



Better Bristol

The Bristol Civic Society Magazine - Issue 15 Autumn/Winter 2019

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- Bristol in Forty-five Bridges



an independent force for a **better Bristol**





Front Cover:
Bristol
Old Vic.
Photo:
Philip Vile.

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The chairman writes

Bristol Civic Society leads the way in terms of the breadth and range of its activities, *Simon Birch* reports

We welcomed Ian Harvey, Chief Executive of Civic Voice, to speak at the Society's Annual General Meeting in June. Civic Voice is the national umbrella organisation for civic societies across the country and Ian is a founder member with very extensive knowledge and appreciation of the ways in which volunteers run their societies.

Ian gave an excellent presentation providing an overview of the context in

which civic societies operate. Inevitably there is tremendous variation with societies located in big cities, small towns and everything in between!

In his view Ian considered that:

- Bristol Civic Society is a leading society in terms of the breadth and range of its activities.
- Better Bristol is one of the best (if not the very best?) civic society newsletters.
- BCS has a very high level of membership.
- Bristol is fortunate in that the City Council has maintained resources in city design and conservation – not the case in many other local authorities.

Ian's talk gave us all a great boost to our morale – we must invite him back!

Ashton Court Mansion.



Bristol's Railings

A request please for your help!

In the Second World War metal railings were taken from many of our gardens and parks as an important source of scrap metal for the war effort. We can still see the sawn off "stubs" on many front garden walls.

But was the scrap actually used in blast furnaces? At the time there was a critical shortage of scrap metal, partly due to submarine activity in the Atlantic reducing imports from the USA, hence the widespread collection of railings.

However, an urban myth has developed that the metal in the railings was unsuitable for use and that many railings were dumped in estuaries, the huge amount of metal even affecting compasses on boats!

I have been unable to find any definitive evidence either way – can you assist? Do you know of anyone whose relatives were involved in railing collection? Or who delivered railings to the steelworks? Can you point to any published information which might help?



CHAIR
3

Bristol's Bridges

We're intrigued that Bristol's bridges are currently being highlighted. There is a recently published book by Jeff Lucas and two events in October:

- Bristol Giving Day on Wednesday 9th October 2019. This is organised by Quartet Community Foundation and the aim is to raise funds for 45 local charities. The challenge is to cross as many of Bristol's 45 bridges as possible – see the website for more details:

<https://bristolgivingday.co.uk/fundraising-support-bristol-giving-day/>

- Jeff Lucas himself will be giving a talk based on his book on Wednesday 16th October – see events on back page

Campaigns

We are very pleased that there is positive progress at St Michael's. The new owner – Norman Routledge – has prepared detailed plans for the new roof and it is hoped that this will be in place very shortly.

We continue to campaign for a sustainable future for Ashton Court Mansion following publication of the long awaited consultant's report. The City Council has just resolved to appoint agents and to market the Mansion on a long lease. The Civic Society is being appointed as a "critical friend" during the marketing and disposal process. No details yet but very positive progress in principle!

Simon Birch

Chair, Bristol Civic Society

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Not already a member?
Why not join TODAY!
See page 27 for more details...

www.bristolcivicsociety.org.uk

University challenge

What shall we do with all the students?

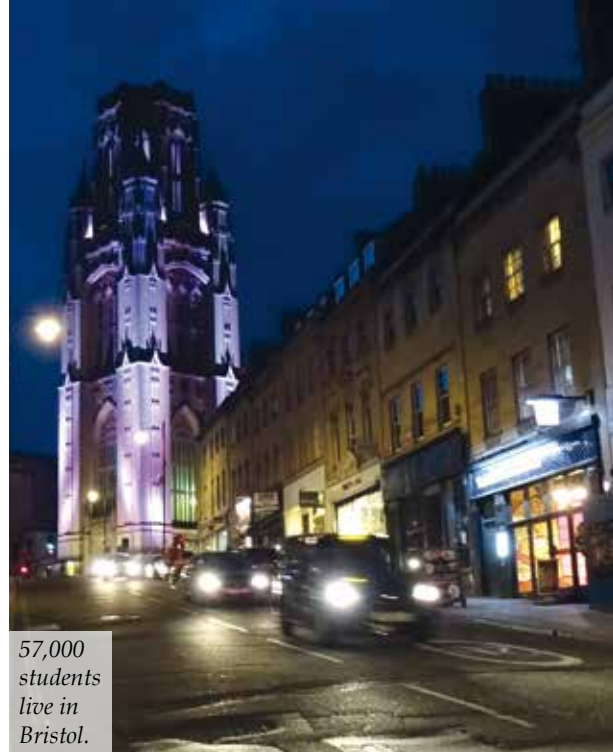
The term-time population of Bristol has never been bigger, and expansion of student numbers at UWE and the University of Bristol seems set to continue. *Eugene Byrne* looks at the impact they're having on the city.

The changes to Bristol's demographics wrought by the expansion of our universities in recent decades have been no less dramatic than the changes to the built environment.

We don't know the precise numbers, but there are around three times as many students at the University of Bristol and the University of the West of England (UWE) as there were 30 years ago.

In 2017/18 there were nearly 31,000 students (part-time and full-time, undergraduate and postgraduate) at

57,000 students live in Bristol.



Students bring new life to central Bristol.

the University of the West of England. In 2018/19 the University of Bristol had just over 26,000 students of all types.

Numbers for the coming academic year will be similar or larger, meaning that this autumn something in the region of 57,000 students from these two universities will be living here.

While some are living with their parents, or are mature students renting or owning their own places (around 10% in the case of Bristol, probably somewhat more for UWE), hall and campus accommodation has not kept pace with the growth in student numbers from homes outside Bristol.

Whatever the actual number is, students make up a big chunk of Bristol's 460,000 (Office for National Statistics mid-2017 estimate) total population.

While we know that the number of UK over-18s going on to university education has risen massively in recent decades, we've also had a huge increase in students coming to study from overseas.

Undergraduates from China, which both universities attract, are now a visible feature of Bristol life. UWE

question of where we put them all has proved a headache for policymakers.

The March 2019 Bristol City Council Local Plan Review talks of how in central Bristol "Student accommodation will be carefully managed to avoid undue concentration and directed towards identified areas both in the city centre and elsewhere."

The Council's plans are currently geared towards putting some of the new accommodation in Temple Quarter



Overseas students are big business. Photo Eugene Byrne

has over 3,000 students from non-EU overseas countries (we don't know exactly how many are Chinese), and Bristol currently has something over 4,000 students from Asia and Australasia of whom the great majority are from mainland China.

In recent years both universities have also hosted around 1,300-1,400 students apiece from EU countries. We don't know for certain what the impact of Brexit will be on these numbers. Nor do we know what effect Brexit will have on the intake from the wider world, but both universities are assuming their intakes will continue to grow in the coming years.

Students make up a big chunk of Bristol's 460,000 total population.

The University of Bristol, particularly, has long since unveiled huge plans for the area around Temple Meads station which are set to dramatically change the character of the area. The "Temple Quarter Campus" is set to shift Bristol's centre of gravity and do much to change the character of the city itself. (See www.bristol.ac.uk/temple-quarter-campus/new-campus)

Bristol's historic manufacturing base is now long gone. The times when Bristolians made workaday things like boots, ballpoint pens or packaging went out decades ago when much of this

and St Philip's Marsh (about 3,000 "bed spaces" in all) with other large developments in Bedminster and at Broadmead and "Frome Gateway", the area bordered by Pennywell Road and Newfoundland Street.

Purpose-built student accommodation elsewhere, says the Council, should be strictly controlled, avoiding the creation of student ghettos, not conflict with plans for affordable housing and be car-free (and deter parking of cars



Trenchard Street. Purpose built flats for students.

work was exported to cheaper labour in less developed economies.

Nowadays we make items dependent on a high degree of technical skill and innovation. Departments of both universities, particularly in science, IT and engineering, are involved in numerous partnerships with private sector firms at the leading edge of technology. Both are also involved in fostering new businesses.

Bristol, particularly, is deep into numerous partnerships, such as Engine Shed and (within it) the SETSquared Bristol business incubator. Since opening in 2012 it claims to have raised £432m and creating over 1,300 jobs (see www.setsquared.co.uk).

One global success story is Ultrahaptics, a University of Bristol spin-out which uses ultrasound to create "three-dimensional shapes and textures that can be felt, but not seen." This alone has raised £31m in investment.

Aside from these visible businesses, Bristol benefits from high levels of "graduate retention", that is, people choosing to remain in the city when their studies are complete and joining the local workforce, often in highly-skilled and well-paid work, or starting businesses of their own.

Manufacturing graduates is now one of the city's principal industries, and while it brings problems and challenges, it has been a remarkable success story.

elsewhere in the city).

So much (though not all) new student accommodation is to be kept away from established residential communities. Whether the Council can withstand the demands of developers in years to come remains to be seen, because there's big money at stake. Landlords love students; they don't stay long, and their parents can be made to sign undertakings that the rent will be paid and any damage or liabilities paid for.

Numbers

• Bristol Uni reckons that each student spends between £9,000 and £14,500 pa on accommodation and living expenses.

• Tuition fees for a UK undergraduate are typically £9,000-plus. For overseas students these can be considerably higher – up to three times as much.

• UWE's annual turnover is around £270m, while Bristol's is about £660m. Most of this money comes from tuition fees, funding and research grants.

• UWE has around 3,700 full-time staff while Bristol has 5,300. A large proportion of these are on higher than average earnings, and beyond these numbers are many temps and casual staff.

• The University of Bristol calculated that in 2014/15 it and its students supported almost 13,300 people in employment outside of the university itself. During the same year it estimated that students who did not already live in the local area, but who had come from elsewhere, spent almost £260m on local transport and food and personal items from retail and leisure outlets.

• The University of Bristol reckoned that its students' visiting friends and relatives spent over £4.5m in 2014/15 on transport, local hotels, restaurants and bars and visiting cultural, recreational and sports attractions. UWE's friends and relatives would add millions more to the total.



Speaking last year, Cllr Nicola Beech, Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning and City Design said: "The surge in student numbers is bringing significant economic and social benefits ... At the same time, we know concentrations of student accommodation can displace or prevent genuinely balanced communities from flourishing. These changes to the Local Plan would give us extra controls to manage the expansion of student housing in Bristol."



2-18 Stokes Croft. The Society is opposed to student flats and seeks a mixed development of flats and work space.

Student accommodation

Bristol Civic Society keeps a watchful eye on specialist student accommodation proposals. It is important, writes John Payne, that it is carefully managed to secure the potential benefits while minimising harmful impacts.

Bristol is home to two well respected universities. They enhance the city's reputation, bring jobs and money and are closely integrated with some of Bristol's key industries. Together, the universities have roughly 57,000 students who bring vitality and buzz to the city. During their stay in Bristol, the students have to live somewhere. Traditionally, this has been in halls of residence to begin with before students find flatshares, bedsits and other private accommodation in later years. More recently, firms such as Unite have spotted a business opportunity and have developed a range of rented student accommodation often in fairly large blocks housing several hundred students.

The pressure for developing student accommodation is reflected in the work of both the Planning Applications Group (PAG) and the Major Sites Group of the Bristol Civic Society. This has been particularly evident in the city centre where a number of office buildings have been converted to student accommodation or replaced by purpose built student housing. There is also growing pressure for student accommodation in the vicinity of the new Temple Quarter Enterprise Campus particularly in the St Philips area. Increasingly, the pressure is moving into inner city areas such as Stokes Croft, St Pauls, Old Market and Bedminster.

