

BETTER BRISTOL

The Bristol Civic Society magazine

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MARKET AND NELSON ST**

**MAKING A
BETTER BEDMINSTER**

**ALL CHANGE AT
TEMPLE CIRCUS**

**GREEN
CAPITAL**

**THE CURSE OF
LED ADVERTISING**



BRISTOL
CIVIC
SOCIETY

An independent force for a better Bristol

Bristol Civic Society, Registered Charity No: 244414



What Bedminster really needs p.15



City Ideas Studio p.12



Improving the Realm p.20



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Front cover

Victoria Park in early Spring, behind, the rendered terraces of Windmill Hill and Totterdown. Bristol south of the river, too, has its charms which are often neglected. See pages 13 -16 for more

The seeds of economic growth may also be sown at TQEZ and Filwood Park (Page 11)

(photo Jeff Lucas)

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Articles are the opinions of individual contributors
and do not necessarily represent those of
Bristol Civic Society

Your Society needs You

Bristol Civic Society is generally in very good heart. There are many challenges facing Bristol which need our involvement and challenge – the Society has an important City wide perspective which is much valued.

Our members continue to be extremely active through the Planning Applications and Major Sites Groups, dealing with development and transport projects as well as important open space proposals. We have received in excess of 20 nominations for our Design Awards and are poised to take responsibility very soon for the much loved Blue Plaques scheme from the City Council.

The Civic Society website has been comprehensively upgraded and now provides a great “shop window” for the Society. And of course we have the excellent Better Bristol being produced twice a year and generating discussion and feedback. The regular programme of events continues to be stimulating and well supported.

Yet despite all this we have a problem. We have a real shortage of people willing to contribute to making all this activity take place. In short the Civic Society urgently needs your involvement!

This situation has crept up on us quite suddenly – and for a variety of reasons – previously active members have secured challenging new jobs; moved away; or reached the end of their natural stint with the Society.

There is anecdotal national evidence that people are volunteering less but my own experience of this is very patchy indeed with some charities which I know having contested elections for management roles and even having to choose between applicants for the post as treasurer.

And of course in Bristol we are fortunate to have very active and well organised local groups, in my own area Redland & Cotham Amenities Society has over 800 members and a well attended and very active management committee. Understandably residents may prioritise local over city wide involvement.

In the past the Civic Society has prospered on fighting large harmful schemes – our booklet celebrating the history of the last 100 years has a good description of these. But we have nothing quite as harmful to focus our activity just now.

In recent months we have canvassed our members and attracted a very good response for two groups - Design Awards and Blue Plaques

Now we are seeking you to volunteer for:

- * working on big issues notably planning (both pre application consultations and planning applications); heritage and transport.

- * helping to run the Society itself – by helping with Better Bristol (editing, producing, providing photographs), by inputting on secretarial matters (arranging meetings, taking minutes), by advising on all aspects of publicity, and by contributing to the future of the Society as part of the Executive Committee.

Many of these tasks can be shared so that individual workloads can be both attractive and manageable. Please do think seriously about offering your skills and your time. Contact me for an informal chat about what we need and what you might be able to offer.

Remember – Your Society Needs You!

Simon Birch
Chair Bristol civic Society

Simon Birch
Chair, Bristol Civic Society





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You can sign up to the society's e-bulletin at
www.bristolcivicsociety.org.uk

Past copies of the e-bulletin and the
magazine are also available to download.

Bristol Civic Society, Registered Charity No: 244414.

BETTER BRISTOL magazine

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necessarily represent those of Bristol Civic Society

SOCIETY VACANCIES

There are lots of jobs here. Hours are flexible and unlimited, pay is illegal minimum, job satisfaction huge. There is always a need for more volunteers to increase our influence

SOCIETY SECRETARY:

This is the main administrative role that legally has to be filled by bodies like this. The current Secretary is just too busy with other Society business. The role involves preparing about 6 executive meeting agendas per year, organising meeting venues and dates, attending and participating in the discussions of the meetings and recording the minutes of the main meetings.

Apply ref SS1 to Chair

EMAIL BULLETIN EDITOR

To send out a regular bulletin of Society news and events, linked to the Website. It has been neglected for a while, but is something we need to address as more and more communication is carried out by Internet.

Apply ref EBB1 to Jeff Lucas

WALKING AND CYCLING EVENTS ORGANISER

This involves organising a programme of walks to and around areas of special interest within the city, and short cycle rides around the fringe of the city perhaps to little known sites.

Apply ref WACEO1 to Chair

BETTER BRISTOL EDITOR

The current editor is happy to make way for anybody who can make a better hash of the job. It involves commissioning and writing articles, planning the layout.

Apply ref BBE1 to J Lucas

GETTING INVOLVED WITH THE SOCIETY

The MAJOR SITES GROUP and the PLANNING APPLICATIONS GROUP

can always make use of more hands. You don't have to be a professional planner, architect or lawyer, though that knowledge is certainly welcome. There is a lot to be done: studying planning applications and policy documents. Chief requirement is enthusiasm, being Internet savvy, and able to understand drawings, and a good knowledge of the city or a willingness to learn. Contact the relevant Convenors if interested.

Not everybody, however, feels formal meetings are for them. There are many other ways in which you can get involved. Our **COMMUNICATIONS** group will always welcome writers, graphic artists, photographers, cartoonists for Better Bristol and our other publications, flyers, Ebulletins.

HERITAGE

There is a need of people to record and document those many historic or interesting Unlisted Buildings of Merit which do not meet criteria for English Heritage listing, and get them registered and included in media such as Know Your Place. Too many are still being lost.

ARBEOLOGISTS AND LANDSCAPE DESIGNERS

To contribute on the Tree Forum, give practical advice on planting and improvement of the city's many green and opens spaces, greening the grey spaces, tree-planting.

VISIONS

Anyone who has a vision for how a corner of the city could be improved please step forward.

ADMINISTRATORS, EVENT STAFF

Meeting and greeting at events.

CURRENT PROJECTS

We have a high-profile programme during the next 6 months .

Brother/sister, can you lend a hand?



FESTIVAL OF NATURE BIG GREEN WEEK

Although a lot of the participants are concerned with Natural History, our presence there is justified for our concerns about the Human Habitat. We have a space in the Marquee over the weekend 13th-14th June (as we always do) since the event began. We need people to be present on the stand for a few hours. You don't have to be an expert on everything, but if you enjoy meeting people, have a relaxed sort of manner and are knowledgeable about some of the issues please join us. In the past we have been rather upstaged by the Barn Owls and other Birds of Prey on adjacent stands, so if you have any ideas for creating an interesting, eye-catching stand .

Contact Mike Manson or Jeff Lucus

CIVIC VOICE

Because of the Green Capital effect, eyes are focussed on us. Yes folks, but don't feel nervous. CIVIC

VOICE, which is a national Umbrella body representing groups like ours, is holding its AGM in Bristol in October, because they want to see what we are doing. The Society will be the official hosts, therefore we need to set up a small team to manage some of the events, act as meeters and greeters , show visitors the way around the city, or just sound knowledgeable about what is going on.

Contact Alan Morris/Simon Birch

BLUE PLAQUES SCHEME

The Society may be taking over running this scheme from the City Council. It is a natural ally for our Design Awards scheme. Because of The Cuts, we understand the

function has been somewhat neglected in recent years and there may be some catching up to do.

Contact Simon Birch

Not already a member ?

As JFK might have said :

“ My fellow citizens of Bristol, ask not what your Civic Society can do for you, ask what you can do for your City“.

Bristol has distinctive features that make it special to us: for instance, its waterways, harbour, green spaces, hills, position, maritime history, industrial history, and the buildings, streets, spaces, and architectural design that history has left us. We wish Bristol to live up to its status as a regional capital, reflected in its cityscape, cultural activities and economic life, to be a place its citizens are proud of, and a place that people want to visit.

We are for blending the new with the old: to recognise Bristol's assets and to implement change through good planning and design. We want to add to the beauty, character and diversity of the city, and to revitalise areas and improve the quality of life for all across the city. We do what we do because we care about the city we live in. We campaign in order to influence how Bristol develops.

Bristol Civic Society is an independent, voluntary organisation that exists to improve Bristol's built environment and celebrate its heritage. The Society has pursued these objectives for over a 100 years. New members from all walks of life are always welcome.

Why not join Bristol Civic Society?

If you are interested in joining please contact the Membership Secretary, Alex Dunn, at: membership@bristolcivicsociety.org.uk or call 0117 9622475.

Join online at:

bristolcivicsociety.org.uk/get-involved/join-the-society.html

As a member, this magazine, Better Bristol, will be delivered to you, you will be supporting a charity that endeavours to be 'an independent force for a better Bristol' and you will have reduced rates for attending BCS events.

Individual membership is £20 a year. Other rates are available for joint members, students and organisations.

BRISTOL CIVIC SOCIETY ANNUAL REVIEW 2014-2015

Chair's statement

2014 was an extremely busy and very positive year for Bristol Civic Society. Members were involved in a wide range of activities and these are described in summary in this Review.

The **Major Sites Group** met regularly and assessed pre application enquiries for significant development and transport projects in the City. The Group had a solid core of members but required more support by the end of the year. The group has also responded to consultations on Cycling Strategy and the Central Area Plan, which is now in force.

The **Planning Applications Group** has commented on a great many planning applications, and been influential on poor quality development proposals. It has had considerable success opposing ultra intrusive digital advertising screens. (See article on Page .24) The group is very stretched at present and urgently needs the support of new members.

The **Public Space Group** has done valuable ongoing work in connection with Castle Park, the Old City, Bearpit Improvement, and in consultation on the Nelson St public realm.

The **Marketing Group** has continued to oversee the Society's communications. During 2014 communications within (and from) the Society continued to improve with the launch of the revamped and greatly improved website. There were two excellent issues of Better Bristol during the year containing much to read within a very attractive format. Feedback has been very positive to both these initiatives.

Once projects are completed the Society's work is not done and the **Environmental Awards** Panel met to assess nominations for buildings completed during 2013. Four awards were made – for the J3 scheme (mixed use), student housing at the

Pro Cathedral, the new HQ for Imperial Tobacco on Winterstoke Road, and for the conversion of the Zion Chapel in Bishopsworth to community use.

Initial work was carried out on an initiative to champion vacant sites and buildings (such as St Michaels on the Mount) and to help bring them back into beneficial use.

The Society was also involved in organising and supporting the very popular Doors Open Day.

There was a full programme of talks, walks and cycle rides throughout the year. One highlight was a challenging cycle ride to visit three remote and very attractive Somerset churches in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust.

Members and non-members have been able to enjoy a huge and stimulating programme of talks and presentations. The highlight was certainly the Society's Big Event which had its focus on "Making Bristol's Streets Special". The event was held at the Arnolfini in November, was extremely well attended, with high profile speakers delivering thought provoking presentations.

There are many people to thank, all have contributed much time and dedication to the Society. Their motivation for this has to be that this wonderful city of Bristol is worth all our efforts.

