

BEST Accomplishments – 2016

Responding to Events and Environmental Threats:

- Ongoing review of all planning applications. This year we reviewed 159 application files and objected to 61 and withdrew 7 objections having received additional information.
- AC35/America's Cup: ACBDA submitted their plans and we raised questions. P0073/16 was approved by Planning for the AC Event Village and includes 14 conditions. ECO members on AC35's "Legacy Committee". ACEA announced their development of a Sustainability Charter.
- Beach Development-Admiralty House: New activity at Admiralty House. The BTA granted financial support for entertainers at Admiralty Cove, referring to the site as "a new all-inclusive adventure park which offers kayaking, zayaking, snorkeling, floats and games." Development of a plan to determine the extent of planned beach development in Bermuda. At a meeting earlier in the year, the BTA indicated that there were 5 beaches identified for development activity while the rest would remain pristine. Commercial intrusion at Admiralty House counter to BTA's stated scheme. Stuart wrote to BTA and Parks Director and Minister and Civil Service head re: disarray at Parks resulting in gaps in process regulating permission for activities on Parklands. Push for alignment on planned beach development in Bermuda. Letters crafted to explore the impact of recreational activities at Admiralty House. Ongoing internal discussions and plans for communications with (i) the Bermuda Tourism Authority and (ii) the Minister for the Environment re status of the Parks Department generally and specifically around development activities at the 'Admiralty House Adventure Park'. Addressed this issue with new Environment Minister and in pre-Throne Speech media release. Kim attended a session put on by the BTA aimed at promoting their initiative to enliven the beach experience and encouraging entrepreneur applications.
- Beat the Bead Bermuda! (Plastic Pollution): Gordon and Christian of Plastic Tides visited regarding an event they are holding at 9 Beaches: paddle-boarding with a focus on plastic pollution in the ocean. Keeping the website current with progress around the world

in banning the microbeads. For example, the UK Government has committed to eliminating microbeads in products by 2017.

- Cell towers: Waiting to meet with the Regulatory Authority and the service providers to discuss the technology and the applicable protocols. BEST contacted by another concerned citizen; possibly another member for the advocacy team on this issue.
- Morgan's Point: Building has begun-you may have seen pieces in the media. Waiting for an update on their appeal to the DAB decisions refusing S0019/15 and P0335/15, which were for building a new roadway entrance through the middle of the agricultural land on Middle Road. The Morgan's Point appeal (to the DAB's decision to refuse S0019/15 and P0335/15 for building a new entrance through the middle of agricultural land on Middle Road) was dismissed by the Minister, and not supported by the Independent Inspector. The work at Morgan's Point continues without any indication as to what they are planning to do since the Minister dismissed their appeal. BEST submitted letters of objection for the reapplication for development of an access road through the agricultural land and for the corresponding subdivision reapplication, which will constitute permission for easement through that agricultural land.
- One Use Plastic Bags: Potential new campaign around one-use plastic bags - Discussions with BHS IB2 students and with Jonathan Starling to consider reactivating Greenrock's 2013 campaign around One-use Plastic Bags. Continue to work with the BHS students' group and a couple of volunteers to design a 'boost' campaign to encourage continued and greater use of reusable bags, instead of plastic bags. Met with Judith of Greenrock and they may join in with a focus on their work done already in respect of potential future legislation, while our project seeks to influence changes in behavior. Also met with Alaire Davis who is another individual who has launched a petition to ask the public about their use and their feelings about the use of plastic bags in Bermuda. Jonathan Starling has agreed to meet with Alaire in early 2017 in the hope that we can all join our efforts together. We believe there may be value in a push for a ban of plastic bags versus the introduction of a charge for bags. While in London over Christmas, Kim noticed that many people were opting to pay the small charge for plastic bags despite carrying many other bags. Is this a sign that people are just incorporating the charge into their expenses (justifying it as their contribution to the charity receiving the charges) and that the charge is not actually changing their behaviour and reducing their

use of plastic bags? Would it be more effective to push for a ban on plastic bags?