Purpose built student accommodation can have positive and negative impacts on their locations. Advantages include bringing life back to empty buildings and run down areas, releasing residential accommodation for use by the non-student community and providing direct and indirect employment opportunities. However, too much student accommodation in an area can unbalance the overall diversity of a community and take land needed for affordable and other residential development. Students are generally

at university for around 30 weeks a year which is not ideal for supporting shops and services. They only stay in an area for a relatively short period of time and are less likely to be interested in the longer term development of communities. Too much student accommodation can also make it more difficult for small businesses and other activities to find floorspace.

In 2011, when the Council adopted its current planning Core Strategy, no one foresaw that the student population of the University of Bristol would increase so much. To prevent hollowing out areas of family housing by conversion to houses in multiple student accommodation the 2011 policy supported new student accommodation 'unless it would lead to a harmful concentration of this use.' The University of Bristol has allowed the market to provide the accommodation for its increasing population. A consequence has been that once commercial student accommodation providers had used up the supply of obsolescent office blocks in the central area, their business model enabled them to outbid ordinary residential developers for potential development sites. It is in no one's interest to allow



Above left, Bristol Civic Society was broadly supportive of schemes aiming to bring vacant office blocks back into use. Above right, Brunel House. Former Council offices converted to student accommodation. Broadly supported by the Society.

the creation of areas with a student accommodation monoculture which fails to balance the city's other needs for new homes and viable retail and employment space. This situation could not continue. The University of Bristol has agreed to coordinate its expansion in cooperation with the Council. The Local Plan Review proposes two new planning policies. To spread student accommodation from the current concentrations in districts BS1 and BS2, specific areas are identified

We will object to tall buildings in inappropriate locations and other proposals which would be overbearing in their locality.

for new student accommodation in Temple Quarter, St. Philip's Marsh and Bedminster. Policy will also require commercial student accommodation providers to include new homes in developments that exceed 100 student bed spaces.

Bristol Civic Society broadly supports the direction of travel of this area of policy development. However, it will continue to scrutinise the impact of specific proposals. We will seek a high quality of design which would allow for student accommodation to be converted to standard residential use if the demand for student housing were to decline. We will object to tall



buildings in inappropriate locations and other proposals which would be overbearing in their locality. It is also important that the Council's aims of maintaining mixed and balanced communities with a variety of floorspace uses are upheld and the Society will seek to ensure that these aspirations are implemented.

More specifically, the following examples of the Society's interventions illustrate how we have responded to some of the proposals. We were broadly supportive of schemes aiming to bring vacant office blocks back into use or redevelop tired or rundown buildings in the Rupert Street/Nelson Street area and which contributed to the regeneration of this area. Examples include the Courtrooms, Fromegate House and the New Bridewell student accommodation.

The Society is also encouraged by the latest proposals for the former BRI building at the junction of Marlborough Street and Lower Maudlin Street (See page 13). We objected to a nearby proposal to shoehorn another block of student accommodation into the Marlborough House student block where Marlborough Street joins with Dighton Street. This would have overdeveloped the site and been harmful to living conditions in the present building. It has been refused.

The Society is particularly concerned about proposals in the Stokes Croft/St Pauls area which we feel would

cumulatively unbalance the local community, hamper its development and diminish the supply of employment generating floorspace.

In particular, we have objected to the student element of the proposals for the former Siddhu Warehouse in Surrey Street/Portland Square and the site incorporating the Blue Mountain Club in Stokes Croft.

There is also pressure for inappropriate student accommodation in the Old Market/Midland Road area where we support the local Community Association's desire to promote rather than hinder community development.

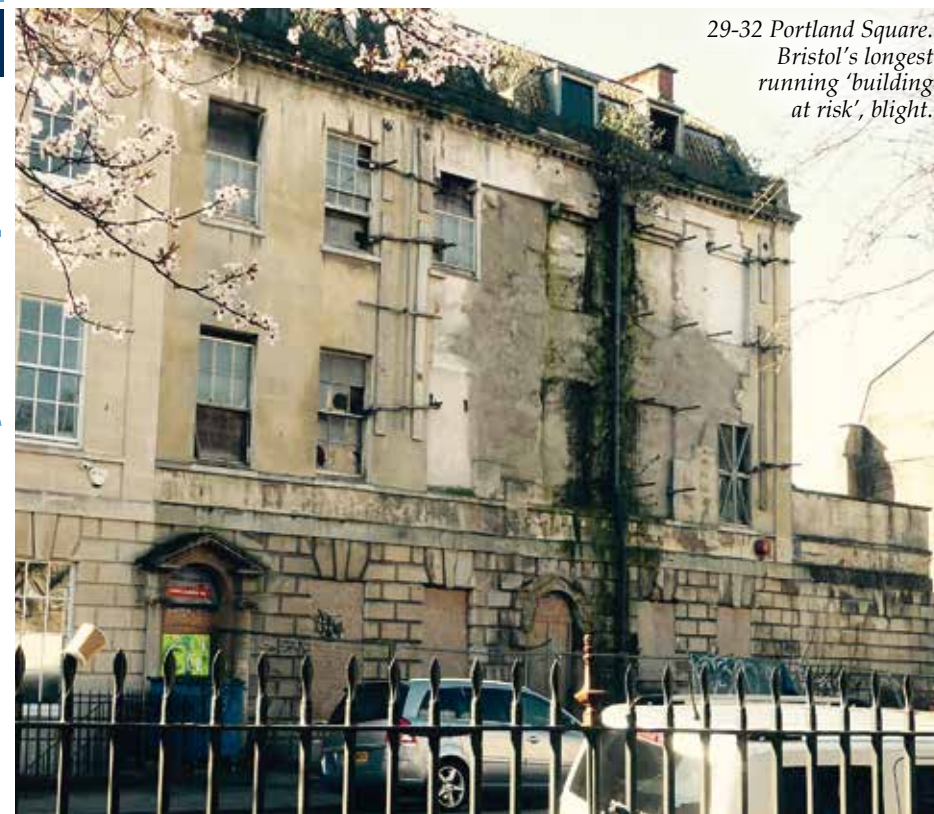
Whilst there is some logic in locating student accommodation close to the new Temple Quarter university precinct, the Society is campaigning to prevent development which could prejudice the redevelopment of the St Philip's Marsh area before the policy framework is produced. We are also keen to avoid an overly tall benchmark for student accommodation in the area being established.

Bristol Civic Society will continue to keep a watchful eye on specialist student accommodation proposals. The pressure shows no sign of easing and it is important that it is carefully managed to secure the potential benefits while minimising harmful impacts.



Marlborough House. Additional student accommodation has been refused. The Society objected to the proposal.

Major Developments



29-32 Portland Square.
Bristol's longest
running 'building
at risk', blight.

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

BRI Marlborough new multi-storey car park.

(See Better Bristol Issue 14.)

Permission was refused to University Hospitals Bristol for a new 820-place car park. The Society opposed the application because the scheme would fail to deliver the public benefits that the Trust claimed and further overload the local roads which are at a standstill for substantial periods every day.

Western Harbourside (land around the Cumberland Basin).

In the Spring I wrote that Arup would outline the options to replace the elevated Brunel Way. Three options have now been identified and are out for public consultation. More next issue.

29 - 32 Portland Square.

(See Better Bristol Issue 14.)

This terrace of four houses has been Bristol's longest running 'building at risk', blight. The Society opposes the revised proposal to substitute student accommodation for the permitted residential scheme. Meanwhile the buildings remain at risk.

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easternmost development area will be purpose-build student accommodation of about 750 bedspaces. The next development area will be a new Oasis Academy, a 1,600-place secondary school to serve central and eastern Bristol. The third development area will deliver about 400 new homes. The site nearest Marsh Bridge will be employment space taken by Bristol University. The scheme will realise the Council's aspiration to make a new canal side promenade. The Society supports the proposal. Bristol Civic Society's full response, concerns and suggestions are on our website.

Former Avon Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters Temple Back.

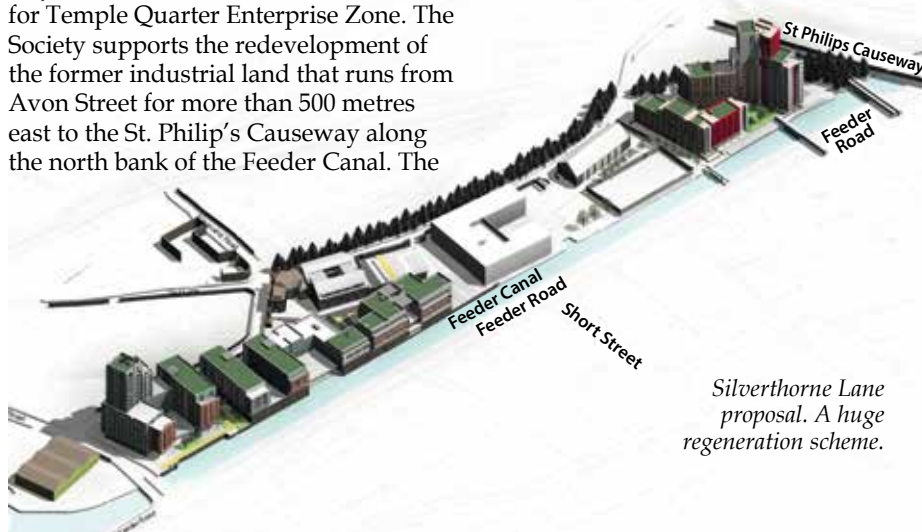
Cubex, the developers of Finzel's Reach, seek permission to redevelop the former Fire Service HQ building. The scheme would mix offices with over 300 new flats and include a 16-storey building on corner of Counterslip and Temple Back. The residential building adopts a communal living approach that devotes 10% of space to communal use; a new form of housing in the city centre. The Society supports redevelopment but not the 16-storey tower which would rise from the back of the pavement without any set-back. This closely built up area would feel oppressive at street level, draw attention away from the Grade II* listed Generator House on the opposite side of Counterslip and obstruct the light to the Templebridge House flats on the north side of Temple Back. The scheme's ambitious density could compromise the quality of the future residents' amenities. The Society has urged the Council not to permit the offer of communal space to compromise the need for all the flats to satisfy the space standards policy. Planning decision pending.

Temple Meads and St. Philips Marsh.

In the spring issue I reported that the Council instructed Mott MacDonald, planning consultants, to coordinate proposals to redevelop the massive area of St. Philip's Marsh. Plans to redevelop Temple Meads Station also appear to progress but there is no published information.

Silverthorne Lane St. Philips.

This huge regeneration scheme is a major investment in the Council's vision for Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone. The Society supports the redevelopment of the former industrial land that runs from Avon Street for more than 500 metres east to the St. Philip's Causeway along the north bank of the Feeder Canal. The



Silverthorne Lane
proposal. A huge
regeneration scheme.

in Bristol

Former Esso Garage Bath Road Totterdown.

There is planning permission to build 152 new dwellings in four buildings comprising a 15-storey tower, two central blocks of 6 and 7-storeys and a 3-storey eastern block. The Society welcomed the regeneration of this site which is a long-standing negative feature in the Bath Road. The central and eastern blocks demonstrate the potential for densification. We objected to the "Totterdown tower" which at 65 metres, would break the skyline of the escarpment, a valuable landscape asset, and dominate the domestically scaled Bath Road. Whatever you think of the

tower's architectural quality, it fails to satisfy the Council's Urban Planning guide. A critical factor will be the ability of families on low incomes to afford the high service charges. The scheme will have a minimum of 30 affordable homes and house about 45 children. There is no children's play area.



