

Redland & Cotham Amenities Society



Annual Report
Open Gardens
Student Liaison
Planning, Parks
Trees



Number 192 - September 2021

ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

This is our Annual Report and the committee reports cover the year's activities and will be adopted at the AGM which will be on November 11th via Zoom. We look forward to seeing the Gold Star candidates for good development in our area which will be awarded at the AGM.

Unfortunately, Covid continues to affect us and our activities and it is disappointing that, again, we will not be meeting in person this year but we look forward to seeing you in the Spring when we will organise a social event for members. We hope that you are all managing to resume, if not normal life, a more social and relaxed existence than during lockdown. It will be very interesting in coming years to see whether the pandemic has had a permanent effect on our way of life.

The committee has continued to meet virtually this year and the newsletter team, editors, distribution and membership officers and our distributors, have produced a full set of newsletters this year, which we hope you have enjoyed. I thank all of them for their hard work and our guest contributors for their articles and pictures.

Despite the Covid situation, there has been no let-up in the development industry and many, many planning applications to monitor as well as work carried out without planning permission, which is reported to Planning Enforcement. The BCC planning officers are still 'working from home' and the volume of work, staffing levels and the mismatch of planning income from

application fees are causing a lot of issues for the department, with the result that consideration of some types of development is not being prioritised. Simon, Dave and I endeavour to respond to any applications which significantly impact on the RCAS area. Thank you if you got in touch about applications or planning breaches that you were aware of. Planning breaches can be reported to BCC through the link on their website, so it is good if members do that too, to ensure they are logged.

There are changes to roads across the city, which have been expedited by the relaxation of Traffic Regulation Order processes during Covid, that were introduced to help support traders as well as to enable safer pedestrian movement where narrow pavements prevented social-distancing. Cotham Hill is the only street where this is being trialled in our area, and we received a large volume of emails from members in favour of the changes, and a number of responses that raised concerns about the impact on local residents on Cotham Hill and on adjacent roads where traffic has been displaced. We believe that a further consultation on the scheme will still be undertaken by BCC. It is regrettable that Hampton Lane has been closed off for construction works during the trial period; this has compromised the way that the planned scheme has worked in practice.

We welcome the new project being taken forward by Chandos Futures group, which comprises Chandos Neighbourhood Association members and traders, which is looking at how

Chandos Road can be made more attractive and safer. Information about some of the ideas being looked at are included in this newsletter and on their website.

The introduction of the Clean Air Zone scheme has yet again been postponed; this time to Summer 2022. BCC expect to receive government's approval of the Full Business Case for the CAZ in autumn 2021. Although traffic volumes dropped during lockdown, they are noticeably high again now; some people are returning to using the buses but many prefer to continue to drive themselves, which is causing pollution to return quickly to pre-Covid levels.

BCC Parks are starting a consultation on updating the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy in September. As we have noted in previous newsletters, our parks are highly valued by residents and have been even more heavily used over the past year and a half. Some local

residents help with litter-picking and other maintenance tasks in the parks; we thank them very much for keeping the parks looking good for the rest of the community. RCAS works with the Redland Green Community Group to support activities in Redland Green and leads on activities in Cotham Gardens and the Redland Grove greenspace. If you are interested in getting involved, do get in touch.

Some of our members are also active through the Street Scene Group helping to fight the graffiti, fly-tipping and waste and recycling mismanagement that occurs in our streets. Thank you to them for their work to keep our streets looking good.

We look forward to seeing many of you on screen in November; enjoy the autumn and let us hope to enjoy some Indian summer weather!

Alison Bromilow

Below: Gardens in bloom in September



MEMBERSHIP REPORT

A big 'thank you' to our distributors who have been busy over the summer delivering the May newsletter and collecting subscriptions. They support RCAS through all weather and eventualities, and without their ongoing commitment you would not be able to read this newsletter.

Most of our members now pay by Standing Order which has reduced the challenges that our distributors have faced in collecting subscriptions in person – it can be difficult to find members at home! However, around 20% of members continue to pay by cash or cheque, and if any of these would like to set up a Standing Order mandate in advance of the 2022 subscriptions please contact Kathryn Armitstead, membership secretary, at membership@rcas.org.uk

Over the last two years we have seen a relatively large fall in membership, owing to the combined effect of members leaving the area and fewer opportunities to recruit new members because of the lock-down measures. Overall, membership has fallen by 45 over the last two years and now stands at 615 households

We would like to extend our membership to be more representative of our area, for example increasing the number of families with young children or people who may be renting. If any of your neighbours might be interested in joining, please do draw their attention to our website and get in touch with Kathryn (membership@rcas.org.uk) if you'd like to share an old newsletter.

