

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DE BEAUVOIR WARD FORUM

TUESDAY, 29TH OCTOBER, 2013

Councillors Present: Cllr Robert Chapman and Cllr Tom Ebbutt

Apologies: Councillor Gulay Icoz

Regent's Canal Towpath

Venue and attendance

The meeting was held in the Pink Room at St Peter's Crypt, De Beauvoir.

Present: Cllr Tom Ebbutt, Cllr Robert Chapman, Ben Kennedy (Hackney Council Transport team), Ben Bradley (Hackney Council - Chief Executive's Directorate), Dick Vincent (Canal and River Trust), Tim Storey and James Hewson (Canals in Hackney User Group), Hector Proud (the Proud Archivist), and about forty five residents were in attendance.

Discussion

Cllr Tom Ebbutt opened the meeting, and thanked everyone for coming. He invited representatives from the Canal and River Trust (CRT), the Council's Transport team, the Canals in Hackney User Group (CHUG), and the Proud Archivist to speak in turn.

Dick Vincent spoke about the work of the Canal and River Trust (<http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/>), and their role in managing the canal and towpath. In response to questions, Dick clarified that CRT is a charity but has a 15 year contract with the government, which includes core funding. Concerns about cyclists along the towpath were acknowledged; amongst other efforts to address this, CRT have handed out 25,000 code of conduct leaflets out along the canal in the last year, and are working with the police to produce new guidance for the Safer Neighbourhood Teams on enforcement.

Ben Kennedy outlined a scheme the Council is hoping to implement by March 2014 to encourage cyclists off the towpath by opening up other routes. The plan affects the stretch of canal between De Beauvoir Road and Kingsland Road. Any comments on the scheme should be sent to Ben on ben.kennedy@hackney.gov.uk, or 020 8356 8023, by 15th November.

Tim Storey and James Hewson spoke about the work of the Canals in Hackney User Group (<http://chug.org.uk/>), including educating about the canal, promoting sustainability and protecting and enhancing the wildlife in the basin. In response to a question about access, it was clarified that public access to the basin is provided from dawn to dusk, via a gate by Reliance Wharf which is kept unlocked during these hours.

Hector Proud then spoke about the Proud Archivist (<http://www.theproudarchivist.co.uk/>), a combined gallery, bar, restaurant, café, and events space he had opened on the canal this

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month. Hector is keen to reach out to the local community and other venues along the canal and is, for instance, speaking to other venues along the canal about joint programming.

The meeting then split into four separate discussion groups, to identify local issues and opportunities in relation to the canal. The issues identified are outlined overleaf.

At the end of the meeting, it was agreed that it would be useful to meet up again to continue the dialogue. It was suggested that the next meeting focus on the possibility of adopting a stretch of the canal (<http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/volunteer/adopt-a-stretch-of-canal-or-river-near-you>).

The next meeting has been arranged for 7pm on Tuesday 4th February, at the Proud Archivist – everyone is welcome to attend.

<p>Cycling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Signage • Cobbles? • Ban cycling? • White line? Split towpath for bikes and pedestrians • Speed bumps for bikes? Chicanes? Calming? • Speed traps? • More fines/enforcement • Rules for different times? • Park not a road • Real effort to get cyclists off towpath – let's show them alternatives • Cyclists behaviour – hard to enforce • Cyclist numbers do make you feel safer at night • Bike barriers • Divert bikes <p>Litter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is managing the contract? They aren't doing a very good job • Bins are not being emptied every day • Bins overflowing – need more bins • Signage • Fines for littering • Why can't we have glass/compost/clothes recycling? • Who is responsible for which bits? Need to identify ownership of bins. • Community activity • Strip by Ladbrokes • There is <u>still</u> rubbish left after canalival • Section 106 could be used for rolling contracts for litter/rubbish, planter maintenance etc. 	<p>Green space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife – increasing biodiversity • How can we make it a more pleasant/green environment • Identify ownership of 'derelict' green areas • Who is responsible for maintaining lovely wooden planters? Section 106 money? • Tranquillity of canal is worth preserving • Adopt a green space scheme? • Emulate New York highline <p>Congestion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too many people on tow path can make it dangerous • Suggestion: one lane walkway on other side of the canal built on a pontoon. • Data gather journeys people make on a daily basis – to redirect flow. Some people could use a different route. • Create an app i.e. digital solution to create alternative routes. Make it easy for people to get off the towpath – TfL have the technology in place. • Connect TfL route guides to cycling routes • Collect data with an app – start postcode and end postcode 	<p>CRT / Council / Local business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure of Canals Trust – complaints put in • Hackney Council planning – did change plans after this • If Hackney Council don't supply enough funding for any of our plans, seek funds elsewhere • Social responsibility of businesses – some benefit from their license but don't contribute to make sure customers don't litter. They should be charged for cleaning on towpath. <p>Lighting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining lights • Use in dark? • Too much light/new developments • Lights broken on Baltic House, alongside ramp near Kingsland Road <p>Bicentennial anniversary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we participate in events celebrating the 200 years anniversary? • A fun day? • Perhaps a bicentennial celebration group can come of this group <p>Rough sleeping</p> <p>Swimming</p> <p>Fishing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pro licensing
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