

# Redland & Cotham Amenities Society



Annual Report

Open Gardens Colour Supplement

Planning, Students, Parks

Redland High School, Redland Bowls



Number 177 - September 2017





Front cover: Angela and Will enjoy a few moments of tranquility

Above: Garden owners on the Saturday before Open Gardens meet for tea before walking round all the gardens

Below: Gardeners walk round in the sunshine to admire each others' efforts



## ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

The world has seen extraordinary changes in the last year, with a general election, Brexit and President Trump taking centre stage in the news for much of the time. Whilst these matters are national and international in context, they do have impact right down to our neighbourhood.

In the UK we are protected by our temperate maritime climate and don't experience the climatic extremes that we see on the news, but it's still fair to say that even in Bristol we are less and less certain about the weather we can expect, we breathe more polluted air and we have to be increasingly careful to protect our natural resources.

RCAS residents have been fairly good at responding to ecological pressures. We recycle more, we walk more, we insulate our homes better and use fewer pesticides in our gardens. Nevertheless we still succumb to many of the temptations that drive global warming. We drive our cars round the city, we take long haul air flights for our holidays and we probably consume a lot more goods than we really need.

An even more direct effect on us comes through the economic impact of government policies. The long term imposition of austerity really affects us all. Education, health, law and order and many other public services are under increasing strain. RCAS is not a political organisation but we have a role in maintaining our community interests when they are directly affected. We have seen reductions in library services, we see reduced waste and recycling collections (when we should be having more) and our green spaces and play areas are under constant pressure. We campaign against adverse changes in these areas all the time.

Perhaps the most disturbing recent change is the Council policy to stop funding our parks. This flies in the face of all logic, depriving citizens of the green space that promotes health, well-being and enjoyment for virtually everyone. Whilst it is clear that the Council has been forced into very difficult decisions, due to massive cutbacks in central grants, I feel that this is a step that must be resisted. Parks are an amenity for the common good of all, they are not a self-funding economic enterprise and never should be. We need parks simply because we are human beings and they are part of our healthy life.

Enough of my rant but do consider your 'green footprint' and do your bit for the environment. If there is one thing you can do right now, it is to sign the council petition against the park cuts (see more on page 25)

On a more cheery note, RCAS has had another good year. Our major events, the May Fair and Open Gardens, have both gone extremely well. The sunny weather for Open Gardens produced such a flurry of lovely photographs that the editor is trying out a 'colour supplement' in this edition. What do you think? Maybe you can spot yourself or your garden.

The results of our membership survey showed that whilst nearly everyone likes this newsletter, there is a need to update and widen the scope of the RCAS website. Many thanks to Alison Bromilow, Bina Shah and Kathryn Armitstead for all their hard work on this and I'm pleased to announce that we will be launching a re-designed website for RCAS in the coming weeks. The announcement will initially go out to all RCAS members who are on the email list. (i.e. you receive RCAS

news by email). If you are a member and currently do not receive news by email and would like to do so, then please complete the online form at <http://www.rcas.org.uk/joining-r-cas>. Further news about the website launch will go out by email and there will be more details in the December newsletter.

As ever I must thank members and committee members for all the hard work done for RCAS during the year. The committee does the lion's share of the work and they all deserve hearty thanks and congratulations. Come and hear more from them at the AGM.

The newsletter delivery system continues to work well, delivering over 600 newsletters four times a year for no cost. We all owe enormous thanks to our distributors.

In spite of the challenges, RCAS is a fun organisation to be part of and if you think you might have something to offer, please get in touch. We would be particularly delighted to recruit

members with young families who have a very different perspective to those older retired members. I know how busy family life can be and there never seems to be a spare minute but if you could find time, even for a small role, it could be really beneficial to the local community.

Many thanks again to so many people who support the society, too many to mention by name.

I do hope to see you at the AGM. In an effort to 'ring the changes' we are having this year's meeting at Redland Green School. Please don't turn up at the wrong venue!

Best wishes and don't forget to sign the parks petition (and get your friends and family to do so as well - the more signatures the better!)

Helen Wilde

## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

A big 'thank you' to our distributors who have been busy over the summer delivering the May newsletter and collecting subscriptions. Members continue to sign-up to paying by Standing Order and if anyone else would like to set up a mandate in advance of the 2018 subscriptions please contact Kathryn Armitstead, membership secretary, at [membership@rcas.org.uk](mailto:membership@rcas.org.uk)

The membership numbers remain healthy; around 685 households are currently members of RCAS. Each year a number of members leave the area (and

hence RCAS) and new ones join; however, the overall trend is slowly downwards.

If you are aware of any neighbours who haven't joined, particularly if they are new to the area, please encourage them to join and show them the most recent newsletter so they can see the work that we do. Joining information is on the website or can be obtained from Kathryn, details as above.

**Kathryn Armitstead**  
Membership Secretary



## 45th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday 9th November 2017

7.00 for 7.30 start

### Redland Green School

Redland Court Road

Bristol BS6 7EH

Nominations for the committee should be given to Helen Wilde

0117 973 9746 or [helenwilde@yahoo.com](mailto:helenwilde@yahoo.com)

## BISHOPSTON, COTHAM AND REDLAND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

The steering group is continuing to work on the structure of the organisation, which is to replace the BCC supported Neighbourhood Partnership. The CP will cover the area of the three wards, Bishopston and Ashley Down, Cotham (which includes Kingsdown) and Redland, but will also work with groups and communities around the ward

boundaries, such as Friends of St Andrew's Park. Groups in Clifton Down ward and Horfield ward are also welcomed.