345 Bath Road.

This site is next to the Majestic Wine Warehouse on the Bath Road. The Society supports Galliford Try's proposal to build on this formerly developed land. The scheme would deliver a perimeter block of about 130 new homes around a green central courtyard. The fall of the land enables the courtyard to be built on a deck above a basement car park which

works well. This is a prominent site that merits a building with innovative architecture. We suggest architectural features to define the profiles of the three blocks. The fenestration does not create any hierarchy between the floors. There is much to support in the scheme such as the green edge to the Bath Road, a new pavement in a green corridor to the west, set-back from the road and greening other areas.



Former Central
Fire Station.

7 Redcross Street.

The Society welcomes the construction of more city centre homes but regrets that we cannot support this scheme to build 64 flats. The proposal would demolish the crude 1970 red spar faced building. The new Redcross Street façade would consist of two new wings in a contemporary recreation of a Georgian terrace to flank the retained five bays of the grade II listed façade. The truncated

terrace once spanned the site. However, the scheme would erect a 9-storey building on the western boundary of St. Matthias Park. The new block would shadow the park throughout the year. The harmful impact of the 9-storey building on the park and its dominance over the recreated terrace would outweigh the planning gain of a new 'Georgian' terrace.

STOP PRESS: Scheme withdrawn.

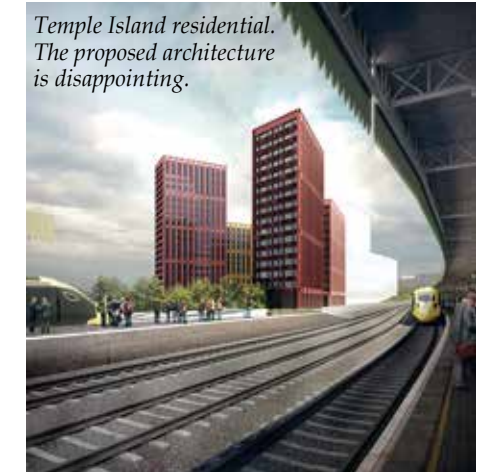
These are the edited highlights of some of the city's development activity. It is critical for the Society to meet developers of large projects early in the design process. MSG tends to concentrate on city centre

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

Above, Bath Road former filling station. Below left, The Totterdown Tower fails to satisfy the Council's Urban Planning guide.

Bristol University - New Campus Temple Island student accommodation.

An outline planning permission determines the mass and height of the buildings of the new Temple Meads campus. The University has published the design for its student accommodation on Temple Island. The Society has consistently supported the new campus and from the outset said that the campus should be distinguished by buildings as recognisably 'Bristol' as the Wills Memorial Building. The proposed architecture is disappointing. These 'anywhere' commercial structures do not indicate that they are part of an exciting future campus. There is no better place in Bristol for a contemporary landmark building. The University has an unconstrained opportunity to use modern architecture and materials. The purpose of the new campus is to signal that Bristol University is at the forefront of the development of new technology, design and sustainability. Temple Meads Station is an example of how 19th century Bristol used new materials and architecture to signal the arrival of new technology and ideas.



Temple Island residential.
The proposed architecture
is disappointing.

Society's full responses.

The Major Sites Group (MSG) meets every six weeks. The Group needs new members. Please contact johnfrenkel5@gmail.com.

www.bristolcivicsociety.org.uk

Bristol Civic Society Design Awards 2019

Andy Reynolds, Craig O'Brien, Katharine Hegarty, Simon Birch.

Always a highlight of the Society's year, the Design Awards presentation event surpassed expectations when it was held in early June. The venue, St George's, was superb, with the bar open

from early evening for drinks and as a base for visitors to explore the entire complex, both old and new. A large crowd took this opportunity prior to the Awards ceremony itself, which was compered by architectural historian, and

Society member, Jonathan Foyle.

Four winning projects were selected by the Awards Panel from a very competitive field. Project developers and their design teams were invited to make short illustrated presentations introducing each scheme.

Bristol Old Vic Architects: Haworth Tomkins

Surely one of Bristol's gems if not its crowning glory! The Old Vic was built in 1766 and is close to the heart of most Bristolians. The Panel considered that "the refurbishment and extension of this Grade 1 listed building would always have been a challenging commission for any architect but Haworth Tomkins have pulled it off beautifully".

Replacing the previous side extension, which was only built in 1972, the designers have created a light and airy foyer area which also complements and blends with the now exposed original building. It houses a new studio theatre as well as delivering a café / restaurant



Bristol Old Vic. Refurbishment and extension. Photo, Philip Vile.

area. The new timber frame structure combines with a glazed façade and roof to contrast with but also complement the existing building.



Paintworks - Phase 3 Architects: Stride Treglown

Over the past 15 years the Paintworks regeneration project has gradually transformed a former Victorian paint and varnish factory next to the river Avon into a new, vibrant, mixed-use district.

Ashley Nicholson gave a lively overview of the scheme describing how Phase 3 is the latest part to be completed and is a mixed-use, new build project. Over 200 residential and live/work units have been developed while Verve Properties (who were responsible for the earlier phases and continue to manage the whole site) have built offices and event spaces.

Architects Stride Treglown placed the entire development on a podium with a series of taller, apartment blocks along the northern edge, providing views over the river. A network of pedestrianised streets, alleyways, public plazas and courtyards provide access to the buildings while car parking is hidden away underneath. Vibrant colour, robust, industrial materials and other design cues have been brought across from the earlier phases and street furniture encourages residents to meet their neighbours and build the community.

The Panel considered that Paintworks 3 provides an excellent blueprint for how we want urban developments to be - people focussed, well connected and where the community can live, work and play together.

Left, Paintworks. An excellent blueprint for how we want urban developments to be. Photo, Evoke Pictures.



Challender Court Project. Part of a city wide initiative to deliver more Council houses. Photo, Craig Aukland, Fotohaus.

Peverell Court, Challender Court and Suffolk Close Architects: Emmett Russell

A double act by Martyn Pursey, from Bristol City Council, and Tom Russell of Emmett Russell Architects described how three infill sites in north Bristol have been transformed from disused garages to new, high-quality apartments and bungalows. This is part of a city wide initiative to deliver more Council houses.

There are a number of architectural solutions that are common between the three sites which the Panel acknowledged as unique and identifiable, and therefore this blue plaque has been jointly awarded for the three sites. In fact, three separate plaques were ordered, one for each building!

The placement and design of the buildings was a key challenge to avoid overlooking neighbouring properties. The solution includes metal screening which allows light to the first-floor flats whilst minimising views into neighbouring gardens. Each site provides sustainable urban drainage solutions which positively influence its landscape character. The residents access their entrances across footbridges which sit above the overflow beds.

Each of the three buildings uses simple well executed detailing with a limited palette of materials consisting of: variegated brickwork, slate roof tiles, powder coated aluminium, block paving and timber fencing.

The Panel considered that "these three schemes not only deliver high-quality council housing in Bristol, but they raise the bar for more design-led council housing schemes in the future".

Right, St George's Bristol, stunning new extension. Photo, Evan Dawson.



Suzanne Rolt, Chief Executive of St George's and team accept their award from Jonathan Foyle.

St George's Bristol Architects: Patel Taylor

Suzanne Rolt, Chief Executive of St George's, explained that St George's Bristol is one of the country's leading concert halls, a music venue of international note, boasting a superb acoustic and unique atmosphere which attracts the world's best artists. Suzanne is delighted that it now has a high quality new extension to match this success.

Change was essential to provide additional accommodation, improve circulation and create a fully accessible venue. There is now a stunning pavilion-style extension, with exhibition and performance spaces, and Café Bar, located on a tight site to the side of the existing building and set back from the main façade facing Great George Street.

Architect George Ferrari, of Architects: Patel Taylor, gave a fascinating insight into the design approach which he and his team adopted. This delivered superbly with the Panel very impressed by the design quality of the new extension, unashamedly modern, yet working harmoniously with the Greek Revival church of Robert Smirke. Both externally and internally the new extension works superbly and delivers on its brief.

Closing the event Jonathan Foyle commented on the very high quality of the award-winning schemes, their geographical spread and their contribution to the lively character of the City. He thanked St George's for their exemplary hospitality in hosting the Awards.





A chaotic situation on the roads.

School streets coming to Bristol

Kate Highton explains how 'school streets' aim to encourage active travel, improve air quality and decrease congestion around schools.

It's rare to meet a parent or carer with primary school aged children who doesn't relate to the stressful nature of the school run.

Getting children up, fed and dressed, finding the correct P.E. kit, trip letter, snack etc. before running the gauntlet of crowds of parents, children and traffic to reach school on time can feel like a major achievement. A three form entry primary school needs to get 610 children and their accompanying adults through the gates before 9.00am. That is quite a feat and no surprise that school gates become congested and stressful.

As traffic danger on our roads has increased, children's independence has been restricted. Children of the 1950s were allowed freedom from adult supervision that modern children can only dream of and most would have made their way independently to and from school. The general consensus from modern parents and schools is

that children in Year 4 and younger need to be accompanied to and from school and the biggest concern cited by parents is road danger. This leaves many working parents or those who live far from school tied to driving their children to and from school.

The situation in Bristol is exacerbated by a lack of affordable public transport. The inevitable result is a chaotic situation on the roads and at the school gates. Rushed parents hover close to the school entrance to let children out of their cars. Others fail to notice measures designed to protect children such as the yellow zigzags. In an effort to indicate that they are only stopping briefly many leave their engines running increasing air pollution.

But it doesn't have to be this way. In Switzerland school places are allocated by the safest route to school and children are expected to travel independently. In Britain councils are waking up to the economic and health value of car-free space. Councils up and down the country are taking action by

implementing temporary road closures around schools at pick-up and drop-off time. First trialled in Edinburgh and now running in Hackney, Glasgow, Solihull and many other London boroughs, these 'school streets' aim to encourage active travel, improve air quality and decrease congestion around schools. In most enforced 'school street' zones residents, blue badge holders, local businesses and buses can apply for exemption and still drive through. Local residents welcome the measure as they are often negatively impacted by school run traffic. Parents who need to drive are still able to do so but will not be able to drive right up to the gates.

Bristol City Council are planning to set up their own pilot scheme next year as part of their efforts to decrease children's exposure to polluted air. Though at most Bristol schools where measuring took place, NO2 levels were below legal limits, these monitors record a 24 hour average. Readings over a 12 hour (daytime) period were up to 40% higher and are likely to be higher still at drop-off and pick-up time.

Parents and teachers are confident that reducing traffic outside schools will create a healthier and calmer start to the school day that will benefit the whole community.

Kate Highton is a parent and doctor who is part of the School Streets Bristol campaign group. You can join the school streets email list by emailing schoolstreetsbristol@gmail.com or following them on Facebook.

The survival of the Old Building of the Bristol Royal Infirmary

John Frenkel outlines the protracted process that has ensured the restoration and reuse of this landmark building

The BRI Old Building in Marlborough Street, the one on the south of the Street with 'Charity Universal' above the door, is a landmark building with a remarkable history.

It was a Georgian foundation hospital, the fourth charity hospital to open in Britain in the eighteenth century. Despite unsightly later additions, the disfigured eighteenth century façade and forecourt remain distinguished. The prospect of demolition produced a huge public reaction; the Old Building is a source of civic pride.