- South Basin/Cross Island: work continued on the landfill, which will serve as the Event Village for the 2017 America's Cup. WedCo have held one public meeting to elicit suggestions for end uses for the land beyond 2017. We participated in a meeting of the Cross Island Committee held at Deloitte's offices who is assisting with the public consultation phase for the determination of the end uses for the reclaimed 9 acres at Cross Island. BEST press piece on the inclusion of an environmental representative on the Cross Island committee, to be Jonathan Starling of Greenrock. BEST made a submission by the deadline in respect of ideas for the end-uses of the 9 new acres of reclaimed land. BEST submission for end-uses has been posted on the BEST website. An application for (temporary) development on Cross Island listed various zonings associated with the area. Asked Planning how/when the reclaimed area was given those zonings. She confirmed that they were not reflective of formal zonings for the new reclaimed area that is Cross Island but just an indication of the various zonings of the area. Stuart is trying to confirm report of excessive sinking/settling of landfill surface. It turned out to be hurricane damage, not sinking.
- Southlands: Growing interest in the idea of proposing that Southlands be developed into an environmental hub. To be added to parklands: on list of topics for meeting with new Minister Cole Simons. Delay in designating Southlands as parkland is beyond aggravating. BEST has written to Premier via his new "Ask the Premier" email address. Received acknowledgement and promise of answer. BEST raised this issue in meeting with new Environment Minister. Were given assurances that there would soon be an announcement.
- St. George's/St. Regis Hotel project: Stuart has reviewed the Scoping Report and will highlight any concerns while monitoring any developments. We arranged for a St. George's resident to attend the public meeting held on June 9th about the St. Regis Hotel, and to provide us with some notes. A soft agreement with the architects (and Planning) extending timing on our review and submission on the application to Sept 9th has positive results. BEST did not submit an objection but we expressed our remaining concerns and applauded historic and social sections of the EIS. This outcome may pave the way for a more inclusive application review process — at least informally. More EIS work is being done on this large

development. We are supportive of the redevelopment of this brownfield site.

- Tuckers Point: met with Jack Ward to discuss plans by Tuckers Point to build a marina.
- Illegal dumping at Fort Hamilton: Followed-up with KBB and Waste Management re the trucker who illegally dumped up at Fort Hamilton. They are working together with the police on the matter and we are requesting that an update be given to the public.
- The BUZZ: continued to strategize for the ongoing work of The BUZZ. Kim gave talk to BHS classes about importance of bees. The BUZZ group continues to meet each month as they:
 - made contact with officials in St. Helena in respect of their Integrated Pest Management programme (IPM) and explored the suitability of Bermuda adopting an IPM program to move us away from the use of chemical products for pest control and/or soil fertilization
 - had a meeting with the Director of the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources (Drew Pettit) and the Senior Plant Protection Officer (Terry Lynne Thompson) to discuss chemical pesticides already being imported and used in Bermuda
 - met with the President of the Farmers' Association re use of pesticides in farming
 - met with the Director for the Department of Health re the Regulations for The Pesticide Safety Act 2009 (only the regulation around importation is currently in force). While there are fairly good controls around the importation of pesticides, we feel, attention needs to be given to the use, training and disposal of pesticides.
 - met with Warren Brown to discuss his proposal to Government to upgrade the existing composting operation to one that is food-quality grade so that it can also be used, if required, to boost local soil remediation
 - had a table at the Earth Day event at City Hall.
 - Made contact with a fellow in Florida who has a composting system which seems worthy of a closer look
 - visited the Woolridge bees in Paget
 - sent a letter to the new Minister for the Environment (Cole Simons) to introduce the group and the work they have been doing

- planned to get more articles 'out there' (eg. in Going Green) to raise awareness and interest in getting involved with The BUZZ
 - posted some links onto the Bermuda Bees Weebly site
 - joined the Bermuda Beekeepers' Association
 - submitted a PATI Request to get information on the details of the meeting in February 2016 between representatives from Monsanto and reps from Bermuda's Department of Health and Department of the Environment and Natural Resources.
- The Green Bermuda Cooperative: continued to develop brochures to share with any hosts or event organizers toward better controlling the waste management for public events. Submitted a piece to the press congratulating the public and the Corporation of Hamilton for a job well done in cleaning-up the City following the annual Bermuda Day parade and festivities. Met with a representative of Somerset Cricket Club who is interested in ways to make the Cup Match event greener.
 - Bermuda Marine Debris Taskforce (BMDT): Anne Hyde very kindly provided the following extensive information on the role of the BMDT:

The [Bermuda Marine Debris Taskforce](#) (BMDT) is a collaboration of local environmental organizations who are studying plastic pollution in the ocean around Bermuda. In 2010, an expedition team from [The 5 Gyres Institute](#) visited Bermuda on their journey to assess the extent of the "garbage patch" in the North Atlantic oceanic gyre. A gyre is a series of ocean currents that circle clockwise in the Northern Hemisphere, and in our case these currents carry debris from the United States to the Azores to Africa to South America then up through the islands into the most well-known current, the Gulf Stream, and past Bermuda. We get high concentrations of plastic debris washing ashore on Bermuda's beaches. Most of the debris has been at sea for a long time and travelled thousands of miles from countries far away. Often sunlight and wave action has degraded the plastic into smaller and smaller pieces. Admittedly some of the plastic debris that enters the ocean is from our own bad habits when picnicking or boating. Plastic pollution can take a toll on marine life by wildlife getting entangled in ropes and fishing nets or mistaking it for food and it clogs their digestive tract leaving no room for their real food.

The BMDT has welcomed several international expeditions who are studying ocean plastics and have come to Bermuda. Bermuda's location is ideal for marine research because of its geographical position in the Sargasso Sea and North Atlantic Gyre, and you can quickly reach deep ocean just a few miles offshore. Recently in 2015, [Race for Water](#), [Plastic Change](#), [Plastic Tides](#) and [5 Gyres](#) (back for their fourth visit) all came through Bermuda which is a terrific opportunity to exchange information about the extent of the problem, identified sources and ideas for solutions.

BMDT Aims:

- To promote awareness of the impact of marine debris on Bermuda, oceans, coastlines and marine life
- To assess the quantity of marine debris, including tar, stranding on Bermuda's coastline and beaches
- To develop advocacy initiatives to reduce Bermuda's contributions to the marine debris problem

BMDT Members:

KBB, BAMZ, BIOS, Greenrock, Bda National Trust, BEST (represented by Jennifer Flood)

- The Botanical Gardens Action Group: The Supreme Court (private civil case) has ruled that Government did not comply with Section 4 of the National Parks Act requiring public consultation and the need to take those considerations into account before making an decisions. Based on this Government must now make a fresh decision on the Botanical Garden's maintenance yard which opens up the opportunity for a judicial review of the any decision in light of objections submitted by the public.

Influencing Policy:

- Letter to the Minister for the Environment: regarding two application appeals where a failing process meant that BEST's input was not part of the official record.
- Bermuda Plan 2017: The process of reviewing the 2008 Development Plan has been commenced at Planning and so we will want to create a group interested in working on this project.

- Enquiry with Planning about the details around the posting of notices of intention to develop, which occasionally are not getting posted at the sites.

Communications and Outreach:

- BEST Website –We launched a redesigned BEST website through local media and ran a contest for six individuals to win a private tour of Trunk Island with David Wingate. Thanks to Sebastian at Subtropik for the redesign, and to Lynne, Stuart and Kim for carrying this important narrative into our community.
- Constant Contact with BEST Friends – Our messages to BEST Friends (including bulletins) are made very attractive by Lynne.
- Facebook – We need to continue to run small ad campaigns to expand our reach, build ‘likes’ and send people to the website. Women still far outweigh men as ‘fans’. Posts to be more locally targeted and engaging.
- Twitter – We now have 614 followers (still increasing consistently every month). Over the past month, we’ve had more than 36 people looking at our profile (an increase of 200% from last month), and our tweets have reached over 630 people. The tweets relating to the Trunk Island Tour that David Wingate gave were very popular, getting retweets.
- Discussion with Amy Harvey of the Bermuda College regarding her setting a project for her students to consider the question of end-uses for Cross Island (although the deadline for submissions of ideas has passed).
- We met with the new concessionaires for Horseshoe Bay Beach House to hear about their initial plans.
- Thanks to Celeste, we highlighted the good work being done with the trees (especially the Tamarind) in Victoria Park by the Corporation of Hamilton.
- Responded to a call from a Devonshire resident concerned at work done down by Barkers Hill/Vesey Street site. Was able to confirm that the work was done with permission from the owner of the site (the Bermuda National Trust) under planning application P0183/14.

