

## **AGENDA ITEM 6**

### **Bishopston, Cotham & Redland Neighbourhood Partnership (BCRNP) Communications & Engagement Group Paper for NP Meeting of Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2013**

#### **Looking Back on the "Our Neighbourhood" Community Festival**

##### **Introduction**

The "Our Neighbourhood" Community Festival was organised by the BCRNP Communications & Engagement Group and was held in May 2013. This paper looks back at the festival and sets out a light touch evaluation. Finally, it considers whether the festival should be repeated.

##### **Recommendation (for agreement by the NP)**

1. It is recommended that a second festival be held next summer.
2. Members of the Neighbourhood Partnership are also asked to nominate representatives to serve on the festival organising committee.

##### **Festival Aims**

The aims of the festival were:

- to increase awareness of the Neighbourhood Partnership, the work it does for local people, and how people can find out more and get involved;
- to encourage people's engagement in and contribution towards the wellbeing of their neighbourhood - helping it to improve;
- to create opportunities for people to get to know other local people, and learn about and celebrate our neighbourhood and what it has to offer.

##### **The Outcome**

###### **Scope of the Festival**

- Far surpassing expectations, the festival programme consisted of 38 events over the 8 days.
- The variety of events provided appeal for a wide sector of BCR society.
- Festival events were run by 27 different local community groups and businesses (including the NP and its sub-groups).
- Just over half of the events were put on specifically for the festival. The remainder were happening already but the organisers agreed to brand it as part of the festival.

###### **Marketing**

Promotional activity consisted of:

- promotional pieces in all 3 local magazines - Redland, Cotham & Westbury Park Directory; Bishopston Matters; and Bishopston Voice.
- coverage in the Neighbourhood Partnership e-newsletter.
- mention on the council Neighbourhood Partnerships website, and full details on our own [www.bcrnp.org.uk](http://www.bcrnp.org.uk) website.

- posters in the windows of many BCR shops and businesses, and on community noticeboards.
- flyers in cafes and other public spaces.
- Advert in the programme of the Redland May Fair.
- Stands and posters in local libraries.
- Mentions in e-newsletter(s) issued by our local councillors to their constituents.

### **Turnout and awareness**

- Turnout at events was mixed, with pre-existing events understandably doing better than festival-specific events.
- Attendance at the Super Forum was high, driven by the Mayor's attendance and controversy around the Residents' Parking Scheme proposals.
- Disappointingly, some of those events run specifically for the festival and relying on the festival advertising had NO or very limited attendees.
- Awareness of the festival amongst the general public seemed pretty low.

### **Lessons learned**

- It was a good idea to have an anchor event at each end of the week - May Fair & Super Forum
- We needed to rely on groups & should do more of this
- Considerable investment of time from organising committee
- Committee should focus on comms & do more of this
- More notice - start planning process in Autumn
- Start comms much earlier.

### **Conclusion**

- Stronger connection between NP and community groups
- Raised awareness of NP, and of the activities of other community groups
- First meaningful engagement of wider NP with traders

### **Recommendation**

The C&E group recommend the festival be an annual event as this would gain more momentum and wider awareness. Poor attendance in 2013 may make some groups reluctant to participate again, but early notice and a stronger comms plan will help that. Members of the organising committee are willing to put in similar effort for a further festival in 2014.

1. It is **recommended** that a second festival be held next summer.
2. **Members of the Neighbourhood Partnership are also asked to nominate representatives to serve on the festival organising committee.**

August 2013