

Better Bristol

The Bristol Civic Society Magazine - Issue 14 Spring/Summer 2019



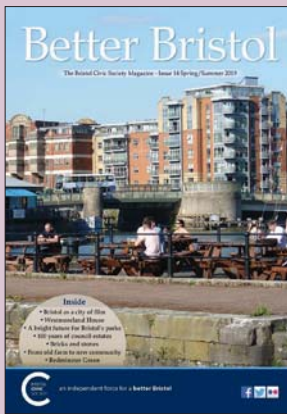
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- A bright future for Bristol's parks
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an independent force for a **better Bristol**





Front Cover:
Redcliffe Back
and Bristol
Docks
Photo:
Mike Manson.

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BRISTOL CIVIC SOCIETY

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of the Bristol
Civic Society.*

Chairman's piece

Bristol Civic Society has been promoting high quality conservation and new development in Bristol since 1905 – quite a track record!

But we are facing a big challenge in recent years to attract new members wishing to take responsibility (possibly jointly with others) for running key groups and for setting the direction of the Society itself. Indeed, we face an immediate and critical dilemma with a number of long serving activists expected to retire in the next few months.

Is this a result of national trends in society? Generally, there is less appetite for volunteering, more working families, and even an unprecedented scale of long-haul holidays enjoyed by those able to afford the time and the cost.

Or do we operate in quite a niche area which will never attract large numbers? Are there different activities which we might do or might we do existing things differently?

One example might be the use of the internet and of social media. We have an excellent website and we communicate with many of you by email. *Better Bristol* is still published in hard copy and receives very favourable comments but is also available electronically – and distributed to the City Councillors in this way.

But should we do more and, if so, who would take forward this different way of working and what results might we expect to experience?

We do try to benchmark through the Civic Voice, the national umbrella



organisation for civic societies, and generally find that we do similar things. Many other societies are in smaller towns and have nothing like our level of development pressure. Many find it difficult to attract new recruits and to manage succession planning as older activists finally retire.

I have been reading recently about the retail industry and the fundamental influences that are changing it so dramatically – online shopping (hardly seen until relatively recently), changing consumer habits moving away from long-established high street brands, the slowness of many retailers to acknowledge and to react to their new environment – leading to multiple store closures and big challenges facing many high streets and shopping malls.

Is the Civic Society experiencing a comparable change in its operating environment? Hopefully we won't be as slow to react as some well-known retailers.

What do you think? We would really like to hear from you. Ideally, we

would like you to join us as volunteers. Many of our activities work particularly well when we have well-organised teams. Good examples are the teams responsible for Blue Plaques, for Design Awards and Events.

Please do get in touch.

Simon Birch

Chair, Bristol Civic Society.

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ASHTON COURT MANSION

The Civic Society is leading a campaign to find a permanent and sustainable future for Ashton Court Mansion (ACM). Owned by the City Council for 60 years this Grade 1 listed property is in poor physical condition and only partially occupied.

Our first challenge has been to secure the completion of a comprehensive report into the physical condition of ACM, the likely costs of renovation and the possible future uses of the building. This report has had a somewhat chequered history but is now expected to be published just as *Better Bristol* goes to press.

We are working closely with Bristol City Council and plan to jointly hold a stakeholders' event before Easter.

For more details see the Civic Society website or join our email list to receive our regular communications

Email: chair@bristolcivicsociety.org.uk



Not already a member? Why not join TODAY!

See page 27 for more details...

Homes for Heroes

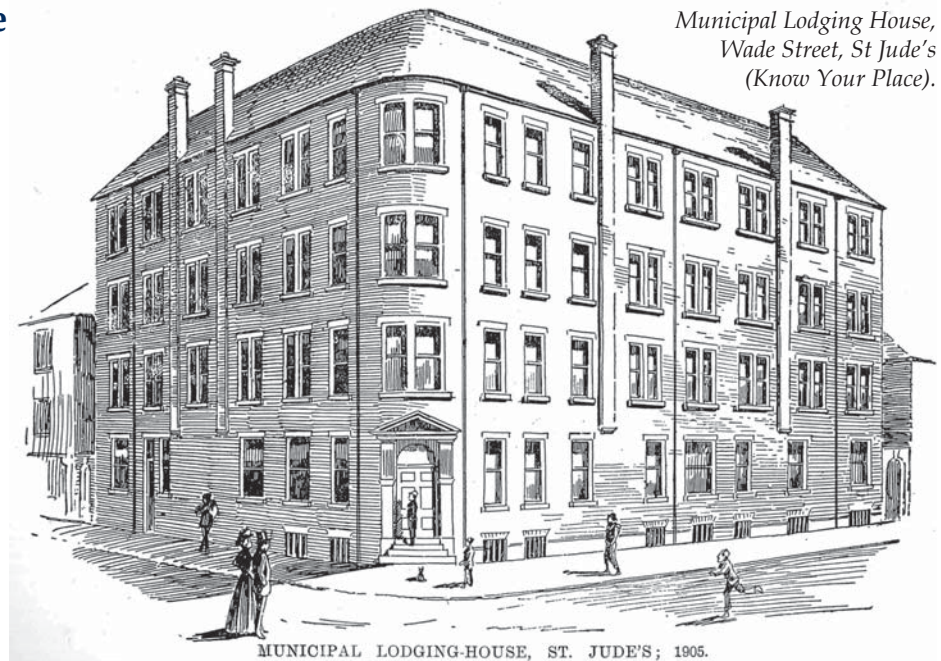
Melanie Kelly writes about the celebrations for 100 years of council estates in Bristol.

The 1919 Housing and Town Planning Act (often referred to as The Addison Act after the then Minister of Health and Housing Christopher Addison) helped trigger the post-First World War council house building programme nationally and the development of the first large-scale council estates. This was not just about building homes; it was about creating communities and changing the social fabric of the country. Originally promoted as homes for those returning from the war and as fresh starts for those displaced by slum clearance, in recent decades council housing – and the social housing that has partly come to replace it – has attracted a stigma.

Homes for Heroes 100 will use community-based heritage research projects and hands-on creative activity to generate showcases in some of the city's estates as well as in the city-centre and online. There will also be a wider gathering and sharing of relevant memories, mementos and archival material; new publications; guided walks; and events linked to Bristol Open Doors (September 2019) and the Bristol Festival of the Future City (October 2019).

The association of homes with heroes came from the speech delivered by Prime Minister Lloyd George after the First World War in which he called for 'a country fit for heroes to live in' (frequently misquoted as 'homes fit for heroes'). Housing became a major responsibility for government in the post-war period as the private sector was unable to meet demand. This was arguably an act of vision and courage inspired by a passion to make a positive difference as well as an act of political desperation motivated by the necessity to smooth the transition to peace.

Before 1919 local authorities had supported a range of rentable housing



*Municipal Lodging House,
Wade Street, St Jude's
(Know Your Place).*

opportunities for those on low incomes unable to afford private-sector rents or to buy a home of their own. In Bristol, for example, early forms of council housing include the municipal hostel built in 1905 in Wade Street in St Jude's and tenement homes in Easton, St Werburghs and St Philips. However, nothing had previously matched the scale of ambition heralded by the new act.

On 5 June 1920 500 delegates, drawn from across the UK, the British Dominions (Canada, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand), Europe and the USA came to the new Hillfields estate in Bristol to study a range of housing types that had been completed there (the Demonstration Area will be the site of a major celebration in June 2020). There was a mix of parlour and non-parlour types; semi-detacheds, terraces and short blocks.

In addition to Hillfields, other estates to be completed in the early post-war period included Knowle, Shirehampton and Sea Mills. The first sod at Sea Mills was cut by Addison himself in a ceremony that took place on 4 June 1919: an oak tree was planted in Sea Mills Square to mark the occasion and remains today (it will be the focus of

community events in June 2019). In 1937 John Betjeman referred to Sea Mills as 'that magic estate' and in 1981 it became one of the first council estates in the country to be designated a conservation area (this was extended in 2008).

Between 1919 and 1939 15,000 new council homes were built on estates that now included Bedminster, Horfield, St Anne's Park, St George and Southmead. The estates' main disadvantages were that they lacked enough shops and services to meet the needs of residents for at least the first few years of occupancy. They could be inconvenient for those still employed in the city centre and dependent on public transport.

The Housing Act of 1930 had extended the post-war slum clearance and relocation programmes and many estate residents would have previously lived in homes deemed unfit for human habitation. They gained a superior quality of home at an affordable level of rent, but the clearance programmes meant they also often lost contact with a strong, settled community that had grown up over several generations.

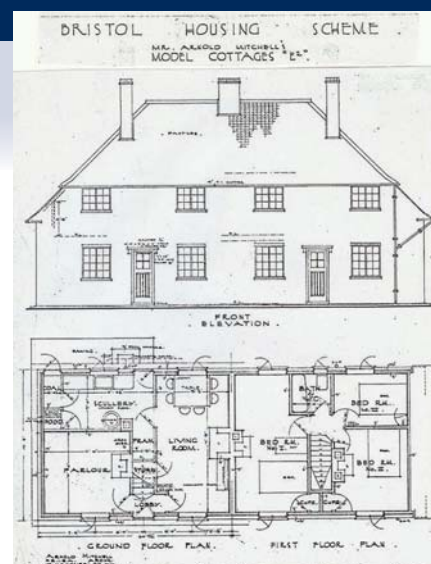
By the end of the Second World War the UK faced its most severe housing

Bristol Cultural Development Partnership (BCDP) is currently coordinating Homes for Heroes 100, an extensive programme marking the centenary of council estates in the city. BCDP is an Arts Council England NPO partnership of Bristol City Council, Business West, University of Bristol and University of the West of England. Homes for Heroes 100 is supported by Bristol City Council and the National Lottery Heritage Fund and partners include the Architecture Centre, Knowle West Media Centre, Local Learning, Sea Mills 100 and the city's libraries, museums and archives.

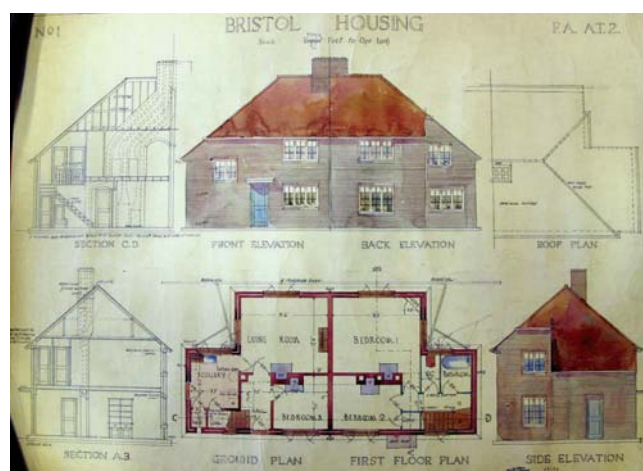


Left, Aerial view of the Hillfields estate, c1926 (Bristol Archives, 44819/3/176).

Right, Arnold Mitchell's design for a type of semi-detached parlour-home property (MIB5) that was built on the Hillfields estate in the 1920s (Know Your Place).



Postcard of Forest Avenue, Hillfields, 1920s, which has a mix of parlour and non-parlour homes. (Bristol Archives, 43207/4/17).