Kathryn Armitstead

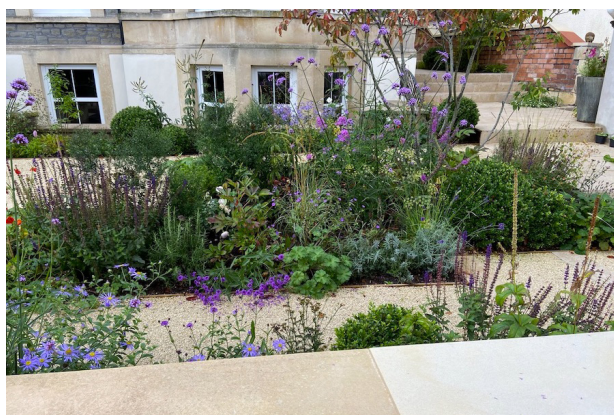


Photo above: This wonderful newly planted front garden is a delight...especially as permission had been given for it to be changed to an off-street parking bay. Thank you for the great contribution to the community.

49th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This will be a Zoom meeting on Thursday November 11th.
The link will be sent out by email on November 10th via the
e-news circulation list.

Provisional start time is 7.00pm. tbc

Thank you to everyone who responded to the e-news request
for your preference for an in-person or a Zoom AGM. It was a
close vote but there was an overall preference for another virtual
meeting again this year; many people said how much they would
like to meet up and chat with other members, so we are going
to arrange a mid-year RCAS gathering in April/ May when the
evenings will be lighter, and we will be able to open the windows
to ensure there is good ventilation.

Apologies to those of you who said you would prefer an in-person
meeting, we hope that our suggestion will meet with your favour.

If you did not receive the e-news, you can sign up on our website
or get in touch with **alison@rcas.org.uk** with confirmation of
your current email address and I will add you to the list.

If you would like to attend the AGM by Zoom and are not on our
email list, send us an email by November 1st to get the link for
the meeting sent to you on November 10th.

ANNUAL PLANNING REPORT

HMOs

As usual, there have been a large number of applications for Houses in Multiple Occupation in our area. The recently adopted planning guidance document (HMO SPD) has helped to set the standards for HMO development in Bristol and has helped the council to refuse some applications.

There remains considerable concern about the number of HMOs that are unregistered which are therefore not being taken into account when new applications are made. There is still a disconnect between the Housing Department, who run the licensing of HMOs, and the planning department, who consider applications for new changes of use from family housing to HMO, increases in capacity of existing HMOs or for 'established use' permission for HMOs which were converted without permission (which has not always been required). The licensing officers do not currently check whether planning permission is in place or advise that it is necessary before approving licences. This leads to situations where enforcement against change of use without permission is made difficult because the property is already let and planning inspectors will allow the use to continue for sufficient time for the tenants to find new accommodation.

There is a real problem in Bristol, with the pressure on housing from the uncontrolled expansion of the university student numbers coming on top of the increasing undersupply of housing and homelessness. The university only accommodates first-year students on

campus and after this they enter the local housing market. The current rate of over 50% of young people attending universities has affected Bristol and many cities in the UK. The rental cost of purpose-built accommodation is much higher than renting private houses, so many students prefer to live in the community, as we locally are aware.

The exemption from council tax of university students used to be compensated by significant payment from central government. This has been reduced over the years so the council services for students are largely paid out of income from other residents so the expansion of the university has therefore exacerbated this underfunding issue. Again, this is a national not just a local problem. All of these issues are contributing to the increasing tension between the local community, the university and the students and the bigger picture needs to be addressed urgently.

Tree Works

A vast majority of applications in our area are for works to trees. Being a conservation area, our trees are better protected by planning law but the planning authority is only able to refuse work to trees with TPOs (Tree Preservation Orders) and this only applies to trees with trunks of 75cm diameter at 1.5 m above ground level. The advantage of applicants having to make an application means there is an opportunity for tree officers to advise on the best methods and practice of achieving what the applicant wants and this can sometimes get a better result.

Good tree surgeons can carry out works that leave the tree looking natural and able to continue to develop into an attractive form; poor tree surgeons do not, and often following poor surgery the tree loses all its amenity value and health and ends up being felled a few years later.

It is important to remember that the council has no control over what people can do with their own private gardens space other than control some of the off-street parking proposals.

Decisions:

Rear of 6 Clyde Park. The application to demolish the garage and erect a 2-storey house on the back garden was refused at committee, despite a recommendation to approve by the planning officer, following a spirited campaign by local residents. The planning committee decided to postpone their decision in order to visit the site and then agreed that the application should be refused. This is a very welcome result. The principle of mews development in the area was cited in the report but this would have been the first building on this run of back gardens. Another application on the rear of 3 Clyde Park was withdrawn this year following a large number of local objections.

13 St Ronan's Avenue. A revised application was submitted for a 2-storey rear extension with the lower floor below ground and has been approved. The overall size of the extension was reduced from the previous withdrawn scheme. Although, the loss of back

garden space is regrettable, the smaller extension was within normal permitted development parameters, and there is no planning law against decking and paving of gardens other than that which creates off-street parking.

