

Redland & Cotham Amenities Society



Annual Report
Open Gardens
Student Noise
Planning, Parks
Street Scene, Trees



Number 181 - September 2018



Above: Members enjoy the gardens while Yasmin, Amelie and Blanche sell cakes to raise funds for the City of Bristol Rowing Club Juniors
Front Cover: Lucy, Reuben and Bill enjoy Open Gardens above the crowds

ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

Perhaps the biggest shock and disappointment for RCAS in the last year has been the announcement that the Redland May Fair is no more. Our amazing May Fair committee decided, quite understandably, that they couldn't carry on without new blood after failing to get more volunteers to join the committee. Rising costs and increasing regulation also contributed to the decision.

At present there are no plans for a May Fair in 2019. Of course it could still happen, or it could re-emerge in the years to come. We all owe a massive debt of gratitude to Julie Hart and her team, past and present, for all the hard work they have put in to this well loved event.

RCAS, like many voluntary organisations and charities, struggles to get sufficient volunteers to act as committee members, trustees or other helpers. As public funding of many services diminishes we see the need for more community involvement and yet individuals and families also find themselves under pressure. The majority of families with children have both parents working and this puts pressure on time available for community activities. At the same time the pull of social media seems to work against more traditional face to face communications and events.

We can't change these big trends but it's worth thinking about what we might be able to do in our local community. Having started on a downbeat, it's important to remember that in the RCAS are we are still very fortunate in having much positive to report. Just look in this edition of the newsletter. We see a report on the wonderful annual

Open Gardens event (looking very healthy due to our brilliant organisers and generous gardeners) and there are lots of interesting events happening at Redland Library. Student issues are being addressed locally and Redland Green maintenance and development are all being carried out by dedicated groups of local 'friends' and volunteers.

Having mentioned student issues, I would like to thank Rob Harris and Andrew Waller for their hard work in lobbying locally about student matters. Of course having two excellent universities in the city contributes enormously to the city's culture and economy but the report in this issue (page 19) starkly emphasises that Redland and Cotham are in the epicentre of the student community.

We all support the rights of students to live and work in the city, after all they are our future, but much seems out of balance. It's actually quite a surprise to see that 'Chandos village' has the highest population density in the city and that almost half of this is due to students in houses of multiple occupation.

It's understandable that students would want to live in a nice residential area, close to Bristol University, all the entertainment spots and the Downs but local residents have been overwhelmed by the sheer pace and numbers of this change. This seems particularly unfair when we remember that neither students nor landlords contribute to local costs through council tax and thus the beleaguered residents are effectively subsidising this situation. Please follow this debate and lobby where you can.

You will note a small article about RCAS publications (page 11). Over the years RCAS has produced many publications which have been enjoyed by members and others. The planning of every publication involves estimating how many copies to print. Sometimes we print too many and sometimes we run out. We have, however, collected a surplus of increasingly aged documents and we are running out of space to store them. Consequently we will soon be disposing of some of the excess stock which has no significant financial value. We will keep, wherever possible, a small residual stock.

So now is the moment to decide if you want that Trees booklet or a few extra cards. Tomorrow may be too late!

I can't finish this report without thanking our wonderful RCAS committee who

keep the whole thing going. I must make particular mention of Alison Bromilow who, as any reader of this newsletter will know, contributes a huge amount.

I would also like to give my sincere thanks to our newsletter distribution team. They work incredibly efficiently and save us having to use an expensive commercial distributor.

In concluding, you would be disappointed if I didn't remind you to consider recruiting your friends and neighbours to RCAS to keep our neighbourhood as lovely as it is.

Best wishes and see you at the AGM on 14th November.

 Helen Wilde

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Once again, 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 2019 subscriptions please contact Kathryn Armitstead, membership secretary, at

membership@rcas.org.uk

We carried out a review of administration processes and communication material at the start of the year to ensure that we were compliant with the General Data Protection Regulations which came into effect in May. Overall, the review led to very few changes and the resulting

Privacy Policy can be found on the RCAS website.

The membership numbers remain healthy; around 670 households are currently members of RCAS. Each year a number of members leave the area (and hence RCAS) and new ones join. The overall trend is, however, 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

46th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 14th November 2018

7.00 for 7.30 start

Please note this is a **Wednesday**

Redland Green Bowling Club

Redland Green,

Bristol BS6 7HE

Nominations for the committee should be given to Helen Wilde
0117 973 9746 or helenwilde@yahoo.com

BISHOPSTON, COTHAM AND REDLAND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP (BCR CP)

The Bishopston, Cotham and Redland Community Partnership officially launched in February this year. This is the replacement for the council-run Neighbourhood Partnership organisation and seeks to retain the best aspects of community networking. BCR CP covers the 6 council wards but also includes groups and organisations who serve or identify with BCR CP communities in Westbury Park, Clifton Down ward or St Andrews.

Bristol City Council (BCC) still talks of their 'commitment to work in a way which grows and invests in self-determination, people-power and long-term resilience', but although the Neighbourhood Partnerships were shut down in June 2017, there has been no progress on putting in a structure which goes any way to support this commitment. All contact routes are now through generic online reporting forms

which makes it difficult to see how the council can make use of the volunteer activists who are becoming ever more discouraged.

RCAS is a founder member of the Community Partnership and, together with other residents' societies and amenity groups such as parks groups and Friends of Library groups, is supporting the CP and networking with the groups, councillors and police.

BCR CP is pressing the councillors for some clarity about the new process for allocating funding from developers, the s106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The new system has yet to bed in and there are significant flaws with the process. Some projects already allocated funding have been missed from the list of CIL monies available.

Alison Bromilow

PLANNING AND LICENSING

We have had very few large planning applications this year as we have few large sites left in the area. The Vincent, formerly Queen Victoria House on Redland Hill, is still under construction.

The development at Redland Court, formerly Redland High School, is yet to start on site as negotiations continue. The property is lying empty and lead has been stolen from the site. The developers had said they were keen to start on site as soon as possible and their team circulated a leaflet drop asking people to support the application to avoid potential damage from leaving the building empty (which a large number of people did). Nevertheless, despite the principle of development being approved and the Secretary of State deciding not to call in the application (to consider the impact on the Listed Building), the negotiations with the council about the level of s106 developer financial and affordable housing contributions are still under way.

