



Candidate Information Pack

Bristol Civic Society

Chair



In this candidate information pack you will find further information on our search for a Chair, together with details on the application process with Moon Executive Search.

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An Introduction from our Chair

Welcome to the candidate's pack and thank you for showing interest in leading Bristol Civic Society as our new Chair.

In 2024 I will be stepping down after 10 very enjoyable years. I'll still be active in the Society but not as a member of the Management Team, and I'll continue to be a positive and supportive volunteer.

The successful candidate will be passionate about Bristol and committed to supporting high quality new development and to opposing projects which will harm the City. It is a high-profile role as the Society is regularly contacted by the media for its views on current proposals.

The Society is entirely run by volunteers and is reliant on their enthusiasm, skills, and willingness to devote their time. It is absolutely fundamental that the Chair is comfortable working with volunteers and is always mindful of the fact that they can be very different from paid employees. Equally the Chair will need to demonstrate their ability to work with key stakeholders such as Bristol City Council, Historic England and developers and their consultants.

The Society is fortunate in having an engaged, and growing, membership and in having a good level of financial reserves. In so many ways BCS is a success story and we have volunteers readily filling most roles, the exception being anyone to act as Chair, plus a small number of vacancies on our Management Team.

We are keen to widen our appeal to the diverse communities in Bristol and positively welcome applications from all sections of the City.





We have developed a wide range of different but relevant activities which include:

- Professional, and hopefully influential, representations on proposals for major developments, including transport schemes
- Blue plaques for memorable Bristolians, 40 plaques since 2015!;
- Annual Design Awards, judged by an enthusiastic and critical Panel
- Comprehensive and always up to date website, lauded by many involved in development in the City
- Better Bristol, a top-quality newsletter, produced twice a year
- Wide ranging and hugely appreciated events programme, a judicious mix of live and online events
- Recently launched initiative to work with all comers in order to save and renovate Ashton Court Mansion

I do hope that you will consider joining us. Feel free to contact me for an informal discussion.

Simon Birch

**Chair
Bristol Civic Society**



About Us

Bristol Civic Society (BCS) is an independent, voluntary organisation that exists to improve Bristol's built environment and celebrate its heritage. Through our working groups, we seek to influence development of major sites and improve transport and place-making. We put on a varied events programme, and publish a bi-annual magazine *Better Bristol*, ebulletins and have a website. We are an active and friendly organisation with over 600 members.

Bristol Civic Society has existed as a society for over 100 years and we are proud of how we have managed to influence how Bristol looks today.

The Society is a registered charity and has a board of trustees known as the Management Team which also acts as the executive body of the organisation.



Our Vision and Our Role

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

We encourage successful blending of the new with the old: to recognise Bristol's assets and to implement change through good planning and design. We want to add to the beauty, character and diversity of the city, and to revitalise areas and improve the quality of life for



all across the city. We want places of tranquillity to complement the dynamism and vibrancy of city life. We want the best for Bristol.

As a civic society, we focus on the impact on people, place (the built environment) and planet. Well-designed homes, places to work, and outdoor spaces for play, enhance civic pride and sustainable communities.

Management Team (the Trustees of the Charity)

Meet quarterly. Currently seven members including the Chair. The Constitution provides for a maximum of 10 member, elected at the AGM.

Current Activities/Groups

Major Sites Group

The Major Sites Group engages with major building development proposals, mostly in the city centre e.g. Wapping Wharf, The Galleries and Bristol University. The group takes part in the public consultation stage, before the planning application for major schemes. This is one of Bristol Civic Society's most important roles.

The group:

- meets developers, planning officers and other interest groups to try to improve complex major developments
- initiates campaigns, prepares written representations, and appears at Planning Enquiries
- may generate ideas to develop and improve particular sites
- works with other local planning groups, and if asked helps them to gain skills in dealing with major sites

Transport and Placemaking Group

Our Transport and Place-making Group looks at the future development of transport and public space policy and schemes in Bristol. Covering not only movement aspects, but also place-making aspects – the quality of the public realm.

The group acts:

- to influence transport and place policy and schemes, and certain planning applications, especially by agreeing responses to consultations and other proposals from Bristol City Council and the West of England Combined Authority (WECA)
- to enable interested members to come together to pool and grow their knowledge and views
- to help choose topics for our events

Other campaigns & projects

We have always been involved with discussions on the future of Ashton Court Mansion and we have recently launched a new initiative to identify a way forward which will be sustainable and financially viable. We are also involved in responding to the Council's Western Harbour proposals including e.g. responding to consultations, engaging with consultants, organising walks round the area, putting forward critiques to the Council.



Better Bristol Magazine

Better Bristol is the Bristol Civic Society Magazine, funded from members' subscriptions. There are two issues a year: Spring-Summer and Autumn-Winter.

<https://www.bristolcivicsociety.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Better-Bristol-Spring-Summer-2023.pdf>

Our Events Team

A group of volunteers organises an events programme: including guided walks, visits to interesting buildings, talks from industry experts (some by Zoom), seminars etc.

The Design Awards Panel

Our Design Awards recognise developments which make a positive contribution to Bristol through excellence of design. Three to five winners each year - plaques awarded at a public event in June.

Blue Plaques Panel

The Society took over (from the Council) responsibility for the scheme some years ago. Blue Plaques commemorate individuals who lived or worked at a specific location with a blue coloured wall plaque stating their connection with the site. They can also honour organisations which have made a collective contribution. A small group assesses the merits of applications and organises the manufacture and the mounting and “unveiling” of the plaques. The plaques are paid for by the proposers, not the Society, other than in exceptional circumstances.