A new website will be coming shortly but in the meantime, the existing NP website [www.bcrnp.org.uk](http://www.bcrnp.org.uk) continues to be updated with news. The CP is also on Facebook 'BCR community partnership'.

**Alison Bromilow**



Street art has arrived in Redland Court Road. This is the hoarding on the building site at the rear of 12 Woodstock Road. The whole image is based on Alice Through the Looking Glass and was painted by Keen Baker-Dias, a well known Bristol street artist.

## PLANNING

### Cotham School

The apparently endless expansion of the school continues, requiring more development of the site. It is obviously difficult to object to 'education projects' but it has been sad to see the original and spacious Cotham Grammar School, with its playing field (remember them?) continuously developed with buildings, parking and hard paved surfaces.

The latest expansion, consisting of 6 class rooms, meeting rooms and dining space has been submitted for planning approval. RCAS Planning Group met the design team prior to this application.

We agreed that the only possible space would be facing Cotham Lawn Road, set back behind and partly on, the large car parking area (see below). The building's immediate outlook, a sea of parked cars at the front and the high fencing of the

Multi-use Games Area (MUGA) sports area at the back, are unfortunate.

The new building would be two storeys high, mostly in brick, and reasonably appropriate alongside the original 1930's Cotham Grammar School building. However, the part next to the original building features a steeply pitched gable, with metal cladding. We consider this architectural treatment to be obtrusive and inappropriate in this street, and disrespectful to the original school building, which is designated a Landmark Building and an unlisted Building of Merit in the Cotham and Redland Conservation Area Character Appraisal.

### Proposed Gym

#### Clifton Down Station approach

The property in the upper level of the two storey buildings next to Clifton



The site of the proposed new development at Cotham School



Down shopping centre previously occupied by Dorma, the nightclub, has been the subject of a couple of planning applications recently. The first was for residential use and the current application is for a 24 hour, 7 day a week gym.

RCAS has not objected to the change of use, provided that issues with possible noise are dealt with, but has objected to the overprominent signage which is proposed in a separate application (17/04234/A and 17/03716/F). Pending.

### **Redland High School, Redland Court**

The planning application for Redland Court is now in and RCAS are disappointed that the proposed reinstatement of windows in the Court building with Georgian style multipaned sashes as discussed at pre-application stage has not been included, nor has the removal of the canopies on the front and back of the building which were added at a later stage.

RCAS remains concerned at the height and design of the new three storey town houses along Redland Court Road which lie at the back of the hall. We feel that they are out of scale and character with the existing residential buildings along this road and will have an overbearing impact on the houses opposite.

### **Redland Junior School.**

Two applications for change of use to residential use have been made. RCAS is not objecting. Further applications are likely once the use is established. Pending.

### **Hampton Lane Garage**

Back of 79 Whiteladies Road. Residential development. RCAS has objected on grounds of loss of employment, poor quality accommodation and overdevelopment. Pending.

### **1-3 Cotham Road South**

Objected to proposal to change use of launderette to residential accommodation. Refused.

### **Front garden change to off-street parking**

The number of applications to create off street parking continues unabated, apparently. RCAS is concerned when this impacts on the streetscape of the area because of removal of front boundary walls and hedges and of planting, which provides an attractive setting for buildings in the area, and objects in principle to loss of greenspace which benefits the wider community.

There is no advantage to the community of single off-street parking spaces, as this simply eliminates an on-street parking space, so reducing the amount of residents' parking (RP) available. We are disappointed the Highways Department is not being more proactive in objecting to loss of on-street parking in residents' parking scheme areas as we feel that this may lead to RP schemes becoming unviable.

### **Small residential units in back gardens**

There are currently a number of very small housing developments being proposed in back and side gardens in our area. RCAS deals with each one on its own merits but does raise concerns about some of them on grounds of lack of outside space for the occupants of the new or existing buildings, particularly when we feel this will lead to issues with waste and recycling management (ie when insufficient provision is made for bins and boxes to be kept off pavements).

There are national housing standards which have to be complied with, unless the occupants are students! This means

that there is no adaptability of residential accommodation in the event of a change in the housing or further education market.

### **University of Bristol, Tyndall Avenue**

An application for the pedestrianisation of Tyndall Avenue is expected in September. RCAS has attended the stakeholder sessions, although this is outside our area, because of the importance of the transport route through to the Triangle

and Park Street particularly for the local buses which serve our area. The proposal is to widen St Michael's Park, using university land, to ensure that the cross-town link is preserved.

Information is on the UoB website  
[www.bristol.ac.uk/estates/projects/tyndallplace/](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/estates/projects/tyndallplace/)

**Alison Bromilow**  
**Roger Mortimer**  
**Simon Birch**

## **ZOO PARKING ON THE DOWNS**

The application was approved by the Planning Committee on May 17<sup>th</sup>. Having recited all the planning policy reasons for rejection the Planning Officer nonetheless recommended approval. The Committee were clearly unhappy but none took their reluctance as far as opposing approval.