The former Redland High Junior School houses were marketed with residential use approved but we are pleased to see that the building will remain as a nursery school, Snapdragons, opening immediately. They will use the wooden classrooms while the older buildings are refurbished. The former sixth form centre and bursar's office buildings on Woodstock Road have permission for conversion to 6 flats.

The applications to make off-street parking spaces in front gardens continue and we continue to oppose them where appropriate. In the marketing survey carried out last year, the loss of front

gardens to parking was one of the major concerns of RCAS members. Many applications involve the loss of on-street parking spaces, which means a loss of amenity for the wider community. We have understood that the highways officers now insist that the applicants pay for the Traffic Regulation Order process to make changes to the approved Residents Parking Scheme, which can be in the order of £6,000.

We always object to applications that do not comply with the Policy Advice Note 6 'Off-Street Residential Parking in Conservation Areas' and involve loss of more than 50% of a front or back garden, or an opening of greater than 3 m or 1/3 of the front boundary wall.

There have also been a number of applications to build small residential units in gardens, which we consider individually on merit. We do not oppose all development in gardens, as this is not compatible with the Bristol policy of increasing density in the city area to protect surrounding green-belt land. There are some successful examples, for example in Gibson Road where the back gardens of the Sydenham Road houses have been developed with small, two-storey houses. Where there are large enough gardens and proposals are for well-designed small houses which have a good relationship with existing buildings, good connection to transport links, well-considered parking and waste management arrangements, trees are not to be felled, and there are no issues of over-looking or over-shadowing, we will not oppose on principle. Although this is a Conservation area, not all development can be said to fail to 'conserve or enhance'

the area. Sometimes the overwhelming need for additional housing in Britain must be given weight and the local planning authority will not be able to refuse these applications, or if they do, the planning inspectorate will overturn their decisions, often awarding costs against the council.

We have been challenged recently over our perceived failure, in some cases, to support the views of local residents, but we do not think it is helpful to our members to make comments which the planning case officer cannot take into consideration. Our practice has been to get involved in the shaping of planning policy, responding to the drafting of national and local planning policy, helping with the writing of the Cotham and Redland Conservation Area Character Appraisal, providing evidence to enable the introduction of the Article 4 which meant that off-street parking proposals must have a planning application and ensuring that we make comments that are supported by the current policies.

In this way, we feel that we are more effective and do not get a reputation for being NIMBY (not in my back yard), with consequent loss of respect for our submissions to the Local Planning Authority (LPA). Planning officers cannot take account of potential loss of value of neighbouring properties, loss of views into and across adjoining properties of neighbours, or the poor site management of developers on nearby properties; three examples of objections we were asked to make recently.

Finally, we have had a larger than normal number of requests for support from residents who are concerned about applications by neighbours. Frequently

these requests are from non-members, in which case, we ask them to join the society. Can you help RCAS by encouraging your neighbours to join the society?

Planning Cases

Certificate of Lawfulness for repair of the Drinking Fountain at the top of Cotham Hill, Hampton Road.

A programme of repair of drinking fountains has been proposed, focussing initially on those in the central area. RCAS supports the project and has offered to make a financial contribution towards the refurbishment of this and, in due course, we hope, the drinking fountain at the junction of Redland Green Road and Redland Road. We would also support the provision of a new fountain in Redland Green play area. All these projects would reduce the need for single-use plastic bottles of water, though there are continuing concerns about the possible issues of maintaining these fountains which are likely to attract vandals.

16 Clyde Road

New single storey house. RCAS did not oppose the proposal to create a small house on this site which we did not consider would have an adverse impact on the area. Local residents were largely supportive, but the application was refused. The applicant may appeal the decision.

19 Rokeby Avenue

The application for an over-large development, which would have significantly changed the height of the roof structure, has been withdrawn and a revised application for a smaller development within the existing roof structure has been submitted.

2 Elliston Road

A revised application for accommodation for the householder's parents no longer involves the demolition of the coach house adjacent to the existing house. This application has attracted a very large number of comments for its size. RCAS objected to the previous larger development proposal but has not objected to the current proposal to create a modern style two-storey extension on the side of the house.

81 Redland Road

Another small house on a site next to the railway. RCAS supported this application which was of a high standard. If only every application was as well presented, it would save us a lot of time trying to interpret poor-quality drawings.

1 Elgin Park

Conversion of existing garage to create a first-floor studio. Approved.

25 Redland Park

A garage was demolished and re-erected forward of the former position without permission. The LPA has decided not to enforce this breach which is regrettable as the new building signally fails to enhance or conserve the area. Local councillors, the Conservation Advisory Panel and RCAS had all raised this case, as had a number of neighbours. It is debatable whether requiring the owner to demolish the structure would have been supported at appeal, so we assume this is the reason for the disappointing lack of LPA enforcement. This case shows the importance of alerting the LPA while the building is under way, when changes can be made. If you are unsure whether a building project has permission, contact RCAS with details, and photos if possible, or better still,

'Report a breach of planning rules' on the BCC website.

Rear of 6 Cotham Lawn Road

New 2 storey house facing onto Trelawney Road. RCAS supported this well-designed design, provided that concerns about impacts on trees could be resolved. Again, many neighbours raised objections, so the application was considered by a planning committee rather than as a delegated (officer) decision, however there were no objectors at the meeting. The committee approved the application with conditions to ensure the safety of the trees.

15 Ashgrove Road

Once again, this development has returned, this time with a proposed increase of size by the creation of a basement level for bike storage. An expensive bike store which we think is highly likely to be a stalking horse for additional poor quality below ground accommodation. RCAS and neighbours have objected on the grounds of potential damage to trees in neighbour's gardens adjacent to the site. Planning enforcement officers are also considering the unlawful felling of 3 trees on the site.

Licensing

RCAS has objected to the application to create yet another drinking establishment on Cotham Hill. Coffee and Beer, 16 Cotham Hill, which had an off-licence but had not applied for planning permission for change of use, has now applied for a licence to serve alcohol. RCAS joins the Hampton Park and Cotham Hill Community Group in objecting to this. The disconnect between planning and licensing is frustrating.

