Lawn cutting was discussed and it was agreed that the present format should continue with the central area being long and the perimeter by the railings being shorter. Concern was expressed about the cost and frequency of cutting, and Mr David Roberts kindly undertook to seek a quotation from an alternative contractor.

The Treasurer reported the current financial position, most notable being the current level of the Appeal Fund which stands at just under £30,000 thanks to a generous donation during the past year by YTL for use of the Lawn for the Three Tenors Concert.

Following the election of the Committee for 2004/05, it was noted that a replacement Editor was required as Mr Stephen Conlin is leaving the area and volunteers were (**and still are**) invited.

To the surprise of everyone, the President announced his decision to retire and, in asking for the support of all in attendance, proposed that Vice-

President Mr Michael Daw, should succeed him. This was carried unanimously. In reply Mr Daw thanked the President for his endorsement and delivered an appreciation of Sir John Barraclough's life and achievements. He proposed that Sir John should be made an Honorary Life Member.

The President thanked Mr Daw and, prior to closing the meeting, presented gifts to retiring officers Mrs Michelle Little who has acted as Secretary and then Treasurer in recent years and Mr Stephen Conlin the retiring Editor of the Newsletter.

IAN WOODHOUSE

PRESIDENTIAL CHANGE

As reported elsewhere in this issue, the Society's first President, Sir John Barraclough, announced his retirement at the 2004 AGM. In a typically gracious and witty speech he also recommended that Michael Daw be made President in his place and this was unanimously approved. Michael accepted the post, accepting the "Wand of Office" (a litter pick-up stick for the Lawn!) and acknowledging the honour, together with the impossibility of following such a great act as his predecessor. He then paid tribute to Sir John as printed below.

"This Society has been honoured and very fortunate to have had so internationally distinguished a gentleman at the head of its affairs for the past 16 years as – giving him most of his title – Air Chief Marshal Sir John Barraclough, KCB, DFC, FRSA, FIPM, MIPR, Gentleman Usher of the Sword of State, Chairman Commonwealth War Graves Commission, Chairman Editorial board of NATO's Sixteen Nations - and so on and so on; his entry in the Who's Who of 1986 runs to well over 20 lines and more achievements have occurred since. Only last month, in his 9th decade, his long campaign for a National Memorial to honour his fallen Royal Air Force comrades who gave their lives in Coastal Command in World War 2 reached initial fruition when he supported Her Majesty the Queen as she unveiled a memorial in their honour at a special service in Westminster Abbey.

Amidst all this fine record of public service and duty, he came to live in the Crescent in the late 1980s and was at once spotted by the redoubtable Monica Bailey as a potential Chairman of the Society. He kindly acceded, was elected in 1988 and has vividly and tirelessly promoted and elevated the status of the Society and its objectives to conserve and protect the Crescent ever since. He created the Federation of Bath Residents Associations as a corporate and more powerful voice for the residents of Georgian Bath. He led the Society's fight to prevent a second hotel here and spoke with great effect at the Public Inquiry, which we won. He captured media attention at the start of the Society's campaign to stop the OTBs and spoke powerfully at that eventual Public Inquiry, which we also won. He used his presence, position and long experience of bureaucracy at the highest level entirely in the best interests of the Society's objectives and was greatly influential in the Society's dealings with senior Bath City, Avon County and B&NES Councils' and other officials. His wit, charm and eloquence need no plaudits from me - you have experienced them at first hand over all these years.

So all residents and particularly members of this Society owe him a considerable debt for time well spent, for particular skills well deployed and for the honour he has done us and the Crescent in serving us so well. We shall greatly miss his urbane and benign direction at our official – but not social, we hope - functions

It is customary for these occasions to be marked in some tangible way, but this time the news broke rather too late for all of the Committee to be informed so that this could be arranged properly. May I therefore ask you to direct your Committee to arrange a suitable gift to mark Sir John's great service, to vote that he be made an Honorary Life Member of the Society and that you both voice your approval of these proposals and your appreciation for all that Sir John has done for us and the Crescent and for making such a difference – in the usual way”.

The meeting unanimously endorsed these proposals and showed their approval and appreciation by heartfelt applause. Later Sir John undertook to choose a suitable gift and this will be presented at the 2005 Festive Dinner.