127-129 Redland Road. Application for an additional one-person flat in place of the garage has been refused on grounds of over-development and harmful effect on existing buildings.

Pending:

8 Chandos Road. 2no 3 storey buildings facing onto Cowper Road. RCAS objected.

27-31 Lower Redland Road. Application for an additional storey with 2 no 2-bed apartments over the garage. RCAS objected.

Rear of 34 Arley Hill. Application for student HMO. RCAS objected.

112-114 Whiteladies Road (formerly Boots). The previous application for conversion of the upper floors to create 3 no HMOs was withdrawn following objections that this would exacerbate the imbalance of HMO residential accommodation. A revised application for 4 no C3 residences has been submitted but RCAS has objected on the grounds that the 2 larger flats are unlikely to be attractive to families and will end up being used as HMOs.

55 Trelawney Road. Roof extension. Previous application was withdrawn, RCAS has not objected to the new application which has a smaller dormer window which we feel is more in keeping with the existing building and does not overwhelm it.

87A Redland Road. Application for change of use of two maisonettes into large student HMOs. RCAS has objected on the grounds of poor-quality accommodation and adverse impact on neighbours, also on loss of trees.

85 Whiteladies Road. Application to increase the size of the approved HMO from 6 persons to 8 persons has been withdrawn. RCAS had objected.

71 Arley Hill. Application for increase in the size of the upper-level HMO from 6 to 8 bedrooms. This is a retrospective application, as work was already well underway and larger property had already been advertised for letting for the Autumn Term. The application has included construction of waste and recycling and cycle stores, and external works to the building to insulate the walls. A separate application to do works to trees and shrubs was approved; no trees were considered appropriate for Tree Preservation Orders. RCAS has objected to the HMO application which will contribute to the existing imbalance of HMO accommodation, and potential for adverse impact on neighbours.

Hampton Lane Garage. An application has just been posted for development for office and housing. It makes a change from student accommodation!

Lastly, we incorrectly raised concern about works to trees at 86 Redland Road in Spring 2021. The tree in question was in the back garden of 88 Redland Road and the works had been authorised by BCC in 2020. We have apologised to the residents at 86 and 88 for the mistake.

Alison Bromilow

Planning Further Afield

Former St Christopher's School Site Westbury Park (see photo on opposite page)

The sale of the site by Aurora to a joint venture partnership was announced some months ago. At a site meeting on May 26th Henry Lumby, Chief Development Officer of care providers Amicala, told Westbury Park Community Association that they want their developments to be seen as an extension of the local community.

The site which closed last year, includes around 93,000 sq ft of existing buildings, including the Grade-II listed Grace House.

Provisional concepts for the potential redevelopment of the site, explained to WPCA, included:

Conversion of the lodges on Westbury Park (facing the Downs) to apartments, retaining trees and gardens at the front.

New apartments and houses to the rear of the lodges and on part of the back land.

The retention of Grace House which will be used to house communal facilities.

The possible retention and use of other buildings on the back land – also for communal facilities.

The project is being devised with a view to making it one of the few extra care communities in the country to operate with net-zero carbon emissions.

Extra care communities are different to traditional retirement housing in both scale and the services provided. The model enables older people to remain relatively independent and move into the community, with a minimum baseline of care which can then be increased as they age.

Amicala hoped to complete the development in 2024. Stages along the way would include the drafting of a masterplan by Autumn 2021 leading to a full planning application to Bristol City Council at the end of this year.



50 Year Celebration

Tim and Caroline Paine are celebrating living in their home on Limerick Road for 50 years. In fact, their house has only had two families living there since it was built in 1903/4. The house was built by Norman Langdon whose two daughters were the same ages as Tim and Caroline's when each family moved to the house. The Langdon sisters were in their 70s when the Paine's bought the house from them in 1971.

The climbing rose at the front of the house was planted very soon after the family moved in and as you can see in the photo it is still producing a delightful display. Tim says that Limerick Road has been a great road to live on with very friendly and helpful neighbours. When they moved in there were lots of young families and they remember that the children even managed to ski and sledge down the road in the snowy winters. The Paines organised street parties for both the Silver and Golden Jubilees and lots of activities for all the families on the road over the years. They have certainly seen lots of changes over the time they have lived on the road but the road itself remains largely unchanged.



Right: one of the hanging baskets in Chandos Road that was partly funded by a RCAS small grant



ANNUAL TREE REPORT

Applications for tree works in our conservation area are reviewed and over the past year there have been 15 objections put forward by RCAS.

Of these there have been 3 trees saved by the council by placing tree preservation orders, the only sanction that can be applied under the town and country planning act. A further tree, a Copper beech has in effect had a deferred TPO agreed. As the Copper Beech is considered such an important tree to the character of this conservation area, the council tree officer has agreed to look at providing protection.

Where the council did apply preservation orders, there were also multiple objections from neighbours, and the council do consider all comments when making their decision. Please do take the time where you have views about tree applications to submit a comment. The council planning website is fairly straight forward to use and RCAS will provide assistance if you have difficulty.