Alison Bromilow and Simon Birch

TREE REPORT

Works which RCAS did not contend and decisions made by BCC July 2018

52B Arley Hill

To fell ash and holly trees in the rear garden, apparently diseased and causing damage. Difficult to identify from behind No. 33 Gibson Road. No comments made. Allowed

26 and 28 Redland Court Road

To fell six trees in the rear garden. Cannot be seen from the road. Allowed

Garden Flat 57 Cotham Brow

To fell a mature sycamore tree growing in the split of a shared stone wall. Allowed

10 South Road

To fell a cypress along the rear boundary of a terrace house backing onto the railway track. Allowed

45 Zetland Road

To fell a cherry laurel in the rear garden close to the house. Offer to replace with Lilac. Allowed

84 Redland Road

To fell a tall Lawsons cypress at the front gate which impedes access. Allowed

2 Archfield Road

(Archfield House Nursery School)

To prune two mature Monterey cypress (TPO 080) in the rear garden to leave a clear stem up to 8m high. Also to reduce the back of the trees facing Poppy Lane. RCAS Objected. Allowed because the clear stem is already 6m from ground.

Decisions still pending

60 Ravenswood Road

Objected (as did many neighbours) to the proposed felling of a mature copper beech in the front garden. RCAS believes this Copper Beech is worthy of a Tree Preservation Order. Decision still awaited from April.

RCAS Responses to new tree works applications in August 2018

34 Lansdown Road

To fell a goat willow which is said to be too large located in small rear garden between two rows of terrace houses. Can be seen from Kensington Road so it must be a large tree. No comment made. Applicant offers to plant a more appropriate replacement tree.

41 Northumberland Road

To fell two fir trees located close together on the common boundary of the rear gardens which is stated to shade No. 39 as well. (Garden orientation would confirm this). Can't be seen from road. No comment made. There are other trees in both gardens.

28 Redland Grove

To fell a mature yew tree in the front garden near the boundary. Applicant claims the branches are too close to the house and that the tree has caused some structural damage to pavings and low boundary walls (photos supplied but no professional report backs this up). RCAS is not convinced that there is significant structural damage nor does it impede access to the front door. The tree does hang partly over the road and the canopy may cause some shading from morning sun.

Though not a tall tree, being evergreen it adds greatly to the visual attractiveness of this side of Redland Grove especially in the winter and is of amenity value in the conservation area. It helps to mark the road junction with Kensington Road. Its berries are particularly attractive to birds and the tree itself has medicinal value.

The applicant offers to plant a replacement tree in the front garden but

there is little space and it might shade the basement. RCAS objects to the proposed felling and feels that crown reduction would be more appropriate for a tree which is slow growing and could also be worthy of a TPO listing.

45 Cotham Road

To fell dead mountain ash and dead weigela on boundaries and to prune apple and bay laurel. No comment made as the fellings and prunings are necessary. There are plenty of trees and vegetation in the garden so no loss of amenity in the conservation area would result.

The Elmgrove Centre Elmgrove Road

Because there are so many mature trees around this church RCAS accepts that felling two cypress trees will help open up the entrance. This species does not add to the attractiveness of the site or contribute to the amenity of the conservation area. Felling four hollies which are part of groups of trees along the boundaries will help thin the vegetation and reduce shading in the garden. Along Elmgrove Road boundary pruning is also proposed for other trees

including a yew, bay, cherry, plus an evergreen oak and another yew tree which are mature and very close to the church on the Redland Road frontage. All these works should help increase light into the building as well. We accept that the three very mature limes along Redland Road (TPO 357) do need to be re-pollarded. RCAS supports all these proposed works.

28 Cotham Park

To fell two holly trees on either side of front gateway. Both are tall trees with clear trunks. They do make for quite a dark entrance. One is located on a narrow raised bed close up against the stone boundary wall and the other next to a parking space. Felling is unlikely to be detrimental to the amenity of the conservation area. As there are other trees in the large garden no comments made.

Gill Penrose

RCAS SMALL GRANT SCHEME

The scheme aims to provide funds so that RCAS members can contribute to their community through small projects.

It was intended to be accessible and non bureaucratic. The process is very simple. RCAS members can send ideas via any committee member or the web site for discussion at committee. The criteria are that an RCAS member must be project lead, that the project meets the

RCAS aim of 'enhancing the community' and does not duplicate other funding streams.

There are a number of proposals currently being worked up by members and so far approval has been given to graffiti clearance, hedge laying in Redland Green, Chandos Road in Bloom and the Southfield Road street party.

Graham Rogers

GOLD STAR AWARDS - NOMINATIONS FOR 2018

We have only three nominations for our coveted Gold Star awards this year!

These are:

New houses on the corner of Nugent Hill and Sydenham Road

New house in Woodbury Lane

New infill development – ground floor retail with residential above – at 14A Chandos Road

Please get in touch if you would like to nominate any additional developments. They must be completed and visible from a public place (no rear extensions). The judging panel will be visiting all the above schemes on Sunday 23rd September, in plenty of time for the awards presentations at the AGM in November.

Simon Birch, Gold Star Awards
Simon.birch7@gmail.com

RCAS Publications

We still have stocks of several RCAS publications but these can't be stored for ever so we encourage members to purchase those they might be interested in before surpluses have to be discarded.

They include the **Trees** and **Walks** booklets as well as some editions (Nos. 1,3 and 4) of the **Living Here** booklets. These are all available at low prices.

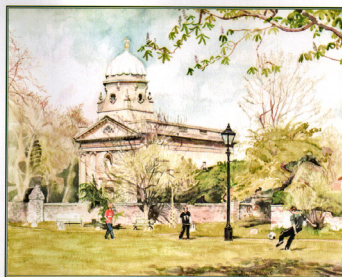
Also remember the small book on **John Cossins and Redland Court** written by Caroline Bateson at £5 each.

Finally we have good stock of **Christmas cards** (blank inside) which show watercolours by Delia Stevens, showing Redland Green and Redland Chapel. These are available at a bargain seasonal price of £1 per 20 cards (See below - size 21x15cm).