RAILINGS AND HA-HA RESTORATION

There is little to report on this subject other than that the associated paperwork and legal documents are at last making some progress. Attempts to persuade B&NES that the southern pavement should be relaid with pennant stone at the same time as the railing bases are re-aligned continue to receive much moral support but zero financial support. The World Heritage Site Management Plan is due for its official launch to a select audience on September 8th. No opportunity will be lost to remind councillors and council executives of the several paragraphs in that weighty document which support such projects.

Pete's Pet Care



Dog Washing, Grooming & Clipping
Exercising, feeding & General Care

Microchip Qualified & K.C. Registered
Home Visits & Care in my Home Available

Cocker Spaniel Specialist
Regular Show Winner

References Available

Tel / Fax: 01761 435964

Mobile: 07808 315138

Email: petespetscare@hotmail.com

SOCIAL EVENTS - SPRING OUTING AND SUMMER PARTY



Inside the boat



Bridge ahoy



Light at the end of the tunnel

The Society's Social Committee arranged another boat trip, as the one a few years ago was such a success. It was a glorious afternoon in May, and we all set off from Sydney Wharf through the Limpley Stoke valley in a canal boat. Apart from enjoying the beautiful scenery from the canal everyone was spoilt with a very English tradition - cream tea in the sunshine (not necessarily an English tradition). It was a perfect way to spend a Sunday afternoon soaking up the warm spring weather, good company and hot tea with warm scones!



After the success of the Lawn party to celebrate the Golden Jubilee in 2002, the Committee decided it would be great to have another celebration on the lawn. Again the Forester family were the main contributors in doing all the cooking and hosting the event. Tim cooked over 60 hamburgers, which were followed by chocolate or vanilla ice cream. As the recent weather had been so changeable with monsoon-like rain the Forester family kindly allowed the event to take place in their home and garden rather than on the Lawn as had been planned originally. The Committee are keen to use the

Lawn for a RCS event in the future, so please watch out for a flyer for further information.

Both the Spring and Summer events had a small profit, which has been put towards the ongoing fund raising for the Railings and Ha-ha Restoration. The Society is very grateful to its members for supporting the events either by organising or attending. Not only are they a good place to meet your neighbours and have a chat but these events helps to raise much-needed funds for the Restoration Project. If you have any ideas for future events please contact Michelle Little 22 Royal Crescent 01225-310180.

Festive Dinner

The projected date for the Society's Festive Dinner is **Sunday January 9th**, at the Royal Crescent Hotel. Confirmation of the date and further details will be circulated nearer the time.

MICHELLE LITTLE



LIZ COX

BATH – ENGLAND

**supporting
the amenities and surroundings
of
The Royal Crescent and Margaret's Buildings**

**17 Margaret's Buildings,
Bath.**

Telephone 445509

JOHN WOOD – FATHER OF THE CRESCENT

As most members will know, whilst John Wood the Younger built the Royal Crescent, it was his rather more famous and prolific father, John Wood the Elder, who originated the concept as part of his grand design for the city. The father was born in 1704 and that event and his death in 1754 are being celebrated as a joint “300th” Anniversary by a series of events starting in September this year. The centrepiece will be a major exhibition at the Building of Bath Museum, “Obsession: John Wood and the Creation of Georgian Bath”, opening on September 7th and running until February 4th.

The exhibition’s title is apt. Its first word was used for Dr. Tim Mowl’s fascinating life of the great man and the rest of the title refers, of course to the concatenation of talents in the mid-eighteenth century in Bath of John Wood, Ralph Allen the entrepreneur and Beau Nash the Master of Ceremonies. Between them they led the transformation in a very few years of a sleepy wool town almost unchanged in appearance and behaviour since mediæval times to a grand – and, for them, profitable – high society watering hole and seasonal gathering place.

A preview of other parts of the celebrations appears below and up-to-date information will be available online at www.bathmuseum.co.uk.