This story begins when the University Hospitals Bristol Trust decided to sell the Old Building because it was no longer fit for clinical purposes. Unite Students, the student accommodation provider, bought the building. In 2015 scheme one appeared. Unite proposed to keep the Old Building, convert the upper floors into its headquarters, adapt the basement and ground floor into a small medical teaching unit, clear the site to the south to build student accommodation, office and retail space. The new building included a 20-storey tower to house the 742 students that Unite said were necessary to make the scheme commercially viable. In September 2016, a Council planning committee refused planning permission.

The principal reasons were the impact on the Grade I Listed St James's Priory and the surrounding Grade II assets; the loss of Locally Listed buildings and poor-quality design. Unite appealed the refusal. In 2017, scheme two appeared which proposed to demolish the Old Building and replace it with an 'anywhere' student accommodation block. The Old Building had no statutory protection against demolition, it was not listed, local listing gives no protection against demolition, and it was outside the St. James Parade Conservation Area. Historic England had advised on three occasions against national listing of the



The disfigured eighteenth century façade of the Bristol Infirmary.

Old Building because their inspector said that too much of the original fabric had been lost. Unite then applied for permission to demolish.

Following a further application, by a Redcliffe resident, Historic England recommended that the former hospital chapel be listed Grade II. S.C. Fripp, a notable nineteenth century Bristol architect, designed the little-altered chapel in the Gothic Revival style in polychromatic materials. Listing stopped the demolition. Unite made a second appeal because the process to list the chapel and Unite's appeal against the Listing, delayed the planning decision. The planning committee confirmed that it would have refused the second application.

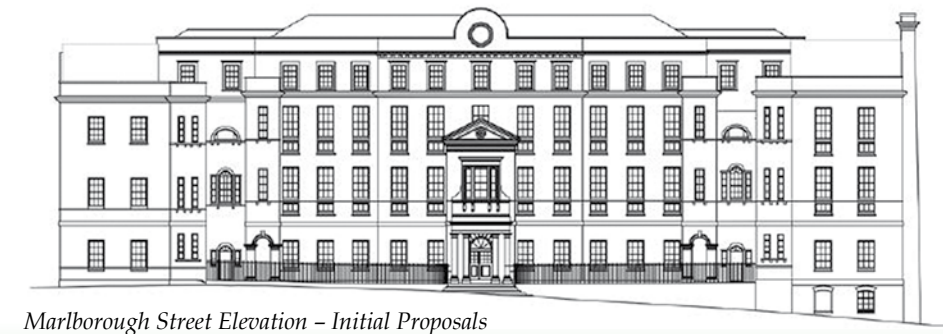
After confirmation that the chapel's Listing was secure, the Council extended the conservation area to include the Old Building. Unite withdrew their appeals and a long silence followed.

In 2019, came scheme three. Unite had changed architects to Alec French who presented a proposal to convert and

reuse the Old Building into 62 flats. The remainder of the site would house around 400 students with some street level retail. The proposal would restore the façade of the Old Building. The unsightly later extensions and

drainpipes would go as part of the restoration. The height of the new buildings would be compatible with the surrounding listed buildings. Although not all the details are published Bristol Civic Society said it supports the direction of travel. The Society has met the developers and architects and made detailed responses throughout the drawn-out process. At the outset we said that there was too much student accommodation which should be mixed with new flats to contribute to the city centre housing stock.

We believe that in this final form of development will be successful for Unite. It is a pleasure to acknowledge the efforts of council officers whose determination and initiative will result in the restoration and reuse of this landmark building.



Marlborough Street Elevation - Initial Proposals

The secret fields of Narrowways

Narrowways is an oasis in the city. Harry McPhillimy explains its origins and the on-going battle to preserve this Local Green Space - just a 10 minute walk from IKEA.

This was once a place of raw red scars carved by Victorian navvies through a little hill on the edge of the Purdown ridge. It expanded the urban despoliation beyond Baptist Mills, but enabled the routes for the cutting edge steam technology of the time - the railways.

Those scars healed over the years, wild flowers and trees seeded, and eventually wildlife crept back. As the houses and roads, brick pits and factories pressed all around, the scarred hill became a sanctuary; a green space in the grey.

The early history of the St Werburghs area is little known. A Roman grave was found in nearby brick workings. A medieval treaty allowed the friars and communality of Bristol to share the precious water supply of the nearby Boiling Wells. The area is Ashley, previously Asselega. The name comes from the old English 'aesc', an ash tree and 'leah', a wood. To this day, the



A volunteer cuts a meadow.

moist, but well drained fertile alkaline soils of the area sustain hundreds of ash trees, creating a leafy corner in the inner city.

The land was in the hands of religious orders, then wealthy individuals. Sir John Greville Smyth was one of the landowners whose land was purchased for the Great Western and Midland railways. The engineer Charles Richardson described the extraordinary lengths he went to in the construction of embankments and cuttings in the area, creating firm foundations and avoiding landslips that could have dammed up nearby streams and unleashed a deluge on the city of Bristol.

The steam trains headed to Avonmouth and Wales, to Kingswood and London, smoking and sparking and likely triggering fires that, along with teams of railway maintenance workers, and local scavenging for fuel, prevented the woodland regenerating for a long time. Arthur Salmon described how in the late nineteenth century the slopes became covered in grass and "boys, in spite of all prohibitions, loved to scramble around them. Sometimes in summer the grass is fired and the green crumbled away before a low red flame...for a long time after there are great black patches; but the grass grows better for it in the end"

The 'artisan district' of St Werburghs grew up around the hill, once the church was moved there from Corn Street in 1879. The church struggled, however, to maintain its influence on this impoverished, periodically flooded district. Working class men gravitated to the hill for their wilder escapades - prize fighting and cock fighting. Dog fighting was also once in vogue - Bull terriers were matched for weight, and on a Sunday morning a circle marked out and a line drawn across which they fought



The 'artisan district' of St Werburghs grew up around the hill.

until one dog was seriously injured. Police would raid the illegal gambling activities that also took place on the hill. Courting couples also used the footpaths around Narrowways to go walking together and one such stroll ended in a savage murder by one Ted Palmer of his fiancé Ada James in 1913 on the footbridge over the Severn Beach line.

But civilising forces were also at work - animal welfare agencies put paid to the dog and cock fighting, Narrowways was considered in the 1880s as a potential new park to serve, in particular, the burgeoning population of Eastville but the better located Eastville Park was constructed instead.

Narrowways became a forgotten place by the mid 20th Century. One former resident, Jan Keats, knew them as 'the secret fields'. The railways declined, the Midland railway closed altogether. These years allowed, at last, the ecosystem of Narrowways to start to recover. From a handful of trees an Ash and Sycamore wood grew. The meadow grasslands blossomed and sustained a myriad of butterflies, slow worms and other hidden creatures. Hidden behind railway fences few knew of this little five-acre Eden.

In the early 1980s British Rail tried to win approval for a couple of three storey blocks on the former Wren allotment site (now the Community Gardens) but local opposition prevented it and instead BR offered the pioneers of St Werburghs City Farm the

chance to lease the gardens and all of the Narrowways land. The first wildlife surveys were done and amazing meadows explored. Marbled White butterflies! slow worms and lizards! Bats flitted around the ash trees in the evening. The value of this green corner was at last being recognised.

Another far more substantial threat to Narrowways came in 1989 - the Advanced Transport for Avon Metro scheme chose Narrowways as the place to store all their materials, equipment and vehicles if they got the go-ahead for their project. Although a metro for the Bristol area has always been a worthy aim, this privatised project fell

apart when the compulsory purchase land development aspect was revealed. Narrowways remained a haven.

We were ready for the next threat to Narrowways. A group formed, Narrowways Action Group (NAG) when we got wind of British Rail's intention to auction off the land to the highest bidder. We had seen the destruction wrought upon nearby Royate Hill by the opportunist landfill firm that had bought it. A well-organised campaign of publicity and petitioning culminated in a huge demonstration of up to 800 people on 9th February 1997 demanding Narrowways be kept as open space. Bristol City Council entered into negotiations with British



Energetic local volunteers have planted hedges and trees, erected nest boxes, repaired fences, strimmed and scythed meadows.

Rail who at first demanded the council take responsibility for Mina Road tunnel as well.

Local people raised thousands of pounds and a deal was struck. The council bought Narrowways and leased it back to a locally run trust as a Millennium Green with a lease for 999 years! Enough money was secured to create fences around the site, with simple post and rail fencing to protect the skyline view. We were also able to commission sculptor Julian P Warren to create a cast iron bench with little creatures sculpted in and Landmark created our signature marker posts, information boards and Marbled White logo.

We have spent the past thirty years single-mindedly persuading people that Narrowways is not a vacuum, a piece of waste ground, a mound, to be filled with buildings or industry, motorbike scrambling, all night raves and rubbish.

Energetic local volunteers have planted hedges and trees, erected nest boxes, repaired fences, strimmed and scythed meadows for hay to protect the meadow flowers, recorded butterflies and birds, led wildlife walks and guided dawn chorus outings. Litter is removed, tagging painted over, grass fires put out, and brambles cut back. And cut back again. And again. Another local sculptor, Kevin Hughes created a wonderful cast iron signpost for the cutting. Local Wildlife Presenter Steve England champions the site.

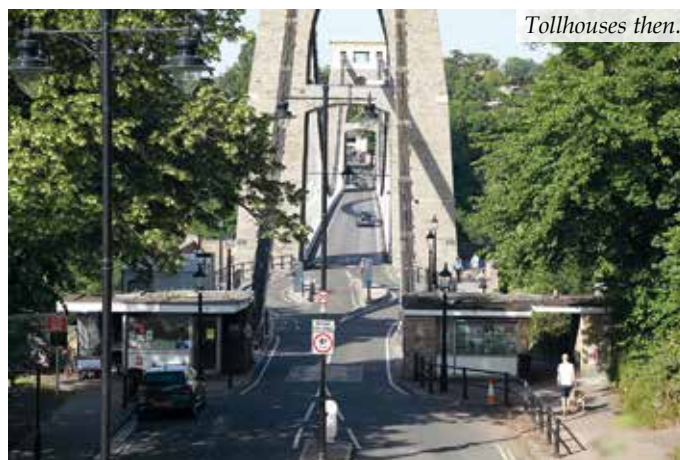
Narrowways is the most biodiverse patch of land in this corner of Bristol, at a time when our air quality continues to deteriorate, insect populations are disappearing and people desperately need accessible green space for their health and even their sanity. Doubly protected as a Millennium Green and, since last year, as a Local Nature Reserve it is now also to be zoned as 'Local Green Space' on the Bristol Local Plan, the highest value of urban green space. Its real value to wildlife and local people will only continue to increase.

The beautiful Marbled White butterfly.



Destruction and renewal – one and the same . . . ?

Gordon Young had ‘access all areas’ to film the demolition and reconstruction of the Clifton Suspension Bridge tollhouses. It got him thinking...



Tollhouses then.



Tollhouses now.

The Clifton Suspension Bridge tollhouses, built in the fifties and seventies, needed radical updating. They lacked empathy with the bridge; it was time to replace them with modern, more efficient structures.

Workshops and consultations stimulated discussion: a pastiche treatment of the original tollhouses was rejected. What was required was a contemporary, functional design, sympathetic to the scale and structure of Brunel's adjacent bridge towers. Conservation architecture specialists, Purcell, designed buildings which would subtly venerate their noble neighbours.

