Redland & Cotham Amenities Society



Report from the Chair
AGM Report and Accounts
Cotham Hill wins Gold again
RCAS Gold Star awards
Planning and Parks Reports
Neighbourhood Partnership
Pull-out Information Section





Front Cover. A wonderful record of the Southfield Road Street party. See article on page 23

Above. John Wallis (centre) from Dorothea Restorations receiving his Gold Star certificate from RCAS committee members Simon Birch and Helen Wilde

Below. Members enjoying the reception and gathering for the AGM





REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

There is no doubt that 2016 will be remembered as a year of politically unexpected surprises and we currently face a somewhat uncertain future. What is certain, however, is that RCAS has continued to thrive and it remains a very successful local community organisation.

All things are subject to change of course and in RCAS we have recognised that we must determine how we move forward as a society in the next few years.

We see in the media that 2016 is likely to be the warmest year on record and RCAS, whilst not being able to act globally, can and will continue our local work of environmental awareness and sustainability for which we are well recognised.

We do need to consider, however, if the wider role of RCAS needs to be changed in any way or if we should continue essentially as we are. To this effect, I am delighted that Binah Shah as our committee member for marketing and publicity, together with Kathryn Armitstead and Peter Wilde, are carrying out a survey of residents in our own area. Members and non-menbers will be consulted using the survey form that you will find in this edition of the newsletter. I do encourage you to take a few minutes to fill it out and return it. We can't do this type of survey very often so this is your best chance to help set our course for the next few years.

This year has been an amazing one for me in the privileged role of High Sheriff of Bristol. I have seen so much incredible work going on in the city and I have worked to support a wide range of important organisations and initiatives.

I cannot finish this article without giving particular thanks to the hard working committee who have enabled me to continue as Chair of RCAS with a slightly reduced commitment for the year. I'll be back to normal from April next year!

I must thank all members for their support of RCAS and wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and New Year.



MINUTES, 44th RCAS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

St John's School Extension, Lower Redland Road Thursday 3rd November 2016

There were over 60 in attendance including the committee. The numbers included a small number of guests and those receiving Gold Star awards.

Rob Harris and Kathryn Armitstead sent their apologies.

This year the evening commenced at 7.30pm in unique fashion with a reception kindly hosted by Helen Wilde, RCAS Chair, in her role as High Sheriff of Bristol. Members and guests enjoyed prosecco and delicious canapés, mingling and chatting, and making it a great success.



The meeting was formally opened at 8.15pm by the chair, Helen Wilde, who welcomed the large audience. Helen talked about her role this year as High Sheriff and thanked the committee for their work during the year. Helen reiterated that there are plenty of opportunities for members to volunteer. helen particularly thanked committee members for their additional support during her current busy year when her time was under particular pressure.

1. Approval of last year's minutes

The 2015 AGM minutes as set out in the December 2015 newsletter were approved, proposed by Simon Birch and seconded by Carew Reynell.

2. Annual report

The 2016 Annual report, also in the December 2015 newsletter was approved, being proposed by Gill Penrose and seconded by Bina Shah.

3. Treasurer's report

Carew Reynell presented accounts that showed net assets of £35,079. He pointed out that, allowing for the May Fair and planned projects, there will be some grant funding available for 2017-18. Interested members should put proposals to the committee. Carew also pointed out that the accounts do not reflect the considerable amount of voluntary activities that are undertaken. The accounts were approved, being proposed by Alison Bromilow and seconded by Gill Penrose. Helen thanked Carew for his contribution.

The accounts are shown on pages 6 and 7 of this newsletter.



Elections for RCAS Committee were held and the following were successfully elected.

Annual appointments

Treasurer - Carew Reynell.

Proposed by Juile Hart and seconded by Alison Bromilow.

Secretary - Graham Rogers.

Proposed by Bina Shah and seconded by Gillian Penrose.

3 year appointments

Gill Penrose, Alison Bromilow, Rob Harris, Bina Shah and Kathryn Armitstead.

Jointly proposed by Roger Mortimer and seconded by Simon Birch.

5. Gold Star Awards

Simon Birch outlined the reasons for the award of a Gold Star to each project, accompanied by photographs, and the certificated were presented by Helen Wilde. Simon reiterated the criteria for award, namely completion in the last 12 months, in public view and that anyone can nominate. 2016 has been a positive year and there were five awards.

Colston's Primary School Annexe Down's Shelter Gentleman's lavatory (Blackboy Hill) 158 Redland Road Conversion of sub-station on Kersteman Road

Full details of recipients are given in the article on pages 16 and 17.

Committee presentations

The second part of the evening was a 'quick-fire' session involving committee



members speaking briefly about about their diverse roles.

