

Beeston Community Forum Annual Report for the year 2016-7

The Eighteenth Annual General Meeting- 1st December 2016

This was addressed by Councillor David Congreve, a former Lord Mayor representing the Lord Mayor of Leeds, Councillor Judith Blake, the Leader of Leeds City Council, and Councillor Stewart Golton, the Leader of the Leeds City Council Liberal Democrat Group

The following Officers and Committee members were elected

Chair	Christine Thornton	
Vice Chair	Richard Bell	
Secretary	Robert Winfield	
Treasurer	Colin Hendrick Ward	
Other Committee Members	Bill Birch Steve Francis Arthur Kirby	Adam Cooper Ken Hewson

Eddie Leatham was elected to the Committee at the Forum meeting on 2nd February. Arthur Kirby resigned from the Committee, due to ill health on 3rd May. Rev Lindsey Pearson was co-opted to the Committee on 22nd June (ratified by the Forum on 6th July). Pam Jones was co-opted to the Committee on 18th September (ratified by the Forum on 5th October)

The Annual General Meeting passed a constitutional amendment to provide for joint meetings with the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum, thus giving effect to the wishes of the members of both Forums that the two Forums work more closely together

Meetings

The table below shows the dates of meetings and the details of guest speakers. Joint meetings with the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum are marked thus *

Date	Details of guest speaker(s)	Topic
5 th January 2017	Chris Darley (Nathaniel, Lichfield and Partners) Nick Child (Barmston Developments)	Plans by Barmston Developments to build 58 houses on a site at Old Lane
2 nd February 2017 *	Stewart Robinson (International Fun Fairs) Martin Wright (Leeds City Council) Ian Mackay (Leeds City Council) Abbie Miladinovic (Leeds City Council)	Valentine Fun Fair at Elland Road The Beeston Neighbourhood Plan
2 nd March 2017	Martin Wright (Leeds City Council) Steve Foster (General Manager White Rose Centre)	Valentine Fun Fair at Elland Road The White Rose Centre
6 th April 2017	Insp Alan Travis (West Yorkshire Police) Mark Burns Williamson OBE (Police and Crime Commissioner, West Yorkshire Police)	Policing issues
4 th May 2017 *	Dennis Kitchen (Chairman, Holbeck Neighbourhood Forum)	Neighbourhood Planning
1 st June 2017	Meeting cancelled owing to the temporary absence of a water supply at the venue	

6 th July 2017	Councillor Keith Wakefield (Chairman, Metro)	Transport issues
3 rd August 2017 *	No guest speaker	
7 th September 2017	Rachel Benn , Leeds City Libraries Angus Kinnear , Managing Director, Leeds United FC	Library Issues Leeds United FC
5 th October 2017	Sarah Kearns , Louise Pavitt, Andrew Potter and Tom Peckitt (all of Highways England)	Proposals for junctions 1 -7 of the M621
2 nd November 2017 *	No guest speaker	Neighbourhood Planning Workshop

Committee meetings took place on 19th January, 16th February, 9th March, 20th April, 18th May, 22nd June, 12th July, 18th September, 19th October and 27th November

Aspiring Communities Planning Application

The planning application by Aspiring Communities to build an Islamic Learning Centre on the site of the former Ice Pak factory on Barkly Road was determined by a full public inquiry on 28-30th March under the chairmanship of Christopher Preston of the Planning Inspectorate. We continued to oppose the application strongly. The Forum was represented at the Inquiry by Christine Thornton. Bill Birch represented the Save Our Beeston campaign, whilst Colin Hendrick Ward spoke at the inquiry in a personal capacity. We were disappointed that despite our strong representations, the planning application was approved

Beeston and Holbeck Ward Boundary

We made representations to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England with the aim of ensuring that the area in and around Stank Hall and Stank Hall Barn is included in Beeston and Holbeck Ward . We otherwise supported the Commission's proposals . We were pleased that the Commission accepted our representations so that Stank Hall and Stank Hall Barn will be included in Beeston and Holbeck Ward. We also wrote to Tom Riordan, Chief Executive of Leeds City Council to express our concerns about the absence of the Beeston Community Forum and the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum from a list of local community organisations to be consulted by the Boundary Commission