As a volunteer tour-guide at the bridge and an amateur filmmaker, the Bridgmaster granted me “access all areas” to film demolition and reconstruction. I am gifting the footage to the bridge's archive.

Last January, as I filmed the excavator scraping down to the foundations of the original Clifton tollhouse beneath its 1958 replacement, it set me thinking.

In Roman times, Athens jealously guarded the ship of Theseus – they believed it had brought back the mythological hero from Crete after he defeated the half-man, half-bull Minotaur. As the ancient planks slowly deteriorated, new wood replaced old. The Roman essayist Plutarch informs

us that the ship “became a standing illustration for the philosophers in the raised question of growth, some declaring it remained the same, others that it was not the same vessel”. The visible, tangible ship always changes, and its planks are continually replaced, but it nevertheless remains the same, since if every new plank is essentially the same as the old one, the intangible wholeness is not actually altered.

This is the paradox of conservation according to the ancient tradition in Japan – Ise Grand Shrine in Mie

The new tollhouses play their part in this renewal process: modern replacing old.

Prefecture, the most sacred Shinto shrine in the country, has been routinely demolished and rebuilt every twenty years since the seventh century. Constantly new, yet ancient, Japan's oldest temple never goes over the age of twenty: the current one was built in 2013, the next will be built in 2033. This reflects the Shinto belief in the perpetual renewal of nature and man as well as a means to pass building techniques from one generation to the next. The rebuilding process is meaningful and transcends bricks-and-mortar antiquity.

Closer to home, the Scottish philosopher David Hume spoke of a brick church which fell into ruin and the parish rebuilt it in freestone and to a modern architectural style. Here,

neither the form nor the materials are the same, nor is there anything in common with the two buildings, save for their connection to the parishioners. But for Hume, this alone is enough to designate them as the same.

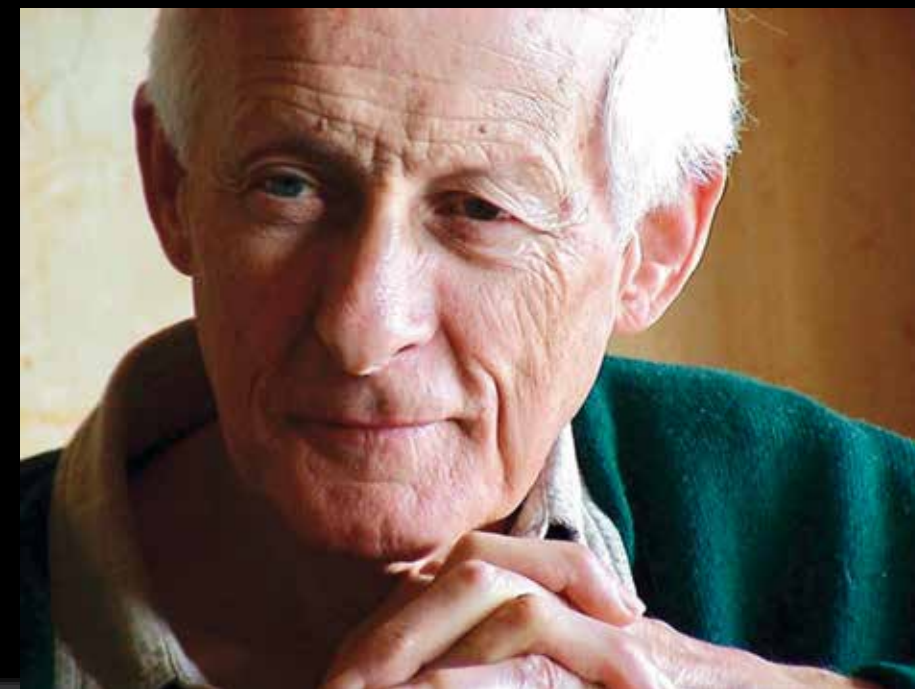
Returning to Plutarch, he wrote that what could be said of a building relates to an entire city: a continuous whole: it does not cease to be itself as it changes in growing older, nor become one thing after another with the lapse of time. It is always at one with its former self.

So, what do these philosophical reflections tell us about our suspension bridge and our city? Well, the bridge is Bristol's world icon and features as a backdrop every evening on local BBC and ITV news programmes. It spans the gorge physically just as it spans the collective psyche of generations of Bristolians. It connects opposites: an extremely densely-populated suburb with a spacious, leafy, affluent hamlet in a dramatic way: an awesome fusion of engineering and nature.

The soul of our city manifests itself through its visible form – the balance between permanence and change. The bridge, and Bristol, cannot remain static and stagnant. The new tollhouses play their part in this renewal process: modern replacing old, and they pay due deference in their subtle slanting form to the delicate entasis of Brunel's bridge towers.

Our city will continue to adapt and evolve, too. Plutarch and Hume would approve.

Obituary Craig Begg



The Society has learnt with sadness of the death of Craig Begg after a long illness.

Craig served the Society for many years on numerous campaigns and also as a long-standing member of the Executive Committee. Always working for the betterment of the City, Craig strove to encourage development befitting the City's heritage and topography and tirelessly opposed proposals which could have irreparably harmed Bristol's character. Bristol would not be the place it is today without the efforts of Craig and his contemporaries.

He was a key player in the Society's major campaigns of the 1970s to the chagrin of insensitive developers. Together with friends in the Society and others, Craig fought to save the Floating Harbour from being filled in by the Council for highway use, prevented the 320 feet Post Office Tower that would have loomed over King Street and stopped the hotel and multi-storey car park development threatening to wreck the Avon Gorge and the setting of the Clifton

Suspension Bridge. More recently, around the turn of the century, Craig was integral to the campaign securing the Council's rejection of a brutally insensitive scheme for the redevelopment of Canon's Marsh. He also helped to save the cranes near M-shed and promote the ferry services in the Floating Harbour.

No application was too small for his interest if he felt it was inappropriate. He organised many a meeting to discuss tactics. Often, these were in

No application was too small for his interest if he felt it was inappropriate.

his gracious house overlooking the Suspension Bridge where there was always a warm welcome from Craig and Kay.

Craig's experience as a lawyer was invaluable to the Society's Executive Committee. He provided succinct and well thought out legal advice. His was always a very balanced contribution to committee discussions.

Bristol and the Society have been beneficiaries of Craig's relentless and effective campaigning over much of his life. Those of us who knew and worked with him remember him with affection and we offer our sincerest condolences to Kay and his family.

Peter Floyd, past Chairman of Bristol Civic Society, adds:

Craig was at the heart of environmental action in Bristol from the 1970s to the 90s. He was a solicitor and partner at Lawrence Tucketts. Craig was Hon. Solicitor to Bristol Civic Society.

Once it became known that Bristol City Council was planning a road system that would destroy much of old Bristol the fight was on. Craig seldom appeared in the newspapers but was always there in legal support - sometimes very necessary, for example when the Council tried to obtain an Act of Parliament to fill in the City Docks and when a developer obtained permission to build a huge hotel in the Avon Gorge or when the s.s. Great Britain was brought back to Bristol and needed a berth and a charity in its support. He worked good humouredly and very professionally, at no charge, for years on Bristol Civic Society's behalf and on many other good causes, like the saving of the cranes and the reintroduction of the city docks ferry. He was a quiet hero in his work to help save Bristol's historic environment and without him much that we now treasure and take for granted would have been lost.

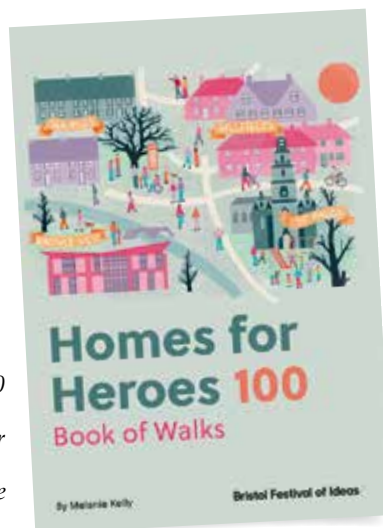
It is with great sadness that we have been informed of the death of John Sansom, publisher and friend of the Bristol Civic Society. A full appreciation will appear in the next edition of Better Bristol.

Festival of the Future City 2019

We face many current crises – political, economic, social. Set over three days, the festival aims to be the largest public debate about the future of cities, writes *Andrew Kelly*.

We face many problems. These range from the rise of populism and fears about democracy through practical, though critical, matters such as the future of work, housing and the good life, to the biggest problem of all, the Anthropocene and the sustainable places we need to build to meet the climate emergency. Cities can provide positive and long-lasting responses to these challenges.

As the world urbanises rapidly, we need to get cities right. Much of our work at Bristol Cultural Development Partnership over the last 25 years has been about the city and particularly Bristol – from the renewal of Bristol Harbourside and culture in the city to making the city easier to find and navigate with Legible City. Next year we celebrate the twentieth anniversary of our first project: *We The Curious*. It's also the fifteenth anniversary of Festival of Ideas and the twenty-fifth



Right, Homes for Heroes 100 Book of Walks and Homes for Heroes 100 Council Estate Memories.



anniversary of Encounters, the short film festival we started in 1995. The nineties were a remarkable period of transformation in Bristol and we're in a similar time now with, among other ventures, the Filton project and the new university campus at Temple Quarter.

Will these make Bristol 'right' and be a model for other cities? Will they build the communities they predict? Create jobs for local people? Create new spaces for public use? Have outstanding architecture? What will the long-term impact be?

We're looking at Bristol and the future of the city in our third Festival of the Future City (16-18 October 2019). Set over three days, the festival – which aims to be the largest public debate about the future of cities – brings together politicians, writers, artists, scientists, change-makers, academics, journalists, students, the public, economists, futurists, policy makers, roboticists, philosophers, filmmakers, think tanks, charities, social enterprises, city-builders and more. We're also working with Futur Ville – an initiative looking at gentrification in Bristol – which runs 18-19 October.

The festival aims to find solutions to some of the deep problems and challenges facing cities and regions, as well as celebrate cities and regions as places for living, working, learning and visiting. Current themes for the 2019 festival include: populism and cities dealing with the results of populism; cities, regions and towns; Brexit and cities; nature-rich cities; economics, productivity and cities; faith organisations and city futures; the media and cities; culture and cities; poverty, inequality and cities. We have many international partnerships in place with organisations in Lagos, Hargeisa, Chicago, Mannheim, Melbourne, Adelaide, Pittsburgh, Vienna, Istanbul and more. The British Council is our international partner.

2019 marks many anniversaries and we use these to look at the future. It's



As the world urbanises rapidly, we need to get cities right.

the 110th anniversary of the Burnham Plan for Chicago, one of the greatest city plans of all time. We examine big city thinking now: how to look decades ahead with the Future Commissioner for Wales (everywhere should have someone devoted to thinking about policy for the future); who the city belongs to – reviving the idea of the city as a commons; and the future of urban tolerance. We may think that cities are more tolerant places than elsewhere, but is this true and will it continue if so? It's a concern at the highest national levels and we have Sara Khan, who leads the Commission for Countering Extremism, speaking.

It's also a critical year for housing – especially council housing. When what became known as the Addison Act was passed in 1919 it meant that, over decades, millions of new homes could be built to house first the returning soldiers from the war and, later, generations of middle and working class people. Bristol has marked this year extensively with more to come. Building on activity in estates in Hillfields, Knowle West and Sea Mills, we've already published a comic-book style history of council housing in the city and two new publications will be given away in the festival. One contains walks from which to learn about the history of the three estates as well as looking at housing issues in St Pauls; the other is a collection

of specially commissioned essays about growing up in council housing. Our day of events on the future of council housing within the festival is 16 October.