If you would like to purchase any of the above, or if you need more information, please contact me on

peter.wilde@doctors.org.uk

Peter Wilde
Newsletter Editor



OPEN GARDENS 2018

As many of you reading this article already know, the large area covered by the Redland and Cotham Amenities Association is divided in to four sections for Open Gardens. In June each year, gardens in one of these four sections open in rotation. Lesley Benson and Kelly Ann Hocking, who took over from Sarah Watson and Jane Powell in 2014, were this year starting again at the beginning of the four-year cycle.

Thank you to everyone who greeted us so pleasantly on his or her doorstep when we came to ask if you would open this year. It was a real pleasure to visit you for a second time.

Over a third of the gardens that opened in 2014 opened again this year. This is a real testament to the continuing support that people give to Open Gardens, and to RCAS.

Going back to these gardens is like visiting old friends; you sit on a stone bench or in a Mediterranean style garden and you remember and catch up, enjoying

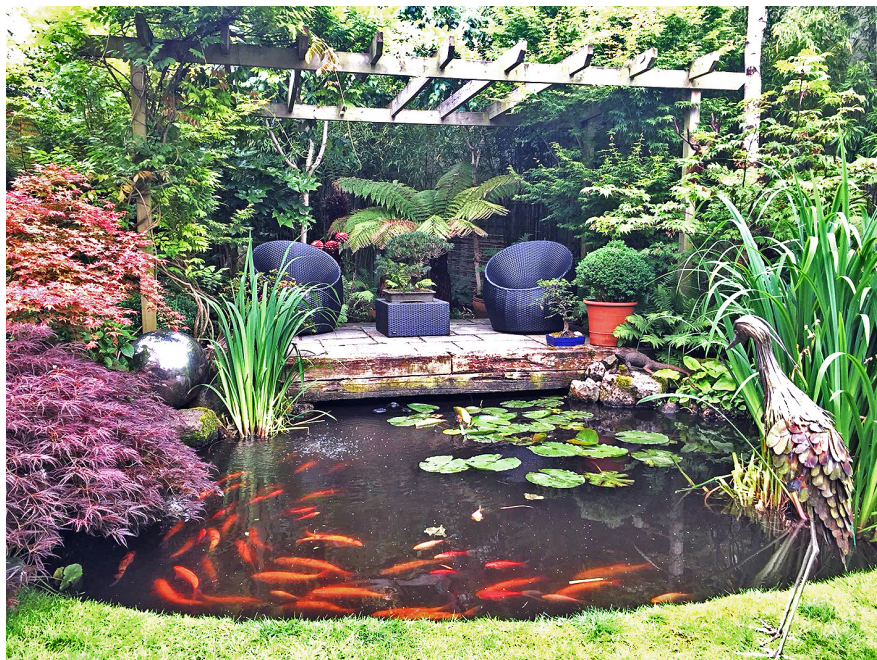
the way a garden has matured or been replanted. A shed that was clearly visible four years ago was, this year, hidden by vegetation. This was like being in a childrens' story in which good things are hidden only to magically appear as you round the corner.

It was lovely talking to the gardeners about skills they have developed over the four years, whether it be in discovering more about plants or learning how to create topiary. Oh yes! Topiary that fits beautifully into a calming, formal, contemporary garden (Jake Hobson from Niwaki ran the topiary course).

A special thank you goes to Chuck and Jess who opened their garden for the first time in 2014 and this year hosted the gardeners tea (before the gardeners' walk round the day before the main event) in their lovely, and now mature, garden complete with vegetables.

In the way of all life on this planet, there was some sadness in our visits. We would like to play tribute to several gardeners who had opened in the past and wanted





to do so this year but could not finally take part because of bereavement.

We would also like to say thank you to the fabulous young people who served drinks and glorious cake. Like plants, the visitors benefited greatly from being fed and watered. Several charities also benefited from these sales. One visitor (Councillor Anthony Negus), said I must mention Leon, and his friend also called Leon, who had delayed his 12th birthday party in order to have a homemade lemonade stall. The boys sold their wares for charity with mature panache raising £130 for the charity Help Bristol's Homeless.

The Beeston family stall raised £132 towards The City of Bristol Rowing Club's new junior boat. Please go to this link for a small film about the junior's boat.

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=TLVFO8d32iI>

This year there were also two plant stalls, the proceeds going to The Botanic Gardens and the Aid Box Community Hub, which gives aid to refugees in Bristol. Our thanks go to the gardeners who organised these stalls, as it is always very good to be able to buy some of the plants that had been admired in a

garden. Once again the gardens did not fail to surprise and delight the visitors.

As you walk along the roads in Cotham (or indeed in the whole RCAS area), you are very frequently surprised at what lies behind the walls, hedges and fences.



This year's visitors were treated to a secret courtyard that was created when a motorbike workshop had been transformed into a contemporary house. The original sign was still visible. During their own walk round all the gardeners were also treated to a second courtyard, only accessible through the house that was very simply and effectively planted with small trees and big pots of Hosta. Being afforded this sort privilege is why participating in Open Gardens is such a

great thing to do!

I think a number of us were looking forward to seeing Muller House on Cotham Park once more but Mr Pullin, the gardener, has retired. Instead we were welcomed into the pretty gardens of the West of England Friends Housing Society that has three residential homes on Cotham Park.

This summer the contrast between the gardens was really marked.

There was a tiny back garden that looked like embroidery in yellow (aquilegia) and red (geraniums), and a front garden with a tiny rockery that looked like a needlepoint tapestry. One visitor was heard to exclaim: "Oh, how cute!"

A few metres away, very well behind a wall and up some steps, we were allowed to explore a front garden and then onwards to where a huge statue of a friendly dog heralded a garden that was like an abundant small

park. People were hypnotised by the pond with fish that had its own little island on which there was a table and chairs. Each of the beds in this garden was planted so they could be enjoyed from the lawn or from its encircling paths.

The gardens on Ravenscroft Road tend to be steep and terraced. Each of the terraces can be like stepping into a different world. For instance a courtyard of sculptures, then up some steps to a shady mezzanine, and up more steps on to a lawn in sunlight where the next door neighbours were having a picnic on the same level as Ravenscroft Road rooves. Fairly Mary Poppins.

