

Redland & Cotham Amenities Society



Report from the Chair
Spring Meeting
Open Gardens Programme
Planning and Parks
Student affairs



Number 203 - May 2024

Report from the Chair

As I write, the sun is finally making an appearance after all that rain. What a winter! The Friends of Cotham Gardens workparty, who have created the flowerbed opposite Cotham Gardens Primary School, worked through the rain to dig out the turf in very muddy conditions...have a look at the picture of the v wet team on the back of the newsletter!

We are now hoping for better weather for our gardeners and for our Open Gardens event which is later in June this year. A great programme has been put together by the new team and it will be particularly good to be able to walk around the new Redland Court gardens this year. Thanks to the team, and to the members and non-members who have agreed to open their gardens for this event.

We are still waiting to hear back from the council and Network Rail about the overlarge sign, which appeared on the Redland Grove/ Lovers' Walk open space just before the last newsletter. One thing, that is now clear, is that this piece of land is actually owned by Network Rail; a section about 3 m wide which you can identify by the change in paving material and the fence dividing the area of shrubs behind the end Grove Park/ South Road houses. We have asked whether this should have had planning approval or whether it is permitted development by Network Rail on their own land. Whichever it is, it does seem to be misplaced, as it does not help people find the entrance to the station and compromises an important landscape feature of the setting of Redland Count and important views along the avenue of trees, which marks the line of the original approach road.

A number of our members are very active in keeping our area looking cared for individually or through the BCR Streetscene group. A big 'Thank you' to them for all their work, clearing litter, tags and graffiti and flyposting. YOU CAN HELP too by reporting issues to be dealt with by the council or by Bristol Waste Company though the BCC website on their REPORT A STREET ISSUE page (or in a park on the BCC Parks and Open Spaces page via the REPORT links). There are specific links to report eg tagging on bus shelters or post boxes as well as streetlights that aren't working or drains that are blocked.

If you would like to become involved with the Streetscene group, do get in touch. People work independently or with others, depending on their preferences, but can keep in touch with other volunteers through social media and face-to-face meetings. Chandos Neighbourhood Assn has a monthly litter picking group which you are welcome to join too.

In this newsletter, you will find information about 'Street link'. This winter/spring, we were concerned about a tent which had been pitched on BCC parks land and reported it, as advised on the BCC website, to Streetlink, who sent someone to talk to the tent-dweller about what other options were available to them and followed up with them a couple of days later. The intervention was successful, and the tent and dweller moved on. Sleeping rough and in vehicles is a major issue in Bristol where homelessness is at the highest level it has ever been. We also report on the situation of Vehicle dwellers and the council and legal position on controlling this in this newsletter.

WATCH OUT:

A member reports that they had an approach from a man who knocked on the door and offered to do some works to shrubs and trees in their garden. He said that a neighbour had been satisfied with the work done for them. Our member expressed an interest, then felt pressured into accepting an offer; the man then did the work, immediately and badly, and wanted immediate payment. They now feel a bit embarrassed for having got themselves in that situation and wanted us to warn others.

Please remember ALL WORKS TO TREES (except fruit trees) IN OUR CONSERVATION AREA NEED PLANNING PERMISSION. So no-one who offers to do the work straight away is a reliable tradesman, however it is your responsibility as homeowner to do the works according to the law, so don't get caught out!

In this case, the tradesman in question presented a card with his details, so we advise you not to accept a quote to do tree works from A WILLIAMS, KINGS TREE SURGERY who also offers to do work on fencing, turfing, patios, paths and decking!

We hope you have a good summer and an enjoyable walk around our area on the Open Gardens trail and we look forward to talking to some of you again at the AGM in November. We have made a provisional booking at the Redland Club to hold the meeting on November but will not get confirmation until the renewed lease of the club is confirmed.

But...please put our provisional meeting date in your diary ... Wednesday November 6th and we will confirm the date, time and venue in our next newsletter in September.