The Beeston Family Feud

Following the publication of a double page article in the Yorkshire Evening Post on 9th March, we wrote to Dee Collins, Chief Constable of West Yorkshire to express a number of concerns about the Police's handling of this matter . We noted that the family feud led to a period of violence in our area, including crimes such as attempted murder, kidnap, assault, arson and robbery and expressed our concerns about these matters being dealt with by a civil injunction. Above all, we were disappointed that the police did not alert the Forum to this situation. The Chief Constable replied, reassuring us that the very best police resources were deployed to tackle this very serious issue , and that the court orders impose a number of conditions on those involved, in particular, their exclusion from the Beeston area. Additionally, the sensitive nature of police enquiries meant that communications had to be carefully managed and reporting restrictions still existed in relation to some charges yet to be heard in court .

Beeston Village Community Centre

We continued to support the project by Health for All (Leeds) to replace the Beeston Village Community Centre building by a new building which is better able to fulfil the functions of a Community Centre. Following the granting of funding from the National Lottery which was essential to allow the project to proceed, Beeston Village Community Centre closed at the end of July and the building was demolished during August. The Committee took a decision that during the redevelopment , our meetings will be held at the Function Room of the Old White Hart. We were

disappointed that after being assured by Health for All (Leeds) that we would be able to use Beeston Village Community Centre for our August meeting , the timetable for the closure of the building was brought forward owing to the need to carry out an asbestos survey before the demolition. Health for All (Leeds) apologised for the short notice of this situation, citing pressures on staff caused by the closure of the building . Health for All (Leeds) have agreed that in view of the inconvenience caused to committee members as a result of the need to change the venue of the August Forum meeting, our first two hirings of the new Community Centre will be free of charge . We look forward to holding our meetings at the new Community Centre, when this is available.

Miscellaneous

- 1) The Forum meeting on 6th July passed a constitutional resolution to extend the Forum area by including the area in and around Stank Hall Barn
- 2) The Forum meeting on 6th April passed a resolution authorising the committee to object to planning applications in Beeston for food takeaways , or for the conversion of houses into multi occupancy flats
- 3) The Forum objected to a planning application by Asda Stores Ltd to extend the opening hours for its store and petrol station on Old Lane
- 4) The Forum wrote to Leeds Building Society to oppose the closure of their Dewsbury Road branch. The branch nevertheless closed on 30th June
- 5) The Forum objected to plans by Farm Foods to demolish the Concourse House building on Dewsbury Road and build a store on the site . Alistair Kay of Farm Foods agreed to appear at the June Forum meeting (then expected to be taking place) , but Farm Foods withdrew the application and abandoned any interest in developing the site after Leeds City Council Planning officers recommended the rejection of the application
- 6) The Forum objected to proposals by Highways England to close junction 2a of the M621 on the basis that this would lead to a reduction in safety and an increase in traffic along various congested roads in Beeston. Representatives of Highways England attended the October Forum meeting and agreed to return to the Forum when a further round of consultation about the proposals takes place
- 7) The traditional stall at the Beeston Festival (held at Cross Flatts Park on Saturday 22nd July) focussed on the Neighbourhood Forum
- 8) The Forum's website at www.beestonforum.btck.co.uk continues to be maintained and updated by Robert Winfield
- 9) The Forum, at its meeting on 2nd November, decided that all meetings between January and November 2018 will be joint meetings with the Neighbourhood Forum. It is currently envisaged that longer discussions about Neighbourhood Planning will take place at the meetings in February, May, August and November.

Vote of Thanks

- 1) To the Forum members who served refreshments to Forum members at the conclusion of meetings
- 2) To Myra Munro and Mark Parry who organised the raffle at Forum meetings during the year
- 3) To the Beeston and Holbeck Councillors , David Congreve, Angela Gabriel and Adam Ogilvie for their regular attendance at Forum meetings and for their donation of MICE money