Cyril A Farey's design for a type of semi-detached home (FAA2) which was built on the Hillfields estate in the 1920s (Know Your Place).

shortage yet, with an estimate of 750,000 new homes being required to meet demand in England and Wales alone. The shortcomings of the first Bristol council estates were repeated in some of the newer ones built on sites at Hartcliffe, Henbury, Lawrence Weston, Lockleaze, Stockwood and Withywood. They too had limited local amenities and public transport. They also suffered from the abandonment of the garden suburb principles, which had been a redeeming feature of the earlier developments. Cost-cutting measures such as the increasing use of pre-cast reinforced concrete construction resulted in major structural problems (concrete cancer) that would come to light in the 1980s.

Council housing became associated with people most in need (the rent levels of the first estates had been aimed at the more affluent members of the working-class rather than the very poor). Some estates started to be stereotyped by the media and those in authority as problem areas, high in crime and welfare dependency. By the first decade of this century many local authorities were faced with major housing debt and with restrictions on investment, bringing a complete halt to new building. Funding was available from government for improvement and regeneration, but

this was often conditional on transferring ownership and/or management to non-public housing associations or Registered Social Landlords.

Council housing had become a safety net for the most vulnerable in society but more recently there are signs that it is becoming a tenancy of choice again. With the renewed building programme in the city, *Homes for Heroes 100* will help to raise awareness of the mistakes of the past that should not be repeated – including problems of social alienation, lack of essential facilities and limited availability – as well as the many positive outcomes that should be publicly recognised.

By the time *Homes for Heroes 100* ends next year, local people will have had the opportunity, support and resources to re-tell their own histories in a high-profile public programme with regional, national and international impact. News of events will be posted on the Homes for Heroes 100 Facebook page and in the Festival of Ideas blog, along with links to background material (both historic and current-day). Follow the project on Twitter at #homesforheroes100.

Melanie Kelly, Research Director, Bristol Cultural Development Partnership/ Festival of Ideas/ Festival of the Future City.

Sources of background information

- Eugene Byrne's chapter "'Homes Fit for Heroes' – Bristol's New Housing Estates' in *Bristol and the First World War*, published by BCDP in 2014. Available at: www.bristol2014.com/assets/files/reading-adventure/Great_Reading_Adventure_Book.pdf
- Homes for Heroes: available as a downloadable PDF at: ww1resources.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Homes-for-Heroes-2.pdf This was created by Myers-Insole Local Learning for the English Heritage Schools initiative in 2014.
- Michael Manson: 'Houses, Flats and Pre-Fabs: Bristol Council Housing.' *Manson's Bristol Miscellany*, publication date to be announced.
- Municipal Dreams, a blog by John Boughton to accompany his book *Municipal Dreams: The Rise and Fall of Social Housing* (2018): municipaldreams.wordpress.com/2014/05/27/a_surprising_beauty/

Planning Applications

John Payne, from Bristol Civic Society's Planning Applications Group highlights some recent applications.

Focus on Bedminster

Bedminster is located close to the city centre with good communications to it and beyond. Although there has already been a considerable amount of development and renewal there, it still has a lot of vacant and underused land. The shopping centre is in much need of improvement. It badly needs balanced, good quality regeneration which is sensitive to the urban grain and resident community. Much of the focus of development interest at present is on the area surrounding Bedminster Green north and south of Dalby Avenue/ Malago Road and the Society has many concerns about the proposals so far. (See pages 10-11.)

Development pressure, particularly for new housing, is rippling out from these larger sites, however, and it is equally important that these proposals are sympathetic to their surroundings and that they enhance rather than harm

their locations. Bristol Civic Society's Planning Application Group (PAG) has considered a number of developments reflecting wider development interest in Bedminster. Three examples are:

Land North East of Philip Street. 18/00551/F

Located between East Street and the City Farm in the Bedminster Conservation Area, this site has an

application to build four houses all of which would be four storeys. Whilst the Group would welcome the redevelopment of this site, it felt that the proposal did not contribute to the character of the Conservation Area or its improvement. A three storey development with more traditional roofs and windows would be far more fitting. A decision by the Council is pending.



Ferodo House. The design does not capitalise on the opportunity to enhance the character of the Conservation Area.

Pressure to convert commercial and community uses to housing.

High demand for housing in Bristol can make it attractive to seek to use buildings accommodating small businesses including community uses



Adam and Eve now sadly closed.

such as pubs into residential use. Bristol Civic Society's Planning Application Group (PAG) considers many such applications. Although additional housing is required in Bristol, space is also needed to provide jobs and services and homogenous residential areas are not necessarily interesting places in which to live. Through PAG, the Society generally campaigns to retain a variety of uses although change from commercial to residential

use can be beneficial for example in Portland Square where we welcome the restoration of appropriate residential use. (See pages 8-9.)

Over the last six months PAG has opposed the conversion of the Adam and Eve public house at Hotwells (18/04632/F), the Merchants Arms in Stapleton Road (18/04935/F) and the Pineapple in St George's Road (18/01818/F decision pending). All of these applications were seeking residential uses. The first two applications have been withdrawn but the Pineapple has yet to be decided. We have also supported the St Pauls Planning Group in objecting to the conversion of the retail unit at 3 Grosvenor Road to residential use (18/05686/F).



Left, The Pineapple; request to be converted into housing.

Ferodo House, Willway Street. 18/05009/F

This is another site in the Conservation Area previously used for offices. The proposal is for a mixed residential and commercial development. Again, the Society wants to see the redevelopment of the site and the proposed mix is suitable for the area but the design does not capitalise on the opportunity to enhance the character of the Conservation Area. In particular, the extensive use of cedar boarding on the walls and zinc cladding on the roofs was out of place. This application is also still under consideration.

Old Tabernacle, Palmyra Road. 18/05043/F

This former chapel is at the junction of Palmyra Road and Elmdale Road. It is not in a Conservation Area but the scale of the building blends well with neighbouring houses and responds to the downward slope towards it in both of the roads. The proposal is to change the existing office and storage use to residential and extend the roof to provide a second floor for one bed apartments. PAG felt that this would harm the street scene by increasing the scale of the building compared with its neighbours and

not respecting the slopes of the roads. A two storey development would be more compatible with the size of the site and the availability of parking space. We also considered that the proposal would increase overlooking of neighbours. There are many objections to this proposal and a decision is awaited.

Below, Old Tabernacle. Application is still under consideration.



Many different types of application in various parts of the City are considered by the Bristol Civic Society Planning Applications Group (PAG). Since the Autumn the group has looked at around 150 applications.

PAG has welcomed a number of new members over the last twelve months. If you are interested in joining the group do contact me on johnpayne997@btinternet.com

Former Public Toilets in Woodlands Road (18/04384/F).

PAG welcomed the imaginative proposal to convert this fine Edwardian building at the junction of Woodlands Road and Park Row into a café. The proposal includes the re-installment

Public toilets on Woodland Road soon to be a café.



of the external metal railings and gate. Although some features of the toilet will necessarily be lost much will be preserved. More importantly, the building will be brought back into use and it will continue to make an important contribution to the street scene as it has done for over 100 years. The proposal has been granted planning permission by the Council.

Removal of Sculpture and Planters to allow for Car Parking, Trinity Quay, Avon Street (18/04305/F).

PAG objected strongly to this proposal from the Bank of Scotland Group. This sculpture, *Time and Tide*, is on an important pedestrian route between Temple Meads Station and Avon Street leading to Old Market. The route is likely to be used considerably more by pedestrians as the regeneration schemes in Avon Road and Old Market are implemented. Conflict between

Right, Time and Tide provides a unique focus of interest.



cars and pedestrians is likely to arise if car parking spaces are provided here and the quality of the pedestrian route will be diminished. It would be a sad day if this fine piece of public art and the winner of the 1994 NatWest Life Students Sculpture Commission were to be replaced with car parking spaces. Georgina Redfern's *Time and Tide* provides a unique focus of interest enhancing the quality of this valuable urban space. The application has yet to be decided.

Planning application reference numbers are shown. Applications can be viewed on the City Council's website.

Major Developments in Bristol

John Frenkel, convener of Bristol Civic Society's Major Sites Group gives an overview.

Bristol City Football Club

The Society supports the Club's proposals to develop the stadium on the land between the Ashton Gate Stadium west stand and Winterstoke Road. Central to the plan is a new multi-modal sports centre to be the home of Bristol Fliers Basketball and ladies Netball teams and to host conventions and exhibitions. The Club proposes to landscape Colliter's Brook to make a park running through the Stadium. To the north of the new Sports Centre would be two new hotels (3 and 4 stars) needed to serve the Stadium. An aspiration is to attract residential conferences. The Society supports the construction of new homes to the south, but has said that it does not support the tall residential towers illustrated in the Club's publicity. There is enough space to the south of the Sports Centre to create an interesting high-density-scheme that is subservient to the Stadium.

High St / Wine St (St Mary Le Port).

The redevelopment of the area occupied by the former Norwich Union, Bank of England and Lloyds Bank buildings, which occupy the whole of the east side of High Street and south of Wine Street, has hibernated again. The buildings are vacant. For nearly 30 years redevelopment schemes have come and gone. The last developer has gone. The Council has met the next developer, Hermes about the Bank of England site about a mixed use scheme with links to St Nicholas market. The developer is in discussion about the neighbouring Norwich Union building. Publicity likely this summer. *See page 18.*

St. Philips Marsh.

Bristol University's new Cattle Market campus has caused a burst of developer interest in nearby land. The Council has asked Mott MacDonald, planning consultants, to coordinate proposals for the massive area of land between the railway to the north, across the Feeder



Proposed BRI Car Park. Plan refused.

Canal to the Avon River to the south. The whole area is on the brink of undergoing substantial change. There are already several major schemes emerging mainly to support the new Campus's student population. Stakeholders include Network Rail; the redevelopment of Temple Meads Station is again under active review. We wait to see what is proposed for the site where the Arena would have stood.

Taviner's Buildings, Prewett Street, Redcliffe.

We were pleased that a Planning Committee refused this proposal to build a large tall building behind the St. Mary Redcliffe churchyard. The Society opposed this proposal but will support a more modest scheme that does not block its neighbours' light.



Taviner's Buildings, Redcliffe. Plan refused.

29 - 32 Portland Square, St Pauls.

This terrace of four houses has been Bristol's longest running 'building at risk', blight. The site includes a gap where 29 and 30 Portland Square once stood and the partially ruined Grade I Listed 31 and 32 and 1 Cave Street. The proposal would replicate the external appearance of the original townhouses and restore the listed buildings, so far

as is possible. We wish the developers well and hope that this scheme is built.

New Bristol University Library - Hawthorns Hotel site - Woodland Road, Clifton.

The Society supports redevelopment of the Hawthorns and the construction of a new Arts and Social Sciences Library but regrets that it cannot support this scheme. The Library would be 55% larger than the library proposed in the University's 2006 Masterplan. The Library would occupy practically all the site and be taller than the Senate House, starting from a lower base. In its Masterplan the University said that the Library would "Relate sympathetically to the scale of neighbouring properties." This massive building would overbear Elton and Woodland Roads. The Society supports contemporary architecture that enhances the relationship between the new and the historic building styles of the conservation area.

BRI Marlborough Street new multi-storey car park.