The Committee were swayed by the overall aims of Bristol Zoo and claims about the dire financial effects of not being allowed to park visitors' cars on the Downs. The latter claim had been challenged by Downs for People, a group including accountants and lawyers.

RCAS, Bristol Civic Society, FoDAG (Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge), Ramblers, CAP (Conservation Advisory Panel) all objected to the Zoo's application.

At the last minute the Zoo director stated that if this consent was granted the Zoo would not apply again for Downs use when the present 3 year consent would expire, end of 2019. However the offer was hedged about with reservations about the Public Transport situation at end of

2019.

For the last 50 years 80% of Zoo visitors have arrived by car and the Zoo's latest Travel Plan offers no new strategies to reduce car use over the next three years. It is thus difficult to see how the Zoo's undertaking can be relied upon. (incidentally, it is not just 'families from South Wales' who come by car; plenty of Bristol and local visitors, including Zoo Members, come by car).

Although not a 'planning consideration' the very small sum of £7,500 that the Zoo pays the Downs Committee for the Ladies Mile parking was revealed. The Zoo now has to agree terms with the Downs Committee for 2018 and 2019. The Zoo also pays rent to Downs Committee for all year parking use of the area of Downs by their entrance. Realistic charging by the Downs Committee for both parking sites could oblige the Zoo to do more to promote non car borne visiting.

The current Council proposals withdrawing funding of parks, including the Downs, is sure to load the dice further in favour of unsuitable use. A depressing thought.

**Roger Mortimer**



## REDLAND HIGH SCHOOL REUNION EVENTS 2017



Former pupils, members of staff, parents and friends of the school were able to visit Redland High School for Girls for two reunion events held on June 17th and July 1st.

Redland High School closed its doors at the end of the Summer term after 135 years of educating girls (and on occasions Infants and Junior School boys too). Fond farewells to Redland Court and the Junior School in Grove Park were mixed with lots of happy memories of school life. Redland High School has now merged with Redmaids to become Redmaids' High School. The new school opens in September at Westbury on Trym and a new chapter in Bristol's educational provision begins.

Generations of former pupils attended the reunion events organised by the School and by the Old Girls' Guild; some were recent leavers who are currently studying at university or in their first

jobs but others were returning after many years to reminisce about their school days and to meet old friends. From the ages of 18 to 85 a common bond united the visitors. Over 700 people attended each of the two reunion days. They were busy and lively occasions.

Redland High School for Girls was founded in 1882 and the original premises were located in rented houses in 27 and 28 Redland Grove. By the spring of 1882 there were 47 pupils. The school grew in numbers quickly and its expansion necessitated new premises so the Governing Council considered possible solutions.

In July 1884 Redland Court was for sale with an asking price of £6,000 and the Governors decided to take a bold step. Negotiations took place and Redland Court was purchased for the sum of £5,500. The first Headmistress Miss Elizabeth Cocks led her pupils and staff

into Redland Court for the very first time at the start of the Summer term in 1885.

*A pupil at the time recalled, 'You may imagine the excitement with which the 70 or 80 girls formed a long line, and under the Headmistress' guidance, explored the long and narrow passages, the winding stairs, the panelled rooms.....It was good to be alive that day. The long gilt mirrors of the main corridor and the crimson corded silk of the library walls impressed us most vividly....and the beautiful oak staircase.'*

The reunions gave everyone an opportunity to revisit the beautiful campus, to walk the corridors, wander through classrooms, recall childhood memories and to re-connect with former classmates and colleagues. The Junior and Senior School, the Art Centre and the Music School were all open for exploration.

The Old Girls' Guild and the Archives Group had assembled fascinating displays of old school uniform and memorabilia and had arranged photographic displays and albums, all of which stimulated much discussion and many anecdotes. Long forgotten events were remembered, frequently and with much hilarity. Films of school events from 1932 through to the 21st century ran in a continuous loop. The familiar buildings and architectural features of John Cossins' mansion formed a constant and consistent backdrop for the ever-changing generations of children and teachers. The fashions of various periods of school history, as hemlines rose and school hats became things of memory, were also very interesting to see.

The Old Girls' Guild had organised a sumptuous afternoon tea for all visitors in the School Hall and this was much appreciated by everyone. The noise

level in the Hall was immense as news was exchanged and greetings called out in recognition of a former classmate or favourite teacher. Many current and former teachers and three former Headmistresses were able to attend and there was lots of laughter and chat. Redland girls can certainly talk!

Former pupils travelled very long distances to attend the final reunions, some coming from Canada, New Zealand, Switzerland, France and the Middle East. Others had made the journey from all over the UK in order to join those former Redlandites who live more locally in Bristol and the South West.

Both days were joyous celebrations of Redland High School. Glorious summer sunshine, blue sky and heat blessed both Saturdays and hundreds of photographs were taken to record the event. Photographs on the Terrace outside the Headmistress' study, the traditional location for many celebrations and pictures over the last 133 years, reflect the celebratory nature of the day.

The grounds, and Redland Court itself, could not have looked more splendid as everyone recalled the privilege of studying and working in such a beautiful campus and supportive environment.

The School may be merging but the memories of life at Redland High will not be forgotten. In the words of the school song, "Close friends we've made, good times we've had, we never shall for-get".