Bristol council do have a target of increasing the tree canopy cover to mitigate the effects of climate change. Trees do of course lock up CO2 within the tree, but in urban areas, other benefits are more significant. An effect called the Urban heat island is very important, when sunrays fall on concrete, brick and tarmac it warms up the air, which in summer can be uncomfortable. Trees can have a dramatic effect on cooling the air locally and can be as much as 10 degrees, which is easily observed when walking along a tree lined street and then stepping into the open.

After the recent heatwave of 49C in Sydney, Australia, a law was introduced to make it compulsory for every garden to have a tree! Trees also increase the ability of the ground to absorb rainwater, called infiltration, and when we experience heavy rainfall they can reduce the water runoff that can overload sewage and drainage systems that result in local flash flooding.

Ash trees. Last year the effect of Ash die back became very visible in the Redland and Cotham area, as across many parts of Bristol, including the Downs. The indications of die back are bare tips to branches and twigs, particularly visible on the top of the tree against a sky background. From first appearance it can be many years before the tree has deteriorated to a condition where action is necessary. The extent of dieback deteriorate is very subjective, but this year, the amount of dieback across Redland trees I have seen does not seem to have got much worse. Ash trees are a significant percentage of our canopy cover and now is not a good time to be losing trees.

Dave Jones



Above: a well managed Copper Beech in a Redland front garden

BISHOPSTON COTHAM AND REDLAND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

The Bishopston, Cotham and Redland Community Partnership held its second online public forum of the year towards the end of June. It was a chance to hear what issues were top of the agenda from five of our newly elected Councillors.

All our Councillors are now from the Green Party, but many of the local concerns stay the same - Covid-19 infection rates, the effect of the pandemic on businesses, support for community initiatives, parking, trees, public transport and problems with multi-occupation properties. Though not quite able to overturn the Labour majority, Green Councillors now hold the position of chair on several Scrutiny Comissions in the Council, allowing them to more easily raise matters for further enquiry.

There was some discussion on the convoluted process by which Councillors allocate Community Infrastructure Levy funds, where bids for spending on projects this year well exceeded the £50,600 available. We also heard updates from several of our participant community groups, who have continued to keep local streets, neighbourhoods and parks more welcoming and sustainable through their voluntary actions.

At the time of writing, we are still unsure whether it will be sensible to start holding face-to-face public forums again this autumn. See our website bcrp.org.uk for further news, or to suggest topics for future forum meetings.

Roger Gimson



Above: Sunny plants on Carnarvon Road



BCR Street Scene Group

The BCR Street Scene Group have been working over the Covid period individually rather than in groups and 'meeting' as a steering group virtually.

It is good to know that many volunteers including a number of RCAS members have continued to spot and report issues such as waste and recycling problems, bins left on pavements, fly-posting and fly-tipping and overgrown hedges through the council website 'Report a Street Issue' tab, and many are also carrying out litter-picking collections and cleaning graffiti/tagging from our street furniture.

A number of new volunteers have been trained and now have the materials to remove tagging or paint over it where appropriate. The team keeps each other updated on a Facebook group so that everyone can share where there are

problems and help with solutions. This also is a record so that, if the police manage to catch a tagger, they can identify instances of their crime.

BCRSSG attends the Bristol Clean Streets forum where groups across the city discuss solutions to common issues; BCC and Bristol Waste Company lead these meetings. They are also represented on the Graffiti Action Group.

The Street Scene Group is supported with paint donated by BCC, and by personal donations including from property owners whose houses and shops are defaced. They were also funded by RCAS this year, to support the work they do in our area. If you would like to find out more, including how to report problems, see Street Scene Group page on the BCR Community Partnership website www.bcrpc.org.uk

PARKS REPORT

Redland Green

The Redland Green Community Group has continued their bird box project by adding a new app to encourage local people to help keep track of which birds are using the boxes for nesting. You can download it onto your mobile phone- just search for Redland Bird (Redland Green Bird Box Survey) on your Appstore. There are some wonderful photos and lots of information about the birds you may see. The app includes a map of where the birdboxes are located on the Green.

The boxes will be cleaned out again this autumn by the group to make them ready for next year's occupants.

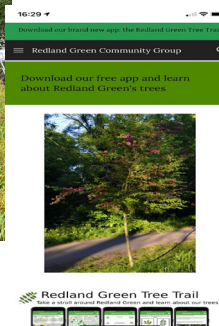
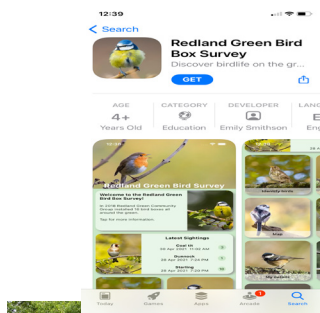
The 4 ancient ash trees in the green are being monitored by the council who are monitoring all the Ash trees in Bristol for possible impact of Ash dieback, a fungal disease. Some crown reduction is planned to stabilise one of the large Ash trees in the 'dell' which has a basal cavity. More tree planting is planned; there are a number of sites which have been identified for sponsorship.