Alternatively there was an absolutely flat garden surrounded by high walls and spread out in front of the visitor like an

elaborate sunken jigsaw of flower beds, a pond, an extraordinary bench made of an old tree, and dotted in one area by small trees with flowers or extraordinary bark. The owners had put out bits of

old clay pipes they had found in the garden, and there was a well with a history dating back to the Civil War at which to marvel and feel connected to the past.

There is so much more to be said including remarking on the wonderful trees in the area: the big

copper birch trees on Ravenswood Road the largest of which is about 160 years old; the ginkgos; an ancient robinia and one truly amazingly huge, cherry tree. We noted that it is very valuable having parents to give you cuttings, or turning your sunny front garden into a lush vegetable patch.

Our must-buy plants include: rosa mundi, the oldest striped rose on record. A must-try planting combination: very deep red dahlia against lime green leaves.

Three years ago Kelly-ann and Lesley welcomed Judith Headley, and this year Abi Heath, into our little organising circle. Abi prompted us to start looking now for next year's patches and so she has already knocked on some people doors in East Redland.





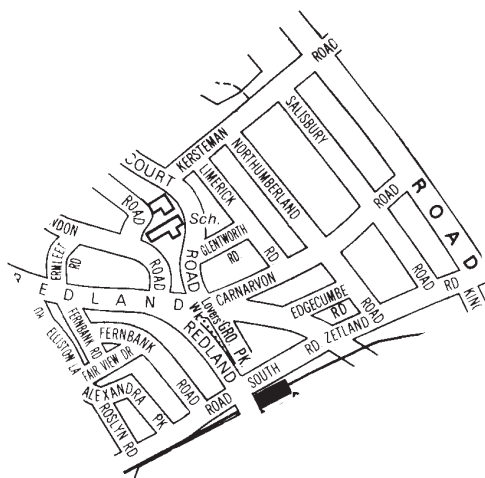




If you have a garden and love working in it, as you read this article take a glance out of your window and remember how lovely it looked this year, in spite of the lack of water.

Recall the extra touches that you promised to try out in 2019 and then, if you live in East Redland (see the map), contact us immediately to say that you would like to consider opening in June 2019!

We also say a deeply felt thank you so much to all the gardeners because it is absolutely true that this lovely and very valued community event, rests on your hard work.



East Redland
2019 Open Gardens area

Lesley Benson
on behalf of the Open Gardens
organising team

STUDENT LIAISON

Student Noise Numbers Jump

What's happening locally?

Chandos Neighbourhood Association (CNA) members held a meeting on Tuesday 3rd July at Chums pub, the main focus being 'Student Big Parties'. Residents had the chance to share their concerns and ask questions. The University of Bristol (UoB) was represented by Lynn Robinson, UoB Deputy Registrar and Joni Lloyd, UoB community liaison officer.

The Chandos area has 800 student residents making up 46% of the population and is the most densely populated part of Bristol. Complaints about student parties and other noise incidents rose sharply in the 2017-18 academic year according to figures.

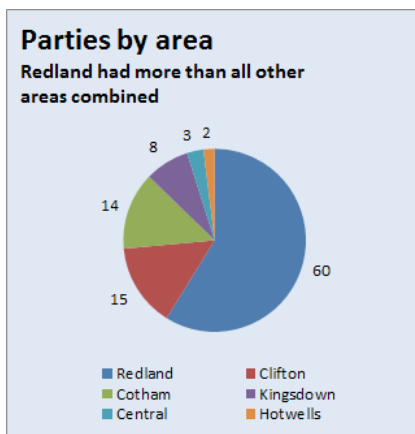
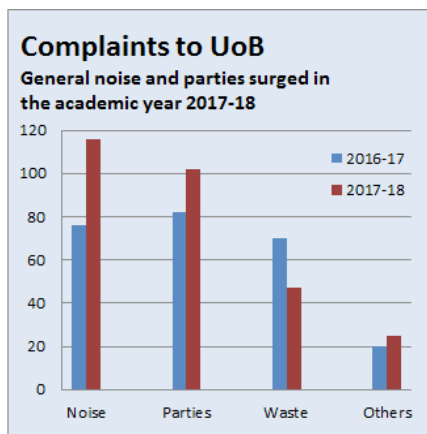
Residents had reported 102 parties, a 24% increase from 82 the previous year. There was an even bigger jump (52%) in 'general noise' complaints, covering noisy neighbour situations and any other incidents not classed as parties. The tally

for these cases was 116, up from 76 the year before. Most parties (60) took place in Redland, which had twice as many as Clifton and Cotham combined (15 and 14 respectively) - see charts below.

It was reported that CNA was aware of 13 large and intrusive student gatherings in the last year. Some of these parties had over 100 guests in a household for 5-12 people. Some parties were professional, with bouncers, DJs and professional sound systems, often starting after 10pm and finishing at 4-5am in the morning (or later). Party goers often spilled into the street and the next day the streets showed damage, debris and litter such as broken glass, sick and the smell of urine.

These events are reported to Joni Lloyd at UoB who gives great support. Students can have sanctions taken against them but these do not seem to be big enough.

At the meeting residents said that UoB could take more ownership of the



problem as students and landlords pay no council tax. UoB plans to increase student numbers by 25% and it was suggested that some of the money generated from students could be put back in to finding solutions for the student noise and behaviour problem.

The university had better news on the recycling front. Complaints about poor waste management by student households dropped by 33% to 47 from 70 a year earlier.

What's happening elsewhere in the UK?

The following Initiatives in other cities to manage students in the community were discussed.

Newcastle runs 'Operation Oak' (more bobbies on the beat) where police, council and university work together to provide extra patrols, paid for by the university, with on the spot fines for unacceptable behaviour.

Newcastle's universities pay to put police on the streets to keep the lid on end of exam celebration parties. Through 'Operation Oak' a £50,000 joint initiative pays for extra patrols on Friday and Saturday nights during term time and now provide extra funding for street patrols every night during the last 4 weeks of term. The operation was extended after residents in areas with lots of student accommodation raised concerns about noise following the exam period.