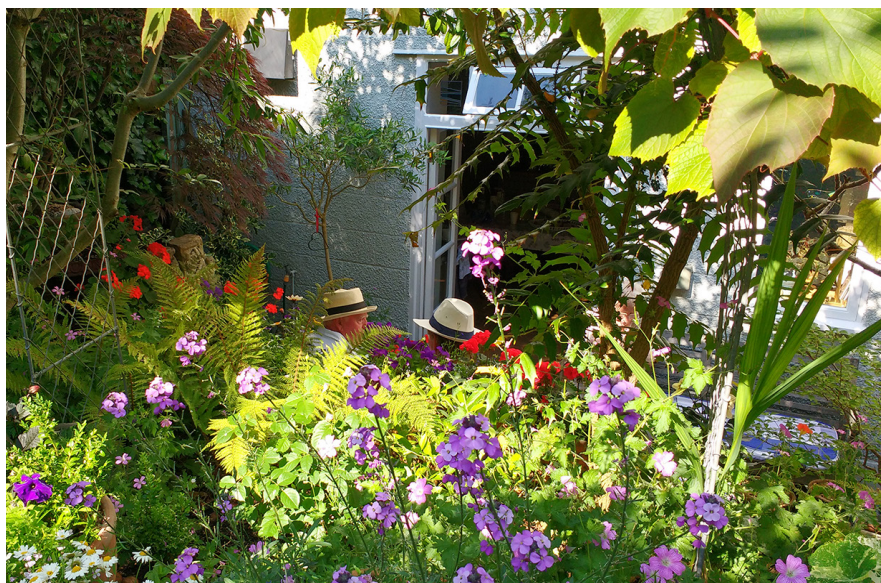
The Redland High Old Girls' Guild will be continuing to hold reunion events in Bristol and in London.

**Caroline Bateson**  
**Headmistress 2006-2015**





## Redland and Cotham Amenities Society Open Gardens 2017 - West Redland Colour Supplement



The first RCAS Open Gardens event was in 1977. In other words, people opened their gardens gates to visitors for the 40th time this summer.

We thought it might be a good way to celebrate the 40th anniversary, and also the completion of the first four-year rotation of the Open Gardens areas Cotham, East, North and West Redland, to ask the gardeners what they wanted to mention in this article. What follows is based on all their messages to us.

If you have never managed to do the annual Sunday afternoon walk round nor opened your garden to RCAS members and their friends, we hope you are inspired to do so after reading some of the comments in this article.

*'We had a wonderful weekend, enjoying meeting other gardeners and welcoming visitors to our own garden.'*

*'Having lived in Redland for 25 years, Open Gardens allows a very special peek behind the street frontage. We have even found streets we didn't know existed!'*

*'It is such a treat to see so many different gardens: some of them the size of a small city park, some of them divided in to 'rooms' to weave through not knowing what you are going to see next. This year it was really lovely re-visiting gardens which opened four years ago and seeing how they had developed and changed - like revisiting old friends and catching up.'*

All of them: *'tranquil oases in which you can forget you are in the heart of the city.'*

In spite of performance nerves, KellyAnn, Judith and Lesley, who have been organizing the event for four years now, have so far found no shortage of members

brave enough to open.

This year there were gardeners who opened for the first time:

*'Twelve years ago we inherited a sloping meadow full of builders debris, just off Blackboy Hill. We now enjoy a lawned garden full of plants trees. It was my husband's birthday and he enjoyed his day. Visitors were all very appreciative and it has given me new motivation.'*

Other gardeners have opened their gardens quite a number of times:

*'Over 19 years the distinction between the Japanese influenced and more contemporary design has become blurred, giving a somewhat different but more comforting aspect to the garden.'*

One of the main reasons that people cheerfully open their private gardens is to make sure the work that needs doing, gets done:

*'We opened our garden for you and found it a great incentive to get it all immaculate for viewing.'*

There are other very good reasons as well:

*'I was motivated to take part by a major life event this year. It helped to have a calm haven on which to focus ... it was a tonic to devote time to.'*

*'I am no longer able to garden at all due to disability. So I was thrilled to be 'On The List', as I absolutely love my garden, which is kept under control by my hardworking and kind young gardener. He comes for a day per month. It is frustrating not to be able to work alongside him these days, but I think I want to say to fellow garden addicts, that the world does not actually end when*





*you yourself can't garden any more.'*

Planning to have visitors (anywhere between 35 and 75) means that for some people it is an opportunity to renew decking and lighting. Long planned garden landscaping, for instance, ponds were finally dug, lined and filled. Indeed ponds and other ways of having water in our gardens have become one of the features of Open Gardens. This year we gazed at two beautiful long reflecting ponds with sculptures in them; a garden that was almost all pond, a rill with a glass bridge over it; little wooden bridges over water; a tiny pond in a wooden barrel that has evidently now become the 'Des Res' for a large number of frogs who prefer it over larger, purpose built accommodation just down the road.

In one steeply terraced garden, your reward for venturing up the steps that blended in beautifully with the surrounding plants, was a fairytale-like water feature made from a very old sink and tap.

Many people who are thinking about opening their gardens are concerned to know about the amount of work and preparation time needed. Unfortunately there really is no accurate answer we can pass on.