To see the locations and species proposed look at the Bristol Pinpoint map under 'Environment and Planning' 'Sponsor a new tree'

The Redland Green Tree Trail App is still available to download as well!

The group are also intending to improve the wildflower planting areas which have been overrun by brambles. Additional planting may be carried out in the grass triangle by the steps at the Cossins road end of the green and around the fringes of the green. See their website for lots more information about the history of the Green and the current projects.

Alison Bromilow



Cotham Gardens

People of Redland and Cotham have enjoyed the open spaces of Cotham Gardens over the summer, with families, dogwalkers, picnickers and exercise groups all making the most of the playground and grass. A coffee and cake van has been licensed to operate at the top of the park, providing refreshments to those visitors.



The increase in adult exercise, which has included both informal and more formal organised sessions, has led RCAS to initiate discussions with Bristol City Council regarding the installation of parallel bars for triceps training. Adults



have been using the children's play equipment, including the spinner, for this training with the inevitable consequence of damage, which we hope to avoid in the future. The chin-up bars have also been replaced, like for like.

The sundial bench is still requiring a sealant; if any members wish to participate in applying sealant, please contact me so that we can get this



organised before the winter. As ever, many hands make light work!

In the next weeks we will be planning not one, not two, but three new trees for the gardens, in consultation with tree experts via Bristol City Council. One will be a mulberry tree offered by a local resident; one is to be sponsored on behalf of Archfield Nursery; and a third will be planted to commemorate all those who have suffered or died during the Covid crisis of 2020-2021. We will hope to choose specimens which will complement the existing plantings and which are hardy enough to thrive in a changing climate.

Further wildflower plantings are under discussion for the top of Cotham Gardens and in Redland Grove. Our area has plenty of room to encourage pollinators and create attractive diversity of colour and texture, and our goal is to improve the wildlife habitat of the park.

Many thanks to all of you who volunteer in Cotham Gardens, picking up litter, weeding and pruning.

Sarah Cuthill

Making Chandos Road a great place to work, live and shop

As you may know, a group of Traders and Residents are working with the wider Chandos Road community to find ways to make the road a great place to live, work and shop.

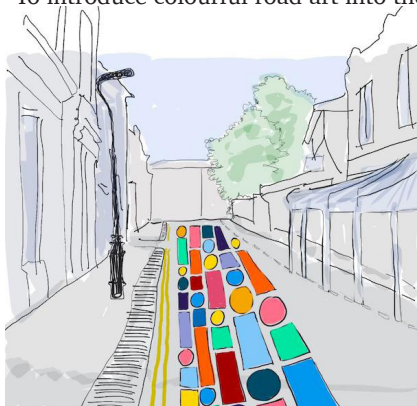
The group came together during the pandemic to find ways to improve the future of Chandos Road. They wanted to help the Traders and encourage people to spend more time (and money!) with the wide variety of businesses located on Chandos Road.

In January 2021 residents leafleted a wide area around Chandos Neighbourhood before conducting an online survey of traders and residents, where the results highlighted that most of all people want to calm the traffic in the road and introduce more 'people-friendly features' such as bike racks and planters.

When Marvin Rees, Mayor of Bristol, visited Chandos Road recently he spoke with Mark Farrell, owner of Chums Micropub, about the project and the Group were invited to present their ideas to the Mayor on a Zoom call in June.

As a result, the Chandos Futures group now has the Mayor's support and together with Council officers we've identified that there are simple new features we can introduce as soon as possible which will help to slow traffic and brighten up the road. These are our ideas so far:

- To site new planters in the road to help to slow traffic, whilst also bringing colour and wildlife to the area.
- To install bike racks to encourage a move away from cars to more active travel.
- To introduce colourful road art into the street – a proven way to slow traffic.