Newsletter (Peter Wilde) Peter is now on his 47th edition. He explained what was involved in the preparation and distribution of the newsletter and reiterated that members are always welcome to submit items. Roger thanked Peter for the continued outstanding quality of this publication.

Planning (Roger Mortimer) The planning committee scrutinise submissions on a regular basis with a particular emphasis on the street-scene with regard to conservation and planning policy. He requested that if any members contribute via comments on the council web site please could they let the planning group know as this helps the co-ordination of responses.

May Fair (Julie Hart) Julie reported on a successful event this year and thanked the volunteers and the May Fair committee. This year's collection was for Redland Green Park. As ever, there is room for more volunteers to be involved in the May Fair.

Parks (Alison Bromilow) Alison reported that a new volunteer is needed to deal with tree planning issues (please contact anyone on the committee or via the web site). Alison reported on the range of activity that has taken place this year and on the fact that the City Council role will become more limited as budget restraints become apparent. She also reminded members that we still need a second member to join the Neighbourhood Partnership.

Open Gardens (Lesley Benson) This had again proved a popular activity and it seemed to be effective having a smaller number of open gardens. There was a vacancy for a volunteer to help choose the gardens for next summer. This will be in the West Redland area.

Publicity (Bina Shah) Bina reported on the work of a new sub-group and highlighted a pilot survey that s being carried out with the intention of distributing with the next newsletter. Part of the aim of the group is to increase membership, seek views and engage members more in the range of activities undertaken by RCAS.

Other presentations

This was followed by brief contributions from four of our local councillors: Carla Denyer, Martin Fodor and Fi Hance from the Green Party and Anthony Negus from the Liberal Democrats.

They spoke in turn about their priorities and the challenges ahead. Peter Wilde thanked them for their involvement and for attending the meeting which was much appreciated by all.

The evening ended with two members of Clifton Rotary Club, Keith Bonham and David Sutton, who were keen for Clifton Rotary to re-establish their close working links with RCAS.

The meeting closed at 9.35 pm.

Graham Rogers RCAS Secretary



RCAS Accounts 2015/16

Income	2015	2016	Expenditure	2015	2016
Revenue a/c					
Subscriptions	6695	6485	Newsletter	3240	3320
Interest	50	55	Admin	471	258
			SO project	363	1
			Meetings/event s	212	25
			Surplus	2459	2936
Totals	6745	6540		6745	6540
May Fair					
Stall rents	5690	5840	Entertainment	1735	1125
Advertising	400	300	Toilets	1334	1362
Collection	1413	968	Security	547	644
Raffle (RGS)	84	75	Waste clearance	300	512
Donations	-	1300	Printing	295	270
Gift aid	350	245	Licences	468	110
			First aid	230	230
			Sound system	175	175
			Insurance	152	208
			Expenses	88	177
			Marquee		630
			Donation	2000	1213
			Surplus	613	2072
Totals	7937	8728		7937	8728
Projects					
Tree fund - donations	99	75	Trees	2376	480
Gift aid	50				
Cotham Hill in Bloom	1592	1415	Cotham Hiil in Bloom	1732	1974
Gift aid	30	50			
			Parks	923	
Donation	115		War memorial	255	



Income	2015	2016	Expenditure	2015	2016
Gift aid	2110	979			
Deficit	1290		Surplus		65
Totals	5286	2519		5286	2519
Balance sheet				30/9/15	30/9/16
Bank account				28777	36266
Less creditors				-850	-1213
Less held for other orgs					-1806
Plus debtors				2080	1832
Net assets				30007	35079
Represented by					
Revenue a/c				11065	11353
May Fair				2654	4726
Project a/c				16290	19000

Gift Aid

Many of you have kindly completed Gift Aid declarations, enabling RCAS to reclaim tax on your subscription.

For a Gift Aid claim to be valid, you must have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities or Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) which you donate to will reclaim on your gifts for that tax year. Other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify.

RCAS will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 of your subscription and any other donations.

If you have any concerns that your Gift Aid declaration may no longer be valid, please contact our Treasurer, Carew Reynell, at carew.reynell@gmail.com or on 0117 9443042.

Carew Reynell Treasurer





More recipients of Gold Star awards at the AGM

Above. Chair Helen Wilde with John Fellows from 158 Redland Road.

Below. Recipients of the award for resoration of the Downs Haven. Helen with Robert Westlake, Maggie Shapland, Alex Philips and Keith Bonham.





COTHAM HILL SCORES A HAT-TRICK!