University Hospitals Bristol has applied for planning permission to demolish its 180-place Marlborough Street multi-storey car park and to replace it with an 820-place car park. The Society supports the considerable body of opinion that opposes the scheme. The Society agrees with the City Transport Management's report which strongly opposes a large new car park. The report shows how the Trust has overstates the benefits which the car park's supporters believe that it would deliver. This huge new multi-storey car park would be contrary to all National and local policies to reduce traffic in city centres. The local road system is already above capacity and traffic is at a



Left, New University library, Hawthornes Hotel site.
Above, Proposal for former Coroner's Court and Lakota Club.

standstill for substantial periods every day. The air in the Marlborough Street corridor is unpleasant for the thousands of pedestrians, cyclists and vehicle drivers. The scheme would demolish the estate of 36 flats in Eugene Street, a major planning loss. The Trust has other options to improve patient access by car. STOP PRESS – Application refused.

The former Coroner's Court and the Lakota Club, 46 Upper York Street, Stokes Croft.

This site is a whole city block, the Tudor Gothic Revival style Grade II listed former Coroner's Court faces Backfields to the south. The locally listed Lakota Club is at 46 Upper York Street. Both buildings are heritage assets that are falling into disrepair and need significant investment. The Society supports the proposal to convert both buildings and to extend the Lakota to develop a heritage-led scheme of 54 new one and two-bed starter homes, with some ground-floor employment space. The former Court has few external alterations but has been extensively modified internally.

This city centre development would be car free. The Society has suggested improvements to the junction of Moon Street and Backfields.

Watershed – St. Augustine's Reach

Watershed has an urgent need for space to expand several of its successful activities. The proposal is to build an extension on the Marriott Hotel side described as 'backpacking' the shed. The ideal solution might have been to move to a neighbouring shed but, there were no nearby opportunities that would meet Watershed's requirements. There is concern about the impact of the higher development on the townscape. The Council will require Watershed to justify the height of the new building, and its impact on the local area.

Western Harbourside (land around the Cumberland Basin).

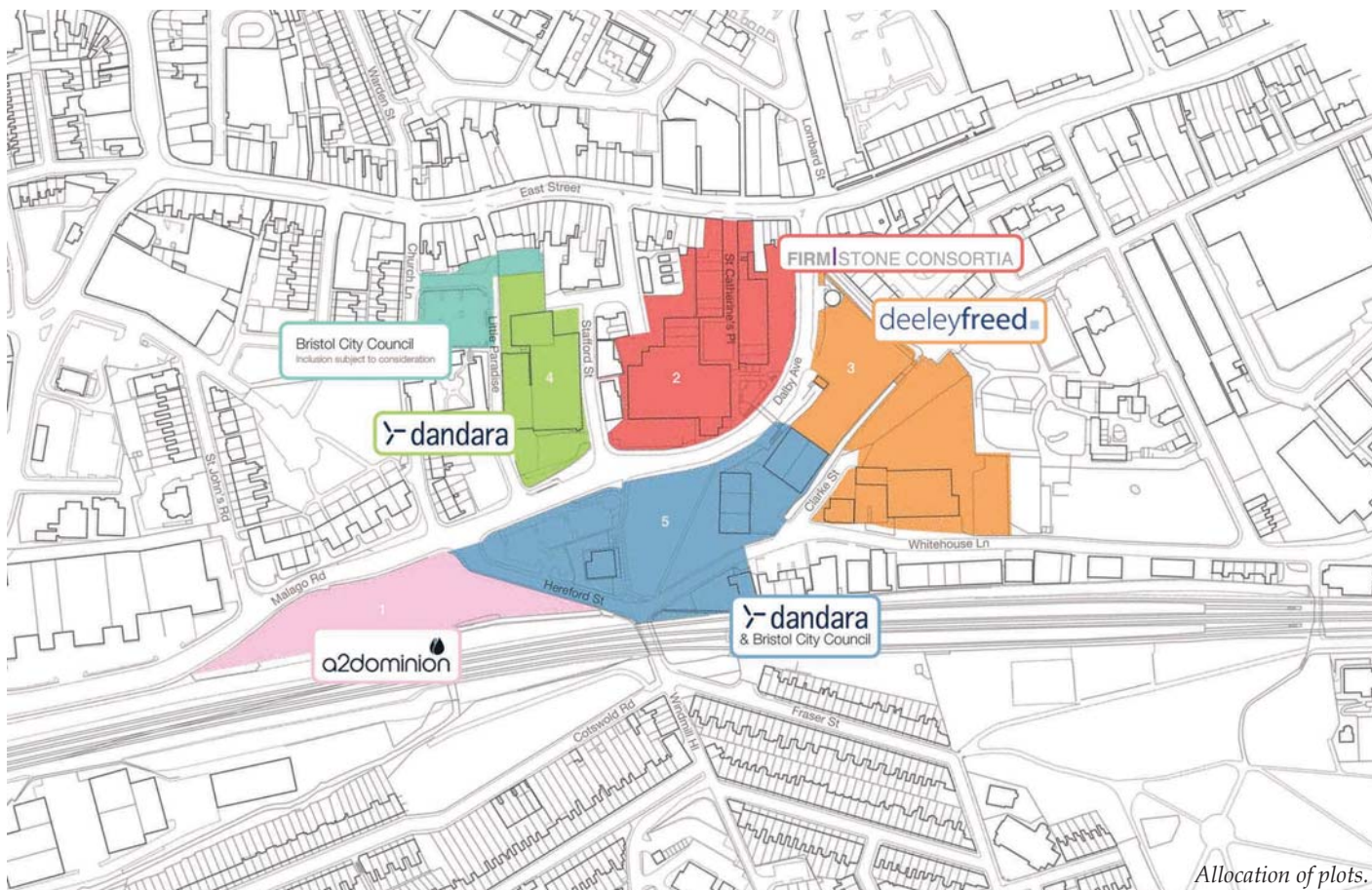
The Council commissioned a report from Arup about highway options to replace the elevated Brunel Way. Dependent on a highway solution

being affordable there could be space for a possible 2,500 new homes. The Council proposes a mixed development of the same height as Wapping Wharf. The Bonded Warehouses would be tallest buildings though a 'placemaker' tall building might be included. Community engagement is planned for the end of April. This is a sustainable location with links to Temple Meads via water. A Bond could be converted to a residential development with B Bond retained for library and archive use.

The Major Sites Group (MSG) meets every six weeks. The Group needs new members. Please contact johnfrenkel5@gmail.com. It is critical for the Society to meet developers of large projects early in the design process. MSG tends to concentrate on city centre developments, which affect the greatest number of residents and where local representation is weakest. The Society supports development and modern architecture. Items on the Society's website have links to the Society's full responses.

Bedminster Green –

John Frenkel, outlines the concerns for this significant development and recommends a public/private partnership to lead the way forward.



Bedminster Green is a development area centred on Hereford Street car park; it extends from St Catherine's Place shopping centre on East Street to Bedminster Rail Station. Once a dense industrial and residential area it has now a character of low-density industrial sheds, open yards and car parks. This fragmented area is close to Bedminster town centre; to the south it faces Windmill Hill's terraced houses and open space.

The Council has identified the area for significant development to help meet the city's acute housing needs. The Society strongly supports the principle of redevelopment of this underused brownfield land.

Together with the proposed developers of each of the five development 'plots' the Council instructed the Nash Partner-

ship to produce planning guidance (the Framework). The Framework proposes a concentration of tall and mid-rise buildings but no specific guidance for each plot of this 6-Hectare town centre development project. This is a once in a generation development opportunity. Development on this scale has not occurred since the compulsory purchase enabled housing schemes of the 1960/70s.

Such has been the level of local concern about what is perceived to be an uncoordinated mass of high-rise blocks of small flats proposed by separate developers that the Windmill Hill and Malago Community Planning Group, with the BS3 Planning Group developed their own Community Planning Brief.

The Council recognise the Framework document which advises a range of heights depending on the urban context: low rise, 2-5 storeys; mid to high, 6-9 and framing buildings 10+. The Society has seen five proposals, only one will follow the Framework advice. Plot 1, the A2 Dominion site on Malago Road proposes 550 student bed-spaces and 49 flats in seven blocks between 7 and 10-floors. Plot 2, St Catherine's Place, the

Freestone site has approval for a 16-floor building but has applied for permission for a 22-floor building with 270 flats. Plot 3, the developer of part of the site proposes 280 flats in three buildings between 10 and 16-floors. Plot 4 - Little Paradise Street on the Dandara site shown in green, the proposal is for 329 flats at market rent in three buildings between 4 to 16-floors. Plot 5 in red – the Society has not seen definite proposals but understands that the developer could propose an 18-floor building.

Among other matters, these are the Society's concerns.

- The developers' disclosed proposed heights would all exceed the Framework's advice. The adjacent blocks of 16-floors (or 22) of St. Catherine's Court with the 16-floors of the Little Paradise development would create a formidable masonry barrier along the north side of Dalby Avenue and overbear and shadow the local streets.

- This development intensity always brings into question the quality of life offered to the occupants. For example,

a new urban quarter

the Little Paradise Street site proposes a density of 627 dwellings per hectare the Wapping Wharf development is 194 dph and Finzel's Reach 460dph. The proposals offer no or limited external amenity space. Only those flats with balconies have private amenity space. Living high is not a natural environment for most people. For those with money it may be their chosen way, they can afford the higher cost of construction and maintenance charges. For those on lower incomes living high is often a trap.

- The density of the St. Catherine's Court and Little Paradise developments compromise their design. They have a high proportion of single aspect flats, some north facing. Following the Grenfell Tower disaster, is it right to build tall with only a single access core?

- The mix of new homes is limited to 1 and 2-bed flats. There are other major flat schemes for example, the conversion of the former Imperial Tobacco offices in East Street. There is a risk of a monoculture of small flats in East Bedminster. So far, no developer has offered town houses, duplexes or maisonettes, which surely, in a development of this size, is a shortcoming?

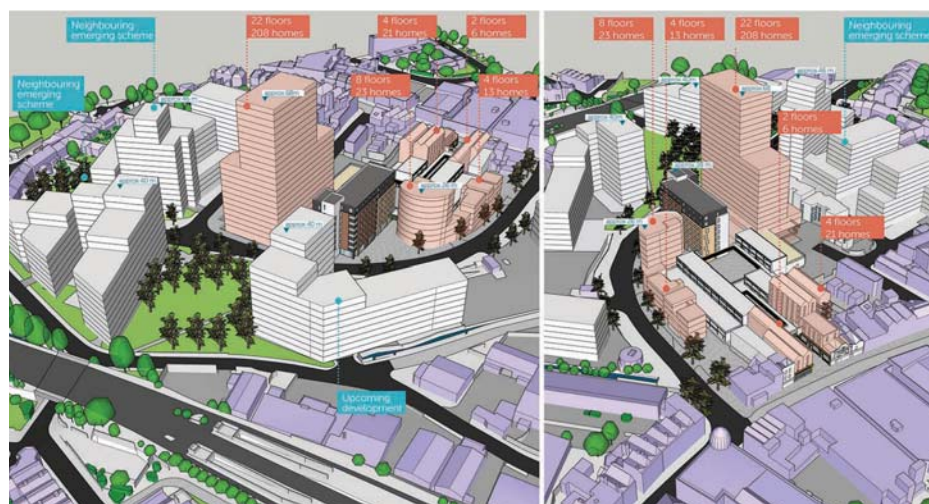
Conclusion

This is a massive piece of urbanisation; an opportunity to deliver an imaginative new district quarter that would transform East Bedminster economically and socially. This opportunity will be lost if each development site is treated as a stand-alone development. The public interest requires a consortium to carry forward the work begun by the Nash Partnership to integrate the Bedminster Green development with the East Bedminster town centre. The Council should lead a public/private partnership as there is with the Kings Cross redevelopment in London.