Communications, Social Media and PR

The website editor issues regular e-bulletins summarising what has been happening, and upcoming events, and a three-monthly open spaces bulletin. We have a [Facebook](#) page and a [Twitter/X](#) account

Liaison with other bodies

Some Management Team members act as links with other bodies such as Historic England, the Bristol Walking Alliance, the Conservation Advisory Panel and the Neighbourhood Planning Network.





Role Description

Job Title:	Chair
Remuneration:	This is a voluntary position but the Chair can claim expenses for travel and administrative expenditure.
Location:	Central Bristol
Time commitment:	Quarterly Management Meetings currently held in central Bristol in the evening for approximately 2 hours Approximately half-a-day to one day per week

Essential

- The face of the Society, outward facing, meetings with City Council, Developers, Community groups, media
- Linked closely to networking, attending meetings all over Bristol
- Chair of the Management Team
- Chairing some BCS events
- Editorial Board of Better Bristol

Optional

The current chair is a member of the Major Sites Group, chair of the Design Awards panel and is instrumental in taking the lead on the Ashton Court Mansion initiative. None of these activities are essential for a future chair.

Key Responsibilities

- Provide leadership to the Management Team and the organisation to enable it to fulfil its charitable purpose
- Oversight of the operation of the organisation and its effective governance as a Charity and ensuring the Management Team fulfils its duties to ensure the sound financial health of the charity with systems in place to ensure financial accountability
- Build and maintain relationships within and outside the organisation
- Act as an ambassador and the public face of BCS

Strategic leadership

- Provide leadership to the organisation and its management team
- Ensure that the Management Team fulfil their trustee duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of a charity
- Ensure that the organisation operates within its charitable objectives
- Ensure that the strategic direction for the organisation is set and regularly assessed and monitored

Governance

- Ensure that governance arrangements are working in the most effective way for the organisation
- Encourage positive change in the organisation where appropriate and address and resolve any conflicts within the organisation



- Ensure that the Management Team is regularly refreshed and incorporates the right balance of skills, knowledge and experience needed to govern and lead the charity effectively; ensure that a successor is found before the Chair's term of office finishes
- Work within any agreed policies adopted by the organisation

Efficiency and Effectiveness

- Chair meetings of the management team effectively and efficiently, bringing impartiality and objectivity to the decision-making process
- Ensure that Trustees are fully engaged and that decisions are taken in the best, long-term interests of the organisation and that the management team takes collective ownership of decisions and strategy
- Oversight of working groups
- In chairing the Management Team meetings ensure:
 - A balance is struck between time keeping and space for discussions;
 - Business is dealt with and decisions made;
 - Decisions, actions and deliberations are adequately minuted; and
 - The implementation of decisions is clearly assigned and monitored.

External Relations and public face

- Ensure adequate support arrangements are made for all volunteers, encouraging members to volunteer and building the membership base to ensure that it is more diverse and inclusive
- Build and maintain close relationships with key officers and members of the City Council and with key local stakeholders and influencers
- Build and maintain relationships with members and outside organisations both in person and via various different marketing and digital channels

Key Priorities

The Civic Society is fortunate in having a growing membership and a sound financial position. But it is important not to be complacent and the Chair will lead on ensuring that this success is built on and taken forward in order to (inter alia):

- increase and widen the membership to be more representative of the City
- develop even more influence on decisions taken by others which impact on the appearance and enjoyment of the City
- identify and develop new initiatives which will contribute to the success of the Society in the future



How to apply

Moon Executive Search has been appointed as chosen Search Partner to Bristol Civic Society and will manage the recruitment process.

**NB: ALL DIRECT APPLICATIONS WILL BE FORWARDED TO
MOON EXECUTIVE SEARCH**

To apply, please send a copy of your latest CV together with a supporting statement (no more than one side of A4) explaining your motivations for applying for the role, how your skills, knowledge and experience match the role outline and what you can additionally bring to the role.

To ensure fairness to all applicants, any decision to shortlist you for initial telephone screening will be based solely on the information that you supply on your CV and supporting statement. Therefore, it is important you give as much information as possible regarding why you wish to apply and what you think makes you a suitable applicant.

Moon Executive Search is an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applications from all areas of society.

COMPLETED APPLICATIONS SHOULD BE SENT BY EMAIL TO:
recruit@moonexecsearch.com
FAO: SANDY HINKS, QUOTING REF: MC2392
CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS: 19TH NOVEMBER 2023

Preliminary interviews will be with Moon Executive Search virtually, we anticipate that only one round of panel interviews will be required but Bristol Civic Society may invite candidates back for a second round, depending on the candidate pool.

Bristol Civic Society has retained Moon Executive Search to manage this campaign and are therefore unable to accept CVs from third party agencies. All CV's and expression of interest received will be forwarded directly to Moon Executive Search for consideration. On behalf of Bristol Civic Society, Moon Executive Search would like to thank you for your initial interest in their Trustee opportunity.

Accessibility

If you require this document in an alternative format, please call Moon Executive Search on 01275 371200 or email recruit@moonexecsearch.com

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

We are committed to equality of opportunity for all staff and applications from individuals are encouraged regardless of age, disability, sex, race, religion, or belief.



Further reading

Constitution [BCS-Constitution-2018.pdf \(bristolcivicsociety.org.uk\)](#)
Manifesto [BRISTOL \(bristolcivicsociety.org.uk\)](#)

Bristol Civic Society a registered charity, No 244414.

DOCUMENT ENDS