Gillian Penrose (left) receives the Gold Award from Alderman Colin Smith and Monica Walker of Yellow Cab Co., sponsors of The Garden for Bristol Awards

Great News!

The 'Cotham Hill in Bloom' scheme promoted by RCAS has won a Gold Award for the third year in a row - a very well deserved hat-trick!

The scheme also won joint second placement with St Michael's Hill in the 'shopping street' category of the 'Bristol in Bloom' competition. Westbury-on-Trym won a well deserved first place.

A Gold Award certificate was presented at "The Garden for Bristol Awards 2016' held at the Ashton Gate Stadium on 21st October. Gillian Penrose of RCAS attended to receive the certificate but none of the traders was able to attend, which was a pity as it was a good social evening with opportunities for networking.

Congratulations to all traders, community groups and residents who participated and thanks again to all members for their support.

The Brewhouse and Kitchen and The Penny public house, both located in Cotham Hill, also won awards in the category for pubs. We are also grateful to the Bishopston, Cotham and Redland Neighbourhood Partnership which helped with a small grant.

If any gardening enthusiasts would like to help with next year's scheme please contact Gillian Penrose (gillian.penrose@virgin.net)

Gillian Penrose



PLANNING AND LICENSING GROUP

8/8a Chandos Road

Revisions to application following substantial objections. The front room of the basement no longer to be used as part of a House in Multiple Occupation HMO. RCAS is no longer objecting.

46 Hampton Park

RCAS had objected to the size of the extensions and additional front garden parking space. Revised plans which slightly reduce size of extensions and with one car space only have been approved.

Redland High School 4 Redland Court Road 7 and 9 Woodstock Road

Change of use of from school to residential approved.

Bannatynes Redland Road

There ia a further attempt to get consent to operate from 06.30 am. RCAS is again objecting to noise nuisance caused by traffic etc including delivery and service vehicles affecting nearby houses particularly in Elmgrove Road.

12B Cotham Road

Creation of front garden parking space involving loss of boundary wall and loss of on-street parking space. Consent refused.

38 Lower Redland Road

Retention of a timber shed in the front garden. RCAS and several residents have objected to this large and prominently sited shed. Now approved.

35 Hampton Park

Conversion and extension of an existing garage building to create a two storey house. Approved subject to detailed

arrangement to secure existing trees.

Tree application

Waverley Road/ Woodstock Avenue

Objected to felling of a prominent Maritime Pine at the side of the house. Consent was withheld and a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) is to be placed on the tree.

Telephone Kiosks

A number of telephone kiosks in our area are the subject of applications to install digital advertising displays. RCAS is concerned at the visual impact on our area of these brightly lit displays which scroll through and may be a distraction for drivers and other road users.

We are also concerned that the advertising is being used simply to generate an income for the New World Payphone company rather than as a way of making public payphones viable. Advertisements on telephone kiosks have been accepted without planning applications for some time but in some cases recently, where enforcement has been involved, the adverts have been removed from kiosks in conservation areas because they do not preserve or enhance the conservation area character.

The kiosk on Lovers' Walk is one of these. There was also recently an application to replace a telephone with a cash dispenser on Gloucester Road, which was refused.

We have objected to the application on Whiteladies Road outside Kitchens, and have also requested that the advertising on the kiosk, which is not permitted, is removed. There has recently been a consultation about the removal of some kiosks in Bristol which are underused but



those in our area are not under threat. One thing we in the Street Scene Group of the Bishopston, Cotham and Redland Neighbourhood Partnership are aware of, is that telephone kiosks do attract a lot of graffiti (tagging) and fly-posting, which has a knock-on effect on property around the kiosk. We would prefer to reduce the number of public phones where they are not needed to reduce the antisocial behaviour they attract.

Bristol City Council Corporate Strategy 2017 - 22

This is currently out to consultation and proposes a halving of the Planning Enforcement team.

In the RCAS planning group, we are aware of an increase in the amount of development which is being undertaken without planning approval. This relies on the enforcement process to temper some of the worst impacts and to ensure that there is compliance with planning conditions. Money needs to be saved in

the council but the planning group is very concerned that a lack of enforcement will undermine the planning system to a point where a 'free for all' occurs.

> Alison Bromilow Simon Birch Stephen Morris Roger Mortimer

LICENSING

Tops Pizza 14 Cotham Hill

There has been another application for a late-night refreshment licence, this time until 4am from Friday to Sunday and 1am on other days. This was despite the fact that they do not have planning permission to be open later than 11pm. Failure to advertise the application properly has stopped progress on this damaging application.

Continued overleaf



The pine tree at the Waverley Road/Woodstock Avenue junction which will be preserved



COTHAM GARDENS

Late in September, a small group of volunteers (and pressed men) met up to tackle to flower beds at the top of the park where the few remaining roses were competing against a thriving colony of weeds.

