

**The Editor  
Bath Chronicle**

**6 December 2010**

**Dear Sir,**

### **FOBRA IS NOT POLITICAL**

Peter Burns' letter in the Chronicle of 2 December wonders whether there is a link between FoBRA and the Conservative Party. I can assure readers that there is absolutely no such link.

FoBRA's constitution can be viewed on our website ([www.bathresidents.org.uk](http://www.bathresidents.org.uk)). We are the Federation of Bath Residents' Associations, and membership is open to all properly constituted residents' associations in the city. Our first aim is to represent the views of residents to the Council and other relevant organisations. We also aim to encourage the development of a strong and effective residents' movement throughout Bath. FoBRA's policy is decided by its committee, on which all member associations and affiliates sit.

We reckon that the best way to represent our members' views is to talk to the people we are trying to influence, whether in the Council, the Police, the business community, the Universities or other local interests. We make no apology for getting on to these organisations and pressing them to understand and respond to the views of residents. From time to time this involves sitting down with the politicians. Sometimes our representations are listened to, sometimes they aren't. It's a constant battle for attention, and we do the best we can. We publish our written representations on the website.

Our constitution requires us, when reaching decisions or responding to Council or Government proposals, to use reasonable endeavours to act impartially on the merits of the case and to avoid religious or political bias. This principle is important to us, for the simple reason that support from our own members, and our influence in the outside world, would diminish if we were thought to be in the pockets of one or other interest.

As regards transport in Bath, FoBRA has always pressed for action on congestion and air pollution, which are serious problems in many parts of the city. We supported the Bath Transport Package when it was originally proposed because we thought it was a first step towards action on these fronts. Our current policy is summarised in the comments we submitted on the draft Joint Local Transport Plan 3 in August. We called there for a Masterplan which would deliver '*a thriving, healthy city, with an efficient transport infrastructure serving residents, businesses and visitors.*' We believe the Council has asked us to be a member of the new Transport Commission because we have always sought to make constructive comments on this subject.

If parts of the city are not represented in FoBRA it is probably because people there have not come together to form residents' associations that could join us. We have discussed this on numerous occasions with Councillors, both Conservative and

**PROMOTING RESIDENTS' INTERESTS IN BATH**

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Liberal Democrat, and we should be pleased to talk to anyone in any part of Bath to see if we could help them form a new group, as we have done in other areas of the city. We believe it is good for residents and good for Bath to have effective, active residents' groups.

If anyone is interested to see how FoBRA operates, they are welcome to attend our committee meetings as an observer. Meeting details and agendas are published on our website.

**Yours sincerely,**

**Henry Brown, Chairman of FoBRA**