

BA13+ REPORT to AREA BOARD

The Annual General Meeting of the BA13+ Community Area Partnership was held on Wednesday 19th August at Stormore, Dilton Marsh at 7pm.

Carole King, Chair of the Partnership, reported that the group have had four partnership meetings in the past year, themed around arts, culture & leisure; children & young people; the environment, and housing. We operate a number of sub-groups. Bill Fanning is chair of health and social care and also represents us on the Town Council group on the Westbury Hospital site. We also have a Restorative Westbury group which is funded to train people in restorative practice methods. We have a community safety sub group, a very successful Safe Places scheme, and following on from that we've implemented Dementia Friendly Westbury. We have neighbourhood tasking meetings, including Neighbourhood Watch.

A new Constitution was adopted, and the posts of Chairman, Vice-Chair and Treasurer were voted on, with Carole King unanimously voted as Chair of the group for a further year.

As mentioned above, each BA13+ Partnership meeting has a theme, and the theme chosen for this particular meeting was **Transport**.

Jon Watson spoke first on behalf of **Westbury Wheelers**, our local cycling club, which has 145 members aged between 16 and 80. Jon explained that they think of themselves as road cyclists, and gave a short presentation which touched primarily on safety and access.

Jon explained there were six access points in and out of Westbury; Capps Lane, Bratton Road, Warminster Road, Trowbridge Road, Tower Hill which is part of the Wiltshire cycleway (Jerry Wickham explained that substantial changes were to take place at Tower Hill to allow pedestrians better access under the bridge), Penny Road out to Brokerswood, Hawkeridge Road out to Slag Lane. There were issues with each one, but there are a number of Quick Wins available.

Cllr. Gordon King asked which the priority would be of the six routes mentioned. Jon replied that Capps Lane was his priority. There is a pavement under the bridge which could be upgraded to a cycle path. Gordon said that issue could be taken to the CATG which takes place 4th September.

Peter Mundy from **West Wilts Ramblers** then introduced himself as Chairman of West Wilts Ramblers, a post he has held for the past 8 years. The West Wilts group was formed in 1977. It covers broadly an area from 80Lacock down to Mere. There are around 314 members, from all walks of life. They range between 50 and 80 years old. They walk every Wednesday and Sunday, usually in groups of between 10 and 45, routes varying from between 4 and 14 miles. Ramblers are good for the local communities because they give people an opportunity to get out into the countryside with no risk to themselves. Walking is good for health, but is also an important social outlet. They also have a working party which goes out every Tuesday morning working with Wiltshire Council rights of way to improve access, installing kissing gates etc.

John Adams then spoke on behalf of **Westbury and district LINK** scheme. John said we are really fortunate in Wiltshire to have this brilliant network of volunteer drivers. Over the last 12 months, volunteer drivers travelled just short of one million miles. They are the biggest voluntary network in the county. This equates to just under a million pounds worth of economic activity. The scheme covers 98% of the county. There are 35 volunteers here in Westbury, who between them covered 50,000 miles last year. Examples include taking people to medical appointments in hospitals and health centres, shopping, library runs, and increasingly taking one half of a couple to visit their partner in a care home.

John urged people to get involved in Wiltshire Council's Strategic Transport Review. Local authorities have had a really raw deal out of the government. There is a drive to make the best possible use out of volunteers and John expressed slight concern that there is not a lot more effort which can be leveraged out of existing volunteers, and new volunteers are simply not coming forward at this time.

The next Partnership meeting is to be held on **Wednesday 11th November 2015** at the Laverton in Westbury. The theme is to be Health and Wellbeing.

Phil McMullen, BA13+ Partnership Officer