Some people plan and work really well in advance but even so human error can slip in:

*'I had decided I would be opening in 2017 a few years back so I made sure that I got most of the planting done in 2016 despite the fact that the hard landscaping really wasn't finished. We planted before the paving was done, which is unusual, and may be not the best way to do things. At the start of this year I went out and turned*

*the soil over, I then realised that I had accidentally 'removed' some of the plants. I made a mental note for next year not to do that again!'*

*'Having got everything very well on the way, my son got into football and started knocking the plants around. I had to ban him from the garden.'*

Most people do work in advance but even then nature can of course play tricks:

*'Treating the grass early did pay off; weeds were slightly less prolific than usual and it looked reasonably green! We cut the hornbeams early this year to make sure they were as shapely as possible for the event. The one potential problem was I had lost a lot of perennials over the winter, so had to fill the gaps with some annuals, but on balance it all looked very pretty.'*

Some people planned and worked in advance but the quest for perfection dictated that:

*'I was still on my hands and knees finishing off before opening at 2pm, having started the final tidy at 7am in my bikini in order to work on my suntan as it was a lovely day.'*

*'I re-positioned several plants between 11pm and midnight the day before. Fantastic.'*

But just to encourage you that it can be wonderfully relaxing to take part in the event as a gardener:

*'Committing to open did not actually take any more time than I normally put into the garden. It tends to look after itself apart from 3 hour visits every 4-6 weeks from the wonderful gardener.'*

(For a little list of the professionals used this year by our gardeners see the









forthcoming pull-out in the December issue.)

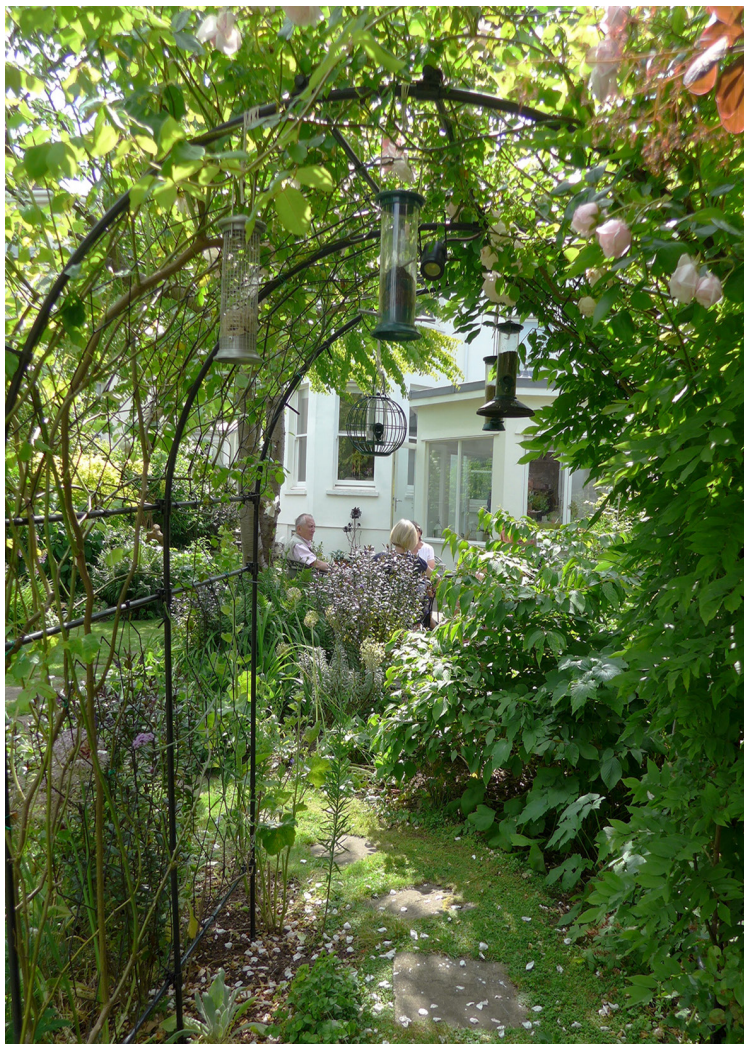
This year one garden was especially organised for children of all ages:

*'We made a treasure hunt for children to follow, things like 'can you find an orange flower/fairly house/dragon's cave/where a frog might live?' and so forth, to encourage visitors to feel relaxed about exploring the whole garden.'*

This was great fun and looked so bright

and cheerful as you walked in. There was also a range of tiny cups on display with plants in them.

The day before the main Open Gardens Sunday afternoon, the year's gardeners walk around each other's patches because they won't necessarily want to leave their own gardens during the event. This is really lovely not only because they get to meet and chat (have tea and eat cake), but also because one of the reasons for walking round the gardens is to pick up ideas.



A comment from a visitor to this year's Open Gardens and who will be opening in future, might inspire you to do the Sunday afternoon walk round in 2018, which will be in Cotham.

*'I loved one of the gardens as it had so much height to the growth. So I'm aiming in my garden for five trees in a tiny garden Holly, Olive, Acer, Plum and Quince grown high to get growth underneath and*

*with some amateur attempts at 'La taille de transparence'. I love this idea of pruning trees into a open, natural shape to allow air and light to circulate.'*

The passionate hobbyists of Open Gardens also turn to magazines and the many extraordinary places that open to the public in the National Garden Scheme ([ngs.org.uk](http://ngs.org.uk)) and of course the National Trust.