New council estates were one radical act of 1919. There were others. As the First World War had only just ended, much of Europe was in turmoil. Out of this came one of the greatest artistic movements ever: the Bauhaus. 17 October is devoted to the impact of the Bauhaus on cities, not just then but also speculating now about how its approaches to life, work and art can help develop city futures today.

We're determined to address how to make cities and towns more responsible for their own futures. Devolution debates stalled as Brexit became the only political game in town. We need a new and deep devolution settlement which is about money and powers. Cities should be trusted to manage their own affairs, raise their own funding and spend this where it's needed. In one of the first events we ran on the future of cities, Michael Heseltine said we needed to demand the resources for our futures, parking our tanks in Downing Street.

This is not just for Bristol. If we are to rebalance the economy, make the most of the opportunities the whole country can offer, we need to make the UK less London-centric and more fair to towns and cities elsewhere.

We also have a project on Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 70 years old in 2019. It's a book that is as relevant today as when first published, covering as it does totalitarianism, fake news, the suppression of dissent and freedom, two-minute hate, Big Brother and surveillance, doublethink, social media spying, strong men in power where tyrannies rule. It's a guide for troubled times today. We'll be giving away copies at the festival and running panels and films.

Few would doubt the need for transformation. We face many current crises – political, economic, social. Will the UK survive? How do we make long-term social care work? What will automation do to cities? Is there a future for capitalism? There are also the older questions: about community building, living the good life in cities, being happy. In the year that marks the centenary of the council estate, perhaps the work we all do here can be as transformative as 1919 was for housing people, changing the lives of millions for the better.

Friday 18 October 2019. 2.30 - 3.45 pm

Building liveable neighbourhoods in Bristol.

Room 3, Watershed, 1 Canons Road, Harbourside, Bristol BS1 5TX.

Free. Jointly organised by Bristol Civic Society and UWE.



Looking at housing issues in St Pauls.

Bristol's performing arts scene and its venues

The performing arts enrich cultural life for citizens, encourage social cohesion and play a vital part in bringing visitors to the city and hence generation of economic and employment benefits to the local economy. *Nic Billane continues his survey of Bristol's creative industries.*

Research conducted by the VisitBritain organisation shows that 9% of all international visitors to the UK will go to the theatre for musicals, opera, ballet and other performances and 7% will experience a live music event. The presence of a lively performing arts scene pulls people into the city.

Over the last few years significant upgrades, structural improvements and capital spending have taken place in many of Bristol's performing arts venues which are now very visible and beneficial to the public. Notable and significant investment has taken place at The Bristol Old Vic, St George's



St George's Bristol. One of the UK's leading concert halls.



Cinderella, Tobacco Factory Theatre. Photo, Farrows-Creative.

(see pages 10-11) and Colston Hall. Each of these venues has national and international reputations, which should see further growth and consolidation as world-class venues, offering first class performances and cultural experiences. Other Bristol theatre and music venues worth mentioning include Bristol Hippodrome, O2 Academy, Tobacco Factory theatres, Redgrave Theatre, Alma Tavern, and Trinity Community Arts all of which offer local performing space for everything covering classical productions to popular entertainment.

Starting with the longest continuously running theatre (1766) in the English speaking world, the Bristol Old Vic on King Street has recently undergone a complete redevelopment of the historic Georgian auditorium, rehearsal spaces and back offices in 2012. September 2018 saw the completion of a two year multi-million-pound redevelopment project which transformed the front of house space, the creation of a new studio theatre which can accommodate more performances, and opened up its unique theatrical heritage to the public for the first

time. The old Grade 1 listed Coopers' Hall has been returned to its internal configuration of Georgian origin and now provides an extensive suite of public spaces for a multitude of uses. Currently, Bristol Old Vic employs 178 members of staff (mixture of full time and casual) and beyond the programme of work taking place on the stage, explores the ways in which a theatre and its partner organisations can bring people together from across the city, to assist in the development of creative talents via workshops discussion and performances. Critically the Old Vic presents a first rate and diverse mixture of productions to audiences across the far reaches of the South West of the country.

St George's Bristol is already one of the UK's leading concert halls, offering each year a programme of 100 plus inspiring classic concerts bringing world-class artists to Bristol; nurturing young talent; and providing audiences with standout music and spoken word experiences. St George's has completed its £6.3 million 'Building a Sound Future' project. The original 1823 Grade 2 Listed building has been lovingly restored refurbished and developed with an impressive pavilion-style extension. Originally designed by Sir Robert Smirke (British Museum/Royal Opera House) as a neo classical church, St George's has been a leading concert hall for more than 40 years and the home of many BBC concerts due to the excellent acoustics for unamplified

music. The bold new extension project designed by architects Patel Taylor has added a welcoming and contemporary place for people to experience music, do business or catch up with friends. St George's has approximately 20 full time staff and more than 100 volunteer stewards.

No coverage of Bristol's performance venues would be complete without mention of the perhaps soon to be re-named Colston Hall. The hall turned 150 years old in 2017 and is currently shut whilst undergoing a major and ambitious plan to transform and update the iconic building. Phase 2 of the redevelopment programme commenced in September 2018 and is planned to be completed in 2021. The £20million first stage involved the construction of foyer space. So far against a fund raising target of £48.4 million some £40 odd million has been raised thanks to commitments from Bristol City Council, HM Treasury, Arts Council England, West of England Combined Authority & the Heritage Lottery Fund. The goal is to build one of the best performance and music spaces in Europe, a modern, accessible, state-of-the-art venue that will attract the best artists and generate an extra £254 million for the Bristol economy.

Bristol's Hippodrome, on St Augustine's Parade is one of the country's top, family-friendly provincial theatres, with its capacity of 1951 seats over three tiers, the theatre proudly continues to stage major West End and Broadway productions such as Miss Saigon, and Les Miserables. The Bristol Hippodrome caters for all from musicals, ballet, opera (Welsh National Opera often in residence), concerts, and children's shows (watch out behind you!!). Opened on 16th December 1912, designed by Frank Matcham the theatre is designated by English Heritage as a Grade 2 listed building, and is firmly established in Bristol's culture whilst attracting audiences from South West, Wales and beyond.

Perhaps a notch off the scale of 'mainstream' the following individual organisations deserve a mention: in Southville, The Tobacco Factory Theatre; in Clifton, the Redgrave Theatre and the Alma Tavern; and in eastern Bristol Trinity Community Arts. The Tobacco Factory Theatre is housed in one of the last survivors from the vast Imperial Tobacco site. It was saved from demolition in the late 1990s by architect George Ferguson Bristol's former Mayor. Today the Tobacco Factory Theatre and Spielman Theatre are home to one of the most exciting performance venues in the country offering a wide



The Old Vic is the longest continuously running theatre in the English speaking world.

programme embracing comedy, opera through to Shakespeare. The thriving multi-purpose building houses a café, meeting spaces, and offices for creative organisations.

The Redgrave Theatre, built in 1966 on Percival Road and modelled on London's Mermaid Theatre, is Clifton College's purpose-built Theatre. Plays are performed by amateur groups as well as by the Old Vic Theatre School. Not far away is the Alma Tavern Theatre which opened in 1997 and claims the honour of being the oldest pub theatre in Bristol. Converted into a black box theatre with seating for 48, the intimate and versatile space has seen hundreds of productions and an eclectic mix of performances from touring theatre companies and amateur productions. The Trinity Community Arts centre claims to be the cultural hub for east Bristol. Housed in the old Trinity church, its mission is to empower communities through arts and make sure everyone has the opportunity to access and shape arts and culture in Bristol, through its offer of music, dance, theatre and performance art.

Bristol has many more places for live



Tobacco Factory. The thriving multi-purpose building houses a theatre, a café, meeting spaces, and offices for creative organisations.

music which I don't have the space to explore, from the large scale of the O2 Academy to summer outdoor concerts at Ashton Gate which in the summer months saw Rod Stewart, Take That and the Spice Girls take to the pitch. To the famous floating Thekla moored at Mud Dock (who remembers original owner Viv Stanshall of the Bonzo Dog Doo-Dah Band?). Perhaps in the future we might see the coming of a mega concert venue out at Filton for those who don't want to make the trek south once a year to the mud and occasional sunshine at Worthy Farm.

In conclusion Bristol is blessed with a lively, vibrant, varied, evolving and growing performing arts scene, something for everyone. We enjoy some splendid old venues some truly world class ones as well, our city is just about large enough to attract the best acts from around the world as well as giving space and opportunity to those performers perhaps on a start of a journey to fame. The broad canvas of performing arts, provide an invaluable stimulus to the life blood of the city not only improving people's lives, education and culture, but also as a driver for change. Arts in their

various guises greatly benefit the local and regional economy in the creation of employment and careers. Arts and music are always cited in the city's numerous awards and accolades; Bristol should rightly be proud of its hard-won reputation as creative capital of the south-west, which by no coincidence is also a reason for employers and citizens to move to, and stay in, the city.

www.bristolcivicsociety.org.uk

'From Brycgstow to Bristol in 45 bridges'

The Bristol Bridge Walk revisited

Jeff Lucas describes a mathematical puzzle that inspired a walk and a book.

The Bristol Bridges Walk is a route that takes you across all of Bristol's bridges that span its main waterways that are crossable by foot. But this walk is a very special one – it is the specifically 'Bristol solution' to an old mathematical puzzle called the 'Konigsberg Bridge Problem', which asks the question 'Is it possible to walk across a given set of bridges crossing each one only once?'. The question was first posed in the early 1700s about the seven elegant bridges in the centre of the Prussian city of Konigsberg (now called Kaliningrad). But no-one could figure out a way to do it.

In the 1730s the 'Konigsberg Bridge Problem' eventually reached the desk of the brilliant Swiss mathematician Leonhard Euler (pronounced 'oiler'). He was able to prove, by simple logical steps, that there was no solution to the problem for Konigsberg, given the number and disposition of its bridges. But his method also showed that solutions were possible to any bridge problem if the right number of bridges were in the right places.

So too bad for Konigsberg, but great for mathematics, because later mathematicians developed Euler's analysis into extremely powerful analytical tools: graph theory, network theory and Topology. Graph and network theory can be applied to any system which is composed of 'links' (eg bridges, family relations, neurons, roads etc) and 'nodes' (ie anything connected by those links such as an area of land,

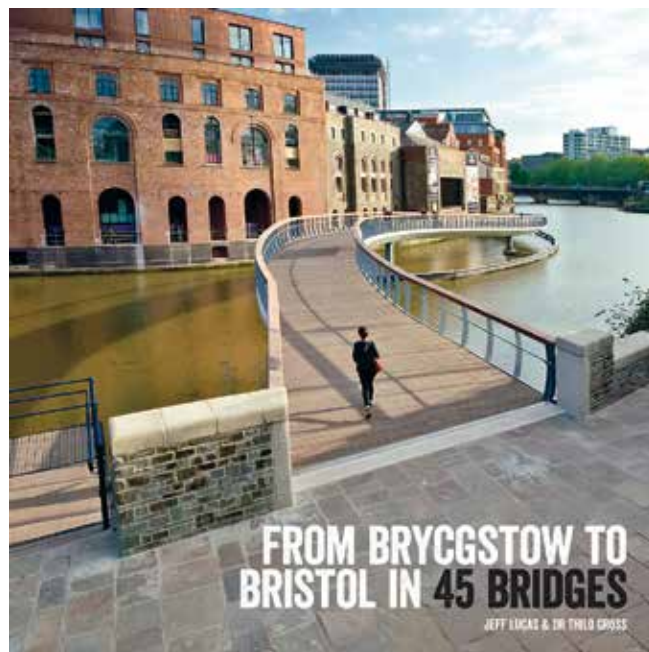
people, bacteria, or bus stations). The modern world would be very different without graph theory and network theory to help us understand it.