Sadly, two key members are stepping down. Heather Leeson is to leave Bristol, and Jeff Lucas is relinquishing his Events organiser role. We thank them most sincerely for all they have done.

Simon Birch
Chair Bristol Civic Society

INVITATION

Members and friends are cordially invited to:

BRISTOL CIVIC SOCIETY
2015 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
TUESDAY 9TH JUNE 2015 from 7.00 pm
The Great Eastern Hall, SS Great Britain, Bristol

AGENDA

- Society AGM, Election of officers, accounts, Chairman's address
- The Presentation of the Society's Design Awards (in association with the Architecture Centre and the Bristol Junior Chamber of Commerce), and sponsored by Bristol Water.
- The Presentation of the Society's Annual Student Award.

TAMING THE CAR

Dave Cave looks at the changing priorities for traffic in the city

After nearly 80 years of clearing great swathes of the city to accommodate the voracious, even ferocious demands of the motor car, there are clear signs that the beast is at last being tamed. Serious questions are being asked about the ratios of street users on foot to those using a very large amount of room in their personal mobility units: who should have the lion's share of the space? We saw at the "Making Streets Special" event this has been tackled in Times Square, New York of all places.

The tide turned in the 1990s with restoration of Queens Square and College Green, and the removal of the Redcliffe flyover.

Pedestrians are no longer prepared to be herded like cattle down mean, smelly, muggy - infested subways or exposed to the windy, vertigo-inducing heights of elevated walkways. The brave new all-concrete world of the 1970s has recently taken a knock with the demolition of walkways at Rupert and Nelson Street.

The little-used subways at Old Market roundabout have been filled in, eventually to make way for a broad promenade from Old Market to Castle St. In Old Market St itself, the dangerous and bewildering bus central islands are to be done away with. Pavements are to be widened, with friendlier access to bus stops and off peak parking. Even the market might be put back into Old Market. The changes at the St James Barton roundabout, that have been taking forever, will it is promised, soon be finished. The Centre is to be finally remodelled as a public Promenade and lively Square instead of the traffic roundabout it has been since the 1930s.

Yet these changes arouse enormous hostility from the Motorist, seeing his inalienable right to drive wherever he likes, at whatever speed he likes and park where he likes challenged.

The Mayor's enthusiasm for the RPZs has proved highly controversial, yet the evidence is that most residents are enjoying the more peaceful streets they bring.

Transport is undoubtedly the big issue and one where there seems to be little agreement about what to do.

Work has now physically started on the Metrobus projects, with site clearances at Ashton Gate and Stapleton. An expensive operation to evict tree-top protesters could have been avoided, but the authorities still refuse to discuss with the community the alternatives to the new bridge. The Society is hopeful that a more sympathetic scheme will be worked up for Bedminster Parade

At last the railways are being taken seriously again. There is now cross-party and cross-boundary support for restoration of the Portishead branch and Henbury Loop. Work has started on four tracking at Filton Bank to increase capacity. On the next page we review plans for Temple Gate and access to the Temple Meads station.



Going Going



...Gone



Little-used subways at Old Market roundabout have been closed. What became of the man in the bowler hat?



Metrobus contribution to the locality so far.... To be considerably improved upon we hope

TEMPLE GATE – A NEW APPROACH TO THE CITY

One of the Council's long held aspirations, has been to repair this fractured part of the city. Twentieth century road construction fragmented the townscape. In the 1990s, the Temple Circus roundabout replaced a 1960s temporary flyover but left historic buildings such as the Grade II listed George and Railway and the Grosvenor Hotel isolated on a traffic island, empty and derelict. There are multiple crossings for pedestrians and cyclists to cross. In January 2015, the Council opened consultation on the first phase of work, part of a £21 million programme of road, cycle and pedestrian route improvements across the Bristol Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone.

John Frenkel – convener of Major Sites Group – reviews the proposals and sets out the Society's response.

Main effects of the proposals

A light-controlled cross road junction will replace the Temple Circus roundabout. The Council's highway experts say that the simplified layout and fewer traffic lights would not create more congestion. Traffic coming into Bristol from the south and east would no longer have to turn around the derelict traffic island but would drive straight past Station Approach.

North bound traffic could no longer turn into Station Approach because there would be no roundabout. Drivers would have to turn around at the Redcliffe Way or Old Market roundabouts to enter Station Approach from the north.

In partnership with others, the Council will create a new road link between Temple Back East and the Friary. This will provide direct access for vehicles to a new taxi and passenger drop-off point in the Friary close to a new entrance on the north side of the station. The taxi pick up will remain in Station Approach.

The Friary route will be one way, entry to be from Temple Way and the exit into Temple Gate.

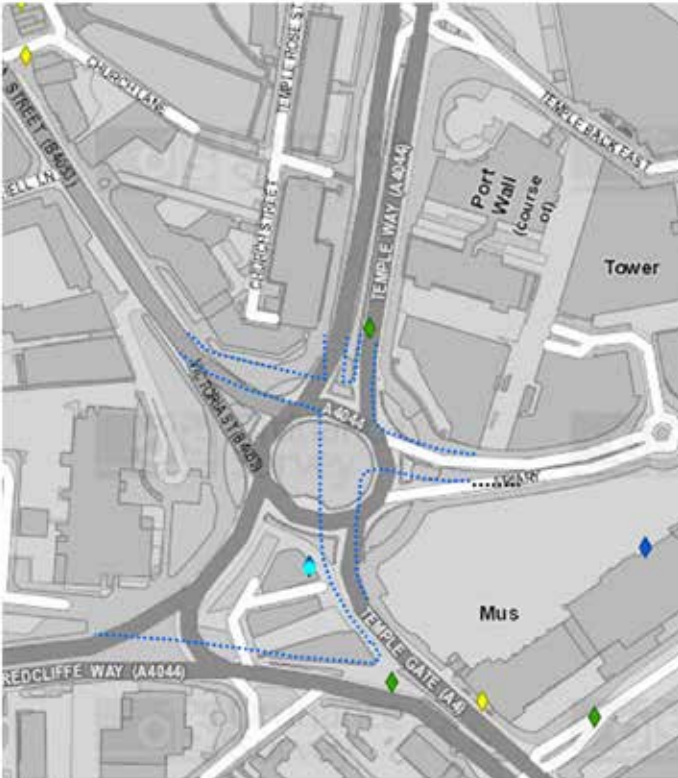
Cattle Market Road will be made one-way eastbound for vehicles, which will remove a set of traffic lights.

The scheme will produce real gains for the public realm

The continuation of the Brunel Mile into the precincts of the station and the one-stage pedestrian crossing over Temple Gate are substantial improvements. The hundreds of pedestrians and cyclists who move between the station and the city centre currently face up to three road crossings. Redcliffe Way will become a safer route for cyclists and pedestrians. There will be room for a MetroBus lane on part of Portwall Lane East.

There will be separated cycle routes wherever possible. The bus stops will have new shelters and real-time journey planning information. A new bus lane will improve journey times through the area.

The scheme will recover development land from the gyratory, eliminate the 'island', and make the George & Railway and Grosvenor Hotels economically viable. On the land recovered from the road the Council will promote the development of new buildings and a public square use to make the area attractive, encourage investment and create jobs.



The existing Temple Circus

The Society supports the principle of removing the existing roundabout to create a simpler straight through route into the city and the other changes to the road network.

Bus stops –

The Society suggests that the scheme consolidates the bus stops in the length of road outside the Friary, to mitigate the problem of the awkward dog-leg crossing at the bottom of Station Approach. To site all the bus stops on this length of road would be a step towards the creation of a larger public transport interchange at a later stage in the area’s redevelopment.

The new public square and buildings –

The conventional approach would be a large building and public space. A group of smaller buildings with pedestrian paths could repeat the success of the Engine Shed, which has attracted an enthusiastic number of start up IT businesses. ‘Pocket parks’ next to pedestrian paths are an alternative to a large public space. A close grain area of work and recreation would create a sense of place. The Society supports the Council’s wish to retain the Grosvenor Hotel, an unlisted building of merit, to give a sense of local character

Public Transport –

The consultation proposals to improve public transport Society are inadequate. The only public transport improvements the consultation proposes are a bus lane and upgraded bus shelters. The Council cannot fund an improved public transport interchange from the current budget. The Council must demonstrate leadership to initiate change and concerted action for the whole of this fragmented area. The Council must publish its long-term transport aspirations for all public transport around Temple Meads Station. It is

frustrating not to know whether there are plans to improve the inadequate bus services to the Enterprise Zone, which includes the station. The Council has a report about the poor public transport connectivity of the Enterprise Zone.

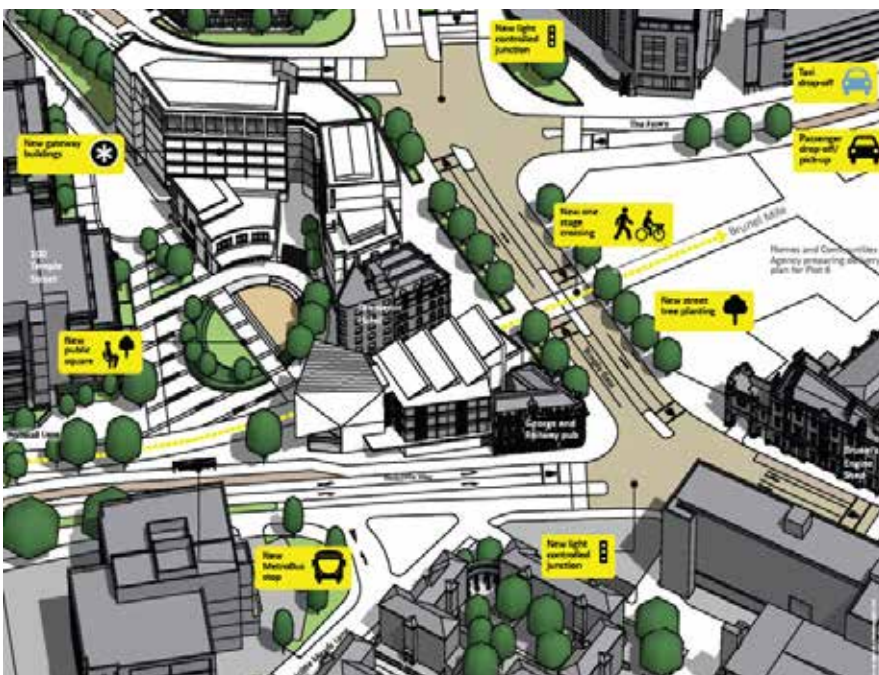
Matters not covered by the consultation –

The Society supports the Council’s wish to begin a scheme of regional significance. The Society recognises that multiple ‘ifs’, surround the Council’s efforts to promote major changes in an area of multiple land ownership. The wider matters of concern are:

The Society could infer from the consultation document that despite Policy BCAP28 the Council has abandoned an aspiration to build a public transport interchange close to the Station. Bristol cannot achieve things that are normal in other core cities.