Above, This image illustrates a high-density development copied from Bristol Council's Urban Living planning guidance.

Below, St Catherine's Place. How it could look. High density without amenity space.



Letter to the editor.

Dear Sir,

Tall buildings (“Reaching for the Sky”. *Better Bristol* Issue13) have a major impact on the appearance of our city and the planners are right to demand highest quality of design, but whilst they always say this, they seldom get it, since lively design requires an interested client and an architect with imagination.

Tall buildings that can be seen from a distance create an important silhou-

ette, but most of them are boringly square and unexciting.

Typically, the *Better Bristol* cover shows a tower which looks as though it was never finished or has perhaps, a stock pen on the roof, whilst the article "Reaching for the Sky" has an artist's impression of a 22 storey block, which has clearly had a good deal more design thought than most, but its up-and-over framing looks as though it is trying to hide or perhaps to secure itself to the ground.

If we have to have them, Bristol's new towers should be landmarks worth a second look, dramatic and adding something exciting to our city .

Developers and their architects might learn quite a lot from medieval churches.

Peter Floyd

Better Bristol welcomes your letters. Please keep them short and email to: mageditor@bristolcivicsociety.or.uk

Bricks and stones

*Bristol Byzantine
in Victoria Street.
Remodelled 2001.*

Bricks

The brick is one of the oldest, yet least celebrated building materials, known to man. Prior to the arrival of the railways in the 1840s bricks were made from local clay. If possible they would be dug, hand-made and fired on-site. The first wholly brick building in Bristol was built on Broad Quay in 1698. It was obviously a success as the following year the largely brick built Queen Square was begun. With the memory of the great fire of London (1666) still fresh in minds, old-style half-timbered construction was largely abandoned for brick. Although few of the original Queen Square houses remain, number 36 (built 1703) and number 29 (built 1709 -11) on the south side of the square are fine examples of mellow Queen Anne brickwork.

Building with bricks was taken to new heights during the second half of the eighteenth century by the Bristol family of masons and architects, the Patys. When they weren't constructing with Bath stone the Patys built houses with bricks of clean and exquisite quality. These houses included those in King Square (1760), Albermarle Row (1761) in Clifton, Brunswick Square (1784) followed by Berkeley Crescent (1787) at the top of Park Street, and a number of detached residences in Montpelier.

By the second half of the nineteenth century machine-made bricks had become the premier building material in Bristol. Indeed, when Victoria Street (1870s) was constructed between Temple Meads Station and Bristol Bridge it was specified that the buildings were to be fronted with brick. The challenge was accepted with enthusiasm and a new and exuberant building style emerged that utilised multi-coloured bricks and established a new building style: Bristol Byzantine.

Cattybrook Bricks

Cattybrook Bricks in a range of colours – red, yellow, buff and blue – have been widely used throughout Bristol. The Cattybrook brickworks near Lower Almondsbury was established in 1865 by Charles Richardson, the engineer of the Bristol and South Wales Union Railway. When constructing the Patchway Tunnel Richardson noticed the local clay produced high quality bricks. The railway tunnel under the River Severn used 30 million Cattybrook bricks.

The Cattybrook Brick Works is still in production and is currently owned by Ibstock Brick Ltd.

*Mike Manson
looks at what
Bristol is made of.*



Above left, Portland stone, 37-39 Corn Street. Elevation by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott. Relief figure by Hermon Cawthra. Above right, Dundry Dole Stone in Dundry church yard. A massive cube of locally quarried stone. Below, 36 Queen Square. An early brick building. 1703.



Classic building materials – where to see them

- Bath Stone – Corn Exchange, Corn Street.
- Brandon Hill Grit – Red Lodge, Park Row.
- Devonian Sandstone (from Monmouthshire) – piers of Bristol Bridge.
- Dundry Stone – St Mary Redcliffe.
- Ham Hill Stone – entrance columns of the old Colston Hall.
- Pennant Sandstone – Arnolfini.
- Slag Bricks from brass smelting – Black Castle, Brislington.

And stones...

The Bristol Region is one of the most geologically varied parts of Britain. The landscape offers a geological textbook of rocks formed by fire, water and wind and provides a rich range of local building materials in a variety of textures and colours.

When it comes to stone for building 'the nearer the better' is the maxim. Having said that, the Normans were so partial to their distinctive creamy Caen stone that they exported it all the way from Normandy by the shipload. The Tower of London was built with Caen stone as was Canterbury Cathedral. In Bristol, the castle (demolished by the command of Oliver Cromwell in 1656) was also built with Caen stone, as was Bristol's oldest surviving building, the priory church of St James (c.1160).

Until the seventeenth century Bristol's domestic buildings were mostly wooden. Although the city avoided a conflagration similar to that experienced by London in 1666, building regulations in the seventeenth century began to specify the use of less flammable materials.

Bristol's Victorian suburbs get their predominantly grey colour from the unlovely pennant sandstone. Pennant sandstone, dug locally, and associated with coal-bearing rocks, is hard but friable and is generally used roughly cut.

If you look carefully at Victorian mortar you may see coal has been used in the mix. It has been said the use of coal was popular after the death of Prince Albert (1819-1861), Queen Victoria's husband. Rather than a sign of respect for the dearly departed Consort, the less romantic explanation is that coal was locally plentiful and cheap.

The traditional Bristol paving slab is also pennant sandstone.

For ornamentation around doors, windows and lintels the easily cut and carved, more attractive oolitic limestone is used. The nearest oolitic limestone quarry was on Dundry Hill. This was the source used by the master masons when they built the Abbey Church of St Augustine (now Bristol Cathedral)



Caen stone was used in the construction of Bristol's oldest building, St James's Priory. Twelfth Century.

Pennant stone was used for building the Muller Orphan Houses at Ashley Down. Now flats.



Above left, Abandoned pennant stone quarry by the Frome at Frenchay.



Above right, Coping stone made of slag from the brass industry.

and St Mary Redcliffe. It is said that the stone was floated on rafts down the Malago Brook – which must have been a faster running stream in those days. In the thirteenth century Dundry stone was shipped as far away as Ireland where it was used in the construction of Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin and St Canice's Cathedral, Kilkenny.

The Dundry quarry ceased being a major supplier in the early eighteenth century when it became cheaper to bring high quality stone by boat along the canalised Avon (1727) from Bath. The Dundry quarry was last used in the 1920s.

Brandon Hill Grit is a rough finished reddish tinged stone seen around Clifton. Less frequently used is the greyer and smoother carboniferous limestone which was quarried along the Avon Gorge. Its sharp angular lines made it a favourite for garden rockeries.

Ornamental stone from further afield includes Ham Stone – which has a beautiful golden brown hue but weathers badly – from Somerset and the fine pale Portland stone. This

celebrated Dorset stone was used for the building of St Paul's Cathedral in London. A number of buildings in Corn Street (nos 31, 37 - 39) are faced with it.

And finally, slag from the brass industry was compressed into rectangular blocks and triangular wall copings. These seemingly indestructible, wrinkled black slabs, many dating from the eighteenth century, were used to construct the Black Castle at Arnos Court. It also randomly crops up in walls across the city.

Recycled building materials

Being green and re-using building materials is nothing new. Work in the 1970s on Numbers 7 and 8 King Street (then the offices of architects Moxley, Jenner and Partners) offered a fascinating insight into seventeenth century building methods. Parts of the building's timber frame came from a ship; some of the wall laths were recycled barrel staves, while the stone used in the well had originally been ship's ballast brought from afar.

From old farm to new community

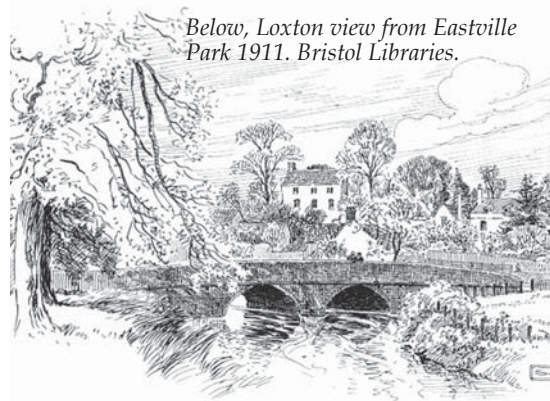
Dave Thomas outlines future plans for that neglected farm house within touching distance of the M32.

A 1767 map of Stapleton, a couple of miles northeast of the centre of Bristol, shows a house and barn on the site of what is now known as Bridge Farm. In the map's margin is a sketch of a house. It looks remarkably like the house at Bridge Farm today. This map is the earliest record yet found of buildings on the site.

The house and barn were probably built some time in the preceding half century. More barns were added in the early nineteenth century with the most recent appearing in the first half of the twentieth century. Among the outhouses is a quaint double-seated toilet with a large and a small seat, perhaps for a parent and child? Today as you accelerate up to the M32

from the foot of Muller Road and onto the motorway you might not notice the farm on the left. It was once part of the Heath House Estate and its fields stretched into what is now Eastville and St. Werburghs. The farm's fortunes faltered in the early years of the twentieth century. By then the Estate had passed to a family living in Oxford who had little interest in it. Around 1911, the Withers family from Hambrook took over the farm. Jack Withers was born there in 1914 and would live at the farm longer than anyone else in its history, remaining there until his death on the 29th December 2015.

After Jack's death, when the farm came onto the market it consisted of a rundown farmyard, an overgrown 3.5 acre paddock and a large farmhouse scarred by the M32 so close it's almost in touching distance. To the Ashley Vale Action Group (A.V.A.G.) though, it was the long awaited opportunity to create a follow-up to their first self-build scheme. A.V.A.G. was responsible for "The Yard", the transformation of a redundant scaffolder's depot at the end of Mina Road into an



Below, Loxton view from Eastville Park 1911. Bristol Libraries.

award winning self-build community. Their vision for Bridge Farm is to provide truly affordable housing along with workshops, studios, open space and community facilities, bringing life once again to the old farm and buildings. A.V.A.G. want to integrate a new mixed community into the surrounding area. They raised enough money to purchase the farm from people who saw the opportunity not as a financial, but a social investment. Unlike a commercial development this is to be a not for profit community venture, that will carry on long after construction is completed with some of the buildings available for rent and green spaces open to the public.

Once in possession of the farm, the first job was to start to clear the house and outbuildings and prioritise the many temporary repairs. Though mainly structurally sound, there are roof leaks and vegetation attacking the fabric of the buildings. The first skirmish to clear some of the impenetrable brambles from the paddock uncovered hundreds of balls lost by generations of children from the Glenfron Primary School next door.

From the start this was to be a



From old farm to new community.



Above, The eighteenth century Bridge Farm.



Right, Within touching distance of the M32.



community project. Meetings were advertised and people invited to come to the farm and to the neighbouring school to discuss hopes and ideas and to pull together the beginnings of a development plan. Volunteers, some with particular skills but all with enthusiasm came forward. They formed groups to explore ideas about land use, transport initiatives, recycling and new building design. So far feedback to A.V.A.G. from local groups, the school, organisations and authorities has been positive. A typically enthusiastic response was received when just before Christmas, the local area was leafleted inviting people for mince pies and other refreshments in one of the old barns now made useable as a temporary meeting space.

However, all the hopes and plans ride on clearing many hurdles. The first was to prepare a case to take to the City Council as part of the Council's wider review of their Local Plan. A.V.A.G. want the land to be re-designated for community-led housing. As a farm, the land was never open to the public. Making it accessible, attempting to address a small part of Bristol's

housing crisis and the preservation and renovation of the old buildings has found much favour among the local communities. The Council should be publishing its revisions to the Local Plan for public consultation in March.

