

Minutes of Inaugural Mobility Focus Group Meeting Feb 14th 2006

Present:

John Swift	Roy Bryan-Hanson	Peter Cross	Maureen Cross
<i>Mike Watson</i>	<i>Bruce Gooding</i>	Jean Cherry	Pat Dennis
Anne Haworth			

Also attending:

<i>Stan Cherry</i>	Bathford Parish Council
<i>Shirley Beazer</i>	Bathford Parish Council
<i>Mike Whitcombe</i>	Manager - Carrswood Centre
<i>Alison Sherwin</i>	B&NES - Highways & Footpath Safety
Jackie Richard	Student Social Worker

Apologies from:

Betty & John Taylor.

Peter Cross

All unable to attend this meeting but wish to take part.

1 Introduction:

- 1.1 SC welcomed all to the inaugural meeting of the Bathford Mobility Focus Group (BMFG). It was good to see such a turn out for the first event on a February night.
- 1.2 SC also thanked Mike Whitcombe for the use of Carrswood Centre for this meeting. MW responded, saying that everyone was welcome and that his team at Carrswood were keen to be involved in this project as long as they were resident in the village.
- 1.3 MW also offered use of Carrswood for future meetings if that was preferable to the meeting.

2 Purpose of meeting

- 2.1 SC outlined the background to the meeting. The need for such a Group had been identified during the preparation of the Bathford Parish Plan. Many of those present had indicated their willingness to take part on PP questionnaires and others had been attracted by publicity for the meeting.
- 2.2 Of the many items chosen by the Parish Council as 'Action Points', mobility access difficulties were identified as one of the more important issues which should be put high on the list of priorities. The Amenities Committee agreed to take the lead on the issue and have called this meeting.

3 Aims of the group are:

- A: Agree the need to set up a Mobilty Focus Group
- B: Investigate means of identifying problem areas within the Parish.
- C: Report findings back to the Parish Council.
- D: Parish Council to act to improve wherever practicable.

4 Need for a Focus Group

- 4.1 Everyone present agreed the need to set up a formal Group to investigate issues identified to date and investigate further around the parish.

5 Methodology

- 5.1 SC explained that the Parish Council's view throughout preparation of the Parish Plan was that they wanted the people of the parish to give their views and they deliberately 'kept out of the way'. On this issue they would like to take the same stance - they want people affected to let them know what the problems are - the Parish Council's job will be to try to address the issues once they are identified.
- 5.2 Alison Sherwin outlined B&NES views on this issue and explained that, while there was no bottomless purse, there were some monies available to make improvements when a need had been identified.
- 5.3 After much discussion it was agreed that the best means of identifying problem areas within the village would be physically assessing the area. This would be best done in teams - preferably with two or three people to each area.
- 5.4 MW suggested that the best method should involve able-bodied and disabled working together in the same team. It would also be preferable to begin the survey later in the year when the weather had improved.
- 5.5 AS suggested that we should split the village into areas and try to identify 'main routes' used by pedestrians to access main centres, e.g., shop, church social areas, etc.
- 5.6 It was agreed that this should be the way forward and that we should meet again in approx. one months time to set identify targets for the survey, set up the teams and identify the date we expect to report back to the Parish Council.

6 Other Issues arising

6.1 Problem areas identified

A number of problem areas had been identified during the Parish Plan preparation. These were issued to the Group. Other issues were mentioned during the meeting and will be added to the list. These were:

- 6.1.1 Mountain Wood - drop kerbs required (Bruce Gooding)
- 6.1.2 Ashley Rd / Titan Barrow - 'If you drive up the Hill on a chair you have to go right into Titan Barrow before you can find a drop kerb'.
- 6.1.3 Birdcage Walk - needs sweeping regularly to ensure safe passage. (Shirley Beazer to progress).
- 6.1.4 Request for a footpath from Birdcage Walk to Manor Drive - would make access to Church St easier and safer for all. (Possible future project?).

6.2 Communication of Group progress

- 6.2.1 Progress will be reported back to Parish Council Meetings (SC).
- 6.2.2 A note will be entered into Bulletin briefly stating that Group has been formed and date of next meeting.
- 6.2.3 A page is to be made available on Bathford Parish website (www.bathford.net) which will be updated with Group's progress
- 6.2.4 These minutes will be posted in the Shop and notice boards.

7 Date of next meeting: 6-30 p.m. on Tuesday March 14th at Tynedale

Stan Cherry