The Society has asked the Council and the Enterprise Zone Board to publish high level aspirational plans for the land that surrounds the Station. The Society understands that the Council commissioned Gehl Architects to write a masterplan for the Temple Quay Enterprise Zone. Why was it not published with the consultation?

There needs to be a framework for future action to prevent future redevelopment being piecemeal, opportunistic and consequential. The development framework should state the Council’s priorities as way markers to achieve the long term goal of an integrated development. Uncoordinated development action will not attract the essential new investment to build confidence in the future that the area needs. Each land owner will develop independently, which will create unhappy land use conflicts, uncoordinated development, and a poor public realm.



The Society’s comments:

- We would like to see a full public transport interchange within the precincts of Temple Meads station. The proposals don’t allow for that.
- A group of smaller buildings might be more successful than one large ‘corporate’ block.
- More comprehensive plan for the whole area, including public transport.

Bristol – European Green Capital 2015



This magazine would not be complete without recording the fact that Bristol has been awarded this significant cachet.

THE CYNICS VIEW: ISNT IT ALL A BIT OF A PR CIRCUS?

We've had trick high wire cyclists, and bridges vanishing in a puff of smoke. That has been the warm-up act. When is the show proper going to start? Or is it just going to remain a media gravy train? Is it just a top down elitist project with, at best, little relevance to most people and, at worst, marginalises real green campaigners?

WHAT DOES 'GREEN' MEAN?

Some people naively interpret "green" literally, in terms of nice green parks, lawns, trees and landscapes. While these are of course desirable, there is much more to it than that.

Glenn Vowles puts it very succinctly: "Being green means: efficiency replacing waste; renewability replacing resource squandering; living within biophysical limits replacing pollution; implementing socio-economic goals geared to well-being for all"

Green cities would be sustainable "because in broad social, economic and biophysical terms they would be in balance with the planet rather than parasitic." The modern Green political movement began about 40 years ago. Activists were concerned about the mis-use of the earth's resources and set up volunteer-run kerbside collections of waste paper and other materials using old vans and tipplers. They were concerned about pollution of air and water and campaigned against the effects of fossil fuels and promoted cycling and walking. One day we will get to the point where being green is normal, but we are not there yet..

BRISTOL KICKS OFF YEAR AS THE UK'S FIRST EUROPEAN GREEN CAPITAL

By George Ferguson, Mayor of Bristol 2015 marks a new chapter in Bristol's history as it becomes the first European Green Capital in the UK.

Bristol has long been a pioneer in sustainable city living with over 9,000 people employed in its low carbon economy, the lowest carbon emissions of major UK cities and around 50,000 residents (over 10%) already involved in green activities.

After 40 years of innovative environmental efforts with real successes in areas such as food, travel energy and waste, Bristol's new international status will build on the blueprint for city living worldwide and serve as a catalyst for change locally, nationally and globally. Bristol's greatest strength is its people– they are the ones who helped it to become a green city and a green capital. We want everyone – families, communities, businesses – to get involved, and to feel excited about playing their part in creating an even better, greener, more connected city.

WHY BRISTOL ?

Bristol impressed the Jury with its investment plans for transport and energy. The city has committed a budget of €500m for transport improvements by 2015 and up to €300m for energy efficiency and renewable energy by 2020 (this includes a confirmed €100m ELENA ("European Local ENergy Assistance") investment in renewable energy). Carbon emissions have consistently reduced in Bristol since 2005, despite a growing economy. It has doubled the number of cyclists in recent years and is committed to doubling this number again by 2020 (based on 2010 baseline figures).

Bristol has the ambition of becoming a European hub for low-carbon industry with a target of 17,000 new jobs in creative, digital and low carbon sectors by 2030. Bristol demonstrated 4.7% growth in the green economy in 2012. Bristol has great potential to act as a role model for UK, Europe and the world

BRISTOL'S HISTORIC RECORD

Again, cynics might ask what has Bristol to shout about : some of the UK's worst traffic congestion, less than inspiring public transport, and high levels of air pollution. It's even putting a Metrobus route across grade 1 agricultural land.

Yet Bristol's record is quite good.

It is often overlooked that Bristol once led the world in transport, being one of the first cities anywhere to have an electric tram system, thanks to the brilliant George White. It has an exceptionally efficient sewage treatment plant, that is largely powered from the gas created there, and has started to export the gas to run a bus.

As Tessa Coombes (co-founder of the CREATE centre) reminds us, the Council's work on green initiatives and sustainable development goes back several decades . We were definitely seen as leading the way, back in the 1990s. Bristol isn't Green Capital because of a small number of projects but because of the longstanding commitment people in the city have had to improving the environment, providing education on sustainability issues, and leading the way when it comes to projects and activities to support green issues.

AIMS

Bristol 2015 will be focusing on five core themes for the year: nature, food, energy, resources and transport. It is supported by a £2million environmental grant programme for local projects and developing leadership in sustainability, and engaging local citizens in green issues .

EVENTS

Over 300 events having some connection with green issues have been organised for the year: there are too many to list here so see:

<https://www.bristol2015.co.uk/events/>

Some are specialist, others of general interest.

To pick out a handful:

Big Green Week/Festival of Nature

13th-21st June

Life Cycle Nature Rides 8th & 12th May

GreenFarm festival 21st-22nd August

Bristol Bright Night 25th sept

BRISTOL METHOD - RECORDING AND SHARING KNOWLEDGE GAINED.

To do this effectively the organisers of BRISTOL2015 have launched a project called the 'Bristol Method': it is a knowledge-transfer programme aimed at helping people in other cities understand and apply the lessons that Bristol has learned in becoming a more sustainable city, not just in 2015 but over the last decade.

The Bristol Method will capture information and findings as Bristol's year as European Green Capital progresses in an engaging and accessible way, rather than produce a 'self-review' at the end of 2015. This should ensure that key groups and individuals who are potential catalysts for positive change in cities can learn from them and feel empowered to take action using Bristol as a role model.

The Bristol Method is made up of a series of modules, or chapters. Each one is presented as an easy-to-digest 'how to' guide on a particular topic, which use Bristol's experiences as a case study. The modules contain generic advice and recommendations that each reader can tailor to their own circumstances. It can be viewed online.

<https://www.bristol2015.co.uk/method/>

Adding your voice

There will be up to four new modules on the website each month in the first half of 2015. These modules are a work in progress and edited and added to as the year goes on and more is learnt.

Available modules

- How to cut the carbon footprint of a city's building stock
- How to set up a local currency
- How to increase local food production
- How to protect and enhance green spaces in a city

if you have something to add to an existing module, or would like to help write one of the remaining modules, please email Katherine Symonds-Moore at

Katherine@bristol2015.co.uk



LEGACY PROJECTS

FILWOOD GREEN BUSINESS PARK

This new business park will provide a home to small and medium sized companies. It is the only development of its type in the South West to be built to the leading industry BREEAM environmental standards. It is a flagship project for Bristol's year as European Green Capital in 2015.

The park has 40,000 square feet of workshops and office space and will hopefully lead to the creation of new jobs, in green and environment-friendly activities, helping to regenerate that part of the city.

BRISTOL'S OWN ENERGY COMPANY

Bristol is on course to set up a council owned Energy Company. Customers would be guaranteed competitive, fair and simple energy tariffs with any profits reinvested back into local communities. The company would also provide low carbon electricity and invest in clean energy. It goes in hand with plans for district heating. The company model is based on the example of several successful European municipal energy companies. Funding for the company comes from the European Investment Bank. The Council already operates turbines at Avonmouth

BETTER BUSES

First has unveiled its fleet of low carbon certified micro hybrid buses, which are being used to provide services across Bristol. They're fitted with technology that captures energy during braking which can then be used later to power the bus. The micro hybrid buses are also lighter than conventional single deck buses and, together with advanced engine technology, are around 30% more fuel efficient overall, which also means they produce 30% less CO2.

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

James Adamson, Sustrans Regional Development Manager gives a (shortened) report on this new group

The Bristol Green Capital partnership sustainable transport action group (STAG) is made up of private, public and 3rd sector

organisations who are collaborating to push for the best transport solutions in Bristol. Sustrans will be delivering bold community-led infrastructure projects that address how people perceive and interact with a street alongside deeper engineering functions. They will also help finalise the "good transport plan" on behalf of the STAG that will aim to

influence future transport plans in Bristol.

Street Pockets

The aim of this project is to empower local communities to improve their street environment and reduce the feeling of car domination, creating better places for play, socialising and walking and cycling. Sustrans will make available modular, moveable and adaptable kits of street furniture that will instantly transform the appearance and use of a street or place. This will be open to anyone interested using it in their street. The community will lead on how the street is used, what are the important issues to address and what improvements could be made. Solutions could easily be made permanent following successful trial.

Sustrans will support local communities to take action and reclaim their street space and recruit and train local champions to engage with their neighbours and set up their own street pockets. If you are interested in using the street kit in your street, please contact Georgie Burr (georgie.burr@sustrans.org.uk)

Promoting healthier transport choices

The "good transport plan" is a product of many people's efforts to unite the voice of individuals, transport organisations and professionals in Bristol that has rapidly evolved through discussion within the STAG. It aims to create a vision and framework of achieving a better, more sustainable transport system in Bristol through collaborative projects and community engagement with a more unified voice. It will set out the issues and opportunities and call on everyone who is involved in transportation to better collaborate and understand their work as part of a bigger movement, mapping out their actions against the good transport plan's principal objectives. It will help them identify what influence they can exert and crucially to start taking and facilitating broader action. Bristol will be better placed to understanding its fundamental transport needs for the future and plan and invest in projects that will make it happen. During Green Capital year a "transport choices" officer will be working to promote the activities and projects being delivered and the best and most sustainable options available to people. They will help explain what future projects like MetroBus will mean for people and the health and wellbeing benefits possible through more walking and cycling. For further information please contact Amy Martin, Green Capital programme manager for Sustrans. amy.martin@sustrans.org.uk

2015: A year of ideas at the Architecture Centre

Centre Manager Christine Davis introduces the Centre's forthcoming programme

The built environment is fundamental to environmental sustainability. How we design, manage and use our buildings and urban spaces is a vitally important aspect of creating healthier, happier and greener cities. The Architecture Centre is pleased to be marking Bristol European Green Capital year with a wide ranging programme that will enable people to explore solutions for a sustainable future through exhibitions, workshops, talks and events.

With support from a Bristol 2015 Strategic Grant, from 1 May 2015 until April 2016 the Architecture Centre is becoming a **City Ideas Studio**. Working with organisations across the city, from grassroots to businesses, the Centre's Harbourside gallery will become a hub of sustainable place-making and a catalyst for green ideas and action. Continuing the Centre's partnership with the Faculty of Environment and Technology at UWE, academics and architecture students will also be sharing their ideas about how to build a more sustainable city.

Drawn from the Bristol 2015 themes for European Green Capital year, the Architecture Centre will ask five key questions to demonstrate how the 'architecture' or 'shape' of a sustainable city is about much more than the buildings we build, and relates as much to food, nature, resources, energy and transport.