Meanwhile A.V.A.G. continues to work on the first stages of a planning application. For a proposal of this size, a full "A to Z" of reports is needed. These include an archaeological desk-top study, a bio-diversity survey, flood risk assessment, heritage statement, transport plan, and many many more.

Some of these can be prepared by A.V.A.G. but many will need the involvement of outside consultants and agencies. The cost of the application could run to £140k. Luckily, some grant monies could be available but applying for, and co-ordinating them is not straightforward and professional help is required. This is being provided by local company EcoMotive who have already been involved in self-build and community land trust schemes in Fishponds and Lockleaze.

Much of this preparatory work can be done before a decision on a proposed

layout of the site is finally made. The housing numbers, type and density on the site will be a major part of the ongoing discussion. The more housing, the more economical the cost of the plots, with the infrastructure costs being shared among a greater number. On the other hand, the more houses the less open space and community use. A.V.A.G. is determined that Bridge Farm will not become just another housing estate. The involvement of a housing association will also very likely be needed. If required they would act as the legally mandated "registered supplier of affordable housing" and they also have access to further grant monies. Should they become part of the project some of this potential extra money is likely to go towards the site infrastructure.

One of the major costs will be a new access road onto the farm from Glenfrome Road. A previous planning application was approved giving better access to the farmhouse, but this will need to be revised and re-submitted to meet the required standards for a larger development. At present the existing and only way into the farm is the blind 180 degree turn at the Glenfrome Road traffic lights.

The farmhouse and outbuildings are Grade 2 listed buildings. A.V.A.G. does not intend to change either the character of the farmyard or the house, but will work with the Council and Heritage England to agree the repairs and the new usages of the buildings. With approval, they hope to use the farmhouse as a test-bed to try out new materials and techniques to bring the house up to the more modern expectations of energy use and fire safety. They also hope to work with apprentices and students, giving them a real life project to develop their skills and knowledge. Already students from the nearby University of the West of England are working from surveys on a 3D model of the farm to look at possible site layouts.

In the meantime as a temporary measure, the (mixed) group known as the "Land Girls" are digging and planting crops. They have plans for a greenhouse and goats, and perhaps also sheep to keep the bracken and brambles down. Trees are being planted and grown on for re-planting. A new gate giving access from the school onto the land has been agreed and talks started to help a mental health charity find somewhere for a forest garden.

As to the future, one certainty is that Bridge Farm will be different, inviting and exciting.

To find out more, keep up to date or volunteer, contact Bridge Farm via their website www.bridgefarmbristol.co.uk

St Mary Le Port area redevelopment

Uncertainty continues over the identity of a developer for this critical site. *Roger Mortimer* shares his plan.

Upper floors. Residential. Similar to other current new developments in central Bristol. A mix of 'studio', one bedroom and two bedroom flats, with a limited number of three bed flats. Most of the smaller flats would be single aspect as they are accessed from internal corridors.

Ground floors. The extensive ground floors are assumed to be basically 'retail' - this term is taken to include food and drink, and any businesses that require significant public access. For example, professional services, personal services such as gyms and health care.

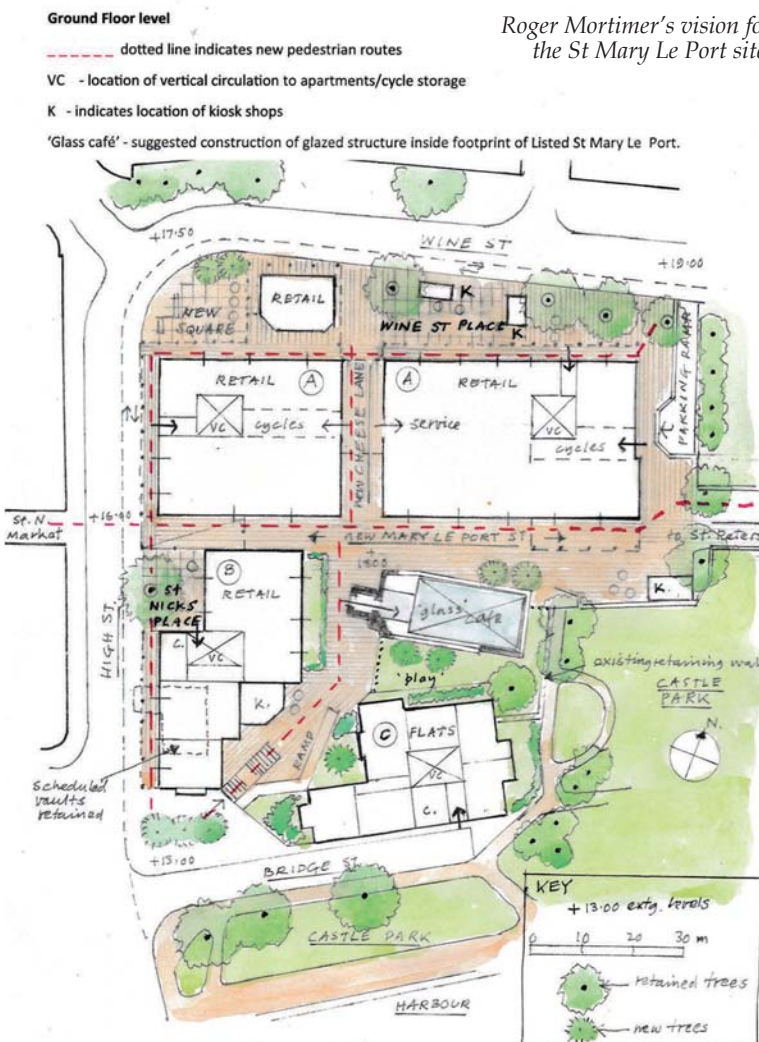
The development creates a large amount of street frontage and it is essential that this creates activity. Flexible and imaginative management of the ground floor retail space would be required. Residential use of some ground floors should be considered. There are plenty of Bristol examples of living space at street level. Block C would be suitable for this approach, with the larger dwellings encouraging family use.

Design aims

Bristol's character in this historic central area is largely the result of the piecemeal development of small sites

over many years. This is in contrast with today's large and often monolithic developments, the dominating impact of which is not easily absorbed into the city's character. This study assumes well modelled facades, using the light coloured materials of the area.

The development will be mainly judged for the street-level environment that is created for pedestrians, shoppers and residents, who will all benefit from the weather protection provided by the Colonnade to High St and Wine St. Cyclists would benefit from the two way path created by narrowing High and Wine Streets.



The materials and design of the new buildings should be deliberately varied, using devices such as large projecting bay windows, and areas

of full height planting to facades - 'vegetated architecture'. Three new landscaped spaces provide a focus for the street trading, mainly food and drink, which is now such a feature of Bristol's city scene. These spaces enable retention of 5 of the 10 existing plane trees to High St and Wine St.



Westmoreland House. Going...



Westmoreland House. Gone.



Westmoreland House has gone

Lori Streich, Chair of Carriageworks Action Group, asks what happens next?

Westmoreland House has gone. The front of E W Godwin's significant Carriageworks building has been secured for redevelopment. 30 years of dereliction is at last being reversed. Developers PG Group have completed the complicated task of clearing the site so they can build out the scheme that was awarded planning permission in October 2015. This comprises 112 flats (10 of which will be "affordable"), 1,010 square metres of commercial space, a market square and a through route.

Inevitably, as development progresses, PG Group will be making some changes to the scheme. Some are minor and uncontroversial; some will be more significant and are likely to have greater impact on surrounding communities. When we have updates, we post them on www.carriageworks.org.uk

The Carriageworks Action Group (CAG) is a broad alliance of local residents, business owners and people from local organisations, housing associations and Bristol City Council that builds on the work of St Paul's residents and Bristol City Council Officers which began in 2002. We are committed to work with any developer who will deliver the scheme in line with the Community Vision. This was

CAG aims to continue to act as a bridge between different interests in the communities surrounding the site and the developer

drawn up in 2011 following extensive consultation. <https://carriageworks.org.uk/reports-minutes/community-vision-document/>

Over the past 8 years, we have worked to ensure the regeneration of the Carriageworks/Westmoreland House site. We opposed a planning application that local communities deemed damaging and poor; and supported one that came close to delivering the aspirations of the Community Vision. We have facilitated actions to enable the purchase of the

site from OpecPrime (Comer Brothers). And we continue to engage with the developer so that we can continue to provide information about the development, its progress and potential changes. CAG supporters are already well-informed residents who want to know what is happening on their doorsteps, and who are always willing to respond!

This development is contentious, difficult and is addressing different needs. CAG aims to continue to act as a bridge between different interests in the communities surrounding the site and the developer. We can only do this if there is an open and honest dialogue – both about the constraints faced by the developer, particularly in this climate of economic uncertainty, and about the concerns of local residents and communities.

Our approach has always been to work in partnership to achieve the goal set by 95% of respondents to the consultation on the Community Vision: to "do something" about the dereliction of the site. But we also want a development which reverses the impact of the blight imposed by 30 years of dereliction, and which makes a positive contribution to the area.

The future of Bristol's transport

Congestion! Pollution! *Peter Floyd* shares some big ideas.

Bristol is heavily congested and the air polluted largely due to its failure to invest widely in transport infrastructure. Outside the city, disagreements between authorities have frustrated progress on transport improvement, sometimes for decades.

However, we now have the West of England Combined Authority (WECA), with an elected Metro Mayor, which is preparing a new Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) and a Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP), covering Bristol, BANES, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. These plans will cover the period until 2036, aspiring to build 105,500 new homes and the jobs and transport to go with them - at an estimated cost of £10bn. The Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) was done first, has already been consulted upon and submitted to government, prior to a Hearing in Public to be held later this year. At the time of writing, the Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP) has been published and is out for public consultation.

My pleasure at having a planning system covering the Bristol city region, is tempered by the approach taken and the development and transport pattern being set for the future. Looking primarily at Bristol, the present plans are questionable.

The Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) covers Bristol, which before World War Two (WW2) was a tightly built up, single centred city about 8 miles in diameter, its size limited by the services of buses and trams. After WW2 bombing, Bristol City Council was able to raise funds to build council housing estates in and around the city. So it was decided to expand existing towns, all about 10 miles out of town, at Thornbury, Yate, Keynsham, Nailsea and Portishead, mostly by private investment. This was



Bristol Centre, congested and polluted.

because the open countryside around the city's outer edge was and still is, protected by a Green Belt in which little development was permitted and which still covers half WECA's total land area, making flexible planning of development over this huge area impracticable.

The most practical and economic way to extend a city is in linear form, based around a public transport line.

The JSP has been designed to accommodate the numbers of new houses set by government, but, though the area of the Green Belt could be reviewed, it is still evidently considered a political no go area and so most of the new housing is to be built outside the Green Belt, further extending the settlements extended after WW2 and adding some more: four within the Green Belt at Coalpit Heath, North Keynsham, Brislington and Whitchurch. But twice as many: eight outside the Green Belt, at Thornbury, Buckover, Charfield, Yate, Backwell, Nailsea, Churchill and Banwell.