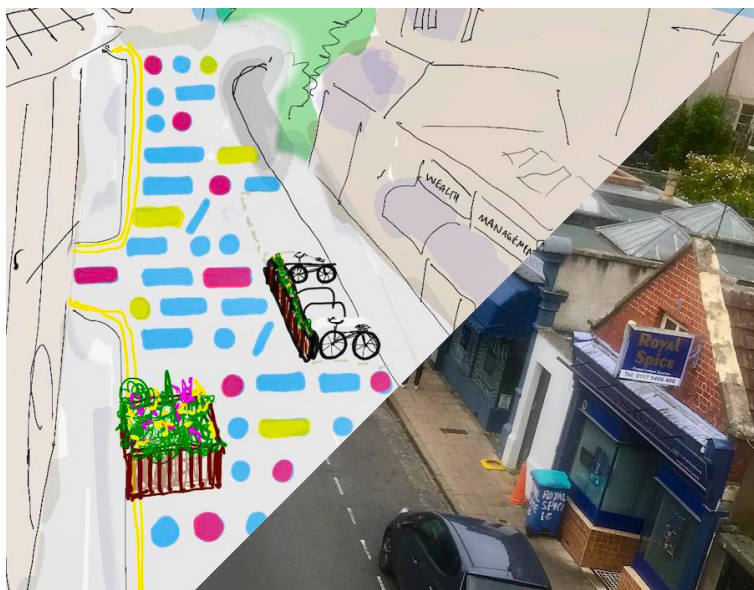


These ideas will be put before residents for comment on September 26, when we will have a “show and tell” morning. There is a workshop in Chandos Atelier, to try out ideas for street art. Across the road children (and adults!) will find out about pollinators and plant bulbs for a spring-time show for us and the bees. In Chums and Wilson’s residents are invited to play around with ideas for placing models of planters and bike racks on maps. We are now collating results of a second online survey.

Chandos Futures group is working with the Mayor’s office and the City’s Highways and Transport teams to make sure the ideas we are proposing are safe, legal, and cost-effective.

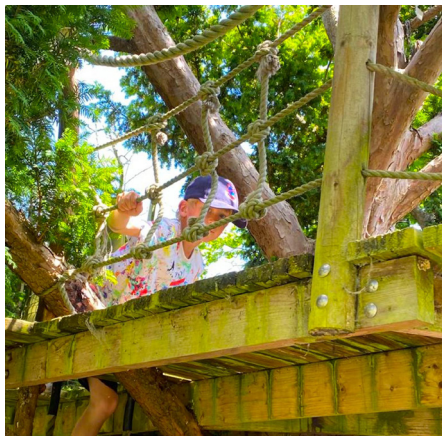
Of course, we are mindful that we need to think about other pending changes for the wider area such as Cotham Hill and the Clean Air Zone so that any new features work in harmony with the ‘bigger picture’ for Cotham. We very much hope to have some of the new features in place by the end of 2021, so that Chandos Road can really be a people-friendly, welcoming, and more attractive road to visit.

Di Swain

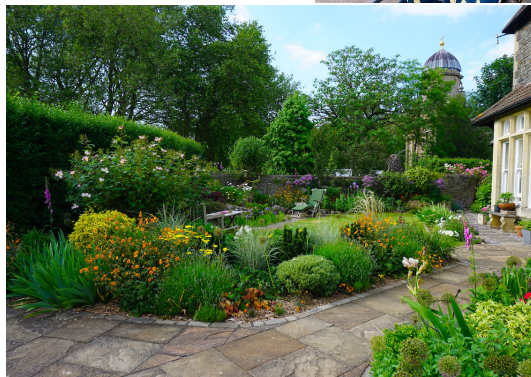
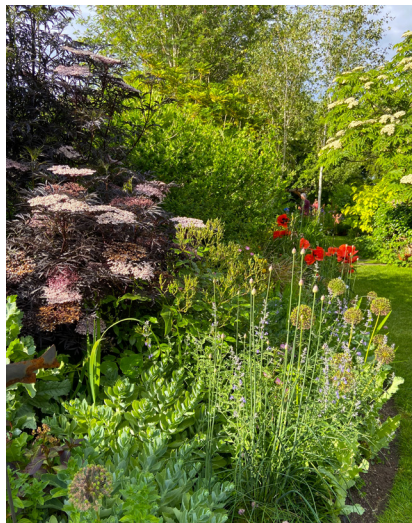


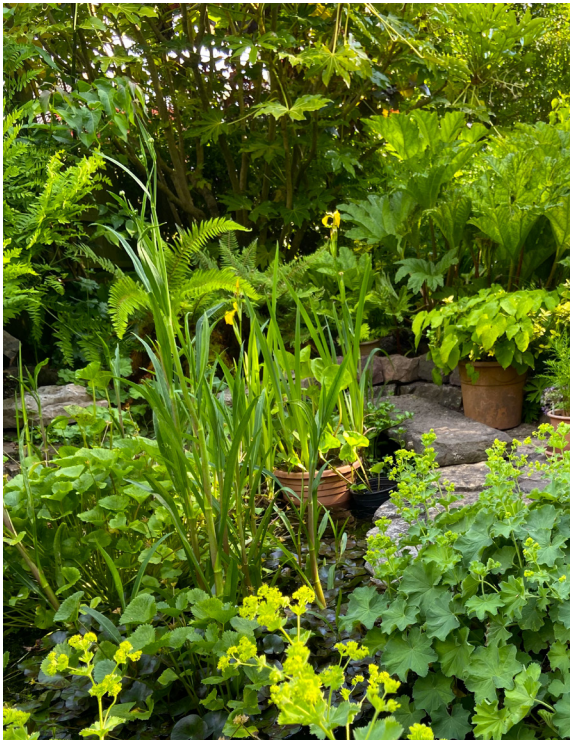
OPEN GARDENS

Happily Open Gardens was able to go ahead this year with some minor restrictions in place. On Sunday 13th June the weather was glorious and we headed out with hats and sunglasses. Here, and on the front and back covers, are photos of some the gardens on display in the Redland North area which we all enjoyed.