Due to the reduced maintenance standards in parks, these beds were not being weeded and the shrubs/ roses not pruned under the maintenance contract. The few volunteers who did this work had become overwhelmed by the task. As reported previously it was decided to further reduce the number of rose beds to reduce the maintenance burden.

In response to the RCAS request for perennial geranium cuttings, we had donations from a few local residents who also volunteered to help plant them. We wanted to use the geraniums to underplant the roses, with the hope of smothering the weeds.

The morning workparty tackled the heavy work of digging over the bed (see photo on back cover) and digging up and replanting the roses from the bed inside the fenced area. The vinca (periwinkle) which had flourished was also split up and replanted.

Despite a couple of sharp showers, the afternoon party then managed to plant out the geraniums and other donated plants. The potted houseplant which appeared in the summer (possibly donated by a parting student resident?) was left in place. I wonder if it will survive the winter.

Thanks to the local residents and RCAS committee members who carried out this work, the flower bed now looks good and, it is hoped, will be appreciated by the many users of the park.

Alison Bromilow

PLANNING AND LICENSING GROUP Continued from previous page

Domus Pizza Top of Whiteladies Road

Application to sell alcohol till the early hours, as late as 4am on some days. This was for 'off sales' as well as 'on sales'.

Despite objections by local residents this was granted but with restrictions meaning that after 11pm alcohol can only be sold as part of a delivery and amount restricted to the value of the food being delivered. Police are obviously aware of the risk of creating an all-night source of alcohol.

a delay in implementing planning consent for apartments. This was nomentioned in newsletter 173 in September.

Our active members in the licensing field report that the Council's organisation of their licensing responsibility remains very poor. There is no online register giving adequate information on existing licences, giving long delays in providing notices of decisions, with these going only to those attending the hearing. Lessons from the Planning Department need to be learnt.



Former Dorma nightclub

It is still likely that this will reopen due to

Roger Mortimer



Before and after views of the replanting work in Cotham Gardens. Photographs Alison Bromilow





COTHAM GARDENS AND LOVERS' WALK BENCH PROJECT

RCAS has drawn up plans for refurbishing the benches in Lovers' Walk and Cotham Gardens and has applied for, and been granted, matched funding by the Bishopston Cotham and Redland Neighbourhood Partnership

from its Community Infrastructure Levy funds.

We are conscious that the Parks Maintenance Contract is supposed annual cover cleaning of the benches and control of weeds and grass under the benches, where they are placed in grass rather than with concrete bases. Over the past 10 years, however, this has not been happening and the benches, in many cases under the canopy of the lime tree avenue, become very black and sticky because of the aphids who feed on the lime trees and drop honeydew.

Lovers' Walk bench in need of repair

used on the more recent bench models. The slats on the benches on the upper section of Lovers' Walk are unfinished and therefore more difficult to clean and liable to break up if spray washed.

the Along lower northern section of Lovers' Walk, the benches are placed in the Redland Grove The grass areas. budget maintenance being heavily has cut back and RCAS has resisted spraying of the weeds below the benches because this leads to bare patches earth and the undermining of the ground fixings. Consequently the weeds and grass this year have been growing up between the slats unchecked. We therefore propose that the benches along this section are lifted

and new concrete bases are put in.

The Parks department do replace broken slats, but these do not always match the existing slats in size or finish. The replacement slats are prefinished varnished wood, which is an easy surface to clean of the grime and graffiti, so we agree that this is a good solution.

Historically, the slats of a number of the benches were non standard green painted planks rather than the narrower slats The benches along this section are of a single type except for one bench nearest to the Redland Road end. They are more comfortable than the modern ones and we propose that the one newer style bench is swapped with one either from ouncil stores or from the upper section of Cotham Gardens, and the bench that was removed by the council because it was damaged earlier this year, is refurbished and replaced, with all having the wider



green painted planks reinstalled.

In the upper section of the park, there are a couple of empty bays where benches previously stood. We propose to replace these benches. An offer to sponsor a new bench has been received and we would like to suggest that this is installed in the bay which is outside the railings but looks down across the park towards the play area and Redland Station.

An audit has been carried out by Graham and Alison to work out exactly what needs to be done. With confirmation of funding, the next stage is to work up a programme for the works. The options are between giving the whole contract to a single outside contractor (more expensive but easier to run) or breaking up the works into smaller packages which can be done by organisations such as Park Work or Community Payback. This cheaper option would need a lot more me from volunteers to run the projects.

