



City Green

The newsletter of Birmingham Green Party

Green Party

AGM Edition
January 2007

BGP 2007 AGM AND FUND-RAISING LUNCH

Inside this issue:

Date: Saturday 27 January

Location: Welsh Congregational Church, Bath Street (off Queensway, not far from St Chad's Cathedral in Birmingham city centre)

Programme:

10.00 am Arrival and drinks

10.30 am AGM

Agenda

Introductions and welcome

Written reports from officers:

- Secretary (Hazel Clawley)
- Treasurer (Phil Simpson)
- Membership Secretary (Peter Beck)
- Elections Officer (Peter Tinsley)
- Media Officer (Barney Smith, plus Peter Beck, acting Media Officer from 28 September 2006)
- Newsletter Editors (Anna and Stuart Masters)
- Policy Coordinator (Alan Clawley)
- Fundraiser/Social Secretary (Anna Masters)

Other reports from key (non-officer) activists appointed by the Committee:

- Website and e-group (Amanda Baker)
- Bournville campaign team (Joe Rooney, Steve Austin)

Election of officers for 2007:

- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Membership Secretary
- Elections Officer
- Media Officer
- Newsletter Editor
- Policy Coordinator
- Fundraiser/Social Secretary

Further selection of prospective candidates for 2007 City Council elections.

Close of meeting by 12.30 pm latest.

12.30 pm Fund-raising lunch (shared with folk arriving for the Regional AGM)

[1.00 pm at same venue - West Midlands Region AGM – all welcome.]

***EVEN IF YOU CAN'T MAKE THE AGM,
PLEASE DO JOIN US FOR LUNCH at 12.30 p.m.!***

BGP AGM

We need YOU! 1
The Bounds of Bournville

*2006 Reports: Secretary,
Policy Co-Ordinator,
Acting Media Officer* 2

*2006 Reports: Election Co-
Ordinator, City Green Editor,
Social/Fund-Raising Sec.* 3

*2006 Reports: Membership
Secretary, Treasurer* 4
Friends of the Central Library

WE NEED YOU!

At the AGM, all officer posts are up for election. There are currently no nominations for the all-important jobs of **Secretary, Media, Policy and Fund-raising**. These 4 posts are vital if we are to make a real impact over the next year. Please think seriously about committing yourself to that extra step. The Birmingham Green Party is a friendly group and we will all help you; don't worry – just volunteer!

THE BOUNDS OF BOURNVILLE

This year's sponsored walk is round the Green Party's target ward in the 2007 local election.

To get your sponsorship form: email alan.clawley@virgin.net, phone 0121 772 7165, or write to 26 Taywood Drive B10 0DB.

This year I hope a lot more walkers (and sponsors!) will take part.

Walking is the best way to get to know your neighbourhood, so join me on Easter Monday! (To find us on the day, ring 07843 787 956.)

Alan Clawley



Written reports from all BGP officers will be available at the AGM.



2006 REPORT: SECRETARY (*Hazel Clawley*)

As the secretary and local party contact, I have, of course, prepared agendas for meetings, and circulated minutes. I have also dealt with correspondence – very little of it, and mainly by email these days. I've done this not-too-taxing job for three years now, and I think it's time for someone else to have a go.

That's all my report, really, except that, as last year, I would like to put on record some BGP activities which are unlikely to crop up in the reports of other officers. In no particular order:

- Regular quarterly members' meetings have been held this year – a very positive and worthwhile development, especially new member Rianne's talk on Islam and the environment
- "Chernobyl 20 years on" stall in city centre, with CND and FOE
- "Green energy works" campaign: survey in city centre
- Keith Taylor's visit in May, just before local elections, highlighting various local GP campaigns – against airport expansion, for renewable energy, for keeping the central library
- Members attended Regional Council (in Leamington) to discuss (with Jim Killock) improvements to next General Election leaflet
- Members attended national demo of Campaign Against Climate Change
- King Edward's High School Question Time – Joe Rooney represented GP
- Birmingham Sustainability Forum – BGP continues to try to influence direction and critique practice of this, as well as running a GP stall at the events
- Members attended Vigil for Asylum Seekers, St Philip's churchyard
- Members attended Respect meeting on climate change and nuclear power
- GP stall at Freshers' Fair, Birmingham University
- GP speaker (Molly Scott-Cato) at Campaign Against Climate Change meeting at Birmingham University
- Members attended Green Economics Conference
- Secretary and Policy Coordinator had informal meeting with respect Councillor Salma Yaqoob
- Members attended NHS demo
- Leafleting at Al Gore's film "An Inconvenient Truth"
- Members attended Autumn Conference
- West Midlands Regional GP – Peter Tinsley continued as Elections Officer, and members attended meetings