Alison Bromilow



Spring Meeting

Bristol Waste Company

It was good to see so many of you at the meeting and social gathering in April. It was an excellent presentation by the two BWC community liaison officers, Nohelia Fernandez and Alex McKie who also answered a range of questions.

They started by highlighting that Bristol Waste is a nonprofit organisation owned by Bristol City Council. 7% of our council tax funds Bristol Waste, and any profits (very little) are used to improve system.

Bristol has been a leader in waste management and recycling and has been the highest rated city in the UK for the last eight years; we recycle 45% of our waste. The method of kerbside sorting- ie the Bristol System where the residents sort the waste and recycling before collection, has contributed to the very high success rate because it reduces contamination of recyclable materials.

Most of recycling is sold to third party processors. Metal is the most profitable with glass and paper/board also attractive. Interestingly, plastic is the most difficult to deal with (as there is a high energy requirement to recycle).

Food waste is sent to Avonmouth where it is turned into methane and compost. General waste is incinerated, and none goes to landfill except a minimal volume (under 2%) of waste which would be hazardous eg asbestos.

There was a long discussion about the management of student accommodation particularly in May and June when students were packing for the summer vacation. Both local universities were now involved in the process and there are now large bins for both recycling and waste in strategic locations that get emptied 6 days a week over this period and students are given access to the city's recycling centres without having to book a slot. This has resulted in a reduction in fly-tipping at the end of term.

There were a range of questions covering paint and paint containers, textiles, coloured glass, batteries, blocks of flats which have different systems etc.

Bristol Waste were keen to stress that if members of the public experienced problems, then they should get in contact with them to register these – or to make direct contact where the owner organisation is known, such as Companies, Network Rail etc.

The best way of reducing waste is to buy less.

In order of efficiency... “buy less; use it more; donate; recycle; bin” in that order

Black bins (general waste) :

- incinerated to generate energy (electricity)
Viridor incinerator opened 2022 – efficient & clean, reduces landfill and CO2 emissions
- NB currently Black Bins contain about 25% organic waste which should go into Brown Bins
- There is currently no additional sorting to enhance recycling at Incinerator (possible in future)

Organic waste :

- anaerobic digester at GENeco, Avonmouth
- generates methane to supply about 20k households
- also supplies Bristol Biogas bus fleet

Metal :

- recycled in UK
- top item for recycling as can be endlessly recycled and recovered

Glass :

- recycled in UK
- rinse (not necessary to fully clean) before putting in recycling bin
- not ‘tougher grade’ glass e.g. GU pots, light bulbs, wine glasses ... these require too high temp to recycle
- all coloured glass is now mixed together

Cardboard incl brown paper & tetrapaks :

- reprocessed in Asia, to produce cardboard packaging (this is v efficient because currently the majority of large imported items come from Asia)
- NB food-grease contaminated cardboard should go in Black Bins for incineration

Paper :

- recycled in UK e.g. for newspaper
- Can recycle thermal sensitive paper like receipts
- can not recycle glitter / plastic coated paper (which does not scrumple easily)
- glossy magazines OK to recycle

Plastic :

- from Green Boxes - recycled in UK
- rinse (not necessary to fully clean) before putting in recycling bin
- recycled into various products depending on grade of plastic e.g. bottles, fleeces, outdoor benches, decking, plastic bags for litter picks and street

- bin liners, recycling boxes
- 'Soft plastic' eg plastic bags and bubble wrap, are recycled by some supermarkets but may export abroad. Worth enquiring about destination – if unclear, better to put in black bin for incineration
- black plastic not recycled, but most 'black plastic' is actually dark grey. If you can see light through, it's not black and can be recycled
- there is a limit on the number of times plastic can be recycled
- Paint :
 - leave at recycling centres
 - partially used pots are sold on by Sofa project
 - nearly empty pots are mixed together and also sold on!
 - if residual paint solid or unusable, pots are scraped clean and recycled as metal
- Textiles:
 - usable clothing is recycled but ...
 - currently no commercially viable option for textile (rags) recycling in Bristol. Put in Black bins.
- Batteries (including disposable vapes) :
 - do NOT put in big Black Bin – if compressed, can burst into flames and set bin lorry on fire

For more information see <https://bristolwastecompany.co.uk/household/get-it-sorted/>

BCR Community Partnership

On April 22nd 2024, the Bishopston Cotham and Redland Community Partnership, which RCAS had been part of, was dissolved. The community partnership had been set up to continue the engagement previously supported by the Neighbourhood Partnerships which were part of the devolved local decision-making process under the council before 2018.