If anyone is interested in helping with this, please do get in touch. If we get some help with organising the project we can go for the cheaper option, leaving more funds for other projects.

With the current budgetary pressures on the council and the fact that Parks are not a statutory requirement, ways of reducing the cost of maintaining parks are being sought. The current Corporate Strategy consultation floats the idea of parks becoming run by local organisations, Trusts, Mutuals etc instead of directly by the council. An interesting idea for future discussion!

It is worth members looking at the consultation to see some of the ideas that are being put forward. There is an online link direct from the Bristol City Council homepage.

Alison Bromilow



Lovers' Walk bench to be relocated to upper park area in one of the empty bays



GOLD STAR AWARDS

We think it's important to celebrate good quality developments in our area and the Gold Star awards are presented for projects completed in the past year which can be clearly seen by the general public, so most rear extensions are excluded!

Each year we collect nominations; from proud property owners, from architects and from Society members. We arrive at a short list and conduct a formal site inspection in September (on a Sunday morning). There have been one or two years where nothing has reached a high enough standard but this year we were delighted with the nominations and a total of five projects were celebrated with Gold Star awards.

In order of presentation at the AGM but not in order of merit, as all are seen as equal in terms of their contribution to the area.

Photographs Simon Birch

Colstons' Primary School Elmgrove Road

See photograph inside back cover.

Selective surgery to the evergreen trees that dominated the site revealed a useful site but with difficult levels. However these have been very successfully exploited to create separate and well landscaped outdoor spaces for different age groups.

When viewed from the street, the timber clad buildings go well with the restored stone boundary wall. The sustainable reuse of "prefab" classrooms from elsewhere was welcomed although there were misgivings about the two-tone green

surrounds to their windows!

Colston's Primary School; Alex Bell Skanska; Mike Carter Childs+Sulzmann Architects; Matt Parsons

The Downs Haven

See photograph inside back cover.

This unobtrusive building at the very top of Blackboy Hill was built in 1917 by public subscription for the benefit of service personnel who were convalescing from their wounds at the nearby Queen Victoria Hospital. Council owned, it has been carefully restored by volunteers.

Clifton and Hotwells Improvement Society CHIS; Maggie Shapland Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge FOD+AG; Robert Westlake Forest of Avon Products; Alex Phillips

The Pissoir (gentlemans public lavatory) Blackboy Hill

See photograph opposite.

This early example of the public convenience was erected in the 1880's by Bristol Corporation and is one of only three remaining in Bristol. The cast iron structure, made in Glasgow, has been carefully restored and the glass roof renewed.

Dorothea Restorations; John Wallis Bristol City Council; Hayley Ash



158 Redland Road

See photograph overleaf.

This large 1930's semi-detached house has been much improved by its renovation, with period details retained and emphasised. The landscaping is particularly successful.

John Fellows

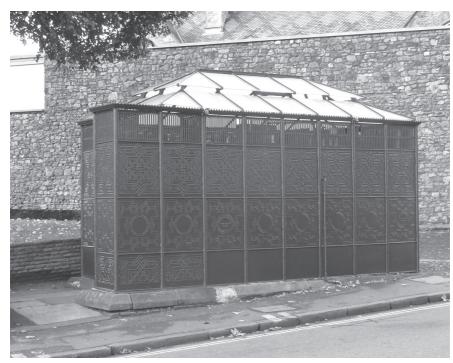
8 Kersteman Road

See photograph overleaf.

The substantial former electricity substation space has been reused as living space with new floors over creating a 3 level house. A welcome new use of a redundant building. It adjoins a church converted to residential use which was a former RCAS Gold Star winner.

Mark and Kathryn Johnson In House Building Design; Chris Corrish

Simon Birch



The restored Gentleman's Lavatory, Blackboy Hill





158 Redland Road









MAY FAIR UPDATE

Put the date in your diary Bank Holiday Monday - 1st May 2017, 1-5pm

Next year's May Fair takes place on May Day itself, Bank Holiday Monday, 1-5pm on Redland Green.

We're hoping that after the soggy start to this year's fair, next year it will live up to tradition as the first day of summer!

The May Fair is a hugely popular, notfor-profit, free community event and is organised by a small sub-committee of volunteers on behalf of RCAS. There are lots of different ways to take part in the May Fair from running a stall, to joining our band of willing volunteers for an hour or two on the day or working alongside the organisers in the run-up to the fair. No experience necessary, just enthusiasm. If you are interested in having a stall at the May Fair please email mayfairstalls@rcas.org.uk to be added to the mailing list and for more information.

If you'd like to get hands-on and help out please email

RedlandMayFairVolunteers@gmail.com leaving your contact details.

