

BOWERHILL RESIDENTS ACTION GROUP (BRAG)

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 24th August.

The August meeting of BRAG was held using Zoom hosted by Mark Blackham.

1. Start:

The meeting started at 19.00.

Present:

Mark Blackham (acting chair)

Sue Tweedie (acting secretary)

Dale Robinson

Pauline Helps

Caroline Fielding

Cllr. David Pafford

Cllr. Nick Holder

Apologies were received from Hazel Muse, Rachel Smith, Mandy Slade, Robert and Pauline Shea-Simmonds.

The meeting was chaired by Mark Blackham after a unanimous vote of confidence in his acceptance as acting chair after the resignation of Mark Harris.

2. BRAG MEETING FORMAT CHANGE

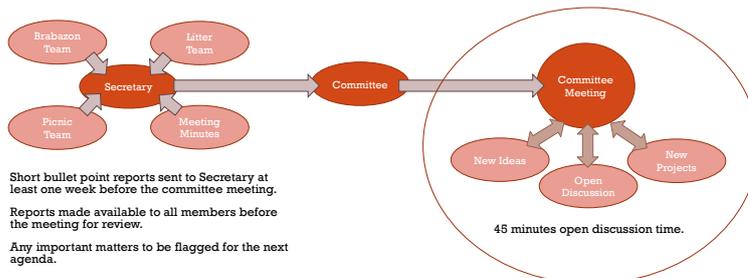
Mark Blackham has suggested that the current format for meetings is somewhat long winded with little chance for discussion. All present agreed. It was proposed that the following changes were made (prepared by MB)

BRAG MEETING FORMAT CHANGE

1. Change of Reporting (to give more discussion time):

It has become quite clear that recent meetings of BRAG have been a little long winded and do not really allow enough time to discuss things that really matter.

Hopefully changing the format of the meetings going forward will address this imbalance by reducing bureaucracy and increasing ideas time. Hopefully more ideas will increase involvement by members and increase a sense of inclusion through open two-way discussion and not dictation. Existing projects only need a quick report and not an hour of discussion. Let project leads run their projects and report as required.



The changes were met with enthusiasm as everyone agreed with the need to make the changes.

BRAG MEETING FORMAT CHANGE

2. Change of Agenda (to give more discussion time):

I propose the following regular agenda for each General Meeting:

- Intro / Welcome
- Acceptance of the reports and minutes (already read by everyone before the meeting). Less than 5 mins
- Any important news or announcements. Less than 10 mins.
- New ideas, environment issues for the Parish Warden and open discussion. Up to 40 mins
- Any Other Business. Up to 5 mins

I propose the frequency of the meeting to be approximately every other month. Ideally, they will be in person so that open discussion is easier. The Village Hall or the function room at The Pilot could be possible locations.

Meetings should be:



Change in the above agenda was accepted by all those present.

It was proposed that meetings be bimonthly from now on. All agreed and the next meeting would be the AGM, to be held early October (date to be announced) at The Village Hall. Dale Robinson has offered to chair this particular meeting to help Mark B. All other meetings could be held at The Pilot function Room.

Dale Robinson and Mark Blackham are actively involved in the Stop The Bypass Group and it was agreed that they would send a short progress report to BRAG.

3. The treasures report is to be circulated prior to every meeting.

The following is a summary of the account to date.

All outstanding bills have been paid.

We were given £150 by NatWest due to the issues with setting up the online banking.

The current standing of the account is: £5671. This includes £2511 which is ring fenced for tables and benches installed by WC and a grant for £1000 from Wessex Water for the Brabazon Way Project.

4. A change of name from BRAG was discussed. After several suggestions the following was the favoured new Title:
Bowerhill Community Group. (it will be added to the constitution)
Any other suggestions from those unable to make the meeting can be considered of course.

5. Mark Blackham proposed a change in the constitution to reflect the needs of the group and not the other way around. There currently needs to be 10 members on the committee which is far too many. Nick Holder asked how we are redrafting the constitution and how we want both the PC and WC represented in the group. For the record, Cllr. Nick Holder is not bothered about having a vote on the committee. Mark Blackham is to draft a revised constitution which will be discussed at the AGM.
Nick Holder asked if there might be value in asking for small membership fee to encourage members to become involved. Most people were unsure that there would be any benefit and could potentially be a barrier.
It was acknowledged and discussed the group is short of active members. This needs to be addressed for the future of the group.

6. There has been considerable delay in obtaining the licence that is necessary to go ahead with The Brabazon Way Community Wildlife Project. David Pafford suggested a letter directly to Nick Holder who would pass on immediately to the relevant person. It was later agreed that Nick Holder would get involved to move it forward as autumn is fast approaching and the best time to start work on the project.

7. There is some confusion over how often we can engage the help of the Parish Steward and what he is able to do. He cannot do tree lopping but can do minor jobs around the area. We should feed the jobs to the Parish Council via Clerk to the Council Teresa Strange. Caroline had reported directly to WC of 6 different areas overgrown with nettles and brambles that are causing her a problem.
Pauline Helps offered to take up the task of identifying trees that may need a bit of brashing (low hanging branches cut back).and reporting them. Nick Holder is to speak directly to the Tree Warden. Caroline also offered (with the help of her own group) to identify areas of potential hazard.

8. Recruiting for active new members, was discussed and various methods were suggested:

Social Media.

Melksham News.

Holding community events such as ‘fun days’ or fetes.

High on the list of suggestions is to engage local schools, scout group, air cadets. David Pafford has already started the process and is to pass contacts to Mark Blackham.

9. The meeting closed at 19.49.