*'I was particularly wanting white flowers after Sissinghurst, so I went for white guara, geraniums, nicotiana, echinacea, and cosmos, many of which are still flowering in abundance now alongside the white hibiscus and the graceful tall slim white Japanese anemones.'*

The Stars of the show are the gardeners because without their hard work Open Gardens would not exist. No matter how inventive and beautiful the hard landscaping perhaps the co-stars of the event are the plants and trees and the gardeners think long and hard about them.

*'I had thought of a lavender hedge to replace some viburnum. Lavender looks great, but only for a limited time, so I decided to alternate with some hebe, and fill in the space behind with white cosmos and white nicotiana. It looked quite respectable.'*

The organisers want to say that it actually looked really beautiful.

*'Opening for Open Gardens meant that I had to stop prevaricating about plants. I picked what I liked and filled space. By and large this has worked and I have learnt a lot for next year.'*

*'I agonized for years about the choice of plants. Finally with opening on the horizon, I focused on what had thrived in previous years and that I liked. There are now, for instance, several colours of astrantia, lots of varieties of digitalis (foxgloves), one with tiny blossom called Lutea, a variety with plump white flowers and grey leaves and the blousy, repeat flowering Chinese Foxglove (Rehmannia).*

*I learnt this year, by accident, that having a colour palate is brilliant but it's even better, in my garden, if I am not absolutely rigid, tiny bits of contrast refresh the eye.'*

*'Our purple mange-tout were of great interest (and have been tasty as well!) However, the top attraction was our very friendly cat Beryl!'*

Among the many plants and trees that caught visitor's eyes we thought that the deep wine red, little pin-cushion like flower of Knautia and the striking deep bluey mauve spikes of Salvia Caradonna deserve a mention. Both plants are pretty reliable perennials so not only are they nice to look at but they make gardening that bit easier!

It is difficult to choose the ideal time for the event and we would like to hear from you about this. One gardener has suggested that:

*'The Gardens would look even more glorious if the event was held a couple of weeks earlier. Peonies, wisteria, irises are past their best very often in June. Could the second May Bank Holiday Sunday be considered?'*

While another gardener observed:

*'On the day of the event my garden had no flowers at all. Everything's burgeoning like mad now in July. But, as I told it, too late!'*

So it may be that whatever we Homo Sapiens carefully plan, the magnificent forces of nature ultimately dictate what's blooming in the garden. By the way, the less than flowered garden written about above was a really attractive, almost secret, front garden with winding paths, bowers, lots of plant interest and a pond. Only the gardener, certainly not the visitors, noticed any lack of bloom.

As usual some of the gardeners sold tea and cake for charity. This year £90.00 was raised for St Peter's Hospice, £162 for the Julian Trust for the Homeless and £100



was raised for HomeStart. We would like to thank these people for putting in over and above for such important causes.

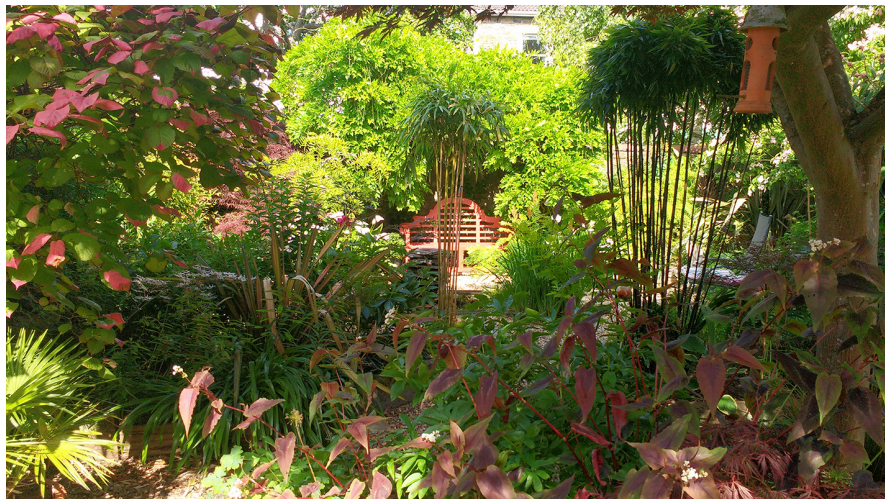
If you live in Cotham, we hope to see you when we start walking round looking for gardens in 2018 and we hope the last words from one of our gardeners will help in your decision to welcome RCAS members into your patch:

*'When a neighbour suggested that I open my garden for the Redland and Cotham Amenities Society event, I was a little alarmed, but the organisation is such a good thing and so worthy of support, I agreed.'*

**Lesley Benson**

**On behalf of the Open Gardens team**









It was a long afternoon for some but it was well worthwhile to visit so many nooks and crannies and resting places in beautiful surroundings

The real heroes of Open Gardens were organisers KellyAnn Hocking, Judith Headley and Lesley Benson





## COTHAM HILL IN BLOOM

Once again Cotham Hill is enhanced with flowers until the end of October. This scheme is promoted by RCAS as a not for profit initiative. It is intended to help make the street a colourful attractive environment in which to shop, reinforcing community spirit and neighbourhood identity. In 2016 the display again won a Gold Award in the Bristol in Bloom Competition. Both the Brewhouse and Kitchen and the Penny also won awards in the category for pubs.