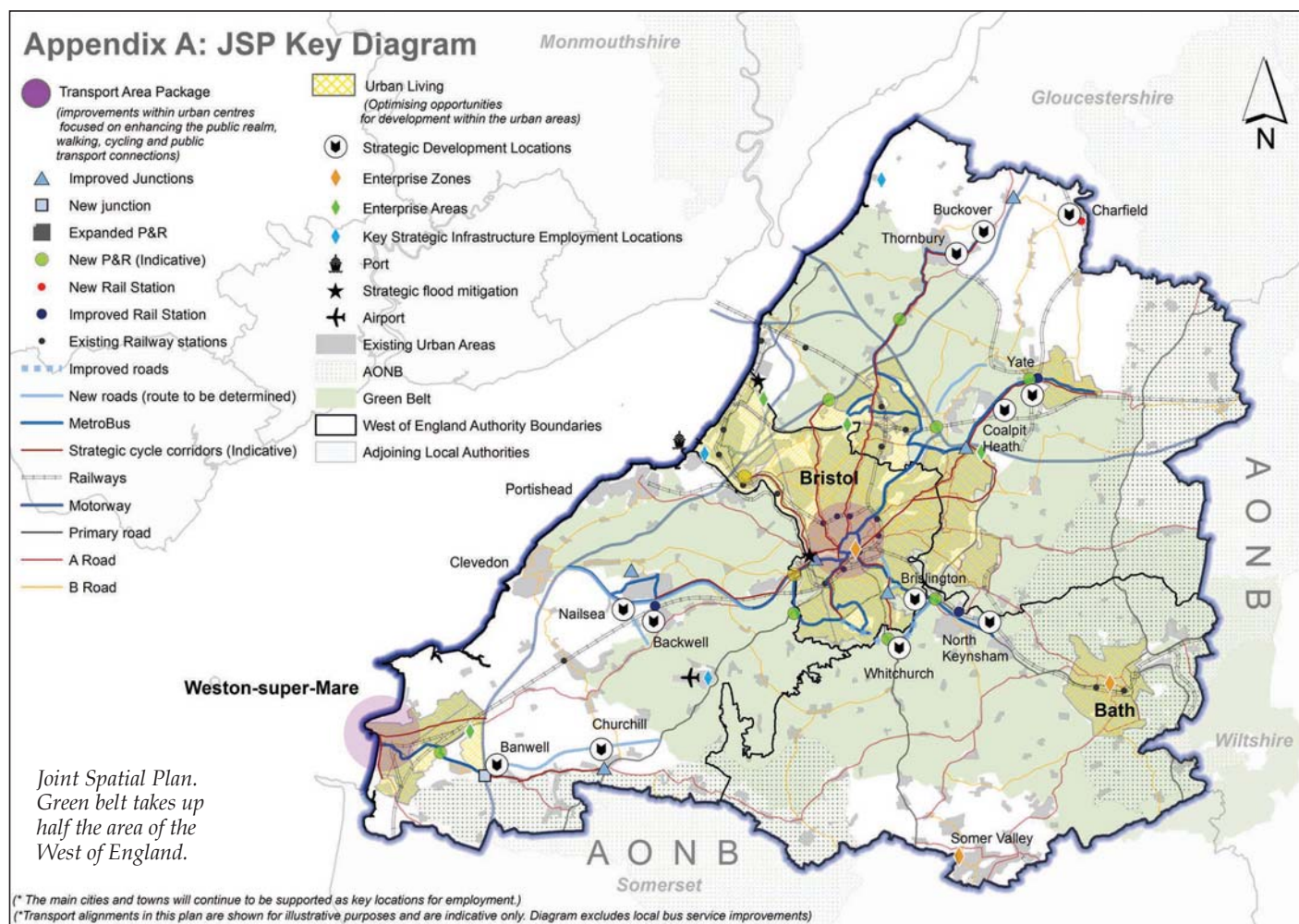
The Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP) continues older transport plans but fails to learn from them. The Bristol and Bath Regional Plan of 1930 was the first modern transport scheme

designed to accommodate the motor vehicle and was a cooperative effort on the part of the many authorities which in those days had a good deal of autonomy and covered an area similar to WECA. The plan included a proposal to address increasing congestion in the city centre by taking traffic around the city on two Ring Roads. The western side of the Outer Ring from Patchway to Westbury on Trym and the eastern side of the Inner Circuit Road from Newfoundland Road around to The Centre were

both completed in the 9 years from 1930 to 1939 when stopped by WW2. The western side of the Outer Ring was lost to the Brabazon Runway and never replaced and the Inner Circuit Road is being slowly closed down as too small. So, after 89 years, we are still well short of completing the first West of England transport plan for the motor vehicle. Other than a new link proposed at Whitchurch, there seems to be no intention in the JLTP of completing that idea even though the city centre is hopelessly jammed, at least in part, by through traffic.

The JSP envisages most new jobs being in the city while most housing is about 10 miles away on the far side of the Green Belt. So the JLTP is left to try to improve the existing radial routes, with the addition of some metrobus routes and Park and Ride sites.

So how will the plans work together? The extended towns are to be further extended, mostly by private developers, who will start to build the minute planning clearance is given. All the overloaded radial roads across the ten mile wide Green Belt, will have to be improved at the same time and at huge cost - reliant upon uncertain government funding which will probably take many years to provide and long before the radial roads are improved, the owners of the new houses will be in their cars, fuming in traffic jams. Far into the future the extended settlements will continue to



grow, creating a built-up fringe, outside the Green Belt, (think North Fringe) which will be struggling with pressure for more urban uses and eroded as agriculture ceases to be viable. It is quite possible we will end up with a badly serviced metropolis, 24 miles across, which was never really intended to happen!

What then is to be done? The plans already published are subject to review and could be redrawn. Bristol is growing fast and must be positively planned. The most practical and economic way to extend a city is in linear form, based around a public transport line, provided in advance of the development, with the development phased, one station stop at a time, to match available finance and creating an attractive alternative to the motor vehicle. If a line were already there, development would be attracted. Think M4/M5 and Parkway Station, directly followed by the rapid growth of the North Fringe and Cribbs Causeway Shopping Centre. Take an existing rail line, to Yate, say, and then to Chipping Sodbury, any improvement needed for commuter use, could be phased, a stop at a time, moving out from the edge of the city and ready before the settlement was complete - perhaps phased under normal planning powers and a method that could be used on any form of transport line.



To adopt this method, the Green Belt would first need to be reviewed, beginning from the present edge of the city and working outwards, to allow some of the land of poor landscape or agricultural value to be released for development around the station stops. This form of development could be repeated several times with different transport modes. Review of the Green Belt, even if difficult, is quite possible.

At the time of writing Bristol has various plans of its own, for the city and city centre. It now also has its One City Plan. Though this is a strategy, it is not yet a plan, Bristol's elected Mayor is encouraging wider thinking. With traffic building up from outside and with no real chance of widening existing roads through the heavily built up city, the idea is being examined for

a partial underground mass transit system funded by private money. It may be that for heavily developed Bristol, this is more realistic than it might at first appear and might be designed to lead towards the linear developments out through the Green Belt described above, much like London Underground's early routes.

Adopting the above suggestion as the basis for planning, it would be necessary to challenge: political and public support for the retention of every last bit of our huge Green Belt; the assumption that government will not coordinate the release of land for development with the availability of public transport, and that public transport can only be provided by government funding - all of which are actively happening elsewhere.

Having abandoned the range of options originally considered, JSP and JLTP seem to me to have been directed by political assumptions that lie behind the physical proposals; as a result the proposals are not going to work and should be challenged if we are to plan our way out of present congestion and continue to enjoy our city region's success and lovely countryside.

Peter Floyd

Peter Floyd is a retired Architect and Town Planner.

www.bristolcivicsociety.org.uk

Sarah Lancashire, from mini-drama series *Kiri*
- image courtesy Nick Wall & Channel 4.



Cinematic art & TV in creative Bristol

Nic Billane highlights the importance of Bristol as a city of film.

The Film and TV industry is economically and culturally important to Bristol, providing significant employment and investment into the local economy. Most people will be aware of such local bastions of film production such as the BBC Natural History Unit or at the plasticized level, Aardman Animations. These successful organisations represent the very visible tips of a film making iceberg which goes much deeper.

Perhaps it is the invisible parts which are most interesting due to their diversity and scale. To make a film or TV programme takes lots of people pulling together to make a seamless final production. In very basic term, films are typically commissioned by commercial backers (usually responding to a creative concept); budgets are assembled, films or programmes are put into production; the initial output is moved on to the post-production stage, where the rough edges are rounded off; then onwards for release

on TV, video or cinema. Simple really.

In practice film production requires an army of people with specialised skills, script writers, producers, directors, actors, people who organise film sets and locations, film crews, including make-up artists, caterers, electricians, cameramen, riggers, the people who hire equipment and props, soundtrack experts - and the list goes on.

Some key facts:

- The film industry's inward investment (£235million) in the city economy being the economic impact of hotels, facilities, studio, vehicle hire, post production etc.
- £15.2 million per annum inward investment facilitated by City Film Office and Bottle Yard Studio.
- Employment; alongside BBC Bristol, there are 131 independent production companies, mostly (58.2%) micro-businesses (turnover less than £500,000 and less than 10 employees).
- Overall, the sector employs 3,700 people: 1,000 in the BBC; 1,200 in private companies; 1,500 freelance.

- Specialisms are natural history and animation, Bristol is also strong in facilities to produce factual films, corporate work and in post-production facilities, and has a growing reputation for drama and feature films.

Bristol's film credentials date back to the late 19th Century as the birthplace of William Friese-Green (1855-1921), one of the earliest inventors of moving image and two colour filming.

For the last 15 years the city has facilitated film-making through a Council-run service, The Bristol Film Office.

The office's mission is to "attract, assist and provide

business development opportunities for the moving image industry for the benefit of the city's economy". Bristol offers a location close to London, but with lower costs, attractive city and country landscapes, an abundant skilled workforce many of whom learned their skills at the BBC. All these factors are undoubtedly a big draw for film producers. In its time the Film Office has generated more than £1.4 million of income for the city through filming



permits and charges, and in partnership with the Bottle Yard Studio has assisted TV & film production worth more than £235 million city wide inward investment over the last 15 years.

It is worth mentioning the successful application (31st October 2017) by the Film Office and its local partner organisations, to UNESCO for one of seven creative field awards, which has resulted in Bristol becoming a 'UNESCO City of Film'. The award has a permanent status, which marks Bristol's achievements as a leading city in the field of film and moving image. Bristol is a member of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network and has been deemed worthy of the accolade because of the city's lasting contribution to film culture, production, heritage, education, research and technology. An impressive achievement.

Bristol City Council also has ownership of the Bottle Yard Studio [BYS] facility, located on Whitchurch Lane in Hengrove. The Studio operates from the site of a former winery and bottling plant, and is now the established base for independent film and television production in the South West of England, attracting major UK and overseas productions of all sizes. The studio has eight stages available at competitive rates, has a giant green screen studio, an extensive back lot, workshop areas, production offices, costume and makeup rooms. A hub of on-site tenants deliver a host of support services including creative, digital, technical and audio/visual expertise in support. In 2017-18, 383 separate productions were issued with permits to film in the city, and 1141 filming days were recorded at Bristol Locations and /or at BYS.

Productions made at BYS include: The Crystal Maze (Channel 4), Poldark (BBC One), Broadchurch (ITV), Wolf Hall (BBC Two), Crazyhead (E4/Netflix), and Sherlock (BBC One).

Examples of recent feature film titles shot in Bristol in the last few months



Martin Parr, one of the most significant documentary photographers of post war Britain.

include 'Stan & Ollie' starring Steve Coogan, and the wonderfully named Hellboy: Rise of the Blood Queen, both at a Cinema near you early in 2019.