STUDENT LIAISON REPORT

The new academic year

Here we are at the start of a new academic year and we welcome new and returning students and wish them well as they join our community.

In order to encourage a healthy community we recommend a 'meet and greet' approach with new student neighbours to help them feel at home in the area. This approach has been found to pay great dividends.

However if you are affected by a student house in your area, eg noise or rubbish bins issues, we first recommend a face to face conversation so that the students, who may be new to living out of the parental home, can understand the effects of their behaviour. If this does not work and further problems occur then register the problem with the various bodies including BCC, UoB and the relevant HMO landlord and/or letting agent.

Landlord and letting agent contact details

BCC has made changes to the way it allows public access to the HMO register. Landlord and letting agent contact details can now be found on their website by searching for 'BCC pinpoint'.

- Click on Bristol - pinpoint local information.
- Select Housing & Property
- Select Property License Mandatory HMO
- Expand the map to the street address of interest.
- Click on the house icon for the HMO of interest and see the details.

This is a new facility in Pinpoint. RCAS has long been lobbying BCC for this and it is very welcome.

For more information regarding registering complaints go to the 'noisepages' website.

The Licence holder should provide occupiers of the immediately neighbouring properties a contact telephone number, address or e-mail address to report any problems. It appears that often the landlord does not pass on contact details as required to neighbours of the HMO and BCC enforcement on this issue is not very good.

Apologies if you have heard this before from last year and the year before! but those who make policy over the future strategy for student accommodation in our residential areas need to know what we are thinking and experiencing and can only be made aware by the reporting of what is actually happening - if an incident is not reported it didn't happen! It must be appreciated by all that we are aware that it is only a small number of students who are causing any issues.

BSCP Meetings

The University Community Liaison Group meetings were suddenly stopped by UoB about a year ago, to the great disappointment of all local groups. RCAS lobbied UoB to reconsider this decision due to the importance of the meetings. A joint letter from local residents' groups was sent to UoB Registrar Lucinda Parr requesting a meeting to discuss a variety of concerns and CLG should be restarted. UoB has turned down this request but instead they have reinstated the Bristol Student Community Partnership (BSCP) and have offered only 2 seats for local groups at the meetings. This maybe a

small step in the right direction!?

BSCP is a multi-agency group that meets several times a year, with representatives from: UoB, UWE, Student Unions, Bristol City Council, Avon and Somerset Police, Bristol Waste and NHS Bristol-support services.

Landlords have not been invited to attend these meetings. We think that they should be as this would be an opportunity for landlords to hear what it is like living at the 'coal face'. RCAS will ask UoB to consider asking landlord attendance.

Report from the first BSCP meeting

Alison Bromilow (RCAS) and Andrew Waller (noisepages) attended representing the local groups. See a brief report on the 'noisepages' <https://www.thenoisepages.com/single-post/new-student-partnership-is-urged-to-address-residents-concerns>

BSCP meeting response to UoB

Local groups headed by Andrew Waller are asking UoB to address reported ASB issues from their students by instigating a program to prepare students for living in the community whilst living for their first year in UoB halls. It is important to make students aware of their responsibilities to their neighbours. The theme is RESPECT your community.

At the next BSCP meeting UoB will be encouraged to develop a robust programme aimed at shaping student attitudes towards neighbours with a view to living in harmony with the community. Starting at the beginning of term with full-coverage, aiming for 100% of all students moving out of hall.

This can be sold to UoB as having many benefits to the personal development

of their students and improving the reputation of UoB as a forward thinking university.

The principles of RESPECT to be carefully explained and the importance of community awareness to be passed on to students

Landlords to be encouraged to attend meetings and to engage with their tenants to fulfil their responsibilities by managing any anti social behaviour.

BCC to be encouraged to enforce the conditions of HMO licences when not adhered to.

A general multi agency approach, with all working closely together would have a better long term outcome and take some of the pressure off UoB.

Operation Beech

Operation Beech was run each term throughout the last year. This is the police patrol that is paid for by UoB. Residents who are disturbed by noise can contact the police by text to 07773 816248 between 8pm and about 1-30am (patrols end at 2am).

Beech is now well known and residents are making good use of it. For more information see the UoB website. <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/accommodation/community/complaints.html>

NPPF - Article 4 & HMOs

The government has now finished consulting on amendments to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); this includes several proposals for changes to Article 4 Directives which could have a damaging impact on the controls currently available for planning applications on HMOs in England.

The new version of the NPPF could open up lots of clauses to be challenged by lawyers before it is clear and functions well again. This could take years to run through if significant changes are

made - more work for planners! RCAS, following requests from the HMO Lobby, responded to the consultation and opposed certain options considered to be harmful.