MICHAEL DAW

Events

Sun 5 Sept	Queen Square, Sponsored Cycle Ride Return to Bath. 3-5pm. Free
Mon 6 Sept	Private View. By invitation only.
Tues 7 Sept	Obsession opens to the public. Talk: <i>Obsession: John Wood and the Creation of Georgian Bath</i> introduction to exhibition, Amy Frost, 1pm. Included in admission price.
Sat 11 Sept	Open Day: Masonic Lodge, Old Orchard Street, 11am to 3pm. Contact the Masonic Lodge for further information.
Thu 16 Sept	Lecture, book launch and signing: <i>The Myth-Maker</i> , Kirsten Elliott. 7pm. Free.
Sat 18 Sept	Mayor’s Guide Walk
Tue 21 Sept	Lecture: <i>John Wood’s book of drawings</i> , Amy Frost, £4. including entrance to the exhibition. 1pm.
Thu 23 Sept	Talk: <i>A Portrait of an Architect</i> , Cathryn Spence, 1pm. Entry inc. in admission price.
Sat 25 Sept	Mayor’s Guide Walk
Tue 28 Sept	Talk: <i>The Four Worthies</i> , Ann Hopkins-Clarke, 1pm. Entry included in admission price.

Sat 2 Oct	Mayor's Guide Walk
Wed 6 Oct	Lecture: <i>The Legacy of John Wood: Bath as an Imaginary City</i> , Amy Frost, 7pm, £4.50.
Thu 7 Oct	Walk: <i>Palladian Influence upon John Wood</i> , Robert Bennett, Start: Pump Room at 10am, 2 hour walk, £3.00.
Sat 9 Oct	Mayor's Guide Walk
Tue 12 Oct	Talk: <i>Obsession: John Wood and the Creation of Georgian Bath</i> introduction to the exhibition, Amy Frost, 1pm. Included in admission price.
15 - 17 Oct	Study Break: <i>Obsession: John Wood and the Creation of Georgian Bath</i> , Amy Frost and Cathryn Spence. More details from University of Bath, 386513, studybreaks@bath.ac.uk , http://www.bath.ac.uk/studybreaks.htm
Sat 16 Oct	Mayor's Guide Walk
Tue 19 Oct	Talk: <i>The Model of Ralph Allen's Townhouse</i> , Ann Hopkins-Clarke, 1pm, Entry included in admission price.
Sat 23 Oct	Mayor's Guide Walk
Tue 26 Oct	Lecture: <i>John Wood: Churches, Chapels & Temples</i> , Amy Frost, £4.00 including entrance to the exhibition. 1pm
Sat 30 Oct	Mayor's Guide Walk
Tue 2 Nov	Talk: <i>Obsession: John Wood and the Creation of Georgian Bath</i> introduction to the exhibition, Amy Frost, 1pm. Included in admission price.
Wed 3 Nov	Lecture: <i>Changing the mythology: comparing two of John Wood the Elder's Building Leases</i> , Francis Kelly. 7pm, £4.50.
Sat 6 Nov	Mayor's Guide Walk
Thu 11 Nov	Lecture: <i>John Wood's Royal Forum: the Lost Glory of Bath</i> , Amy Frost, 7pm, BoBM, £4.50.
Sat 13 Nov	Mayor's Guide Walk
Thu 18 Nov	Lecture: <i>John Wood, Alchemist?</i> Kirsten Elliott, 7pm, £4.50.
Sat 20 Nov	Mayor's Guide Walk
Tue 23 Nov	Lecture: <i>John Wood and Early Printing/Publishing in Bath</i> , Trevor Fawcett, 7pm, £4.50.
Fri 26 Nov	Talk: <i>A Portrait of an Architect</i> , Cathryn Spence, 1pm, Entry included in admission price.
Sat 27 Nov	Mayor's Guide Walk
Wed 1 Dec	Talk/discussion: <i>Lilliput: John Wood's Bath in Thomas Robbins' sketchbook</i> Francis Kelly, 7-8pm. Free.
Thu 2 Dec	Lecture: <i>High Society & the Growth of 18th Century Palladianism</i> , Carole Fry, 7pm, £4.50.
Sat 4 Dec	Mayor's Guide Walk
Thu 9 Dec	Talk: <i>Bath Before John Wood</i> , Cathryn Spence, 1pm, Entry included in admission price.
Sat 11 Dec	Mayor's Guide Walk
Thu 13 Jan	Lecture: <i>"Dear John": The Duke of Chandos' letters to John Wood</i> , Kay Ross, 7pm, £4.50.
Tue 18 Jan	Lecture: <i>A Benevolent Friendship: John Wood and Ralph Allen</i> , Cathryn Spence, 7pm, £4.50.