As well as a year-long anchor exhibition and resource providing a permanent introduction to the Bristol 2015 themes and their close relationship to the built environment, the five themes will be explored via 'anchor residencies'.

The first theme is **Food (1 May to 5 July)**, and the Centre is working with organisations that are helping to deliver Bristol's Good Food Plan, which aims to improve Bristol's access to, provision and enjoyment of food, including groups such as Incredible Edible Bristol.

The Centre will be working with Avon Wildlife Trust to explore the

Nature theme (15 July to 13 September), with subsequent themes :
Resources: 23 September to 8 November;
Energy: 18 November to 31 January;
Transport: 10 February to 10 April.



Throughout the year the Centre will also be delivering **My Green City** - a Learning and Participation programme with a strong sustainability theme. My Green City comprises schools workshops, a design competition, a youth participation project, events as part of Bristol Family Arts Festival, and ongoing family activities and events. The first event is a **My Green City** free family event on 23 May, a creative afternoon to draw and model a city with nature at its heart. This fun afternoon invites families to use their imaginations to create a vision of Bristol as a truly green capital.

The Architecture Centre is thrilled to be part of Bristol 2015, and the City Ideas Studio will play a vital role in generating debate and interest in how changes to the city could make a real difference

Alongside the City Ideas Studio programme, the Architecture Centre's summer programme includes Urban Wanderings, such as **Wapping, Chocolate & other places**. This guided walk led by urban design specialist Alastair Brook traces a route along the Harbour onto the 'Chocolate Path' and beyond to discover the history and future of Bristol's Harbourside, and takes place on Wednesday 6 May as part of **Bristol Walk Fest**.

The Architecture Centre is pleased to be continuing to work with the Bristol Society of Architects (BSA) and the local branch of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) to offer **monthly Saturday advice surgeries** with a local RIBA registered architect. For a £10

donation, visitors are invited to book a 30 minute slot to discuss plans, schemes and dreams for large or small projects. Dates for Ask an Architect in 2015 include 11 April, 9 May, 13 June, 11 July, 8 August, and 12 September.

The Architecture Centre took over the coordination of **Bristol Doors Open Day** in 2014 and is working with partners including Bristol Civic Society to bring the annual celebration of architecture and culture to the city once again this year. Over 60 of Bristol's fascinating contemporary and historic buildings will open their doors for free, allowing everyone access to places that are usually closed or which charge admission. Visitors of all ages can discover hidden architectural treasures and enjoy a range of tours, events and activities which bring buildings to life. Bristol Doors Open Day (part of the national Heritage Open Days, the UK's biggest public participation event) takes place on Saturday 12 September, 10:00 – 16:00 and is free to explore.

For more information about the Architecture Centre and its activities, visit the website:
www.architecturecentre.co.uk

Email: info@architecturecentre.co.uk
 call 0117 922 1540

16 Narrow Quay, Bristol BS1 4QA

City Ideas Studio
Exhibition and events programme beginning Friday 1 May through 2015

To celebrate Bristol's year as European Green Capital 2015 we are transforming the Architecture Centre gallery into a 'City Ideas Studio'...



LET'S WALK BEDMINSTER!

*Reclaiming and celebrating our local streets:
a Bristol 2015 European Capital strategic*

Stef Brammar and Ben Barker report.

The Greater Bedminster Community Partnership (GBCP) has issued a clarion call to local residents, organisations and businesses to join us in relearning the pleasures and benefits of walking: long-lasting benefits which relate to health, understanding of our history, social interaction, reductions in CO2 and to the economic sustainability of our retail streets. It is an initiative for all ages, but with particular emphasis on the needs of the most disadvantaged groups when it comes to the walking environment, ie the elderly and the young.

Bristol City Council's Walking Strategy for Bristol (Our Vision for 2011/2021) states 'We want to provide pedestrian routes that are coherent, pleasant and accessible and to enable users to maximise use of the facilities available'. Now, with a strategic grant from Bristol Green Capital, the GBCP is determined to put those aspirations into practice: with the Green Capital 'badge' we will bring pressure to bear on those who are in a position to help us improve our urban environment.

Some of Greater Bedminster is a pleasant and interesting place in which to walk. However, it is also very densely developed and traffic drenched. Many routes are degraded by obstacles and ugly patches. 'Let's Walk Bedminster!' aims to establish a network of 18 walking routes: across the neighbourhood, to/from the city centre, and to/from adjoining neighbourhoods. This will be achieved through a series of events and activities to actively engage local residents, organisations, schools and businesses. The ultimate aim is to bring about a 'step change' in attitude based on communal respect and responsibility for the public realm, and a personal interest in walking as a healthy, interesting, sociable form of transport.

Making a Better Bedminster

While the Council will be funding streetworks projects, a lot of the responsibility for 'making a better Bedminster' will rely on the community

This isn't 'parachute in, clean up, forget it': the active commitment of local people is central to the project. Its success will depend upon:

1. Individual citizen responsibility. – Removing clutter and litter from the streets, reporting fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour, developing attractive front gardens

2. Community action: Our community groups will bring residents together by encouraging street activity (we are already working closely with the Bedminster based charity Playing Out and with citywide Streets Alive); by installing street noticeboards and supporting other cooperative activity, such as events like the South Bristol Arts Trail, Best of Bedminster Show and Lark in the Park many of which are already annual successes. We will continue to work with local groups such as Patchwork, the Bedminster Wildlife group, Incredible Edible BS3, and our many active resident groups to turn waste ground into



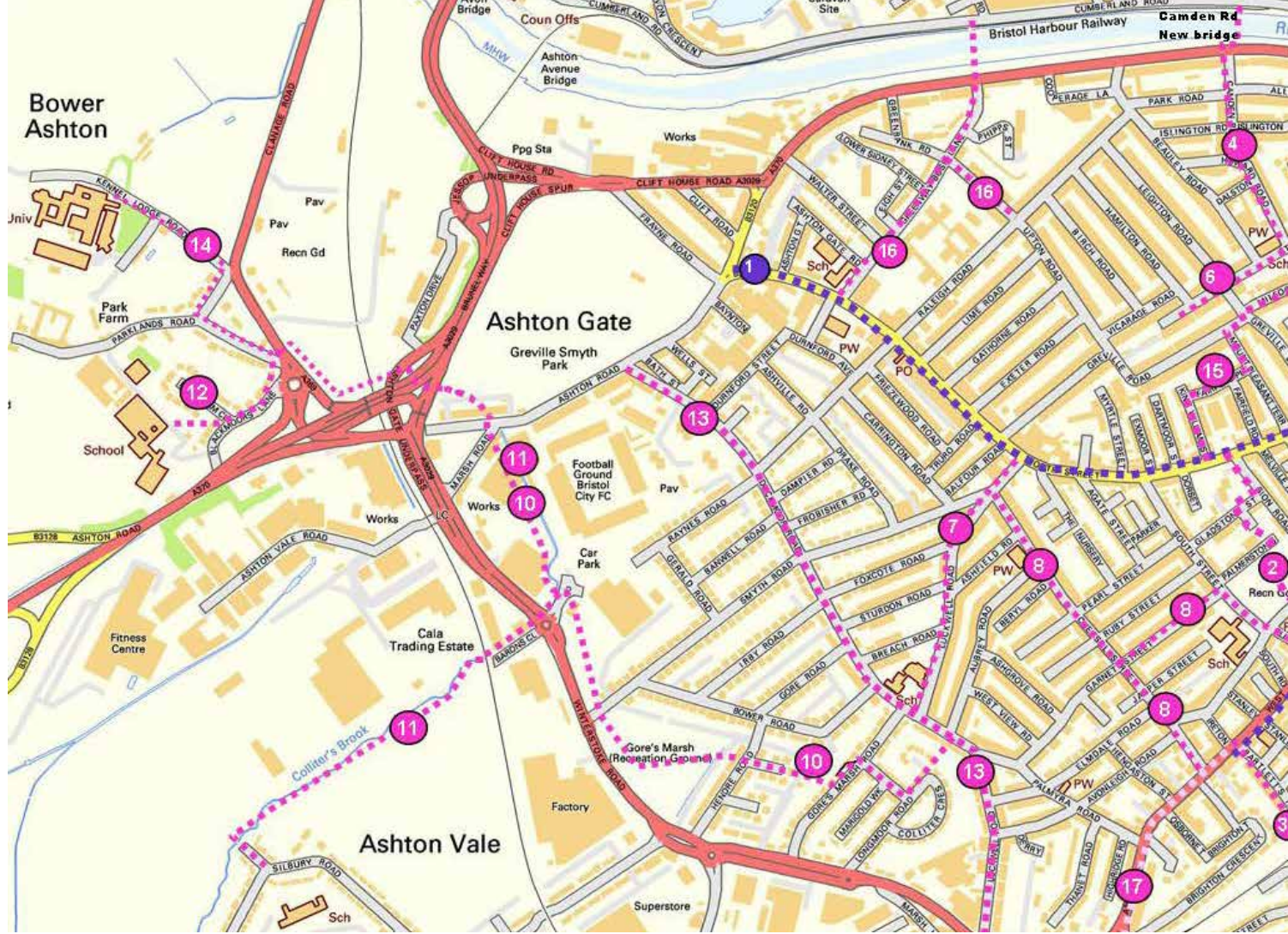
community gardens rather than flytipping sites.

3. Active involvement of local business: we have a good track record of collaboration with the Bedminster BID/Town Team, with three GBCP directors on the BID Board and several joint projects (the Beautiful Bugs of Bedminster, Upfest, Christmas street fairs and much new planting on the streets). We will continue to work closely with the over 400 business members of our BID, whose stated purpose to improve and develop our three main high streets closely links to this initiative, and whose spending plans support our emphasis on the pedestrian experience and street scene improvement.

4. Inspiring young and old:

- The project is linked to GBCP's national pilot Our Place project which aims to reduce social isolation, especially amongst older people, but we are also working closely with our eight local schools. This is therefore an ALL age project.
- We will build on our good relationships with local schools and voluntary groups with a youth focus, which have delivered past projects such as the Bedminster Winter Lantern Parade and Seeds for Change. Discussions are already underway on several new planting initiatives in parks and on the streets, and artwork is being produced for public exhibition in shop windows.
- The newly formed Bedminster History Cooperative has been funded to work with young and older citizens to produce a history map, highlighting the many buildings and sites of historic interest on our streets.