From the notes of the meeting:

1 Background

1.1 The Partnership was set up in February 2018 following the decision taken by Bristol City Council to dissolve the Council led neighbourhood partnerships. The Community Partnership sought to continue the neighbourhood partnership practise of holding public meetings and maintaining a dialogue between the local community, the City Council and other public sector decision makers.

1.2 Over the past six years the Community Partnership have hosted fifteen public forums and circulated 60 newsletters to 800 subscribers.

1.3 No public forums have been held in the last year, primarily because there have been no Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds to distribute in our area.

1.4 In January 2024, the City Council approved a new constitution that will come into force in May 2024. The new constitution included the setting up of nine area committees that will be responsible for taking decisions on CIL: the new committees will also have a wider remit to be consulted on local services such as road safety, parks and waste management. They will be required to hold two meetings a year in local venues and potentially a further two meetings online.

1.5 The new area committee arrangements should provide the kinds of interactions that BCR CP was set up to foster after the demise of the neighbourhood partnerships although there is one important geographical change: Bishopston, Cotham and Redland wards are no longer in the same committee area. In these circumstances the BCR CP Committee agreed that it was no longer necessary or desirable to continue with the Partnership and that a Special General Meeting be called to formally dissolve the Partnership and to agree the distribution of remaining assets. ...

3.2 It was unanimously agreed that the portable PA loudspeaker and the digital projector be donated to Ardagh Community Trust who have agreed to make these items available to other community groups.

3.3 It was unanimously agreed that the funds for holding public meetings should also be donated to Ardagh Community Trust – the money to be used to support continued community engagement with local councillors and the City Council.

3.4 It was agreed that The Redland Club should receive £100, The Friends of Bishopston Library £50 and the Ardagh Community Trust £51 from the funds not ringfenced for public meetings.

With many thanks to Roger Gimson, chair, and Kevin Chidgey for the notes. We look forward to hearing from the local councillors about the new area committee arrangements. Unfortunately for RCAS, we are now split between two of the proposed AC groupings, Redland with eg Westbury on Trym and Henleaze, and Cotham with Clifton, Clifton Down and Hotwells and Harbourside wards.

Alison Bromilow

Planning Report

New planning applications:

24/01117/H 52 Clarendon Road Redland Bristol BS6 7ET Demolition of part front boundary wall and excavation of garden to form off-street parking space with charging point for electric vehicle and reconfigured steps and relocated refuse/recycling store.

This is a re-application of proposal made 8 years ago which was previously refused by BCC and at appeal. RCAS has objected on grounds of loss of historic boundary wall and impact on viability of the residents' parking scheme through loss of publicly available on-street parking.

Existing planning applications: not decided/ updates

23/01007/F | Application for retention of use from residential (Use Class C3) to small House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4). | 25 Brighton Road Bristol BS6 6NU still awaiting decision

22/05745/F | Basement extension within the current footprint of the flat and replacing the existing shed with new garage. | Garden Flat 52 Hampton Park Bristol BS6 6LJ We have been informed that this application has been withdrawn, though it is still on the Planning Online website. We objected to the new dwelling unit over the new garage which backed onto the garage on Hampton Road.