Thilo Gross, a mathematics lecturer at Bristol University, always starts his university lecture course on graph theory with the Konigsberg Bridge problem. About 6 years ago, after giving his 'Konigsberg lecture', one of his students asked him if Bristol had a bridge problem with a solution. Thilo thought this was an excellent question to which he had no answer, so he set to work. After several weeks of poring over maps and many miles of walking, he had identified all of Bristol's (then) 43 bridges that you could walk across. He also discovered, to his delight, that Bristol's bridge problem had a solution. He worked out the route and sent his quirky discovery to the Bristol Post, who published a short article about The Bristol Bridge Walk in February 2013.

In 2014, I entered the story. I spotted the Post article, and was intrigued by it. I interviewed Thilo, and with his



Above left, St Philip's Footbridge installed in 2018 to give access to Temple Island. Above right, Brock's Bridge installed in 2016 as a key route to the ill-fated Arena.



permission I designed a more detailed map and wrote an article on the walk for Better Bristol magazine which was published in Autumn 2014.

As I was writing the article, I realised that a history of all the bridges that comprise the walk would make the fascinating book which is now on sale, published by Bristol Books (a non-profit Community Interest Company) entitled 'From Brycgstow to Bristol in 45 Bridges'.

We normally pay little attention to the bridges in our city - they are just a



way of getting over an awkward bit of water. But they are of great economic, social and cultural significance. There are reasons why they are where they are, and why they look like they do, for better or for worse, and all tell us something about design, engineering, and the 1000 year history of Bristol. Some are sculptural works of art. One of the pleasures of writing the book was to discover so many aspects of Bristol's history and its people, even after 25 years of living in the city. In it, you will learn about, amongst other things: the great Bathurst Basin Naptha explosion of 1888, when Bathurst Basin became a sea of flame and every glass pane of the facade of the General Hospital was blown out; the mass gas workers' strike of 1889 when strike breakers were turned back on Marsh Bridge by a crowd of thousands; the Bristol Bridge massacre of 1793 when the militia shot dead 11 people; and you will also learn what links Sparke Evans Park with the National Park of Patagonia!

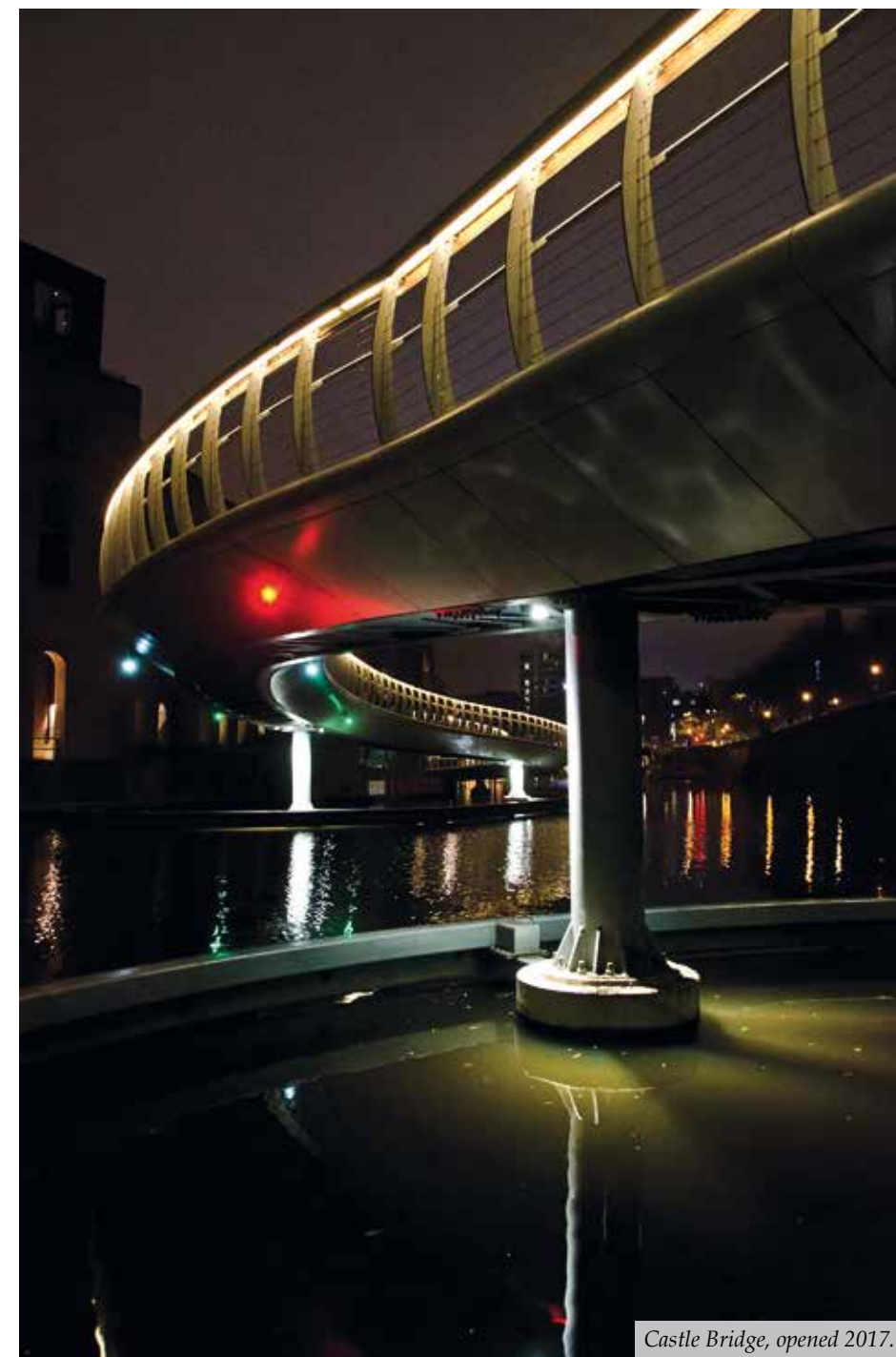
Since Thilo's original 2013 solution, Bristol has gained four new bridges. But we have now slightly tweaked the definition of what bridges to include in the walk/puzzle so that two very minor bridges in the Lower Trym Valley are no longer included. The net result is that there are now 45 bridges in the walk. In order that each bridge is crossed only once, the addition of the new bridges necessitates a completely different route to that of 2013. By a pleasing coincidence, you will cross 45 bridges in 45 km (28 miles). So more bridges than before, but fewer miles than before.

The four new bridges which have been built since 2013 are, in chronological order, Castle Bridge on the south side of Castle Park, a second Bathurst Basin road bridge (alongside the first), Brock's Bridge joining Temple Island to Cattle Market Road, and St Philips Footbridge a little way upstream from Brock's Bridge. Two of these are superb additions to the cityscape, two are not. Castle Bridge is part of the (ongoing) development of Finzel's Reach which takes in most of the buildings of the former George's brewery and Finzels sugar refinery. Its sinuous curves are an attractive well-thought-out addition to the waterfront. The second Bathurst Basin road bridge is just a bit of road - mere function - bland and un-noteworthy. Brock's Bridge, named after a prominent Victorian Bristol builder and entrepreneur, was intended as the main route into the now relocated Bristol Arena site. It is a dull off-the-peg standard bow bridge that demonstrates why it is unwise to have a bridge that slopes - it looks unstable

and ill-at-ease. A huge disappointment. Thankfully, St Philips Footbridge, completed this year, is a delight and one of the best we now have. Like Brock's Bridge, it was intended for pedestrian access to the Arena. Built on a very difficult site, it is novel and elegant, and a superb tribute to skilful design. It has justly won a structural engineering award. Sadly, its pristine white surfaces are already collecting graffiti, and I recommend you see it before it gets completely covered. It will be some time before the former Arena site is developed, and

until then Brock's Bridge and St Philips Footbridge will remain closed, although you can walk past them.

I hope our book will persuade you that, magnificent though the Clifton Suspension Bridge is, Bristol's other bridges also have a rich cultural and historical wealth that is well worth exploring. And you can get some exercise whilst you do it! When you have completed the walk, you can get a badge with the Bristol Bridges Walk Logo. The design is a representation of how the 'bridge problem' is solved for Bristol using 'graph' theory (the six dots are Bristol's six 'nodes').



Castle Bridge, opened 2017.

Jeff and Thilo's book can be ordered from the Bristol Books CIC website (£18 post free, hardback only). More information and free downloads to do the walk can be found in the Explore Bristol section of the Civic Society website.



The structure and form of the building is based upon the Dougong joinery technique.

The Confucius Institute and Culinary Arts Centre

Each year Bristol Civic Society presents an award for an outstanding piece of work by a graduating student from the Faculty of Environment and Technology at the University of the West of England. Here is the 2019 winning project by *Sam Willett*.

This year's project for architecture and planning degree involved creating a masterplan for a site, stretching from Temple Meads train station to the Mud Dock. This part of the historical centre played a vital and vibrant part in Bristol's industrial heritage but the character of this area changed as the shipping industry moved to Avonmouth and the road network developed in front of St Mary Redcliffe. This change of character created issues including lack of connectivity and activity driven by the dominance of the car and an absence of quality and engaging redevelopment.

In response to these issues, the masterplan aims to reconnect the city by extending the vibrancy and activity from the area surrounding the floating harbour to Temple Meads, one of the main gateways to the city. The intention

is to devise a more fitting, clear and welcoming entrance to the city by shifting the focus from vehicle priority to pedestrian and cycle priority. This will be accompanied by creating an engaging, human scale environment through mixed-use development with active frontages at ground level and affordable and family-sized residential units at upper levels.

Accompanying the masterplan we were tasked with creating a design proposal for a Confucius Institute along with a complementary secondary use of one's choice. The Confucius Institute is an education organisation affiliated with the Chinese government with

aims to promote Chinese language and culture and support Chinese teachings internationally.

In my proposal, the chosen secondary use was that of a culinary arts centre. The institute would have a significant public-focused programme, street food market and restaurant to celebrate the diverse range of Chinese cuisine. The market would bring vitality to this area, extending the vibrant bar and restaurant scene of the floating harbour. This will complement the educational programme of the institute that specialises in the Chinese culinary arts and provide a hub promoting Chinese culture and learning to the wider society.

In terms of the design of the institute, the building is constructed around a central public space in the form of stepped seating down to water level and lined at ground level with street food vendors, café and the main entrance. This space can be extended for events by infilling the Mud Dock with floating pontoons, creating a perfect performance space. The educational aspects of the institute are located on the first floor along with a striking bridge structure which spans the Mud Dock. Within this structure the restaurant is located, allowing a more formal experience of Chinese food culture while offering views across the floating harbour and to St Mary Redcliffe.

The overall structure and form of the building is based upon the Dougong joinery technique that consists of a series of interlocking timber elements that as the height of the stack increases so does the cantilever from the original point. This technique is used within Chinese temples at the columns as a way of supporting the deep overhanging eaves of the roof. This approach has been followed through to the overall design of the form of the building, with a stacking glulam (glued laminated timber) structure creating an exoskeleton which forms unique interior and exterior spaces.