Ask us in a year how successful we've been!
GBCP Secretary: benbarker@blueyonder.co.uk



The Walking Routes-as promoted by Greater Bedminster Community Partnership

- 1. Bedminster Business Improvement District**
This aims to make the main retail areas of East St and North St a more attractive experience by improvements to seating, planting, road crossings, additional artworks and removal of unpleasant rubbish bins.
- 2. Green Way from West St to North St.**
Should be implemented in 2015. Funded by residents, traders and BCC
- 3. Bartlett's Bridge GreenWay**
This links communities of Malago Vale with West St. Will include improvements to the unfriendly railway bridge.
- 4. The Daisy Route**
- 5. Dean Lane GreenWay**
This links North St to M Shed via Gaolferry bridge. Dean St will be made safer and more attractive
- 6. Stackpool- Merrywood Greenway**
This links North St and the city via Southville centre and Gaolferry bridge

- 7. Luckwell Greenway**
Improves access to Luckwell school
- 8. Chessels Greenway**
A major route, with spurs, linking green spaces of Luckwell park and South St park and West St
- 9. 3 short routes from Windmill Hill**
Exit from Windmill is restricted by the two railway subways. One route leads via Philips St to East St, one from Bedminster station to Dalby Ave and East St, which can also link up with the Daisy Route
- 10. Ashton Green WalkWay**
From the Luckwell Hotel to Greville Smyth Park via green features, Colliters Brook and improved alleyways
- 11. Ashton Vale to Greville Smyth Park Walkway**
A 'rural' path from Ashton Vale Youth Club along Colliters Brook to the Ashton Green walkway
- 12. Bower Ashton GreenWay**
This will link Ashton Park School and Bower Ashton to Grevill Smyth Park. Improvements to signage, and steps to alleviate effects of fumes through

- closeness to heavy traffic.
- 13. Duckmoor Road Greenway**
- 14. Routes to support Bower Ashton Art College**
Major rebuilding and expansion of the college will increase numbers of walking and cycling students on existing routes. The Festival Way will benefit from better lighting, widening of paths and planting to make it more attractive.
- 15. Southville School and their new Annex at the Myrtle Triangle**
BCC is proposing buildouts, dropped kerbs and tactile paving as improvements with a new zebra crossing on North St.
- 16. Ashton Gate School and their new Annex on Upton Road**
- 17. West Street, Parson Street, Bedminster Road GreenWay Loop**
The area around Parsons St station is bleak, traffic drenched, and lacks signage. Improved signage, some planting around the station with wildflowers and bulbs by Parsons St school will help.



major modern buildings and large car park. Possibly the City was too slow with this site strategically..... perhaps they were not expecting it to come out of employment use... perhaps it shouldn't.

The two main buildings, Regent House and Consort House, are actually modern office buildings which were rebuilt behind the facades of the WD & HO Wills head office (Grade II listing) They were used by Lloyds as a rather grand office until 2012, using materials and fittings from the old Imperial building . The buildings are well suited to conversion, and C & C intend to preserve as much of the historical features as possible.



But the site includes a large car-park, which C& C intend to build on, with demolition of some recent additions. This is in a conservation area. How much will these new-build units respond to that and preserve or enhance local character ?

WHAT BEDMINSTER REALLY NEEDS?



News has recently reached us that City & Country, the developers of the old General Hospital, have acquired the main Imperial site, bordering on Asda, East St and Lombard St and including Imperial Arcade Residential redevelopment for 300 homes is on the cards

There are suddenly no shortage of developers with big ideas in the area, coming on top of recently approved development at St Catherines place, and the HCA owned site at City Gate There is minimal income in CIL or S106 schemes for conversions, perhaps that is why developers are so keen on them.

This will bring substantial population growth, but has any consideration given to the wider infrastructure needed.?

Schools in BS3 are already oversubscribed, and GP services stretched. The city Council has dealt with the initial need for primary school places but won't this be followed by secondary school places ? Its probably too late now, but not implausible that the Imperial site could have been acquired for educational or health uses given the





The much-loved Gaol Ferry bridge

BRIDGES OVER MUDDIED WATERS

There hasn't been a new bridge over the Avon or New Cut since the 1990s. At the last count (BB05) there were 43 Now we're getting a few more.



Bridges over the Avon - The Government's Cycling Ambition Fund will finance new cycle paths and two bridges.

The much-loved Gaol Ferry bridge is just too narrow to accommodate the huge numbers of walkers and cyclists crossing it. A new bridge over the New Cut at Camden Road has planning permission. The Society supported the proposal but said that it would prefer a more ambitious design. The Avon New Cut is one of the city's important geographical and historical features. The walks along its banks and the views up and down the river are a visitor attraction. It is important that the new bridge equals the quality the bridges designed of our predecessors and creates a worthy visual legacy.



A new bridge



BANANA bridge

At Langton St, the Society supported the principle of a new bridge beside the Banana Bridge, but suggested visual appearance and traffic flow would be improved if there were a greater separation between the old and new bridges. The Council withdrew the planning application; it has now announced a new bridge westwards, further down river.

With the final approval of the AVTM Metrobus project, work can now start on repairing the 'rust-bucket' Ashton Avenue bridge.



Ashton Avenue bridge

The Society originally objected to a new bridge from Castle Park because of its bulk, and concerns about safety. Cubex, the developer of the former brewery site, revised the design to make the bridge slimmer. The Society will withdraw its objection if the Council decides that no other design could cope with the height difference between the banks. Approval was given in March



WATCH YOUR PROW

Historian Peter Gould and the Society's man on the Public Rights of Way Liaison Group (PROWLG) warns us that historical footways could be lost.

Cap the Map

The Map is the Definitive Map of footpaths and other minor rights of way that Highway Authorities were required to compile and maintain by the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act. It provides proof that a recorded path is a right of way. (The red or green dots on your OS map derive from it) An unrecorded path may still be a right of way but it has to be claimed and its status proved if it is to be legally protected and if the long-term right of the public is to be easily asserted.

Occasionally, paths are "expressly dedicated" by landowners. Mostly, they are claimed by members of the public on the basis of legal evidence. There are two classes of legal evidence. "User evidence" means you have to prove 20 years use nec vi nec clam nec precario, counting twenty years back from the date when use of the route is challenged. The law being the law, there are further complications. But we can ignore all this because no changes have been proposed to the system of "User evidence" claims.

The threat

The second class of evidence is "Historical", most often maps and tax records, though sketches and diaries might well be considered. (Note the disclaimer on old OS Maps) The 2000 Countryside & Rights of Way Act said that claims based on this class of evidence would not be entertained after 2026. The rationale was that after eighty years landowners ought not to have such claims sprung on them. The politics was that the landowners had to be offered something to offset the "Right to Roam." The administrative view was that 2026 was a safe difference in the future. This means in effect that it is up to us, the public, to lodge any claims. Time is running out. Now we have eleven years. In Bristol, a few paths have been drawn to the attention of the Public Rights of Way Liaison Group, though not formally claimed yet. Allegedly there are others around Hallen. Likewise Dundry. Very probably elsewhere. If these paths are claimed with evidence before the statutory date their status will be investigated. Two or three members of the Ramblers' Association are researching this but, to cover the whole of modern Bristol, more very local historians are needed for this interesting and useful task. The legalistic handbook is Rights of Way Restoring the Record Sarah Bucks & Phil Wadey. Unclaimed means forever lost.

Note : the online map can be viewed at

<http://m.bristol.gov.uk/page/transport-and-streets/public-rights-way-service#jump-link-0>

A VIENNESE "NASCHMARKT" FOR THE CENTRE ?

The Centre. That space between the harbour, the Hippodrome, and Corn St/Baldwin St. Once the very soul of Bristol, where tall sailing ships moored, right in the heart of the city. Filled in, and reduced to being a miserable traffic roundabout in the 1930s. Successive generations have messed around with it, at one time making it a rather staid municipal garden, the latest incarnation dating from 2000 with its diddy little fountains and timber decking. Some people love it as it is, some hate it. Matthew Montagu-Pollock thinks it is rather dead space which could be better used with a lively market

Right at the heart of Bristol there is a strangely low-key area. "The Centre" yet it connects two of the most vibrant parts of

the city, the Waterfront and Corn Street/Farmer's Market. It is a sort of low-energy pause, a disappointment at the heart of the city. Ideally, the whole Centre should be active, alive, as abuzz with people as are the nearby areas. This large square is fronted by charming buildings, yet now its traffic and strangely municipal feel divide rather than join the Waterfront and Corn St/Farmer's Market.

Major changes are coming as part of the Metrobus proposals. The proposal drawings show green trees and happy, strolling people in an enlarged pedestrian area. Yet it is not clear that the changes will sufficiently address the fact that it doesn't tie the city into a whole.



A "Pop-Up" market on the Centre?

In another city a very similar space is abuzz with life, drawing in hundreds of thousands of young people and tourists every day. The Naschmarkt in Vienna is a popular attraction. Its stalls, fresh food markets, restaurants, and curiosity shops are brimming with people. Its atmosphere is famous, as are its baked goods, meats, and seafood, also many small restaurants which offer kebab, crepes, seafood, beer, or all kinds of meals, and stalls which offer clothes and accessories. Drink, sit out in the open, have a coffee, wander around, or buy your weekly food supplies. Why not Bristol? Why not fill its centre with life? There is incidentally a real need for a daily fresh food market, given the wealth of farming produce from Gloucestershire and Somerset.

Let's consider the changes suggested by the Metrobus proposals:

The northern area round the cenotaph will be significantly enlarged, the north-east side (Colston Ave) largely pedestrianised.

Yet are the changes enough? And is the focus right? The real need is to connect Corn St and Clare St to the Harbour so that pedestrians and tourists can have clear stroll through and be led on by a buzz of activity from one vibrant area of the city to another.

Of course Bristol City is hardly likely to suddenly create a full-scale Naschmarkt, even if one could generate stallholder interest. So you'd have to start slowly. The south end by the water is the ideal initial market location because it would benefit from the human traffic on the Waterfront, and in turn help connect the Waterfront to Cork St and Farmers Market.

Shopping/cafe areas are most successful when located on areas linking two destinations. While keeping the existing water steps the unpopular fountains could be replaced as a market area with permanent stalls, attracting clients by day and by night, and beginning to create a direct walkway from the Waterfront to Clare St/Corn St.

Vienna's Naschmarkt is much longer than The Centre, but it is about the same width, fitting 3 rows of stalls. The public mostly moves between the stalls, protected from the surrounding traffic.

Could Bristol do the same? While we suggest something less ambitious than the instant creation of a Naschmarkt, the addition of rows of permanent stalls could transform the sense of life and vibrancy of the area, as the considerable flow of people through the Waterfront already suggests.



ANYONE FOR CYCLING ?

Eugene Byrne dons the Lycra for the Tour de Bristol cycling fashion

A thundering leader column in a local newspaper slams the reckless minority of cyclists who endanger Bristol pedestrians daily, particularly by riding on the pavements.

The paper, it says, is constantly getting letters from readers deploring the activities of cyclists, who do not pay anything towards the upkeep of the city's highways. The editorial calls on the police to see that the rights of pedestrians are respected.



Sounds familiar, doesn't it?

Except that this was 1895.

So back in your great-grandmother's time, many Western Daily Press readers considered Bristol plagued by testosterone-fuelled two-wheeled twerps. There was even a nickname for them: "Scorchers".

(Of course young ladies rode bicycles, too, but their deportment was generally more considerate.)

In the 1890s cycling was fashionable and sexy, but times soon changed. Two world wars and a bit of

postwar prosperity later, bikes, like buses, were for losers, for working men in flat caps who dreamed of owning a car and saw that dream come true.