BBC Bristol is the centre for the world-renowned Natural History Unit which has spawned 'Green Hollywood' in Bristol, the world's largest concentration of wildlife film production, with many companies headquartered around Whiteladies Road.

We're also home to the world famous, four times Academy Award-winning Aardman Animations, creators of Wallace & Gromit, Shaun the Sheep, and Creature Comforts. Aardman was established in Bristol in 1972, when Peter Lord and David Sproston started their business creating 'Morph' for the children's programme 'Take Hart'. Nick Park joined full time in 1985 and the rest is history. The business has developed its animation studio to create feature films, broadcasts, advertising and interactive

entertainment for an international audience. Their work continues to be innovative, entertaining, brilliantly characterised and full of charm.

Channel 4 will be setting up one of its national broadcaster's "creative hubs" in 2019 to bring extra jobs and more media opportunities, as it seeks to break out of London and spend more of its money supporting and commissioning

programmes from the country's regional media sectors. Announcements of whereabouts in Bristol they will establish their regional HQ are expected shortly.

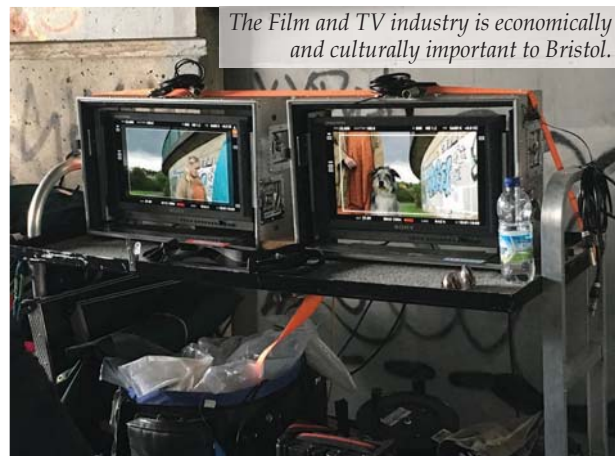
Plimsoll Productions on Whiteladies Road is now one of the fastest-growing UK independent companies, producing non-scripted wildlife format films from its offices in Bristol, Cardiff and Los Angeles. Their creative team has produced many hits and won Bafta and Emmy Awards. Working for clients in US, the UK and Canada. Plimsoll have secured orders for more than 50 series, and completed shows and formats are sold all over the world.

Icon Films, based at College Green, is an innovative and award-winning independent production company. In the last five years they have filmed in 52 countries, producing programmes such as River Monsters, through to Savage Kingdom which was made for National Geographic. Icon Films concentrate on delivering high-end factual content for the UK and international market.

BBC West regional television, with headquarters at Broadcasting House on Whiteladies Road and studios in Clifton, began broadcasting in 1957, part of its output being focus on the coverage of local news. Many changes have occurred in the scope of programming, which assisted the growth of the independent producer sector but today's shows are still based on the proud tradition of serving Bristol, the majority of Wiltshire, northern and eastern Somerset and North Dorset with local news programmes such as BBC Points West, and topical magazine style analysis Inside Out West and the Sunday Politics

(continued on page 22).

www.bristolcivicsociety.org.uk





Filming in King Street for the making of 'Sherlock The Abominable Bride'.

(continued from page 21).

show. ITV West Country at Arnos Vale offers a similar profile of local news and events output. Since 2012 local broadcaster 'Bristol TV' offers pre-recorded local news programmes out of its Filton studio.

Bristol's Watershed opened its doors in 1982 and declared itself Britain's first media centre. Nowadays it retains a leading position in film culture and as the digital media centre for the South West offers advanced education, skills, application and understanding of the arts, with particular focus on film, media, and digital technologies. The Pervasive Media Studio Company, based at The Watershed, is a vibrant network of artists, creative services, technologists and researchers. The Arts & Humanities Research Council has recently announced a multi-million Investment in Bristol & Bath Creative R&D which works alongside the Watershed community and so the positive news continues.

The British Film Institute (BFI) also has a base at the Watershed through BFI Film Hub South West (a network of cinemas, film festivals, new talent and creative organisations, BFI also fund regions creative offerings).

A good example of one of the many post-production companies located in Bristol is Films @ 59, based on Cotham Hill. Founded in 1990, the company has grown steadily in size to offer kit hire and post-production facilities in support of their clients, be it for a 1-minute promotional film, a 12-hour series or a feature film. They offer vision and sound services to ensure that the product gets to the eventual customer in the correct format to suit local technical requirements.

It would be remiss not to mention how
BRISTOL CIVIC SOCIETY

the sector benefits from the significant educational role of local Universities; Bristol University has a Department of Film and Television, and UWE has a film division based at Bower Ashton Campus, not to overlook the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School, which has its own film production department.

As of February 2019, The Royal Photographic Society has made its new home and HQ at the Paintworks site Brislington. The Society has an all-new exhibition space open to the public, an auditorium, education centre and library. The Paintworks site also is the home of the Martin Parr Foundation, which preserves the archive and legacy of Martin Parr, one of the most significant documentary photographers of post war Britain.

The city hosts events such as the biennial Wildscreen Festival along with another ten annual film festivals (including Encounters, VR World Congress and Codefest). As viewers we often watch TV without being aware of its local origin. Casualty,

Fools & Horses and Eddy Shoestring may be long gone but other popular programmes have taken their places.

Conclusion

Bristol has a very significant stake in all stages of the fast-growing and important film and TV production business. The creative energy emanating from the sector has given the city an internationally recognised reputation for wildlife and factual documentaries, drama programme and feature film output is also increasing. These activities and skills have created and will continue to provide wealth and jobs for people making their lives in Bristol, and will provide entertainment for the many over forthcoming decades. Our splendid local landscapes and buildings remain much sought after filming locations.

I apologise for any omissions of people or companies in this article, there are many more entities which deserve mention, but space does not permit. I offer my thanks to Natalie Moore of Bristol Film Office for her help. Nic Billane.



m.v. Balmoral as a backdrop for Stan and Ollie.



Sowing the seeds of the Bristol and Bath Parks Foundation

Sue Sanctuary sees a bright future for Bristol's parks.



Left, Queen Square, late summer. (Bristol Design).

Below, Victoria Park, Windmill Hill. (Bristol Design).

Our public parks and green space help define our sense of place and are much loved by the people of Bristol and Bath. Whether the need for a space to run free, to spend time outdoors with the family or escape the urban environment, the health benefits of parks and wider importance to our communities and cities is undeniable.

Ever increasing pressures on local authority finances have stimulated new ideas and innovative approaches to ensure a brighter future for Bristol's parks. The result of a unique partnership across two cities, the Bristol and Bath Parks Foundation will be an independent charity able to raise funds for projects in public parks and encourage charitable giving in a way that has not been possible until now.

The partners who have enabled the creation of the charity are Bristol City

Council, Bath and North East Somerset Council, the Bristol Parks Forum and the Natural History Consortium. Alongside these partners, Bristol Green Capital Partnership will help engage business audiences and Quartet Community Foundation will offer financial management expertise. Taking inspiration from the Bournemouth Parks Foundation launched in 2015, the Bristol and Bath Parks Foundation will test how public giving, volunteering and social enterprise can be encouraged to benefit parks for public use and enjoyment.

The aim of the charity is to raise funds for enhancements to parks and green spaces in both cities, to encourage volunteering and promote enjoyment of our public parks. It will not take on ownership or management of parks which remains the responsibility of the local authorities. As a Charitable Incorporated Organisation the Bristol and Bath Parks Foundation will be an independent entity with its own board of trustees and steering group. Alongside its fundraising activities, the Foundation will highlight the benefits of volunteering and importance of strong community connections.

The Foundation will help tackle some of the challenges facing our parks. For example, 'how to improve our parks and preserve their unique features for the benefit of the community?'. It will also encourage projects that protect nature and wildlife, reduce social isolation and benefit mental and physical wellbeing.

Over the next two years the Foundation aims to identify key projects and develop its first fundraising initiatives. It will begin with a small number of ideas that have the backing of the local community and can capture the imagination of the wider public. This summer sees the launch of the Bristol and Bath Parks Foundation at the Festival of Nature (1st-9th June) which takes place across both cities.



A new loop road layout is proposed.



Up to 12 million passengers a year by mid-2020s.

Proposed canopy extension over a pedestrianised forecourt.



Airport passenger numbers are expected to exceed the nine million mark for the first time this year.

Taking off

Nic Billane considers Bristol Airport's expansion plans

Bristol Airport is the ninth busiest airport in the UK, and the fifth busiest outside of London. Around 4,000 people are currently employed at the airport, supporting about 24,000 jobs in the wider economy of SW England and South Wales. Passenger numbers are expected to exceed the nine million mark for the first time this year.

The success of the airport is largely based on its convenient location and the wide provision of flights to European holiday destinations mainly by easyJet and Ryan Air, although 17% of passengers are flying on business often catered for by other airline operators.

Prompted by Government all UK airports have to create and update their Master Plan for future commercial development, while paying heed to consultations with

local government, transport agencies and neighbours to follow a sustainable approach. Bristol Airport's 2006 Master Plan is currently being updated, and a planning application has been submitted to North Somerset Council, seeking consent to increase the current terminals' capacity limit of ten million passengers a year to up to 12 million passengers a year by mid-2020s. This would allow for growth largely within current boundaries and cater for forecasted demand until the mid-2020s. Of greater interest are the proposals to develop new infrastructure, and make improvements to existing facilities to allow a more significant leap in capacity. The proposals represent a first step in the long-term to develop the region's airport to serve up to 20 million passengers a year by the mid 2040s.

Under the 12million passenger plan, the terminal will be enlarged creating new space for expanded passenger and baggage facilities. There will be a canopy extension over a pedestrianised forecourt and improvements to airport terminal access. Two new multi-storey carparks with expansion to the existing one is also

planned. Within the airport site a new loop road layout to improve traffic flow is proposed, and local external highway improvements focussed on the A38 junctions with West Lane and Downside Road are also included in the plan.

The most recent public consultation on airport expansion has resulted in over 1,800 people objecting to Airport expansion. But there is also strong support for the development plans. Concerns raised mostly revolve around climate change, the pressure on traffic and travel in the area and the need for local road improvements, noise and the likely local disturbance associated with the increased operation of aircraft. Set against this is the likely boost to the region's economy, improved access and facilities for customers, and the chance to fly to more destinations around the world from a local airport thus avoiding London airports. A difficult choice in matching environmental, economic and social pressures. Such an ambitious and wide-ranging Master Plan cannot be achieved without working in partnership with the West of England Combined Authority, North Somerset Council, Local Enterprise Partnerships, Highways England, Network Rail and extensive consultations with local communities. Bristol Airport has a website www.bristolairport.co.uk/ future which shows the interesting submissions made by the public.

Striking twentieth century buildings added to Bristol's Local List

Mike Manson is pleased to report on the recognition of Bristol's iconic buildings.

The Purdown BT Tower and the Brabazon Hangar at Filton are among the latest buildings to be placed on a register which provides extra recognition in the planning process.

Bristol City Council has published the latest additions to the city's Local List of valued buildings.

The List, which contains over 500 buildings of merit, recognises buildings, structures and sites that don't already have listed status but are worth preserving because of their quality, style or historical importance.