2006 REPORT: POLICY CO-ORDINATOR (*Alan Clawley*)

During the year I invited members, through an item in *City Green* and by the BGP email group, to submit new policy statements and amendments to the 2005 *Manifesto for a Sustainable Birmingham*. I organised a Policy Conference in October at Friends of the Earth at which about half of the clauses was reviewed and some new clauses were added.

After two years as Policy Co-ordinator I believe I have helped the Party to establish a substantial body of policy that it can draw on in its local election campaigns and a democratic procedure for amending and adding to that policy.

I will not be standing for the post of Policy Co-ordinator for 2007.

2006 REPORT: ACTING MEDIA OFFICER (*Peter Beck*)

This report is, unfortunately, not the result of thorough analysis, but mainly my impressions of our activity and coverage in 2006.

We have been reasonably successful in getting letters in the name of Birmingham Green Party into the local press, including the *Birmingham Post*, the *Birmingham Evening Mail* and the *Halesowen News*. The majority have been in the *Birmingham Post*. Thanks to all who contributed to this.

We were not very successful with press releases. I represented BGP in two BBC Radio West Midlands Breakfast Shows on Climate Change and Sustainability.



2006 REPORT: ELECTION CO-ORDINATOR (*Peter Tinsley*)

We achieved our best results in 16 years in the council elections on 4 May 2006. Overall we got 12,800 votes or 4.9%. Although we got more votes in 2004, all voters then had 3 votes and, as we only contested 1 seat in each ward, our vote was exaggerated. Our best results were in Harborne (10.0%), Moseley & Kings Heath (9.8%), Bournville (9.6%) and Selly Oak (9.2%), with good results in Nechells and Ladywood. Many thanks to all those who stood as candidates and to those who helped in any way during the campaign.

Following the local elections, it was decided to target Bournville for a focussed intensive campaign and Joe Rooney was selected as candidate in September. Most of the ward has had an initial canvass and the first of a series of newsletters delivered - a strong campaign is expected before May.

Fifteen candidates have already been selected for May's elections and this meeting will be asked to endorse further candidates. All seats will be contested. Given the national mood, we can expect a substantially increased vote.

Region-wide, Birmingham's policy of contesting all seats has had a dramatic impact. In 2003, of 3.7 million electors who had local elections, only 430,000 (11.5%) had the chance to vote Green. This year, 1,370,000 (36.8%) will have that possibility, and the bulk of that advance is because of Birmingham's efforts.

We are committed to trying to fight 5 seats at the next General Election – definitely Edgbaston and Selly Oak, and then 3 others to be decided. I suggest we should proceed to select candidates for Edgbaston and Selly Oak after the local elections. We can also consider which other seats to contest.

Birmingham GP has accepted Sandwell members as part of its family and, wearing another hat, I am hoping we can field an increased number of candidates in both Sandwell and Dudley, with a view to contesting seats there in the next General Election.

Later in 2007, there will also be the selection of the West Midlands candidates for the European Elections in 2009 and I would encourage Birmingham members to participate fully in that process.

I am willing, subject to your agreement, to continue as Elections Officer after the AGM. I apologise that, as a result of other commitments, I will not be present at the meeting.

2006 REPORT: CITY GREEN EDITOR (*Anna Masters*)

During 2006/7 there were four editions of *City Green* published: April 2006, July 2006, November 2006 and January 2007. A range of topics was covered, with emphasis on elections and the Bournville campaign. Most of the copy continues to come from a few regular contributors, but there have also been contributions from new sources.

Email is now the preferred delivery form, with distribution of approximately 70-75 versus 30-35 paper copies. I struggle to find the best printing or copying options. I've been resorting to photocopying, which has poor, although inexpensive, results. I welcome suggestions or help with this.

I am happy to carry on as *City Green* editor and, as always, welcome all manner of contributions.