Newcastle University's director of employability and student success, Marc Lintern, said:

'With such large numbers of young people living in residential areas, living different

lives and keeping different hours to their neighbours, it's understandable there have been tensions in certain neighbourhoods of Newcastle.

This is an issue for most university cities, but at Newcastle University we have been working hard with our colleagues at Northumbria University, the police, council and local residents to tackle the problems and try to improve the relations between our students and their neighbours.'

Both of Newcastle's universities and the police have said that 'Operation Oak' has been a great success. The police say the funding provided by the Universities means they can work jointly to educate the student population on how to be respectful and considerate neighbours to the local communities they live alongside. It also gives police an opportunity to engage with students, making sure they are safe and don't fall victims to crime.

In Manchester, the university has funded additional police patrols and apply noise abatement tactics with a 24hr helpline for residents.

Loughborough university runs a 24hr helpline and has university trained student wardens.

Oxford Brookes has paid for extra policing.

Discussion at the meeting

In Bristol by contrast, police will only respond if a public order offence has been committed and will generally not deal with noise inside a property. Bristol City Council is responsible for noise issues but has no night time service and relies on residents logging noise

incidents online. UoB pay for one police officer during daylight hours which seems a bit of a waste of time when the problem is at night.

Lynn Robinson was asked whether UoB would consider financing a scheme such as 'Operation Oak'. She was non-committal and said she would discuss this with others at UoB and report back. As yet CNA have had no news.

Lynn stated that she understood and recognised that student behaviour had a big impact on residents. She lived locally in Kingsdown and had seen issues first hand. Some residents believed that it could sometimes be the same households causing repeat problems and wondered if anything could be done about these.

The university has said it plans to increase the level of fines that may be levied on students who hold parties in breach of UoB rules. The basic fine is currently 'up to £100' for each student tenant of a party house, but UoB statistics revealed fines had been levied in only a fifth of cases that resulted in complaints. The university hasn't yet revealed what its new policy will be.

A local resident commented that UoB was a business and students were its product (and its profit) and thus had a responsibility which it was currently ducking. Lynn recognised that UoB had a responsibility but it was limited by the law as to what it could do in students' private residences.

Highbury Residents Association, whose members live almost next door to the university, has joined Chandos in calling for night-time intervention on parties, possibly by the university's mobile security team.

RCAS Student Affairs Rep. comment

It is my opinion that a police knock on the door at a noisy party could have a significant effect and would be the first step in the management of this problem. Requests by neighbours to turn down the volume are generally not well received.

When will UoB take more responsibility for the management of its students in the community? There is a fear that someone is going to hurt themselves due to the large number of people in properties and worrying incidents have already occurred.

In my opinion there is a growing feeling of disappointment at the various meetings attended that nothing is being done of any real value to sort out what appears to be an escalating situation. We hope that UoB will realise that they have a duty to look after the well-being of their students in the community and of the community that they live in.

As Andrew Waller reported in the last issue, he has set up a website,

www.thenoisepages.com

to help coordinate a community response to student noise concerns. Publication of the last article brought an immediate flurry of sign-ups to the site, so thank-you RCAS!

Rob Harris
RCAS Student Affairs Rep.

Andrew Waller
RCAS member

PARKS REPORT

Since the report last year, there has been a little bit of progress with the funding for maintenance of parks across the city. The council rowed back from their previous position that no funding for maintenance would be found after 2019, and that parks service had to be 'cost neutral'.

(Cost neutral means that it is necessary to find income from a number of options such as advertising in parks, increased charges for events in parks, including commercial dog-walking and outdoor activity organisations, car parking charges, and so on.)

There was a consultation last year on these options and a petition was organised by Bristol Parks Forum. The result was that the Mayor announced that the £3million per annum cut would be reduced to £1.69 million.

So there will still be large cuts to parks funding and more income will need to be generated to enable the parks and green spaces in Bristol to be maintained. Bristol City Council and Bath City Council, with input from Bristol Parks Forum, have been successful in a bid for the 'Rethinking Parks' funding from The Big Lottery Fund, Heritage Lottery and NESTA to investigate setting up a Parks Foundation. This would be able to access streams of funding such as Lottery funding not available to local authorities, as well as public giving, volunteering and social enterprise.

Our Parks Manager is on maternity leave, and the grounds maintenance manager is covering for her, which together with staff cuts, has meant

that communications with the parks department are not easy at present.

Cotham Gardens

RCAS consulted parks users about the possibility of a new piece of play equipment, likely to be aimed at 1-3 year olds, under the Small Grants programme. We had little interest and the suggestion of installing a small piece of equipment in the sand pit area (where the 'spring animal' had been before the climbing frame was installed) was rejected by the BCC play officers. We have put this project to one side but may come back to it.

In January RCAS met up with the Tree Officer, Beth Garman, to inspect the trees, both inside and outside the play area. We requested that the two holm oak trees in the play area be crown lifted as the one with the circular seat around it had become so overgrown that it was difficult to get from one side of the play area to the sand-pit whilst walking upright! This was done.

We also looked at the trees which RCAS has planted over the years in the upper section of the park. The apple tree had been badly damaged when a branch had broken under the weight of the fruit the previous autumn and it was proposed that the tree be removed but a local resident campaigned to retain the tree, which is a rare species with red flesh, possibly a Niedzwetsky apple from Central Asia. The fruit is said to have health benefits, including preventing cancer, so perhaps this year the apples

will be eaten by RCAS members reading this, instead of being used as substitute balls by children and dog walkers!

A new tree has been sponsored and planted in the upper area by a private donor. We see on the Bristol pinpoint mapping system that another tree is being offered for sponsorship in this area; a silver birch. We assume that this will replace the failed oak tree RCAS sponsored but we have not been consulted about this proposal. The incense cedar which failed has been replaced. During the summer, a large branch snapped off the black pine tree. The parks department made it safe and removed the branch the next day.

We are planning to sponsor name labels for the trees as one of the Small Grant projects; there are many interesting trees in this area.