This year's list focuses on important architectural monuments of the twentieth century. Entries were nominated by members of the public and assessed by an independent panel, including among others Simon Birch, Bristol Civic Society's chair. 28 buildings have been recognised.

Cllr Nicola Beech, Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning and City Design, said: "This year's focus on the Twentieth Century sees a number of buildings added to the list that challenge traditional ideas of what historic monuments look like. Nevertheless these buildings have a strong architectural importance, or social significance, that express the attitudes and beliefs of people in the era they were built.

Right, 1930s flats in Eugene Street.



"It's a challenge to focus on modern buildings, many built within our lifetimes, as heritage, but it's important to protect the achievements of recent generations, so they might be appreciated and enjoyed by those in the future. Bristol is now leading the way nationally in protecting and managing appropriate change in these buildings."

There is a growing appreciation of high quality modern buildings and an increasing awareness that many are being lost around the UK. In many instances new research has revealed the newly added buildings to have an important place in Bristol's social and architectural history.

Among the buildings now recognised are a number of social housing projects built by the council, including industrial housing in Mina Road, 1930s flats in Eugene Street, and parts of the Redcliffe estate, which were among the most

How to nominate a building

You can nominate a building by using the contribute function on www.bristol.gov.uk/knowyourplace or by emailing conservation@bristol.gov.uk

Telephone 0117 922 3044 for more information.

All nominated sites must be in the Bristol City Council area.

revolutionary in the country at the time.

By far the largest building on the Local List is the Brabazon Hangar at Filton. Turned down for national designation in 2011 the building's connections with both the pioneering Brabazon project, and Concorde, make it a proud and historic landmark for the people of Bristol. (It will be interesting to see how this affects any projected plans for its conversion into an 'arena'.)

A marked increase in health and leisure time in the 1930s is reflected in the addition of the Art Deco Central Health Clinic in St Philips, Jubilee Pool in Knowle, and Broadmead's Art Deco Odeon cinema. Four bold and experimental post-war churches also find themselves on the Local List, each one expressing the optimism of their age.

News of the latest additions to the list has been welcomed by Bristol Civic Society.

Art Deco Odeon Cinema, Union Street, Broadmead.



Waring House (1958-1960), Redcliffe.





Unveiling at 3 West Mall, Clifton. Left to right, Thangam Debonnaire M.P., Lucienne Boyce and Lori Stretch.

Blue plaques surge onwards

From votes for women to 'crafted Gothic', Gordon Young reports on the latest blue plaques.

In 1918 women were granted the vote. Well, at least those over 30 who met a property qualification (it took ten more years to achieve a fully equal footing with men).

Fifty years earlier, Florence Davenport Hill, in her late thirties, was granted permission by her father to hold a meeting of what was to become the Bristol & West of England Society for Women's Suffrage. It took place at 3 West Mall, Clifton. Lucienne Boyce, the proposer and fund-raiser for a plaque to honour the



Venue for the inaugural meeting of the Bristol & West of England Society for Women's Suffrage.

event, vividly outlined the background to this early landmark in the struggle for women's suffrage.

Bristol MP, Debonnaire informed us that there have been just 450 female MPs in all since 1918. The Houses of Parliament has lots of statues of men and portraits of men wearing tights and carrying swords. And she assured us that today, there are very few depictions of women; certainly none with swords.

And panel member Lori Streich spoke of how our Blue Plaque scheme honours not just individuals but places of significance in our city. We recognise

where people got together to achieve amazing things.

More than 35 attended the unveiling. Those who turned up deserve a mention in despatches. The weather forecast for the unveiling was dire and proved to be accurate: yellow weather warning Storm Deidre made herself felt – temperature: 5° Celsius minus wind-chill factor; wind speed: 22mph and gusting to 35mph, and heavy rain. It was like being at sea in a storm.

But spirits were not dampened. After all, we were celebrating those brave, forward-thinking suffragists. Women with attitude, confidence and determination.

Certainly, Deidre demonstrated her approval.

John Dando Sedding

He lived at 4 Berkeley Crescent from 1873 for just two years. Sedding has credentials as an architect: he gets 21 pages – an entire chapter – devoted to him in Alister Service's definitive *Edwardian Architecture and its Origins*. And he gets seven mentions in the Cornwall edition of *Buildings of England*: Pevsner, with haughty disdain (a Prussian pedant, lecturing the English on Englishness, perhaps), says of Sedding's St Elwyn's church in Hayle: 'not up to the standard of Holy Trinity, Sloane Street'. But then,

his Belgravia church certainly raised the bar high – Betjeman described it as the 'Cathedral of the Arts and Crafts'. It was Sedding's last and most mature work, featuring stained glass by Burne-Jones and William Morris.

As Sedding resided here only briefly, we are really fortunate to have one of his buildings to ennoble our city. And one that is hardly known and a definite delight to



John Dando Sedding lived in Berkeley Crescent.

discover. It's St Saviour's House, St Agnes Avenue, Knowle. Grade II-star listed and in a lively Free Tudor Gothic style with Queen Anne Revival details. It's been praised as an important example of Sedding's work, and of an educational building in this style.

The Panel are pleased to honour John Dando Sedding and we hope that his plaque will inspire inquiry and tempt the curious to visit St Agnes Avenue.

Bristol Civic Society membership

Your Civic Society needs YOU!

Bristol Civic Society is more than 100 years old. It is a non-party-political body which campaigns for what is best for our city. Joining the Society is inexpensive and it is open to all. The bigger and more diverse our membership, the stronger we can be.

As a Society member you're also on the invitation list to a range of events and benefits, from serious campaigning through to expert talks and social evenings and outings.

Bristol Civic Society is:

- * Saving the best of Bristol's past
- * A powerful voice in Bristol's future
- * Campaigning on issues that affect us all - and the generations to come
- * A great way to make new friends (and maybe re-connect with old ones!)

Find out more about the Society and its work at bristolcivicsociety.org.uk

Invitation

Members and friends are warmly invited to the

Bristol Civic Society *2019 Annual General Meeting*

Tuesday 4 June, from 7pm

At Redland Parish Church Hall, Redland Green Road, Bristol BS6 7HE
(refreshments from **7pm**; the meeting starts at **7.30pm**)

The Agenda will include:

Chairman's Report, Finance Report, Election of officers and other Management Team members & Review of the Society's activities.

Nominations for officers and Management Team members must be sent to the secretary by 28 May 2019.

Joining is easy

There are three ways to apply. You can do it via the website: bristolcivicsociety.org.uk/get-involved/join-the-society where you can join using PayPal, or download an application form. Or fill out, cut out or photocopy, and return the form below.

Have you considered leaving something to the Bristol Civic Society in your will?

Membership application to join Bristol Civic Society

Membership (Annual)	Rate	✓
Individual	£20	
Joint living at the same address	£30	
Student	£10	

Please return to: Alex Dunn, Membership Secretary, BCS, 47 Abbey Road, Bristol BS9 3QN.

Cheques, if not paying by standing order, made payable to Bristol Civic Society.

Enquiries: Tel: 0117 962 2475

Email: membership@bristolcivicsociety.org.uk

Title..... Forename Surname

Email@

Address.....

Phone(s).....

giftaid it

By completing this Gift Aid Declaration, Bristol Civic Society can increase the value of your subscription at no extra cost to you by claiming a tax refund.

I would like tax to be reclaimed on my donation under the Gift Aid Scheme. I am a UK tax payer and pay an amount of income tax and/or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax that can be reclaimed on my donation. Bristol Civic Society is registered charity No. 244414

Please tick

YES ☐ NO ☐

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Please pay annually from 1st of (1) 20 (2)

the sum of £..... (3) (.....) (4) pounds)

to CAF Bank Ltd (sort code 40-52-40) for the account of Bristol Civic Society (account no. 00087355)

reference no. (5) (for completion by BCS)

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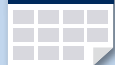
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Events

Spring and Summer 2019

MAY 1 - 31 May 2019



Walk Fest

Both Bristol Civic Society and Bristol Walking Alliance will be participating in Walk Fest.

Jeff Bishop will be running his often booked-out walks in the city's May Walk Fest based on *Bristol Through Maps* but this time a very different route and several different maps. The focus will be on what maps show (and don't show) about the development of the city docks through to today. Provisional dates are 11th and 30th May - watch out for the final programme. Simon Birch will also be repeating his *History of the Tobacco Industry* walk, dates to be finalised.

Bristol Walking Alliance will be putting on a number of walkability audit walks in different parts of Bristol.

Each walk will explore good and bad walking environments in the neighbourhood, and an event on 29th May will discuss how walkability varies between different places and what can be done about it. The walks will be in Easton, Knowle, Southville, and Westbury-on-Trym. See Walk Festival publicity for full details.

Wednesday 15 May. 7.00 pm

Future Travel Choices: electric cars and transport on demand?

The Station, Silver St, Bristol BS1 2AG

Sara Sloman of Go Ultra Low West and Dr Nick Small of Stagecoach UK will share their perspectives on the future development of electric cars and transport on demand. Professor Graham Parkhurst of The Centre of Transport and Society, University of the West of England, will provide a response as to whether he thinks that these innovations have a role to play in addressing some of our local transport problems. There will be an opportunity to question the speakers and for the audience to vote on whether they think that these innovations will make a significant contribution to address current transport challenges.

Wednesday 22 May. 7.30 pm

Routes to Clifton

Friends Meeting House, 126 Hampton Road, Redland. £5 bookable in advance

The untold story of street improvement in Victorian Bristol - a talk by Peter Malpass, a retired University of the West of England professor and author of *The Making of Victorian Bristol* due to be published in April 2019.

Check Bristol Civic Society website to book your place and to find updates. Some events will have limited numbers. We usually make a small charge to cover costs.

As Bristol grew in the 19th century its narrow and, in some cases, steep streets became more congested and more obviously in need of improvement. Of particular concern from the early 1840s was the route between the new railway station at Temple Meads and Clifton and this presentation will focus on how, over a period of fifty years, new roads and bridges were constructed, partly to compensate for the lack of a centrally located station.

JUNE Tuesday 4 June. 7.00 pm



Bristol Civic Society AGM.

See details on p.27.

Tuesday 11 June

Civic Society Design Awards. St George's, Bristol.

Tickets £5 each bookable in advance.

Friday 13 - Sunday 15 September

Doors Open Days - supported by Civic Society.

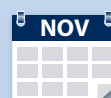
We are looking at the possibility of holding an associated event. Details to follow.



OCT October. Date and venue to be confirmed.

Film & Television Industry in Bristol.

Bristol has become a major centre for the Film and Television industries. The event will examine this business, the scale of the local industry, what is and has been made in Bristol, the locations used.



NOV Tuesday 19 November. Time and venue to be confirmed.
Lost rivers of Bristol and flood risk management

An illustrated talk by Melvin Wood, Environment Agency. Back by popular demand!

In planning

- Tobacco Bonds. Study visit aimed at greater understanding of the historical importance of the three surviving tobacco bonds. Jointly with Bristol Records Office.
- Ashton Court Mansion. We will be continuing with our campaign to save and restore Ashton Court Mansion. We plan further public events and consultation, following on from the well attended public meeting held in the Mansion in November 2017.

If you have ideas for future events do please let us know!

We always welcome fresh thoughts.

We are a small team and need reinforcements.

If you can spare a little time to assist in organising our Events Programme please get in touch.

Please email events@bristolcivicsociety.org.uk with bookings, queries, ideas and offers of assistance!



Walk Fest 1 - 31 May 2019.