The approach to the scheme had to change this year. Due to the council's spending freeze and the Neighbourhood Partnership's demise, no small grants were available which previously had helped pay for lamp post baskets. RCAS hopes that the increased number of planters

(7) and hanging baskets (2) on traders' premises helps make up for the lack of hanging baskets on the lamp posts. This year will be the last that RCAS promotes the Cotham Hill in Bloom Scheme. Hopefully traders and residents will think it worthwhile to organise it themselves next year. Thanks to the following for their support in 2017 and we encourage RCAS members to shop there:

Travis Perkins  
Costa Coffee  
BS6 Community Magazine  
Ministry of Beauty  
Simon Lee's Aesthetic Clinic  
Rubicon Too  
Residents of Cotham and Westfield Park

**Gillian Penrose**

## MAY FAIR UPDATE

As a result of the bucket collection at this year's May Fair plus gift aid and donations we were able to give £2,345 to our nominated charity Caring in Bristol; a small local charity which helps homeless and vulnerable people in Bristol. Thank you to everyone for giving so generously.

[www.caringinbristol.co.uk](http://www.caringinbristol.co.uk)

If you enjoyed this year's May Fair, have you considered joining our pool of volunteers?

- Would you enjoy helping to organise the stalls?
- Are you a foodie with or without catering experience?
- Are you good with spreadsheets and administration?
- Are you practical and well-organised?

If the answer to any of the above is 'yes', please email; [mayfairinfo@rcas.org.uk](mailto:mayfairinfo@rcas.org.uk) to find out more about being part of making the May Fair happen.

**Abigail Shepherd**

**On behalf of the May Fair Committee**

### **John Cossins, Redland Court**

Former Headmistress of Redland High School, Mrs Caroline Bateson, has recently completed research into the life of John Cossins, the 18th century owner and builder of Redland Court and Redland Chapel. Many of the roads and houses in Redland are located on land originally belonging to Cossins and his Redland Court estate. The RACS is supporting publication of her pamphlet on Cossins and it will be available for purchase later in the autumn. More details will follow.

## STUDENT LIAISON

### How to survive the new academic year!

Hopefully it will be quiet in your street at the start of the new academic year. In order to pave the way to getting on together we recommend a 'meet and greet' approach with your new neighbours to facilitate their integration into the community. This approach has been found to pay great dividends in previous years.

If you are adversely affected by a student house in your area or are suffering antisocial behaviour in your street and you are able to identify which house the students live in we first recommend a face to face conversation so that they realise the effects of their behaviour. If this does not work and further problems occur then this is the time to register the problem with the relevant bodies. There is a well-established route to follow to air any problems with those parties who have an influence and responsibility on securing solutions.

The RCAS website is the first port of call, where under the heading 'student liaison' you will find links to the University of Bristol and the University of the West of England accommodation offices, and also Bristol City Council (BCC).

Last but not least, it may be worth contacting the landlord or the letting agent. The landlord is licensed by BCC and has a responsibility to exercise control

over their tenants if their behaviour is unacceptable. The landlord must be a 'fit and proper person' to hold a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) license and must take reasonable action to facilitate the quiet enjoyment by neighbours to their HMO, or risk losing their license.

Contact details of Landlord and/or Letting Agent can be obtained from the BCC Private Housing Department, email: [luke.spanton@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:luke.spanton@bristol.gov.uk)

The current approach from BCC housing is that one can obtain contact details and housing details for 3 HMOs for free. We have asked BCC to publish the HMO register on their website as many other Local Authorities do. Bath and North East Somerset Council, for example, does publish the register on their website.

Apologies if you have heard this said so many times before, but those who make policy over the future strategy of student accommodation in our residential areas need to know what we are thinking and feeling and can only be made aware by the reporting of what is actually happening.

If your student neighbours are driving you mad please report your problem, help is at hand!

**Rob Harris**

## PARKS

A petition calling on Bristol City Council (BCC) to withdraw its budget proposal to stop funding Bristol's Parks from April 2019, and to work with Bristol Parks Forum and others to develop a realistic alternative to their proposal to rely on revenue generated from parks events and outside sources, has reached 2941 signatures at the time of writing. It needs 3500 to be debated in full council.

There are many budget cuts proposed but none as radical as that proposed for parks. Parks are already underfunded, because they are an easy target, not being a service that local authorities must statutorily provide. However, the benefits of parks are not taken into consideration; it is difficult to monetise the physical and mental health benefits for users and for the wider communities but if parks and trees didn't exist, particularly in high density built up areas, the environment and community would suffer.

Increased residential population is putting a great strain on parks services, as those of you who are park users will no doubt be aware. Many local people do what they can by clearing up litter, removing graffiti,

helping with planting and maintaining planting, but the community is not in a position to take on tree management or grass cutting, so a proper solution must be found.

If you haven't signed the petition, please consider doing so as soon as possible in order that this can be properly debated. Go to the Bristol City Council website and put 'petitions' in the search box. It is petition 3842, Protect our Parks. The petition closes on 31st October.