As reported in the previous newsletter, the Lovers' Walk/Cotham Gardens Bench Project was completed this spring in time for some heavy use during the hot summer months; the limes trees on Lovers' Walk giving much welcome shade.

Alison Bromilow

Redland Green

Redland Green Community Group (RGCG) has RCAS funding support to carry out hedge-laying on the 10 year old hedge planting along the wall bounding St Oswald's Road properties and on the maple hedge enclosing the Metford Road allotments. Both are very overgrown. This is one of the RCAS Small Grants projects and will be carried out over the winter of 2018/19, using volunteers under the instruction of

Malcolm Dowling, a professional hedge-layer who carried out similar work in the Metford Road allotments last year.

The council has, at last, got around to licensing ice cream concessions across the city, including those in Redland Green. The application for a licence included a variation in the hours and type of food to be sold. The consultation was advertised by a notice in the park and we were alerted by the ward councillors who asked for input from RCAS and RGCG. We have been pressing for the ice-cream vans, which keep their diesel engines running while they are parked up outside the playground gates, to be restricted from the area.

The funds raised from the May Fair were to be used for the provision of a Lucy Post, an electricity supply which could be used by concessions and May Fair attractions. Discussions with the Parks department progress at a snail's pace on this; perhaps the new licensing process will kick-start the discussions again. This is a Bristol-wide issue, and with the current Air Quality Improvement Project under way, we hope that the council will be making sure that all food concessions are prohibited from using diesel engines to keep food cool while stationary.

The fruit tree project which has seen 29 trees planted on the Green has been masterminded and carried out by the Redland Green Community Group (RGCG) who have also got the council to replace the two failed tulip trees on the new 'avenue', the road leading to Woodstock Road. Unfortunately, the trees have again failed, possibly victims of the summer drought, but RGCG are in discussion with the Council to get these replaced.

RCAS and RCGC together with other parks groups continue to press the council to give greater consideration to the needs of parks users when identifying new cycle routes through parks. Recent studies including the new Bristol Transport Strategy recommend that shared pedestrian and cycle routes are avoided because of the possible conflicts between the activities. Careful cyclists are welcome but commuting cyclists who wish to travel at speed cannot expect others, especially small children and dogs, to give way to them when paths go through parks like Redland Green. We continue to raise this issue at Parks Forum meetings where other groups support this point of view.

Dog walking in parks was a point of contention at the beginning of this year, when a number of people were issued with Fixed Penalty Notices in both our parks. The notices given in Redland Green were cancelled but Cotham Gardens and Lovers Walk/Redland Grove greenspaces do have restrictions and dog walkers are reminded that Public Space Protection Orders apply to these areas and people who are not in control of their dogs can be issued with Fixed Penalty Notices.

The remains of the felled silver maple tree by the entrance to the Green has just been carved into seating by Denius Parson with a grant from Dr Jazz Charitable Funds.

A litter pick was held after

the last snows at the end of March. The November 2017 planting of fritillary bulbs and cowslips along the walls Redland Church Halls and vicarage gave a good display in April(see photos). Thank you to all who participated.

Last year, the council did not mow the grass on the slope above Redland Road where the community planted daffodils in 2014. We are in discussion to rectify this as the daffodils struggle to get their heads above the long grass. It may result in volunteer action. If you would like to help with this or any other tasks in the parks do get in touch with

loisgoddard@mac.com

Alison Bromilow and Lois Goddard





TREE SPONSORSHIP

A handsome young Rowan tree that was vandalised on Kersteman Road is to be replaced following a funding collection by local residents which RCAS has match-funded.

There is a layer on the council's Pinpoint mapping system which shows where trees need sponsoring. A couple of locations in Cotham Gardens have been identified, and species have been proposed. RCAS will be engaging with Tree Bristol to identify and potentially match-fund other trees in our area.

All trees for planting in the next season (Nov 2018 - March 2019) are to be identified by December this year, so if you want to propose a tree site please get in touch. We will be prioritising replacement street trees and trees in green spaces (eg Parks and Lover's walk), as this is an easier process than putting a new tree in a pavement. The work involved in carrying out service searches to ensure that a tree pit can safely be constructed means that the cost

of new trees is significantly higher than replacement ones.

PINPOINT: Council Mapping App.

If you haven't already found it, do have a look at the council mapping system Pinpoint on

<http://maps.bristol.gov.uk/pinpoint/>

You can see the historic maps, which we have previously drawn your attention to, and you can also identify many other things on this map; planning applications, park furniture, trees with Tree Protection Orders, ward boundaries, council property, HMOs, and so on. Just have a look at the list of items on the left-hand side drop down menu. It is invaluable when reporting blocked drains, or damaged trees, for instance, as each one has an individual reference number which is shown on the relevant section of the map.

Alison Bromilow

SOUTHFIELD ROAD STREET PARTY 2018

The 5th annual Southfield Road and Elmgrove Road Street Party took place on Saturday 9th June this year and it was glorious. A beautifully sunny day and surely the best-attended event to date, it brought neighbours new and old out of their homes and into the street, together. Some of us also brought along friends from other parts of the city who proclaimed the Southfield Road Street Party the best in Bristol - praise indeed!

The bake-off kickstarted proceedings and was immensely popular as always, with the numerous keen and competitive bakers and equally keen tasters ready to descend on the submissions as soon as the judges had announced the winners. Once again the standard was high and the tasting didn't disappoint. Other regular features proving popular once again through the afternoon were the bingo, the name-badge making stall, the BYO barbeque, the quiz and the book swap table.

One highlight this year was a new face-painting offering, and ladies in particular queued up to have their Zorro, handlebar or Chaplin moustaches painted on. Fenn brought fresh young confidence to the regular Cash Bonanza Raffle, and topped it off by wowing the crowd in a karaoke duet with his friend Hannah. Another first was the bold group of tweenies who delivered a self-penned poem on the open mic spot; both courageous and creative!

Then more food, with everyone bringing their delicious contributions to the groaning buffet table for the communal

barbeque tended by Chris and Laura, our devoted volunteer chefs, who grilled our chipolatas and veggie burgers to perfection. We all sat together and ate splendidly into the early evening sunlight. A self-service urn for teas and coffees and a bar provided by the Moor Beer Co. van kept us well hydrated throughout.