- Responded to a couple in Sandys whose neighbours are building right up to their lot line without their knowledge. Continue to consider ways BEST can assist them since there seem to have been a number of irregularities in the Planning process for the neighbouring property.
- Responded to a call from a St. George's resident alarmed that the beach concession recently removed from Fort St. Catherine's beach was setting-up-shop at Buildings Bay, near Alexandria Battery, on the beach where the turtle eggs were found some months ago. We were able to quickly get Planning and Parks involved to put a stop to it, considering permission had not been given to do this.
- Responded to a caller concerned about the amount of clearing that was done around the porch of the concession at Horseshoe Bay.
- Met with Mr. Kenneth Bascome, former Mayor of St. George's, regarding the efforts underway to continue the push (by some) to widen the Town Cut and dredge in the harbour so that the large cruise ships can get into the St. George's.
- Met with a businessman who is developing a proposal around a centralized sewage treatment plant.
- Request from a member of the public interested in applying for permission to develop a vertical farm to discuss zoning of the site.
- Attempted to contact a resident in an area on Harrington Sound where quarrying has been recommenced. Will offer to put her in touch with another group (in Warwick) who have had ongoing problems with industrial-type activity in their residential area.
- Discussions with a resident in Baileys Bay who was concerned that her neighbor may be building steps down to the water without permission.
- Met with representatives of Bermuda Economic Development Committed (BEDC) to see the plans being put forward for the remediation of the Mangrove Bay beach area.
- Stuart teaming up with an environmental writer to produce more frequent BEST public comments on pertinent issues (e.g. climate change).

- Responded to the news that Bermuda is going to allow rental cars for tourists.
- Met with Jack Ward and a representative of the airport project to talk about the scoping report that has been developed for the project.
- Had a drop-in visit from a fellow who has interest in some of the issues around Planning policies/enforcement.
- Met with Ms. Jendayi Joell who is a (very enthusiastic) Bermudian student studying environmental science in North Carolina. We gave some assistance earlier in the year to her efforts to get to an Environmental Conference in New Zealand. She is now a BEST Friend and well worth keeping tabs on.
- Met with Annie of BEC to hear plans by CableVision to lay cable along the sea-floor in two areas: from Dockyard to Spanish Point and from Castle Harbour to BLDC on Coopers Island.
- Consulted with a member of the public about the Cell One application (P0328/16) for a cell antenna, which, while above the site location, will be positioned right in line with his property, which sits on the hill above and behind the proposed installment location.
- Working with a group of BHS IB2 students to create a project/campaign that they can work on for their CAS requirement. It will be a 'boost' campaign around reducing one-use plastic bags.
- Discussion with a member of the public concerned about (i) whether lionfish eggs are getting flushed into the ocean from the cleaning of the tank at BZS, and (ii) illegal fishing and the illegal taking of restricted species. Emails sent to BZS and DENR to follow-up.
- Discussion with a member of the public about derelict buildings. Will ask Andrew to review as a possible opportunity to influence policy.
- Met with Peter Adwick and Bermuda Waterworks Limited to discuss their plan to develop a major installation for a water supply system in Southampton.

- Met with Kate Trueland who grew up in Bermuda and is pursuing a Masters degree in Tourism Management with a focus on Sustainable Tourism in Bermuda.
- Met with a group of entrepreneurs (Meredith Stapf, Dawn and Miguel) who are running tourism activities in Admiralty Park – kayaks, snorkeling etc plus entertainment as contracted by the BTA.
- Had a BEST table at the Bermuda Motors launch of their electric vehicles.
- Met with a member of the public who wants to set up at Elbow Beach to offer food, seating, snorkel rentals and better (but pop-up) toilet and rinsing facilities. Looking for BEST's endorsement. Advised him that, "as BEST does not have a policy as it relates to commercial entrepreneurship, we are not in a position to give such an endorsement."
- Went to a presentation by the Corporation of Hamilton in respect of 40' shipping containers.