THE OLD GREY BOX

The Final Episode

Regular readers will recall that in July 2003 (the 24th) I asked BT the simple question “Why has the telephone kiosk at the junction of the Royal Crescent, Brock Street and Upper Church Street been painted red, having been grey ever since its installation in 1955?” This produced flurries of management embarrassment and regret that this Grade II Listed building had been altered without Listed Building Consent and the issuance of internal “Actions” to have the colour restored, special paint ordered, etc.. But nothing actually happened.

Suddenly, on May 24th 2004, exactly nine months to the day after the initial request for information, painters arrived with the approved paint, the Old (Red) Box became grey again and BT’s managers averted an Enforcement Notice by being back in compliance with the Listing. That the painters did a fairly rough job, failed to outline the glass panes in red as before and left the very scratched and cloudy glass in place perhaps reflects the rush to get the job done.

Meanwhile, the makers of Tanqueray Gin sponsored a general survey as to which of 100 items members of the public thought was the most distinctive symbol of being British; to their chagrin Gin & Tonic came 87th! But Red telephone boxes came 34th (equal with queueing). The list did not include grey ones!

MICHAEL DAW

ROYAL CRESCENT HOTEL

The Bath House at the Hotel has recently undergone a stunning transformation to create a new reception and relaxation area. It is open to non-resident guests and now offers half-day retreats, starting from £85 per person, which include a treatment followed by a two-course lunch in The Bath House.

Gourmets may be interested in the Ruinart Champagne dinner, a black tie occasion planned for Sunday 24th October. For more details of this and other events, contact the Hotel, tel. 823333, email info@royalcrescent.co.uk.

4TH BATH JANE AUSTEN FESTIVAL

Sat 18 Sept 10 -11.45am - GEORGIAN COSTUMED PROMENADE



Re-live the 18th century custom of promenading. Starting at The Jane Austen Centre, stroll in all your Georgian Finery with us up to the Circus - a perfect architectural background for your photographs - along to the stunning Royal Crescent Hotel for some refreshments and music. Saunter back via the flowers

in Victoria Park to the start. This event is free to anyone in costume but you will need to register for your vouchers for refreshments.

Venue: The Jane Austen Centre, 40 Gay Street. To register, call the Jane Austen Centre 01225 443000

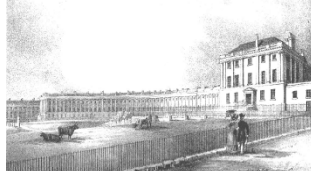
THE SEARCH FOR AN EDITOR

Following the departure from the Crescent of former editor Stephen Conlin, who has produced our Newsletter three times a year since 2001, the Society's Committee is now looking for an editor for future editions, as announced at the AGM in April. The task involves gathering items from both within the Society and elsewhere for inclusion in the Newsletter, liaising with advertisers, and finalising the layout for submission to the printer.



If you would like to help the Society by undertaking this task, even for a short stint, please inform the Chairman, Stephen Little, who will give any computer or other assistance required.

CRESCENT LAWN COMPANY LTD



Although there does not seem to be much going on to the casual on-looker, I can assure you that there is plenty going on behind the scenes. It is no easy (or quick) matter to get a project such as the one we are embarked on to progress at anything like reasonable speed. But when you remember we are dealing with B&NES, The Heritage Lottery Fund, The Charitable Commission and Solicitors (all of which seem to need to go on lengthy holidays at this time of the year) all becomes clear. However, the good news is that things are progressing, albeit at a snail's pace and personally I am optimistic that the work will be carried out next year.

The next pressing hurdle to jump is obtaining Charitable Status and agreeing and signing the Deed of Variation with The National Heritage Memorial Fund and B&NES.

It is now 16 months since The Crescent Lawn Company Ltd received absolute title to the Lawn, Railings and Ha-ha, and with the advent of young Charles, Michelle Little has handed on the baton of Company Secretary to me, having first done all the hard work of laying down a foundation of precedents for me to follow. A hard act to follow.

JENNY HARDISTY

STOP PRESS

We have now heard that the Charity Commission is not willing to grant the Crescent Lawn Company charitable status, mainly on the grounds that there is (supposedly) no public access to the Lawn and that therefore the upkeep of the Lawn is a private benefit to residents and owners who are entitled to use it. The CLC board will meet shortly to decide how to react to this.