Later in the evening, the more active (younger) members kicked a football around, perhaps dreaming of the impending World Cup, whilst the more sedate settled into hushed groups for the annual quiz which was put together by Corin, one of our A-level students. This proved immensely challenging, particularly as several glasses of vino had been consumed by this point!

Having previously been held in September, the move to the drier month of June this year proved shrewd, and there's no doubt that the fine weather contributed enormously to the success of the event; we can't wait for next year's!

If you think it might work in your street do give it a try - go to

www.streetparty.org.uk/bristol/

where you'll find some useful information to get you started.

Abi Heath



Southfield Road street party

REDLAND LIBRARY - Desert Island Books

If you were stranded on a desert island, which book would you take to keep you company?

Every month, Friends of Redland Library invites a panel of experts to talk about their two favourite books at an event in the library. One book is on the theme of the evening, the other is a 'wild card' – a book in any genre.

Over the summer, Desert Island Books has covered subjects from 'Bringing History to Life' to 'Books, Religion and Ethics', taking in 'Books and the World of Crime' to 'Books, Environment and Global Warming' along the way. Guests have included academics, novelists, campaigners, a rabbi and a District Commander of Avon and Somerset Police. Their discussions have been fascinating, not to say surprising and sometimes, illuminating.

Looking ahead, we have arranged a new programme of events for the autumn, which promises to be just as interesting:

- 13 September: Books and Poetry
- 27 September; Author Event, Women Who Built Bristol
- 16 October; Books and The Sea
- 1 November; Books and The City
- 6 December; Books and Europe

All events are held at Redland Library on Whiteladies Road, beginning at 7.00pm. Doors open at 6.45pm and admission is £3.

For further details on the autumn programme and to find out which books our recent panellists decided to take to that desert island, go to:

<https://friendsofredlandlibrary.org.uk/>

Caroline Melvin

GARDEN HEDGES

Have you looked at your boundaries recently?

We are lucky to have so much green vegetation in our front gardens which adds to the attractiveness of this area. BUT if you have hedges or fast growing plants, brambles or roses along a road frontage you may not realise how much they have expanded. Please check them. Possibly they are now overhanging the pavement to create obstacles for people walking past pushing buggies or people with eyesight problems.

You are responsible in law for looking after your garden hedges, making sure they do not cause a nuisance to anyone else. Many hedges in our area now overhang the pavements and need to be taken back to the boundary. Most will cope with very heavy pruning and then will be easier to keep under control in future.

You can report someone else's overgrown hedge on a road frontage to the council on their website. They will notify the hedge owner and your name will not be made public.

Go to
www.bristol.gov.uk/report-a-street-issue
 and go to Trees, Hedges, Leaves or Grass

Useful information can also be found on
www.bristol.gov.uk/planning-and-building-regulations/high-hedges

This gives guidance on assessing whether high hedges block too much daylight or sunlight from reaching adjoining properties or gardens. The 'action hedge height' above which action can or should be taken is 2m and applies to evergreen hedges only, not individual plantings, and should take into account orientation and slope of the land as well. However 'It's good to talk' to the neighbour first if you have a problem.

Gillian Penrose



RCAS STREET SCENE REPORT

RCAS works with Bishopston, Cotham and Redland Street Scene group to tackle issues affecting our streets and encourage everyone to report issues such as hedges blocking pavements, bins and waste left on streets, graffiti and fly-posting.

If you have been affected by tagging (graffiti) on your property, it has been agreed that Bristol Waste Company (BWC) will remove it (ie paint over it) free of charge, if it is smaller than 1m square, and not above head height, as long as you sign an indemnity form. Again, report this on the Bristol City Council website. Larger tags and also pressure washing of stone or brick walls may need to be paid for. BWC may not have the correct paint colour, so you may end up with a different-coloured painted square rather than the graffiti. You may decide to deal with it yourself! The quicker you tackle it the better because one tag attracts another (just as one dog using a lamppost encourages others!)

The leading light of the BCR Street Scene Group, Liz Kew, has stood down from organising the group following her move away from the area. She will be sorely missed. The street scene team are still in talks with Bristol Waste Company (BWC) and BCC councillors and officers, but the organisations are still in flux, so it is hard to agree new ways of working.

BWC has had many problems with the service this summer and has missed collections of waste and recycling. It is important to report those missed services as soon as possible so that a special collection can be made. The

Street Scene Group are talking with local groups about how the work of the group can be continued in her absence.

Many RCAS members are part of the volunteer team who clean their area or spot and report street issues and I will be continuing to liaise with them and with other areas and volunteers to ensure that all Liz's hard work does not go to waste.

Report It

Find out how to report street issues by going to the Street Scene Group page on BCRCPorg.uk

Most issues should be reported on the BCC website but some, such as tagging on post boxes or bus shelters, can be reported direct to the companies. All the details are on the page so do have a look and get reporting. Remember, there are no BCC or BWC officers monitoring streets; it is up to the local residents to bring problems to their attention if they want them dealt with! If BWC miss a collection of your bins or recycling, report it the next day through the BCC or BWC websites.

If you would like to talk to people about how to use the online reporting forms, the Street Scene Group holds monthly drop-in sessions in Bishopston Library on Gloucester Road on the second Monday of the month from 4.30 to 6pm. If you use Facebook, join the BCR Street Champions group, where there is more information and chat with other volunteers.

Alison Bromilow

RCAS WEBSITE

Have you used the new improved Website? If not, do check it out on

<https://rcas.org.uk>

Lots of work has been put in to inform and entertain members as well as allow easier communications between members, supporters and organisers. Members can see previous editions of the newsletter by going to 'publications' and 'newsletter' and clicking on the link using **News** as the password.

We also have an active Facebook page

Redland & Cotham Amenities Society

The link to this can also be found on the front page of the website.

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 to reduce our distributors' work and we will supply a Standing Order mandate form on request.

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 your contact details and your e-mail address.

If you are a taxpayer and make the following declaration, 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. Signed and dated.

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



There is a variety of accommodation available in our gardens; bee hotels and (back cover) tree houses