However you'd like to get involved with the May Fair please get in touch and let us tell you more about being part of this fun-filled family event.

> Abigail Shepherd On behalf of May Fair Committee www.rcas.org.uk/redland-fair

The Redland May Fair is the biggest free community event in the local area and is organised and run by volunteers. If you'd like to get more involved, we'd love to hear from you!



COUNCIL TAX AND STUDENTS; WHO PAYS?

Some residents of domestic properties are exempt from Council Tax, including full-time students, student nurses, those with mental health issues, soldiers and diplomats. Properties occupied entirely by students are exempt because students, unlike other groups of people on low incomes, are not normally entitled to income-related benefits such as housing and local Council Tax support.

Students being exempt from council tax encourages further education take-up by reducing their financial burden. Since currently there are record numbers in further education, has the time come for government to look at this principle again?

Council Tax comprises about a quarter of Bristol City Council's (BCC) income, so exemptions are significant. National government compensates for these through the Revenue Support Grant (RSG), but the compensation is not straightforward. RSG is based on a number of factors, including an amount intended to compensate for differences in needs of each local authority area, and an amount intended to compensate for differences in the relative strength of the Council Tax tax-base (including exemptions) in different areas. There is therefore no direct reimbursement of lost Council Tax, and it is impossible to clarify any level of reimbursement.

Exemption from Council Tax for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) occupied by students gives rise to a number of concerns.

(a) The occupancy of student HMOs is (on average) double that of the average household. Such HMOs therefore make higher than normal demands on local services but they make no contribution to their costs.

- (b) The revenue lost to local authorities by Council Tax exemption may be reimbursed by national government but this compensation is drawn from general taxation, which in turn is paid by those who have already paid Council Tax.
- (c) Many local authorities argue that they are not fully reimbursed. And recently (under the policy of 'austerity') the government has stopped updating the needs-based formula and has made major reductions in the level of RSG paid to local authorities. By not reimbursing councils for the loss of council tax due to student exemptions, their residents are bearing a disproportionate share of spending reductions.

BCC loses out within the current arrangement by receiving lower income from its levied council tax, and at a time when more austerity is forcing more cuts in services this obviously does not help. So what is the solution?

Well, students in HMOs could become responsible for their own council tax. This would be very unpopular and unfair particularly to those from less well off backgrounds. Perhaps it would be better if the landlord could become responsible for paying, and student HMOs themselves could be reclassified as business properties, not domestic. This would reflect the reality that HMOs are businesses with a high turnover of occupants (like hotels) and it would make landlords responsible for paying Business Rates.

The Studentification of Bristol, something that we are all becoming aware of, needs to be managed. Are you concerned about



any of the issues raised above and feel that there should be some changes made? If so, please send your views to our MP: thangam.debbonaire.mp@parliament.uk

For further formation see the "The HMO Lobby" at http://www.hmolobby.org.uk

Rob Harris

RCAS SURVEY 2016/17

If the delivery of your newsletter works out as we have planned, you should find a survey leaflet in your copy.

The aim of Redland and Cotham Amenities Society (RCAS) is to conserve and enhance the character of our area, its architecture, streets, trees, parks, open spaces and amenities, for the benefit of present and future residents.

RCAS operates as a member driven organisation. We currently have a solid base of approximately 1200 members most of who have been members for a long time. We also wish to encourage new members. We would also like to encourage membership across the demographic of our catchment area. We have relatively few young families and hardly any students amongst our membership.

There is a sense that members feel protected by RCAS and feel safe about what is done in the area. This is the core business of preservation of the area. This key focus is not anticipated to change.

We do, however, need to test the waters every so often to ensure that we are not missing any opportunities within our catchment area.

This survey is for RCAS members and non-members. We hope the response to the survey will highlight what is appreciated about RCAS by all as well as alert us to any new opportunities that

might fit within the RCAS remit. The survey should take approximately 5-6 minutes of your time to complete. All answers will remain anonymous. Your opinions are very much valued. We'd really appreciate your feedback which will directly help to shape the future of RCAS.

We have suggested several ways to complete the survey to make it as simple and easy as possible for you. You need to only use one method. Your choice is:

On the form: Complete the survey form included in the newsletter and put it in the prepaid and addressed envelope provided and post it back (or hand it to a committee member to save postage).

By email: You can find the survey at

www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/LQQJQ9Y

and complete it on line. If you copy the link exactly into your internet browser, it will take you to the survey and all you need to do is follow the instructions. It does work!

Thank you very much for your time. We appreciate your feedback. We will publish the results when they are available.