2006 REPORT: SOCIAL AND FUND-RAISING SECRETARY (*Anna Masters*)

There was a variety of events during 2006: some social, some fund-raising, most a mix of the two. There were fund-raising meals, a barbecue, Alan's annual Sponsored Walk, a couple of city-centre information stalls, the monthly Green Lunch at Café One, and the advent of the quarterly members' meeting, which provides a way for new and long-term Party members to get to know each other. There are also plans for a regular Saturday meet-up at Stirchley pub. All in all, good progress so far, and still many avenues to explore!

I'm afraid I am unable to continue in this role, but am still interested in supporting the social and fund-raising activities and would be glad to help the next person to take up this role.



2006 REPORT: MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY *(Peter Beck)*

Encouragingly, the decline in membership which took place in the second half of 2005 and continued into the first half of 2006 has proved to be temporary. It brought our numbers down to 81 in February. However, it should be remembered that in 2001 we only had 46 members. The second half of 2006 has seen an increase in membership and especially significant is that, from September this year, we have had 15 new members. Thus, despite expected losses during the year, we are back to 2004 levels and currently our membership stands at 94.

No doubt good 2006 Local Election results and the Target to Win Campaign have contributed to this upward trend. There has been a notable increase in younger members including those who are also in the University of Birmingham Young Greens. Obviously this is essential for our future.

On a personal note, I believe I have been more effective this year in communicating with the membership, including welcoming new members and following up with enquirers, and particularly since September when I "retired". There has also been an increase in passing on news and information about our activities and those of the Regional and National parties.

I hope that we can continue to do what is necessary in 2007 to ensure that these recent encouraging trends are sustained.

Membership report:

The new membership list reveals that since the last one of 10.10.06:

- 1 resigned/not renewed
- 1 transfer
- 4 just lapsed (am chasing them up)
- 12 new

Grand total membership: 92.

Public Meeting about the future of the Central Library

7.30 pm, Monday 26 February 2007, Birmingham and Midland Institute, Margaret Street.

Speakers: Clive Dutton, Andy Foster, Brian Gambles, Gary Taylor (Argent), John Madin, Joe Holyok; **Chair:** Adrian Goldberg.

This will be the inaugural meeting of the "Friends of the Central Library" support group.

The City Council remains determined to demolish the building to make way for new offices and build a new library on the car park between Baskerville House and the Repertory Theatre in Centenary Square. BGP's policy is to retain and refurbish the existing building, oppose the commercial redevelopment of Paradise Circus and oppose the use of the Private Finance Initiative for new public buildings.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Ongoing	Campaign in Bournville ward (contact Peter Tinsley for details)
Sat 27 January	BGP AGM (see p.1 for details)
Thu 15 February	BGP Committee Meeting, 207 Bournville Lane
Mon 26 February	Friends of the Central Library meeting (see above)
Thu 22 March	Quarterly Members' Meeting, location TBD
Mon 9 April	'The Bounds of Bournville' Sponsored Walk
13-14 October	BGP hosts GPRC (watch for details!)

BGP OFFICERS

Secretary:	Hazel Clawley (772 7165)
Treasurer:	Phil Simpson (427 2945)
Elections Officer:	Peter Tinsley (472 6003)
Membership Secretary:	Peter Beck (422 6975)
Acting Media Officer:	Peter Beck (422 6975)
Policy Co-ordinator:	Alan Clawley (772 7165)
City Green Editors:	Stuart & Anna Masters (451 3369)
Fund-raising/Social Secretary:	Anna Masters (451 3369)

POSTAL ADDRESS

C/O Hazel Clawley, 26 Taywood Drive, Birmingham B10 0DB

2006 REPORT: TREASURER *(Phil Simpson)*

Firstly, the good news. We have £1,290 in the bank. BUT - last year, donations and fundraising produced over £2,100. This year, we only managed £1,100.

But now, some more good news. Standing orders are running at £90 per month, bringing in £620 this year, compared to £151 last year.

Looking ahead for 2007: it will cost us about £1,200 to support the TTW campaign in Bournville. Add to this room hire for our open meetings and other incidental expenses and we need £1,500 to stand still.

We have committed to stand 5 candidates in the General Election (2008?) which would cost £2,500 in deposits alone. Printing could be as much again. That means 2 years to raise £5,000!

So in real terms our income needs to treble - standing orders and fund-raising ideas now please.