By the late 20th century, thrusting, ambitious, go-ahead types went around in Porsches and BMWs, while most people riding bikes in Bristol appeared to be a noisy coterie of eco-activists, evangelists for sustainability.

Thus began the culture war between drivers and cyclists, a struggle for moral supremacy waged both on the roads and in the letters pages of the local press.

It might appear that the war is still going on. Earlier this year a Bristol stockbroker made a quip on Twitter about hitting a cyclist in his car. He later apologised, said it was just a bad joke. Mayor Ferguson took to Twitter to riposte that making jokes about running over cyclists was no better than the sort of racism you got in the American Deep South 50 years ago.

(Which is how come any spin-merchant worth their salt advises all politicians and political candidates to avoid Twitter like it's a radioactive rabid dog with ebola and black death germs.)

It's not that the Mayor's comparison was daft or even offensive. It's that it's just plain wrong. The cyclists are not an oppressed minority. They are becoming Bristol's new ruling class, while men and women in business suits with BMWs look increasingly out-of-touch and boring.

Some of this is down to Mayor Ferguson, with his residents' parking schemes, 20mph speed limits and general insistence on planning decisions favouring feet, bikes and public transport over private cars.

More important, though, are changing habits. For increasing numbers of city-dwellers, owning a car is an expensive hassle. Insuring one for a male under 25 is ruinously costly. And with dramatic increases in population density in central Bristol, where do you leave the blasted thing at night anyway?

Many of Bristol's growing influx of educated young professionals have never owned a car, and can't see the point when you can get around town a lot more quickly, easily and cheaply on a bike.

In our Green Capital, bikes morally healthier, but they're physically healthier, too. As in the 1890s, cycling is sexy and fashionable once more, no longer the preserve of preachy eco-hippies.

Just as Mayor Ferguson gets round town on two wheels (most of the time), so do a fair few councillors and cabinet members.

Most of the young new media and internet types doing mysterious things with websites and phone apps in funky offices around town travel by bike.

If you're young and ambitious and going places, a bike will get you to those places in Bristol much faster than a car will. The managerial classes, of whatever age they are, have long since grasped this.

And now, Chris Curling, chairman of Sustrans, the Bristol-based organisation putting cycle paths all over the country, is Master of the Society of Merchant Venturers.

For the boss of a cycling organisation to be made head of the most influential group of business people in Bristol tells you everything you need to know about how the cyclists have arrived. You could elect Jeremy Clarkson Mayor and it wouldn't turn back the clock.

You can't imagine Sir George White or any of the Wills tobacco barons travelling to work on bicycles. Back when the Scorchers were making a nuisance of themselves, the local elite got rich in business, went around in carriages and, later, chauffeur-driven cars and died, corpulent and gouty, in their 60s or 70s.

A typical member of the local elite in the 21st century will live to be over 100, and have really well-developed calf muscles.





IMPROVING THE 'REALM'

THE SOCIETY LOOKS AT PLANS FOR THE AREA

Bristol City Council policy SPD8 - 2006 is that Nelson Street should be transformed from an underused and unloved canyon into a vibrant new quarter of the city centre and a key link between Broadmead, Harbourside and Christmas Steps.

Nelson Street suffered some bomb damage during World War II, but it was the modernist vision of the 1970's that most dramatically changed the area. This period saw the construction of a new civic quarter of tall brutalist architecture and aerial walkways, characterised by blank frontages and little permeability at ground level.

This legacy has left Nelson Street a particularly poor quality, and inhospitable zone. The Nelson Street Public Realm document issued for consultation at the end of 2014 sets out a strategy for its regeneration.

The document sets out a number of broad "aspirations":

- Encouragement of new or refurbished buildings with more active frontages and sympathetic architecture.
- Public transport, walking and cycling will be prioritised.
- Reduction of through traffic and conflicts with pedestrians and cyclists.
- On-street parking will be reconsidered and reduced where appropriate.
- The development of a segregated cycle route along Nelson St
- Creation of new public spaces
- Improved materials, enhanced paving and street furniture as in Broadmead.
- Widened pavements, planting.

The Society welcomed all these aims in its response, but would prefer to see the document more action-oriented and less aspirational. We support the limitations in traffic movements, but felt that The Council should over time seek to eliminate all through-traffic movements in the area. We would like to see a 'spur system' of controlled access-only entry/exit points. This policy has been successful in other cities.

Nelson St will continue to be a traffic route dominated by buses, even after their diversion away from Quay St, which will not improve it as a public realm.

We would like to see more emphasis on

reclaiming the route as a credible link from Harbourside and the Centre Promenade to the retail centre and the Old City, similarly a better link to Christmas Steps, to restore the historic pedestrian linkage broken by post-war development.

The public realm improvements could be extended into Old City, creating a new 'square' between Christmas St and the arch of St Johns church.

(Compiled by Dave Cave, based on response by Alan Morris)



Wapping Crane..!

Let's bring a historic DD2 crane to Bristol City Docks

A DD2 crane by Stothert & Pitt, can be brought to Bristol City Docks from Avonmouth before it gets scrapped. It can be located on the quay at Wapping Wharf, where four DD2s used to stand. It can be decommissioned and converted to a viewing platform...

The stairways are enclosed, so are suited to a conversion, making them safe to use and enjoy. The area on top of the cab is very high - enough to make it into a popular viewing platform. It can become a destination, from which you look over the whole of the Floating Harbour; a location where you can see from Temple Meads, past SSGB, to the suspension bridge... all Brunel's works from one central location. The engine room is the size of a living room, enough to give talks, an exhibition, a cafe...

Practicalities:
 Crane available immediately
 Planning permission
 Foundation rails already exist
 Cost: est. £80K locate/refurb
 Energy self-sufficient

www.wappingcrane.uk

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 Architect and Author of Bristol Cranes
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 www.wappingcrane.uk
 01752461307 27th February 2015

Similar existing:
 Crane Hotel, Harlingen, NL
 Glasgow's Titan Eye
 Crane hotel, Pilek Beach, Amsterdam, NL
 London Eye

DD2 crane

27.5m max radius
 4.3m
 +29.2m
 +20.5m

Wapping Wharf, Bristol

Architect, entrepreneur and crane enthusiast Thomas Rasche wants to bring one of these cranes back to Wapping wharf, as a viewing platform and unusual small venue

HOOKS AND CRANNIES



St John the Baptist Church - opportunity to help with historical research. Would you like to join a small Churches Conservation Trust team researching the history of St John the Baptist Church in Old City (the church on the wall)? If so, please contact Keith Stenner at the address below.

The Churches Conservation Trust (CCT) has initiated a

project to develop St John the Baptist Church. The developed St John's site will form part of a new network of 'Conservation Churches'. These are national stand-out sites where the visitor will be able to expect an unforgettable visitor experience, through enhanced interpretation, activities, facilities, volunteer training, retail and special events.

The project will improve the interpretive information and access for visitors at St John's church, as well as do some associated building works. A monthly research group has been started, headed by volunteers who are pulling together all the information relating to the site, the ebb and flow of the city via the gateway, people and stories and so on.



The research team will develop this information to improve visitor appreciation of the building and its 1,000 year history. At the same time individuals will have the opportunity to progress their own private research while sharing data as the group progresses. No previous experience or knowledge of the building is really necessary – just a willingness to join the small group and share the team's aspirations and enthusiasm for the project.

The Church of St John the Baptist in Bristol is part of the very fabric of Bristol - built into the city walls in the 14th century as a place for travellers to offer prayers before a journey. The archway over which it sits is the site of the medieval north gate into the city.

CCT believes that this site is absolutely integral to understanding the history of Bristol, and wants to tell the stories of this unique building with new and ambitious interpretation, creating a vibrant visitor attraction which will complement the diverse heritage and arts market that exists in Bristol. Throughout all stages of this exciting project CCT will develop volunteer roles, actively engage groups from the wider Bristol community and develop educational partnerships within the local area.

keithstenner@blueyonder.co.uk



Underfall Yard

– Heritage Lottery Fund restoration project. Sarah Murray, Community Learning and Volunteering (CLV) Officer, invites you to get involved.

Underfall Yard, at the heart of Bristol's historic dockside was for over 200 years the operations centre of the docks, housing the docks sluices, hydraulic lock systems and pump house and complex of buildings and workshops. We are embarking on a major 3 year project, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and other partners, which will: RESTORE buildings, CREATE a dedicated visitor centre and ENGAGE our community through education activities and projects. During this exciting time, we will be seeking volunteers for a whole range of activities, including tour guiding, interpretation, hydraulic machinery demonstration, marketing, research, oral history interviews and education.

We are currently embarking on two linked projects: Research and Oral History. We want to ensure that the rich history of our wonderful site is captured and shared as widely as possible and we're seeking people who are enthusiastic about Bristol, history, engineering, maritime industries etc. who can offer us some of their time to research the Yard and/or interview people about their memories. In return we promise to value their contributions and time; provide interesting opportunities and training; pay for travel expenses; and welcome you into the Underfall Family!

I look forward to hearing from you,
Sarah Murray Underfall Yard Trust.

Underfall Boatyard, Cumberland Road, Bristol BS1 6XG

0117 929 3250

www.underfallboatyard.co.uk

REJUVENATING OLD MARKET ?

Old Market is more than just the name of a street, it is the area that the street runs through, and comprises 7 neighbourhoods. For decades the area has been in decline, as a result of bomb damage, slum clearance, being isolated from the rest of the city by urban motorways, traffic and general neglect.



Now the Community is fighting back, and has produced its own Neighbourhood Plan. This is an unusual event, as normally plans are produced 'top-down' by the local authority. It has now reached the stage when it will be submitted to an independent Inspector, and if approved, will have the authority of an official planning policy.

The Neighbourhood Plan has been initiated and developed by residents of Old Market Quarter and in particular by members of the Old Market Neighbourhood Forum, a group of residents, business owners and supporters brought together to bring positive change to the area. They have been supported by Bristol City Council, the Prince's Foundation for Building Community, and also by Locality, the Quartet Community Foundation, Destination Bristol, planning advisors to the Neighbourhood

Planning Network in Bristol and ESHA Architects. The area is an amazingly varied one. St Jude's and the Dings contain social and mixed housing. Retail is dominated by the mighty Gardiner Haskins store on Broad Plain, with more independent shops on Old Market St and West St. The restored Trinity Arts centre is flourishing, after Heritage Fund improvement. There is important employment in the warehousing and light industrial area off Midland Road. Old Market St itself has one of the largest concentrations of Listed and unlisted Buildings of Merit in the city. The plan is a remarkably detailed survey of the area, with a mixture of policies and projects for the future.