Bina Shah Kathryn Armitstead RCAS Marketing and Communications Team



REDLAND STATION

Do you use Redland Station for business or pleasure? Would you like to help ensure it is kept in good condition?

How about being part of a 'Friends of Redland Station' group which could

ensure that the station can look good, cope with the increased passenger traffic and serve the community in the best possible way.

station building itself, the disused platform, footbridge and the track are owned by Network Rail so we cannot do much about those areas other than though discussion. The platform waiting area is, however, run

by Great Western Railway who are keen to support community group projects on the local rail network with some funding, help in setting up and liaison. There is a station adoption process run through the Association of Community Rail Projects (ACORP) and there are a number of Friends groups across the country.

Over the last couple of years, some good projects have come forward on Redland Station, such as the excellent 'Coffee Trike' run by Keira and the bike stand/ planters which were planted up by Incredible Edible.

The planters are currently in good condition and do not need any work at

present, but will need some attention in the future to ensure they continue to look good. Do we need more? What do you think? Would you be interested in taking on occasional weeding or replanting tasks? Waist height gardening is the easiest way!



Planters and notice board at Redland Station

Alison has a key to a community notice board which be can used to advertise local events. She has already discussed with the Severnside Community Rail Partnership community liaison officer, possibility of running work parties to clear up some of the fly-tipping on the cuttings by the bridge. Days would

be indentified when the Severn Beach line is closed and we can legally access the track without affecting the running of the trains.

There is already interest from the local cubs groups and from the Hamilton and Hodson furniture restoration business who occupy the station buildings. Is this something that you would like to find out more about?

Do you think it is something RCAS should take on? if so, would you be prepared to help? Please get in touch if so.

Alison Bromilow



SOUTHFIELD ROAD STREET PARTY 4th SEPTEMBER 2016

(see front cover photograph)

It was all down to the initiative of one resident who picked a date back in 2014 and approached the City Council for permission to close the street. Like most of my neighbours, the first I knew about it was a circular asking if we had any objection; and of course we didn't!

We thought it was a great idea and before long a group got together to organise the first event in 2014.

There were a few key features that were central to that event and their popularity has ensured they have remained. Bring Your Own Barbecues, free bingo, a bake-off competition, and a major raffle have all been popular. We also supply active games for children and adults, an all-day self-service tea and coffee urn and a home-brew 'bar'. To comply with licensing rules we don't sell anything, relying on donation jars around the site.

Each year we have introduced something new. Last year it was face painting, this year it was a book swap table, and a group photo which adorn the front of this Newsletter! The group photograph with about 80 people all smiling is a testament to the success of the event and the community spirit.

We have a democratic playlist of recorded music. Everyone is invited to submit in advance a dozen or so tunes they would like included and the assembled list is shuffle-played throughout the day so everyone has a fair chance of hearing at least some of their suggestions. We usually have an ice-breaking initiative and a pub style quiz. We have also experimented with other elements with varying success, like performances from local choirs, and an 'open-mic' invitation to perform nformally (which has yet to be taken up!)

Obviously the weather plays an important part and this year we had to change the day on the eve of the event when it became clear we were in for heavy rain.

The number of smiling faces in the Group Photo seems to suggest that our 3rd running was another success. This annual get together has proved to be a great way of making new friends and bringing together long-standing and short-term residents, young and old.

If you think it might work in your street I suggest you have a go; just search online for 'Bristol Street Party' and you'll find loads of information.

Allen Harris allen@harris-bristol.com

(Anyone who has ever tried to photograph large groups of people will appreciate how brilliant the Southfield Road group photograph is! Editor)



BUS SERVICE CHANGES

The following are notes from the meeting in Redland Library in September where James Freeman, Managing Director First Bus, attended the Clifton Neighbourhood Partnership forum. Another forum meeting for Bishopston Cotham and Redland NP is being held on November 21st. RCAS members who are on our mailing list were sent details of this meeting. If you do not receive these notices, please join the 'email news alert' mailing list via our website.

James Freeman told the meeting:

Over previous years, it had been difficult to recruit staff and there were considerable staff shortages, which First dealt with by raising pay. This has driven up costs. Since the introduction of fairer fares, which reduced ticket prices, there have been increased passenger numbers; 25% more people use the buses than 3 years ago

The 2016 consultation and monitoring indicated that Temple Meads to Clifton Village no 8 section of the route was the busiest, Temple Meads to Redland Station number 9 section was also busy; however the section between Clifton Village and Redland Station had very low usage and was not able to cover its costs. This section of the route ran up and down Whiteladies Road nearly to the Triangle and ran with 2-3 people on it most of the time.

The current system requires First to make a profit. The Competition Act precludes companies from using profitable routes to subsidise unprofitable routes.