BATH HISTORY FESTIVAL AND HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

B&NES Council and BBC Radio Bristol have joined forces to stage the first ever Bath History Festival which will take place at the Guildhall in Bath on Saturday, September 11 from 10am-5pm. There will be lots to see and do with family activities, rooftop tours of the building, guided walks around the exterior of the Guildhall and a wide range of talks.

There will be dancing by the Bath Minuet Society and the Jane Austen Dancers as well as a chance to meet the Ermine Street Guard – the UK's premier Roman re-enactment society. The Mayor's Parlour will also be open during the day between 10am and 4pm, offering visitors the chance to see the City of Bath's civic regalia. Representatives from a number of local history societies and heritage attractions from across Bath & North East Somerset will be at the Guildhall throughout the day. There will also be displays of dance, drama and music throughout the day in Abbey Square and Parade Gardens and a concert at Bath Abbey at 2pm.

Nine other buildings across the area will also be open to visitors throughout the weekend:

- The **Tramshed and Beehive Yard** in Bath's Walcot Street will be open on Friday, September 10 from 10am-4pm – call 01225 481418 for more details.
- The Grade II* listed mediæval **Englishcombe Tithe Barn** at Rectory Farmhouse will be open on Friday, September 10 from 2pm-6pm, Saturday, September 11 from 10am-12noon and 2pm-6pm, Sunday, September 12 from 2pm-6pm and Monday, September 13 from 10am-12noon. Call 01225 425073 for more details.
- **Saltford Brass Mill** will be open on Friday, September 10 from 10am-4pm and Saturday, September 11 from 11am-3pm. The mill is the only surviving water-powered brass mill in the area. Brass rubbing and quiz sheets will be available for the children. Call 0117 986 2216 for more information.
- **Bath Masonic Hall**, built in 1750 as the Theatre Royal, will be open on Saturday, September 11 from 11am-5pm. Call 01225 444256 for more details.
- The award winning **headquarters of Wessex Water** in Claverton Down will be open on Sunday, September 12 from 11am-3pm. One of the 'greenest' offices in Europe, the operations centre was named as Building of the Year in 2002. Call 01225 526327 for more details.
- The Gothic spectacle that is **Beckford's Tower** at Lansdown will be open on Sunday, September 12 from 10.30am-5pm with talks every hour from 11am. For more details call 01225 460705.

B&NES LOCAL PLAN

Green Belt at Claverton Down - Statement to FBRA 26/7/04

Following on from previous support from FBRA, particularly in the form of signatories to last November's 1400-signature petition to B&NES and supportive statements in the Better for Bath: document, this is a short summary of progress to date regarding the continued vigorous opposition to the proposal in the draft B&NES Local Plan, to lose 55 acres (220,000 sq.m.) of Green Belt at Claverton Down to facilitate future expansion of the University of Bath.

The first opportunity for formal public consultation had to wait until the Revised Draft Local Plan was placed on deposit towards the end of last year. This resulted in 600 objections being submitted, the largest number received for any proposal within the Plan. The vast majority challenged the claim that exceptional circumstances exist, as required by central Government, before any Green Belt boundary can be modified.

Then, in early June, the University admitted that it had previously grossly overestimated its floorspace requirements for the foreseeable future and that sufficient opportunities for building development within its existing campus had been identified to cater for all its expansion needs (41,000 sq.m.) for at least the next 6 years, which coincides with the end of the period of validity of the Local Plan. However, B&NES' responses to the 600 Local Plan objections totally ignored these changed circumstances and persisted with the claim that exceptional circumstances still exist based on the University's initial gross overestimate of its requirements.

At meetings of B&NES' Executive and Full Council earlier this month, Councillor Rosemary Todd, Executive Member for Sustainability and the Environment, refused to recommend deletion of this unnecessary proposal from the Local Plan before it is taken forward to the lengthy and costly Public Inquiry, due to commence in January 2005 and run for up to a year. It is therefore unlikely that the B&NES Local Plan will be adopted before 2006, half way through the 10-year period it is supposed to cover.

The committee which represents the Campaign to Preserve the Green Belt at Claverton Down is currently awaiting a reply from Councillor Todd to a recent letter asking whether B&NES recognises the fundamental change in

the University's stance, and whether it was the University or the Council who initiated the proposal.

In the meantime, our committee is concentrating its efforts on developing a comprehensive report for the Inspector at the forthcoming Inquiry. We welcome the continued support of FedBRA.