### Cotham Gardens

Litter has been a big problem this year for the park. During the summer (ie not August!) there was a very large number of people using the park for picnics and barbecues and leaving their waste behind, whether there was space in the bins or not. BCC has been running a campaign asking people to take their litter home with them if the bins are full but the council has concentrated on city centre parks and has not included Cotham Gardens, despite the fact that our area has one of the greatest densities of residents per park. Following the problems in June, there was an increase in frequency of litter



Heavy usage of Cotham gardens and the play area during the sunny summer weather

bin collection by BCC parks dept.

Thanks to everyone in RCAS who helps by picking up litter and to members of the BCR street scene group who regularly clear streets and parks and report issues.

The parks bench renewal project has still to be started, nearly a year since the money was made available. RCAS decided to ask Parkwork to carry out the work, but we are still waiting for a programme of work to be agreed since our meeting with Parkwork and BCC parks officer at the end of April.

### Redland Green

The reduction in the BCC Parks maintenance budget has also been noticeable this year on Redland Green. Maintenance issues and related problems

seem to take much longer to be dealt with and the grass is being cut less frequently. We urge everyone to sign the Bristol Parks Forum petition (Go to the BCC website and put 'petitions' in the search box. It is petition 3842, Protect our Parks).

Council charges have also been raised considerably and the licence for the May Fair from BCC is being costed at £2500 for 2018 as opposed to £375 in 2017, a more than sixfold increase!

Hopefully there will be no more parking on the grass along Woodstock Road. Double yellow lines were painted on Woodstock Road

on 12th July 2017 with thanks to BCR Neighbourhood Partnership support on the issue (see adjacent photograph).







Some of the new carving on the 'teen seats' on Redland Green

The fence repair around the play area was completed on 3rd May with thanks to Redland Church for donation of the fence panels (see photograph opposite).

The Redland Green Community Group have continued with the tree planting scheme and a number of new trees went in this year. We are still waiting for work to start on the 'Lucy post'; the freestanding electricity supply which will be available for use by the ice-cream vans and at the May Fair in the future. This project is being paid for using money raised by the Redland May Fair in 2016.

In January, Andy O'Neill completed carving the uprights of the 'Teen seating' with images of leaves of trees and shrubs to be found in Redland Green, with thanks to grants from Bishopston, Cotham and

Redland Neighbourhood Partnership and Dr Jazz Charitable Funds.

Regular activities such as replacement tree planting, watering of new trees and litter picking continued as usual throughout the year.

A Facebook group now exists for those interested, entitled Redland Green Playground Improvement Group. We are also grateful for the efforts of our BCC parks Manager Teija Ahjokoski and Adrian Murdoch, Parks maintenance team manager and his team.

For more detailed information on Redland Green Community Group's activities over the year the AGM was held on 11th May 2017 and the minutes can be found on RGCG website.

**Alison Bromilow  
Lois Goddard**



## BOWLS ON THE GREEN

Everyone who has walked on Redland Green has passed the secluded corner surrounded by trees and shrubs where the bowling green lies with its perfect square of smooth grass.

The Club has been there since 1952, starting with a wooden hut, but now there is a comfortable and well equipped Club House.

There are about fifty of us who love this gentle but highly competitive sport which takes place between April and September.

There must be 40 or 50 bowling greens around Bristol's parks, but the sport is struggling for numbers. It is true that most of us are over 60, but Hey! what is wrong with that? The sport is as active as you can get without having to run and, believe me, after a full afternoon's bowls, you sleep well.

I took up bowls as I approached retirement, looking for new friendships and challenges. Bowls provided both.

Redland Green Bowling Club is having a good year, being runner up in the Gloucestershire Two Rink Cup held in Moreton-in-Marsh, fighting to remain in the First Division of the Bristol and District League and with the second team pressing for promotion to the first division of the North East Bristol league. Those members who have a less competitive approach have plenty of time for non competitive roll-ups on a Monday evening.

When there is a match on, anyone is welcome to come and watch. Better still, come down on a Monday evening and ask for an introduction to the game. You'll find it a very friendly club; we are



Colin shows how it's done whilst his opponent looks on intently

always looking for new members, and we're not all old codgers!

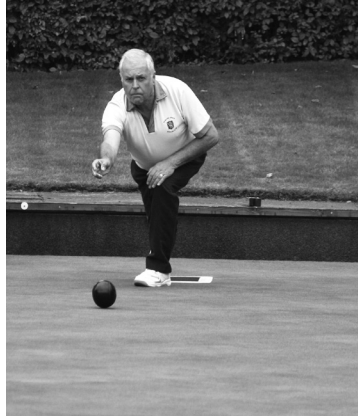
It is hard to define exactly what is the lure of bowls. Certainly, there is the calm beauty of the surroundings, broken by the cries of 'Well you bowled' and 'Shot wood!'

I do not miss golf and cricket, because I know how I would struggle to keep up with the youngsters.

There is also the camaraderie. A bowls match can involve up to 48 players on the green at a time and every match involves

a chat beforehand and a drink afterwards.

With 8 players per rink, there are 16 woods vying for the jack, which doesn't leave much room for the last, and often decisive, shot.



Club Members come from far and wide, but many live in Redland and, as you know, the Green is always open during the May Fair for people to try their hand at a sport which seems so simple, but requires great skill to master.

**Colin Sara**



Focus and concentration are an essential ingredient in the game



## **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](mailto: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.