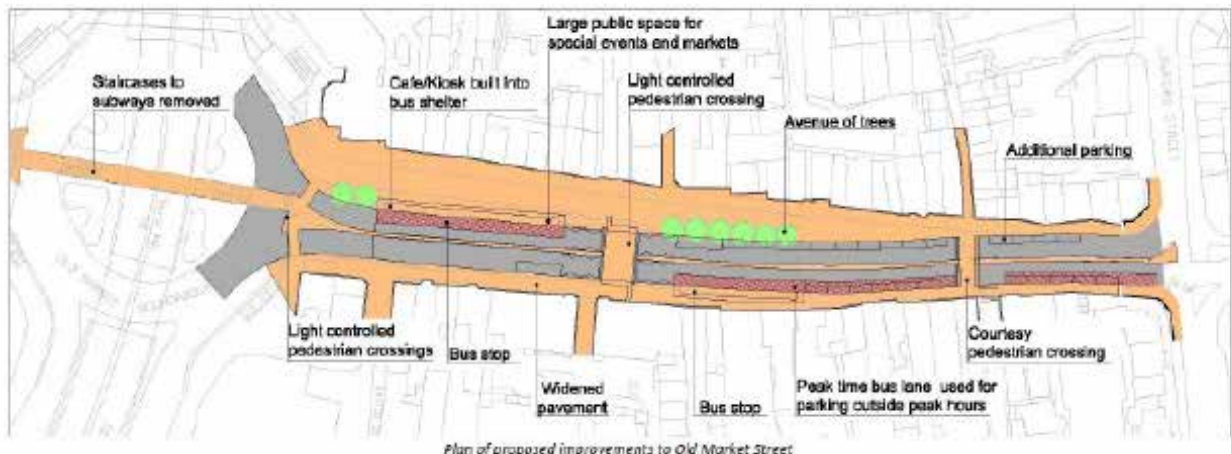


POLICIES

The plan includes a survey for every street and has a policy for their future, what sort of uses they should have, what can be done to improve them. There is even a survey of every Listed and Building of Merit, with proposals for improvement, with advice on restoring historic shop-fronts

PROJECTS

Putting the Market back into Old Market is a favourite. In recent years changes to the street have prioritised vehicular traffic. There is a wish to reverse the priority (taming the car?) by restoring the two-way streets and doing away with the single-carriageway 'race-tracks'. It is hoped that funding will be available to widen the pavements, remove the perilous and confusing island bus-stops. There could even be small 'Pop-up' market on the pavement. A start has been made by filling in the little used subways at the roundabout. In the future, maybe scrapping the hated underpass, and scrapping the huge roundabout at Lawrence Hill. But these will need big 'gear changes' in public attitudes to the car.



Plan of proposed improvements to Old Market Street

A TALE OF TWO SWIMMING POOLS

Back in 2005.... the City Council took the decision to close a number of swimming pools which were either uncommercial or redundant.

THE HAPPY TALE OF BISHOPSWORTH POOL

This is an edited version of a report by Richard Bevan. Bishopsworth Pool was opened in 1971 by Bristol City Council, Leisure Services. Faced with mounting losses, and the opening of the new Hengrove Leisure Centre, it closed in 2012. What was to be done with it ?

The city council was keen to listen to local residents seeking their views and comments. The Bishopsworth Pool Development Steering Group was formed. It comprised, ward councillors, officers, representative from Dundry View Neighbourhood Partnership (DVNP) and local residents.

The steering group looked at several options, including demolition, and after extensive further consultation with the community and interested organisations, came to some conclusions on who should benefit from the site and by how much. These conclusions were reached by a points system after analysing the responses. There was a clear demand for a community focal point/ village hub that would benefit the whole community.

How could this be achieved? It would require some sort of commercial activity. The priorities then compared to the 6 expressions of interest received by steering group. These were for:

- Indoor activity centre (exercise classes, music, art, toddler centre),
 - Christian centre,
 - Indoor sports activity (convert building for specialist sports activity, skate park),
 - Re-use of swimming pool (specifically for disabled people),
 - Underwater centre (much specialised activity),
 - Housing development/minimarket/pub
- It was decided that a village hub and possible skate board park met the highest criteria.

The Steering group took a final report to the DVNP meeting in February 2014 recommending;

The pool site be developed to include an indoor skate park, café, skate shop and meeting space, additionally an outdoor village hub with war memorial, parking, community events space and garden would be developed. It was also recommended to work with Transitions CIC to achieve the development of the building through a Community Asset Transfer (now completed) and approve the next steps by setting up a volunteer group to support elements of the village hub. Since then Phase 1 – conversion of the pool into a ‘world class’ skate park has been completed. This development will put Bristol ‘on the (skating)map’ as not many other cities have

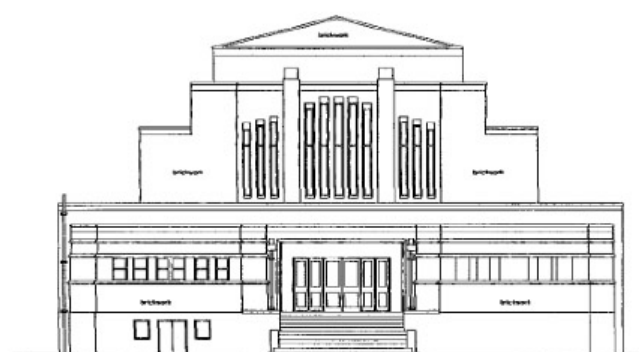


indoor skate parks. It is hoped that this will gain interest from both funders and commercially interested parties to complete phase 2 and 3 (café and meeting rooms) within the year. Bristol City Council have been extremely supportive of the project This is an exciting time for South Bristol confidence is high, that this initiative will be well supported by the local community and beyond in providing a new venture into the area.

SPEEDWELL SWIMMING POOL

It is sad that the same positive story cannot be told for Speedwell Pool, now boarded up forlornly on its island of allotments. Closed and sold off in 2006, the owner received planning permission to demolish and redevelop the site for housing in 2009. There is a high density of housing in the area but precious little in the way of community infrastructure. A proposal to build a new public pool nearby seems to have stalled.

This building is part of the area's character. Deco and Moderne are self-confident styles. They are the last universally recognised architectural styles. The architect was well known for a number of cinemas that he designed in the city. It is such a pity that local listing carries no protection and that the baths are not in a conservation area. It does not sadly meet English Heritage criteria for official listing. There is a slim chance it could be saved if declared an asset of community value (ACV) as a matter of urgency, if it found very committed supporters. It could then be run as a community trust. (DKC/JF)



Existing Front Elevation (northwest)



PLANNING APPLICATIONS GROUP (PAG)

AUTUMN 2014 AND WINTER 2015 John Payne reports

THE CURSE OF DIGITAL ADVERTISING

PAG has considered many planning applications through the autumn and winter. Our concerns continue to be over-intensive development, inappropriate conversions to houses in multiple occupation, loss of front gardens to car parking, harm to conservation areas and the impact of other forms of advertising. We are very pleased that the Council has supported a number of our representations.

PAG has considered many planning applications through the autumn and winter. Our concerns continue to be over-intensive development, inappropriate conversions to houses in multiple occupation, loss of front gardens to car parking, harm to conservation areas and the impact of other forms of advertising. We are very pleased that the Council has supported a number of our representations.

However, a great amount of our efforts has gone into a campaign against digital advertising screens.

PAG was shocked and dismayed to learn earlier this year that the Council's Cabinet was to be recommended to approve the Council entering a partnership with J C Decaux to establish digital advertising at Bond Street, Temple Way Underway and a possible third option which appeared to be at James Barton. (Item 6 – Cabinet, 13 January.) Through PAG, the Society has robustly opposed proposals for LED digital screens at the Fish Docks Site by Bath Road Bridge, Colston Tower, The Galleries, and at the junction of Stokes Croft and Jamaica Street. We have been particularly impressed and gratified by the stand taken against this highly intrusive form of advertising by the Council's planners. All four applications referred to above were refused and the Council's decisions for the first two cases have been upheld at appeal. PAG submitted representations to the Cabinet on behalf of the Society and also spoke at the meeting.

The Society objects so strongly to digital advertising screens because they dominate and harm their surroundings. Much brighter than conventional types of illuminated advertisement, they are intrusive in daylight and overwhelming at night. Screens often have changing or moving images which can be distracting to road users increasing the risk of accidents. The light they emit is intense over long distances and so their impact is far reaching, an important consideration in Bristol where there are many fine views within and across the City.



Regrettably, the Cabinet approved the proposal on the basis that the income generated outweighed the disadvantages although the details of the financial arrangements are still unavailable to the public. Whatever the short term gains, the long term costs must be considered. For example, what would be the long term impact on the attractiveness of the city to inward investors and visitors and also the health and well being of residents?

What is really upsetting about this proposal is that it undermines the good work done hitherto by the Council's planners in resisting these screens. Their decisions have been sound and upheld at appeal where Inspectors have noted the harmful impact of screens on amenity and that their presence would be against the interests of public safety. To proceed with the proposal to put these screens on Council sites would pull the rug from under their feet. The screens will spread like a rash.

The Cabinet decision was, however, called in to the Call in Subcommittee of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board. PAG and others submitted further written and oral statements opposing the proposal and the proposal has been referred to a full Council Meeting for further debate. We hope that this decision might still be reversed by the Cabinet. If it is not, PAG is urging the Council to adopt a coherent and consistent policy to apply to proposals for digital advertising screens. Without such a policy, the Council will lose any hope of controlling the siting of screens and there would be a free for all scramble for further locations.

This would have major harmful impacts on the appearance of the city particularly at night but also by day as advertisers battle with each other for maximum illumination. Bristol is a major visitor destination and tourism contributes very significantly to the City's economy. This is largely due to the quality and interest of its townscape and heritage assets of which the Council is the guardian. It must exercise this role most diligently and not allow the scourge of excessive advertising to harm these precious assets and the benefits that they bring to the City.

MAJOR SITES GROUP (MSG)

AUTUMN 2014 AND WINTER 2015

John Frenkel reports

The MSG meets once every six weeks. The Council persuades most major scheme developers to open a public consultation before making a planning application. It is critical for the Society to meet developers at an early stage in the planning process; it is too late to effect change once a developer has paid the preparation costs of a full planning application. MSG tends to concentrate on city centre developments, which affect the greatest number of residents and visitors and where local representation is weakest. These are the recent highlights.

Metrobus Northern Fringes Hengrove (see also BB05 and page 7). The scheme has planning permission. The Society said that design of the route in East Street and Bedminster Parade would not strike the right balance between the needs of buses and motor traffic and cyclist and pedestrians. This is a once in a lifetime chance to fund a place-making development in East Street/Bedminster Parade as part of the Core Strategy's policy to regenerate south Bristol. The Society expects that the Council will improve the original plan.

The University will convert **Beacon House (former Habitat Building)** into a student study space and the former **St. Michael's Hill Children's Hospital** to educational use. Both buildings are Grade II listed; their future is now secure. The Society supported both schemes.

St Mary's (former Nuffield) Hospital – After the Council refused planning permission for a student accommodation scheme the developer has put forward a new scheme to build 61 flats and mews houses. The former hospital site desperately needs a new use and the Society supports redevelopment.