Sound proofing of HMOs

A resident in Hertfordshire, has created an online petition to Parliament urging that HMOs should be "sound-proofed".

The outcome of this could be significant if Parliament decides to support the petition meaning that noise created in an HMO should satisfy certain sound level requirements.

Articles appearing in the local press during the last year

There were various press reports of large gatherings breaking Covid rules, during January in and around our area. Some of the gatherings involved students.

The Police were called to several gatherings on the weekend of Jan 30th, including one which involved 30 people in Ashgrove Road, Redland. The police had to close down the gathering, putting themselves at risk, and have issued substantial fines.

BCC Noise Enforcement Team

Former BCC Cllr Anthony Negus asked BCC officers to respond to issues raised by Andrew Waller of the 'noisepages' about Bristol's noise-enforcement policies. This follows a public-forum statement he made to a February 8 meeting of BCCs Communities Scrutiny Commission.

The statement is available to read in detail on the 'noisepages' - see "Noise Enforcement in Bristol: A Failure to Protect Communities" - it calls for a review of current policies, in particular calling for response to one off reports of noise disturbance. NET (noise enforcement team) is not a well

staffed BCC department and elected to introduce the 14-day noise diary system to overcome the overwhelming public response to them of single incident noise events. Most night time disturbances tend to be one off events but the one off event can become a regular event in high density student areas, but cannot be successfully reported at present.

HMO Licensing and Planning Permission

Occasionally there has been a problem because licensing of HMOs is a quite separate legal requirement from the granting of planning permission, in England and Wales. It can lead to a situation where an HMO quite legitimately has a licence - but does not have planning permission.

There have been examples of this happening in Bristol. The Government gave guidance on this issue last year to all LA's. We hope BCC will formally adopt this, the least it will do is to make their job easier and should make it much harder for illegal HMOs to occur a win win situation.

SPD to control the expansion of HMOs passed by BCC

BCC has approved a supplementary planning document (SPD) which will control the development of HMOs in planning policy. This is very good news! The SPD sets limits for the creation of new HMOs or enlargement of existing HMOs in areas which already contain them. There should be no more than 10% HMOs in any area. This area and principles are defined within the SPD. This is very important at a time when UoB is expanding with more pressure for student accommodation in our community.

Local groups including RCAS have been pushing for this to be adopted by

BCC and the successful outcome was assisted by strong support from our local councillors in Cotham and Clifton Down.

ZOOM meeting with UoB Registrar Lucinda Parr and Community Liaison officer Gordon Scofield

The UoB management of their students during the lockdowns during the year was discussed. UoB said they had worked closely with BCC and that they had supported their students and the wider community.

The question of guidance given to students moving into the community was an important discussion. (see Sheffield Uni info brochure) <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/media/17564/download>.

LP admitted that timing of lockdown meant that talk to 1st years 'moving on' did not happen but emails were going out to all students. She is reluctant to make attendance at future talks compulsory for students but is keen to look at information provided by other universities to their students.

RCAS said that better education of students for their move into the community could engender better life skills and to understand the effects of ASB.

We think the University should consider having an ongoing dialogue with all HMO landlords for the purpose of information sharing. Could we work with the UoB contacts and through BCC to spread information more widely. Eg do landlords know that their tenants are having big parties?

GS said that a number of larger landlords and those that are part of UoB scheme are very conscientious and that he has regular positive dealings with

them. With his help Flatline produced a document that is on show in all of their lets. The 'good' landlords keep in touch and the 'bad' don't. There is a Private Rented Sector Team who communicate with landlords and BCC do too. LP & GS took on board that landlords should be getting the information which we get too. For waste and recycling issues, GS is in contact with Bristol Waste.

RCAS are interested in getting a relationship going with the community and students, eg by helping with looking after student gardens if possible.

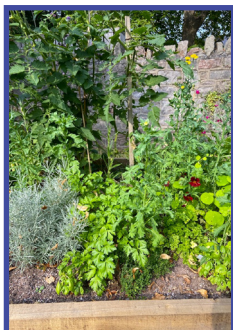
UoB are all for positive developments and will pass this on/look into it, although I expect it will be up to us to get on with it

Rob Harris

Update on Cotham Hill pedestrianisation

The signage and barriers marking the areas pedestrianised on Cotham Hill have been updated and improved as the photo below shows. Many of the restaurants and bars have built outdoor seated areas for customers and there is a much more relaxed feel to the road. Many shops report an increase in trade as a result of these temporary changes.

The road closure is temporary though and is due to end on 12th October.



Correction

In the last issue I incorrectly credited Arnold and Ruth Mayes as the only gardeners tending the raised bed and wildflowers outside Alderman's Park. In fact there are many residents helping with this colourful garden which is enjoyed by everyone passing it. Apologies to all. Melanie

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