The Local Authority is the transport authority under the Transport Act 1985 and can consider, if commercial services are not possible, whether to provide services themselves. The 505 service provided by Bristol City Council (delivered by Wessex) is is the remaining cross town route which could be rerouted if there was support for this

Mr Freeman acknowledged that the local authority budget pressures would mean further subsidies were unlikely.

On 4 September the routes were rationalised to meet most of the needs. It was acknowledged that it does not meet them all. eg Clifton residents cannot travel without changing buses to Clifton Down shopping centre and the service for the north area of Redland is now down to one timetabled bus every 30 minutes.

RCAS response: This is clearly unsatisfactory for a large number of Redland residents and we will be working through the Neighbourhood Partnership and local councillors to seek improvements to the service. Many RCAS members have written to us and to James Freeman expressing their views and to local councillors. Please do keep us informed of any responses.

Alison Bromilow

Stop press.

In response to feedback, some further changes have been made. James Freeman, Managing Director First Bristol, said:

Immediately following the service change in September, First Bristol engaged constructively with the councillors for Clifton, Clifton Down and Redland, which led to the improved route of the 9 service, which means that Redland will have a direct link with Clifton Village and Clifton Down Shopping Centre every 30



minutes throughout the day, 7 days a week. Clifton residents will also once again have a direct service to and from Clifton Down Shopping Centre. We are confident that this change will be welcomed by local residents, who were keen to see the connection reestablished.

With effect from 8th January, the No 9 will, during the daytime on Mondays to Saturdays, follow the current route from Bristol Temple Meads to St Paul's Road and then operate via Queens Road, Merchants Road, Clifton Down Road,

Clifton Park, Pembroke Road, Alma Road and Whiteladies Road, before following the current route back to Bristol Temple Meads.

Monday to Sunday daytime journeys will follow the same route, however, some early morning and evening journeys will only operate as far as Blackboy Hill and will therefore not link Redland and Clifton.

BISHOPSTON, COTHAM AND REDLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP

A review of Neighbourhood Partnerships (NPs) is being undertaken as part of the Corporate Strategy consultation. Different models are being discussed, including Urban Parishes. An advantage of Urban Parishes is that they could raise a precept to fund some of the local services (eg street lighting) which would reduce the burden on the main Council which is restricted by central government in the amount it can put up council tax.

This would mean additional financial contributions would be set for residents in those parishes. There would be an additional level of bureaucracy involved, with parish councillors and a clerk. Would we get enough people stepping forward to be parish councillors I wonder?

Other models of organisation are also being considered including reducing the number of NPs from 14 down to perhaps 9.

So Neighbourhood Partnerships may be up for change in the next few years, but in

the meantime residents, councillors and NP officers continue to work together to bring forward projects such as the Cotham Gardens and Lovers' Walk bench project and minor traffic schemes such as the road junction remodelling at Chapel Green Lane/Lower Redland Road.

Money and resources continue to be ever tighter and more is being expected of volunteers to deal with some of the tasks that we have got used to our council taxes paying for. It is certain that local residents will need to take much more responsibility for elements of parks maintenance, litter picking, gutter clearing and so forth so that more of the council's money can be directed to priorities such as ensuring good standards of education and healthcare.

To take part in the Corporate Strategy consultation go to the Bristol City Council website homepage on www.bristol.gov.uk

Alison Bromilow



FRIENDS and NEIGHBOURS may want to join RCAS

The annual subscription is £10 per household. The postal subscription for those living outside the RCAS area is also £10.

We prefer to collect subscriptions by Standing Order in order to reduce work for our distributors.

We will supply a Standing Order mandate form on request.

For those who do not wish to use Standing Order, subscriptions will be collected by distributors in May

Those wishing to join should contact the Membership Secretary

Kathryn Armitstead 52 Redland Court Road Redland Bristol BS6 7EH

Email: membership@rcas.org.uk

Please give a full contact address and telephone number. Please include your e-mail address if available.

Please make the following declaration if you are a taxpayer - and sign and date it. This means that the Society can claim Gift Aid.

I want the Redland & Cotham Amenities Society to treat all donations I make from the date of this declaration until I notify you otherwise, as Gift Aid. I know that I must pay an amount of income/capital gains tax at least equal to the tax the charity reclaims on my donations in the tax year.

Do mention if you are able to help with any RCAS activities.





Above. The extension to Colston's Primary School in Elmgrove Road

Below. The restored Downs Haven at the top of Blackboy Hill

Back Cover. RCAS Secretary Graham Rogers and other members putting their back into Cotham Gardens improvements. See article on page 12.









Newsletter 174 December 2016