Unfortunately, the Society cannot support the new proposal. The new block of flats would be larger than the current building and would harm the setting of the slope of Brandon Hill. The Society would strongly support redevelopment within the former hospital building, which could create a substantial number of flats within a building of character. The remodelling of the General Hospital is an example of a successful conversion of a former hospital.

Westmorland House and the Carriageworks Stokes Croft – The redevelopment of this 30 year derelict site could be in prospect. The Society had early meetings with a new developer. The Society made some criticisms and the developer changed aspects of the design. The Society supports this planning application, its purpose is to see this awful blight removed. The Council's threat of compulsory purchase remains if the developer does not build out the planning permission.

Other sites – The city centre is alive with new development; this is a round up. **The Temple Back New Fire Station has planning permission. The Society objected to the scheme, because it made poor use of the space and an important public building merits a better design.**

Sampson Court 25 Redcliffe Street is a 136 flat scheme, which will run from Redcliffe Street through to St. Thomas Street. The



1.



2.



3.



4.

1. Sampson Ct
2. Prince William and Matthew House
3. St Mary's Hospital
4. Queen Victoria House

developer has lowered the height of the St. Thomas Street elevation close to the Grade II listed Wool Hall and the Society withdrew its objection.

There is a real prospect that two derelict warehouses on Redcliffe Back, the Huller House and the Cheese Warehouse, will be restored and become flats.

Prince William and Matthew House in Colston Street will become student accommodation. The Society met the developer who has changed the Colston Street and Host Street elevations. The Society withdrew its objections; it now supports the scheme.

The Society has supported modifications to **Marlborough House** (opposite the bus station) to enable its conversion to flats. There will be a block of student accommodation on the site of the Post's former **Print Hall** in Temple Way. The Society and the Old Market Association support the scheme. The Society and the Redland and Cotham Amenities Society support the conversion of **Queen Victoria House**, Redland Hill from offices into an assisted living development

Bridges over the Avon and New Cut.

The Society also commented on these. See page 16-

The Group welcomes any member who wishes to join, please contact: johnfrenkel@blueyonder.co.uk



LIVING IN THE BEARPIT

– BRISTOL'S REVITALISED PUBLIC SPACE (BIG)

Alan Morris, Chairman of the Bearpit Improvement GROUP REPORTS



On Saturday 28th March hundreds of people came to a 'Spring in the Bearpit' event. It was wet and windy, but even so large numbers came to a sunken area within a roundabout in the centre of Bristol. Why?

The recipe is not complicated. Take five years of gradual change by a small grass-roots group of committed individuals, and add in a council-initiated change to the look and feel of the space by putting in new paving and lighting. Put on a simple event with bands playing, and set up stalls to supply a variety of food and refreshment.

Take for example the Bearpit Social coffee stall and Bear Fruit, run by Miriam and Tina, trading out of converted shipping containers, six days a week. Getting to know their regular customers from amongst the thousands of commuters, shoppers and office workers who pass through the space every day. Acting as the eyes and ears for the space.

Take the new café, occupying a converted vintage Bristol bus. Run by Robin and Simon, giving up full-time jobs to start this new venture, with a crowd-funded financial contribution from 200 local backers.

Take the art panels, brightening up the space, and the bear statue rising up high, giving the space identity.

The Bearpit Improvement Group (BIG) has been working away at this for almost

five years. It is about to sign an agreement with the council covering its continued management of the space, formalising the existing co-operative-arrangement. It has demonstrated that it has staying power and responsibility, justifying the council's trust in it. The 'Community Action Zone', as it has been designated, can be an exemplar for other groups. Already, others are visiting to hear of what can be done.

But that's not the end of it. After the works (largely designed by BIG) are finally complete later this year, BIG will continue bit by bit to make more changes. Greening and planting will complete the transformation of the space. Play features will be introduced – for children and adults. Panels telling the history of the area will be unveiled soon. Art will include a locally curated series of interventions over the summer, and

PRSC's Green Fringe programme of art. It is hoped in due course to build meeting rooms for community groups, including classes for recovering addicts. It is also hoped that the council will facilitate the renovation of the toilet blocks, freeing up one of the buildings for other uses. And so on.

I have been with BIG from the start and Chair since November 2012, alongside two other Civic Society members – Henry Shaftoe who started it, and Mike Thorne. It has been hugely fulfilling to hold together a lively and talented group of people, with all their different skills and attitudes. And to work with good people from many council departments and the police. It has been a privilege to work with creative people on art and heritage projects.

There have of course been challenges along the way. It is not always easy to hold together a group with strongly held views. Progress on everything seems slower than one expects at the beginning – voluntary spare time is limited and council projects get delayed. Anti-social behaviour in the area of the Bearpit will never go away entirely.

I will be moving on from BIG in due course to do other things. I will leave it happy that Bristol Civic Society has played its part in making the Bearpit a revitalised public space.

Alan Morris



**Wednesday 13th May
and Wednesday 20th May**
THE ARBORETUM OF BRISTOL
(a talk and a guided tour)

Michele Lavelle, Bill Ambridge, Alan Steeley and Kevin Stuckey

Bristol has a very favourable climate able to support a wide variety of trees. A fine collection of ancient and veteran trees have graced the city for hundreds of years, with several achieving a trunk circumference of 8 metres. There are also more recently introduced exotics and specimens.

With several native species under threat due to disease, in particular Ash and Oak, the documentation of other tree species that can grow and thrive in Bristol will be an important green legacy.

The project aims to recognise and celebrate this relatively hidden aspect. Michele and Bill, of 4D Landscape Design Ltd, are practising landscape architects. Through working together with the University of Bristol, the potential to increase the 'Arboretum of Bristol' has become apparent. On May 13 Michele will highlight the special qualities of the Bristol treescape and what more can be done to secure a legacy.

May 13th 7.30pm; Upper Meeting Room, Friends Meeting House, Hampton Road, BS6 6JE.
Members £2; Non-members: £5 suggested (minimum £2). Booking not required.

On May 20 Alan Steeley, Head of External Estates, and Kevin Stuckey, Horticultural Manager, at the University will lead an evening walk through some recently planted unusual species and varieties verging on the exotic, and also a fantastic collection of well established specimens in the grounds of Churchill Hall and Wills Hall, not normally seen or noticed by the public.

May 20th 6.30pm; Meet at Café Retreat, (near the Water Tower) Durdham Downs, Stoke Road, BS9 1FG.

Please note the walk will finish at the University Botanic Gardens.

Members: £2 Non-members: £5 suggested (minimum £2). Booking not required.

WALKING EVENTS IN MAY

The Society has organised these events to support the Walking Festival , 1st – 31st May

THE TOBACCO TRAIL

Led by Simon Birch. Duration 4 miles ending at Raleigh Road

May 10th at 10.15

May 13th at 2.00

Meeting place : Redcliff St/Victoria St

To book a place phone Simon Birch 07917 403473

OLD CITY of BRISTOL

Circular walk, led by Ed Hall, based on the Walled City Walk. Duration 1 mile

May 7th, 14th, 21st and 27th,

Meeting 10.15 for 10.30am

Meeting place : Merchant Navy War Memorial, Welsh Back, near 'The Glassboat'

To book a place, phone Ed Hall: 07805 007304.

Members £2 non-members £5

Tuesday 9 June

BRISTOL CIVIC SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING , WITH STUDENT & DESIGN AWARDS

in the Great Eastern Hall at SS Great Britain, starting at 7.30 pm (See page 6 for further details)

Tuesday 7th July **ARNOS VALE CEMETERY –**

Following the talk organised by Bristol Civic Society and given by Alan Bambury last December on Arnos Vale – The Architecture and Symbolism of a Victorian Garden Cemetery, we have now organised a private guided evening tour of this very special place, which was almost lost forever in the 1980s. The tour will last for about two hours.

The cemetery, which was established in an Arcadian landscape in 1837, is now managed by Arnos Vale Trust. The Friends of Arnos Vale Cemetery provide vital financial support for the Trust's

restoration work. Arnos Vale Cemetery includes a number of listed buildings and monuments, notably the Grade II* listed Church of England Mortuary Chapel and the Nonconformist Mortuary Chapel, as well as about 30 Grade II listed monuments.

6.30pm: East Lodge, Arnos Vale Cemetery (just off the A4 Bath Road). Some parking on site. Strong footwear advisable. Members: £7, Non-members £10. Booking required. To book a place, phone 0117 977 2002, or email walks@bristolcivicsociety.org.uk.

Thursday 6th August

DISCUSSING BRISTOL'S HISTORY: BRISTOL AS AN IMPERIAL CITY (Talk and discussion)

Alex Gapud

What, if anything, did the British Empire mean to Bristol and what might it mean to us now? How do we remember this aspect of the city's past? These are questions for debate, which raise strong opinions and invoke powerful passionate responses. This debate is part of an ongoing research project which seeks to ask if and how we might begin to talk about Bristol's complex history and its relationship with Empire.

Your chance to air your views and join a discussion of these issues in an interactive session which involves how we understand our city and our nation's past and what should be done with these histories and legacies?

Alex Gapud is a PhD student in Social Anthropology at the University of Edinburgh researching how we know, understand, and negotiate Bristol's past and its histories. Originally from the American South - where history and memory are complex and painful in their own right - and with ethnic roots in America's own forgotten imperial past, his research seeks to engage larger questions of how England understands and remembers its imperial past and, what, if anything the British Empire meant then and might still mean now through investigating its memory, its legacies, and its continuities.

7.30pm: Unitarian Chapel, Brunswick Square, Bristol, BS2 8PE
Members: £2 Non-members: £5 suggested (minimum £2).
Booking not required.

Thursday 10th September

BUILDING THE WORLD'S FIRST OPEN PROGRAMMABLE CITY

Paul Wilson

How cities work is changing. Developments in software, hardware and telecom networks are enabling more interaction between people and places and more machine-to-machine communication, creating an internet of things. Opening-up and making sense of this will give us more ability to interact, work and play with our city. Smart city technologies will be able to respond in real-time to everyday events including congestion, waste management, entertainment events, e-democracy, energy supply and more.

This year the centre of Bristol will be home to three new fast networks: in the ground; bouncing from lamppost to lamppost and connecting wirelessly along the Brunel Mile.

These networks will enable a variety of research and development projects. Each project will be managed by the 'Bristol Is Open' Joint Venture between the University of Bristol and Bristol City Council.

Paul Wilson is Managing Director of Bristol Is Open. Paul previously worked in software and finance for fifteen years. He joined from the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership, where he developed the Strategic Economic Plan for the West of England.

7.30pm: The Architecture Centre, Narrow Quay, BS1 4QA
Members: £2, Non members: £5 suggested (minimum £2)
The venue has limited capacity so arrive early to ensure admission.

October 23rd- (12 noon) - 24th (4pm) CIVIC VOICE CONVENTION - at St James Priory and M Shed

Civic Voice is the umbrella group for Civic Societies across the country and delegates will be attending from all corners of England..

Bristol Civic Society is assisting with the organisation of the event and members are welcome to attend all or part of the convention. However registration will be necessary. Timetable in preparation.