A photograph is available of a relevant part of the public exhibition which was staged at the University in June 2004. It states:

“Figure 10 shows the areas on the campus that have been identified as sites for new buildings in previous masterplans. If all of these sites were built on at a density similar to the existing buildings on the campus, around 41,000 sq.m. of additional space would be provided. This would cater for 6 years of anticipated growth at current rates. Once this space is occupied, the University would have to consider either building on land which is currently within the green belt or identify suitable sites elsewhere in Bath”.

CHRIS BEEZLEY

Chair, Beech Avenue Residents' Association
email: BeezleyCJ@aol.com

Final Chance To Have Your Say On Green Belt

Time is running out for residents opposed to plans to reduce the size of the green belt in Bath to allow for University expansion. All comments about Bath's development blueprint for the next ten years have to be received by the end of September, or they will not be considered. Once it is approved, the Bath and North East Somerset Local Plan will provide clear guidelines about what land in and around the city can be developed and what must be left alone.

After the release of the first draft of the local plan in 2002, a revised edition was published last October, and members of the public were invited to comment on the new plan. The most controversial proposals set to be included in the plan are the changes to the green belt around the University of Bath campus. They would allow the institution to develop its Claverton Down campus.

Hundreds of people from across the city have already written letters objecting to the proposed changes, which would remove 29 acres from the

protected zone. Now Chris Beezley, chairman of the Campaign For The Protection Of Green Belt at Claverton Down group, is urging others to write in. "It is very important that we put our objections down," he said. "One of the proposed changes would allow the building of unlimited student accommodation on the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. I don't think that would be allowed elsewhere in the country."

All representations about the local plan will be heard by a Government inspector at a public inquiry early next year. Mr Beezley said: "There seems to be a determination on behalf of the Council and the University to push the whole green belt issue through in ignorance of the facts."

The University unveiled a masterplan for the Claverton Down site in June, and said it needed to develop the site if it was to maintain its status as one of the nation's leading centres of innovation. If it was not allowed to use green belt land, the University has said it would need to search for an alternative site in the city.

Elsewhere in the local plan, the Council has also changed the proposed capacity for some housing development sites, including reducing the number of homes sought on the Western Riverside site from 900 to 800. In addition, changes have been made to the floodplain boundaries in the Bath area, and amendments made to the Council's policies on amenity, non-retail uses in Bath city centre, on nature conservation and listed buildings.

Full details about the amendments to the local plan, and the form for making official representations and comments, are available from B &NES Council at its offices at Trimbridge House in Bath, at Keynsham Town Hall and from all libraries throughout the area. You can also see the Council's website at www.bathnes.gov.uk .

Completed forms can be sent by fax to 477516, by e-mail to [local_plan@ bathnes.gov.uk](mailto:local_plan@bathnes.gov.uk), or by post to Planning Policy, Trimbridge House, Trim Street, Bath BA1 2DP. The deadline for making comments about the revisions to the local plan is Thursday, September 30. Some time after that, a Government planning inspector will hold a public inquiry into the plan.

HYWEL LLOYD

TOUR BUSES

During the long campaign to rid the Crescent of tour buses, we asked for, and received, support from other residents' associations. Now that we are experiencing the benefit, and yet can see the disruption caused by buses to other parts of central Bath, we should welcome a chance to reciprocate. Below is a condensed plea for support from CARA (Circus Area Residents' Association).

The Council will soon be reconsidering both the tour buses & the international coaches. It will only respond to the weight of local opinion.

Please make your opinions known in writing now to

Executive Council Member for Transport – Sir Elgar Jenkins -
22 Frankley Buildings Bath

with copies sent to:

1 The Traffic Commissioner - 2 Rivergate, Temple Quay
Bristol BS16BH -----Fax 01179 29 83 52

2 Don Foster MP - 31 St James St West Bath BA12BT
Fax 46 36 30

3 Rosemary Todd – Executive Councillor (Environment) –
Guildhall, Bath

We suggest references to:

- diesel engines pollution – particulates – damage to lungs
- 20 buses every hour is grossly excessive
- asthma sufferers affected
- serious challenge to health
- can't open the windows
- the smell
- very noisy
- vibration – the buildings – the vaults under the road
- where's the Council's environmental policy if they constantly ignore this?
- extra pollution & congestion & noise caused by the great number of international coaches which cruise the area

Please keep copies of your letters & replies received.