The appearance of the institute makes the building a landmark in the way that the unusual form, created by the stacking glulam, differs from its surrounds, as well as referencing Chinese culture and heritage.



Creating an engaging, human scale environment through mixed-use development.

Behind the blue curtain

Graham Egarr writes about the creation of a blue plaque.

Brandon House on Jacob's Wells Road was the scene on 31 May 2019 for the unveiling by the Lord Mayor of a Civic Society blue plaque commemorating the site of the Jacob's Wells Theatre. Jacob's Wells Theatre was the first purpose-built playhouse in Bristol, operating from 1729 to 1799.

The idea for a plaque came from the Jacob's Wells Community Hub. Plaques are usually funded by descendants or organisations with professional connections. In this instance however, there being no such links, the Civic Society's Blue Plaque's



Bristol Old Vic Theatre School students sang an extract from *The Beggar's Opera*.

Panel sought help from local businesses. Acorn Property Group, currently developing the nearby Brandon Wharf on Harbourside, kindly agreed to fund the costs of manufacturing the plaque.

Agreeing accurate but succinct wording for plaques is a challenging task. Tom Morris, Artistic Director of the Old Vic and the Theatre Collection at the University of Bristol assisted. Technical issues had to be solved such as fixing the plaque and the method of unveiling. We settled on a pull-away blue cloth, secured with gaffer tape.

Plaque unveilings are often significant events and one celebrating a theatre deserved to be 'theatrical'. The Panel approached Bristol Old Vic Theatre School who agreed to help. Their students sang an extract from *The Beggar's Opera*, one of the plays performed at the theatre. A crowd of over seventy: local residents, theatre interest groups and members of the Civic Society then watched the Lord Mayor of Bristol, Councillor Jos Clark, carry out the unveiling.



The Lord Mayor, Councillor Jos Clark, unveiled the plaque.



Defoe the compleat Englishman

Crusoe 300 exhibition - Daniel Defoe's adventures in Bristol

Created to help celebrate the 300th Anniversary of Daniel Defoe's pioneering novel *Robinson Crusoe* - and its associations with Bristol - a free exhibition has been organised by the Long John Silver Trust charity with help from Bristol Libraries.

Defoe's mercurial life, and the ramifications of his novel (from Karl Marx to *Crusoe on Mars*), are examined in detail. Several books on display are over 300 years old and are presented with period artefacts from the Trust. These are complemented by nine panels of pictures and descriptions.

The Long John Silver Trust was founded in 2005 with the aim of making more of Bristol's maritime and literary associations. Bristol has bona fide connections with 18th-century sea captain Woodes Rogers, whose plight is generally believed to have inspired Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. His voyage not only brought back a Spanish treasure ship, but also rescued marooned Alexander Selkirk.

Crusoe 300, First floor of Bristol Central Library, College Green, until 30 September 2019.

Voices of Bristol - Gentrification and Us

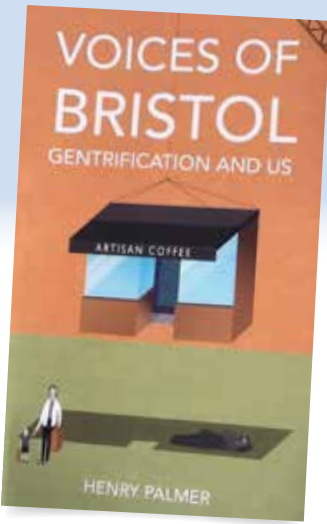
Henry Palmer
Arkbound, £5.99

This is a thought-provoking book. Henry Palmer was brought up in the Whitehall area of Bristol, one of the most deprived wards in the south-west. He experienced the rough and ready up bringing that youths in such areas face. He writes he ‘would get into fights, be beaten up, be robbed at the end of a gun barrel’. Yet when he left Bristol to study at the University of Kent he found the transition to white, middle-class student life challenging. He had the mickey taken out of him for his pirate Bristol accent and his liking of Spam.

He was glad to return to Bristol, but after three years of absence noticed things had changed. So called working class areas of Bristol were increasingly ‘up and coming’. Pubs in Easton had gone up-market. Greasy spoon cafes in Church Road, St George were offering gastro experiences, while sourdough bread was touted in Old Market. Previously shared houses were becoming single occupancy. Children didn’t play out on the streets any more.

What had happened? Big money developers were buying up land in the bohemian areas such as Stokes Croft. Although affordable housing is promised, numbers are never enough. Palmer cites the Carriage Works development (see previous *Better Bristols*) where only 10 out of 110 housing units are affordable. (The numbers are ever changing! Ed)

Housing shortages were making the middle classes move into new areas. The ‘Right to Buy’ has exacerbated matters. According to one source, 42% of council housing has gone to private landlords, who go on to rent out at two to three times what the market rates were. Incomers are nothing new; Italians and Polish arrived after the Second World War; the Windrush



Left, Bristol is a thriving city.

generation in the 50s and Ugandan Asians in the 60s. But Palmer sees this as different. The locals are not only being priced out of their own areas, they also feel alienated by the incomers. He saw ‘the dismayed look on elderly local faces.’

And an increasing number of students are no longer living in hall, but spilling out into new, unstudenty areas (see pages 4 -5). According to the Centre for Cities, 30% of Bristol students remain in the city. The divide between students and locals is clearly becoming unbalanced. ‘While more students mean more growth the negatives are often glossed over.’

Palmer raises some interesting questions. Gentrification isn’t all bad. Indeed, gentrification is often the vision of enterprising locals. ‘... we are also local people who saw a gap in the market’. Sam of Bristol Spirit says of the new, hipster traders, ‘They also use local tradesmen, and they contribute to Bristol’s accolade of being the best out of Britain’s core cities for recycling’.

As one elderly man said of North Street, ‘although more friendly before, (it) did have less going for it.’

Is gentrification killing the golden goose? As the ‘edgy’ and arty areas are being gentrified, there are unexpected consequences. Bristol is well known for its

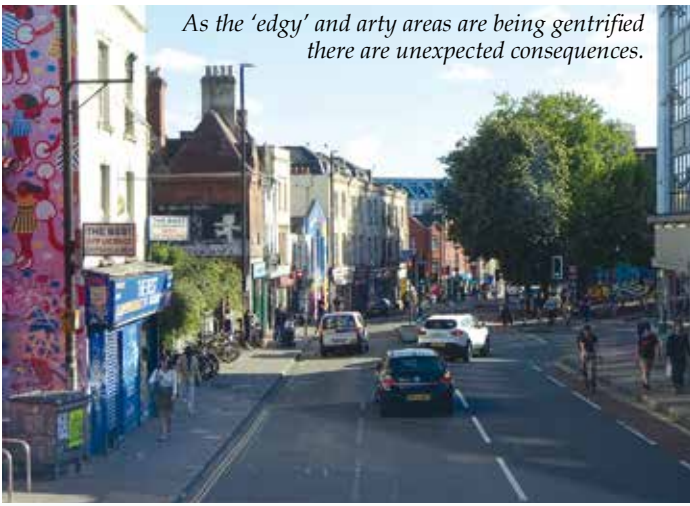
music scene. Yet music venues are increasingly under threat, being bought out by developers (Blue Mountain, Stokes Croft) or under fear of closure because of noise complaints.

Where do the original working class people go? Bristol is a thriving city. It gets much of its energy from a churn of new residents: DFLs (Down From London) and students alike. Palmer pleads for incomers to have respect for those who came before them.

Palmer has interviewed scores of people for *Voices of Bristol*. Bristol is a thriving, vibrant city. It’s important to make sure everybody is involved, that everybody benefits. Palmer would like to see the provision of ‘regulated, public housing and more fundamentally, the revision of how we see property - not purely as an investment, but rather as a human right...’

‘Do you know how that feels?’ asks one St Paul’s resident, ‘to be made to feel you are the bad one in your own area?’

Mike Manson



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



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: Membership Secretary, Bristol Civic Society, 52 Oakwood Rd, Bristol BS9 4NT. Cheques, if not made by standing order, made payable to Bristol Civic Society.
Enquiries: Tel: 0117 9621592.
Email: membership@bristolcivicsociety.org.uk

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Events

Autumn and Winter 2019-2020

Please check the Bristol Civic Society website for updates on the following and other so far unannounced events. Some will have limited numbers and we usually make a small charge to cover any costs.



Building liveable neighbourhoods in Bristol.



Wednesday 16 October 2019.
7.30 pm.

From Brycgstow to Bristol in 45 bridges.

Friends Meeting House, 126 Hampton Road, Redland, BS6 6JE.

Each one of Bristol's bridges has a fascinating story which is woven intimately into the 1,000 year history of the city. When and why was it built? What was involved in its design, engineering and construction? Jeff Lucas tells the stories of a selection of the 45 bridges which span the main waterways of Bristol between Avonmouth and St Anne's.

Illustrated with historical photos and Jeff's own revealing photography, his talk will open up new ways of looking at these often beautiful structures that are usually overlooked in day-to-day life. The bridges are linked into a 45km circular walk that takes you from the nooks and crannies of the inner city to the open vistas of the Severn Estuary and back again.



Friday 18 October 2019.
2.30 - 3.45 pm.

Building liveable neighbourhoods in Bristol.

Room 3, Watershed, 1 Canons Road, Harbourside, Bristol BS1 5TX.

Liveable neighbourhoods are much talked about but what does this term mean? Liveability has to take into account issues of housing, transport, street design, green spaces and creating places and communities for all ages. Is policy - for example, encouraging more cycling and walking - fit for purpose in creating liveable neighbourhoods? What

recommendations can we bring together for the future of Bristol and future cities? Using examples from Bristol and elsewhere, the talks will cover transport and movement (Steve Melia), greening (Danni Sinnett), street interventions and social well-being (Mark Drane), as well as a contribution from Jon Severs of Bristol City Council.

A free event organised jointly by Bristol Civic Society and UWE, Bristol. Part of The Festival of the Future City.



Thursday 24 October 2019.
7.30 pm.

Film & television industry in Bristol

Broadmead Baptist Church, Union Street Bristol BS1 3HY (next to Tesco Metro).

Rob Champion is a film and television location manager and former Bristol City Council Film Officer. Rob specialises in TV drama and, as well as telling us about his experiences in this area, he will give an overview of the current film and television industry in Bristol.

He will also cover how film and television locations are found, dealing with owners, what is important in selecting a location and much more.



Tuesday 19 November 2019.
7.30 pm.

Lost rivers of Bristol and flood risk management.

Redland Parish Halls, Redland Green Rd, BS6 7HE.

Illustrated talk by Melvin Wood, Environment Agency.

Back by popular demand! Bristol was built on good river systems in order to

develop trade and to provide power for milling. Those rivers have gradually and steadily been built over and effectively 'lost.' However they are still there and their associated flood risk needs to be assessed and prepared for if Bristol is to be a resilient city for the next 100 years. This talk will look at the river systems across the city and provide an overview of the flood defence systems which reduce flood risk.

In planning for 2020:

Annual Social Evening. Last year we held a successful evening event in January. We aim to repeat this. Thoughts for a suitable (and accessible) venue welcomed!

Ashton Court Mansion. We will continue with our campaign to save and to restore Ashton Court Mansion. We plan further public events and consultation - following on from the very well attended public meetings held in the Mansion and in City Hall. To join the Mansion newsletter distribution list please email simon.birch7@gmail.com

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!