23/01285/F | Renovation of 2 existing garages to front of site; demolition of 6 existing garages and construction of a two-storey residential dwelling to rear of site. | 38 Chandos Road Bristol BS6 6PF Revised plans were submitted in March 2024

23/01038/F | Proposed extension and general alterations to extant prior approved dwelling. | Land And Buildings Lying on The South Side of Brookfield Road Bristol: no longer live application

23/02830/LA | Demolition of potting sheds, outbuildings and garaging, and altered access off Hartfield Avenue. Change of use of Muller House from a large HMO into 6no. Use Class C3 dwellings and construction of 5no. dwellings (Use Class C3) with associated car parking. Alterations to listed building and curtilage listed buildings. Works to trees and re-landscaping. Major | Muller House & The Lodge 7 Cotham Park Bristol BS6 6DA, awaiting decision.

23/02315/F | Proposed 2no. bedroom 4-person dwellinghouse. | Land To Rear Of 116 Coldharbour Road Bristol BS6 7SL An application to build a detached house behind the mini market on the corner of Coldharbour Road and Greendale Road has been refused. RCAS objected to this application on grounds of poor and inappropriate design and lack of private amenity space for occupants.

Planning application system update

Since our last report, Bristol City Council as local planning authority (LPA) has been taken into special measures because of the excessive backlog of applications. The department has been understaffed for some years and when the previous administration brought in a staffing freeze, it included the planning department, which exacerbated the situation. As the planning department brings in funding from planning application fees, it is difficult to understand why it was included in the freeze, but it has led to a lack of mid-level officers in the department and, although the new head of planning, Simone Wilding, had a recovery plan in place, the government decided to put Bristol into special measures.

This means that developers can apply direct to the HM inspectorate instead of the local planning authority, but not in all cases. All householder and major sized projects still have to go through the local planning authority, so it is only a small group of development proposals that are affected. Only developments of between 1 and 9 dwellings or less than 1,00 sq m of commercial development can be considered by HMI. They also do not have a mechanism to deal with CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy), so would not be able to deal with those applications. There are therefore very few applications which will be taken out of the system for Bristol.

We have noticed a significant increase in planning decisions recently, as a direct result of the recovery plan rather than the special measures, but also a big reduction in applications other than for works to trees which still make up the bulk of the planning applications in our area.

As a result of the pressure on the LPA to focus on planning decisions, planning enforcement cases have been reduced in priority, which given the number of developments which were undertaken without permission during the Covid period, is of concern but a new piece of legislation in the Levelling Up and

Regeneration Act has been passed which increases the length of time for consideration of a planning enforcement case from 4 years to 10 years after the breach occurred. This means that some developments (which includes change of use) will continue to be enforced when previously they would have been 'out-of-time'. Unfortunately this cannot be applied retrospectively.

Alison Bromilow and Simon Birch

The password on the RCAS.org.uk website for access to the archived newsletters is

News (Capital N)

General Data Protection Regulation(GDPR)

RCAS keep details of information you provided us when you joined the organisation (or updated subsequently).

These details include your name, address, phone number and email address. The information is kept within the organisation and not distributed outside.

Free online membership for under 40s

We want to increase our membership and are offering under 40 residents in the RCAS area the opportunity to join us as online members for free. If you are lucky enough to qualify, please get in touch with Kathryn (membership@rcas.org.uk) who can give you the password to access the newsletter.

Do you know any family or friends who might be interested in this offer? Please get them to email Kathryn at membership@rcas.org.uk

Help with tech issues

Does anyone have some free time to help RCAS with technical support for our website to deal with email protocols (and other issues)?

Please contact us on info@rcas.org.uk



StreetLink an organisation which connects rough sleepers to the local support they need.

Rough sleeping and homelessness are increasing. We can see the evidence of rough sleeping on green spaces and streets in the Bristol area. If you do identify someone you think may be rough sleeping please contact StreetLink (streetlink.org.uk). They provide an alert system that community members can use to give details about the rough sleeper. StreetLink's role is to contact the relevant local authority so they can contact the rough sleeper and assist them. This means that the local authority outreach team can quickly engage with rough sleepers.

StreetLink runs in partnership with StreetVet (StreetVet.co.uk) and Street Paws (streetpaws.co.uk). We know that many rough sleepers have pets that may often be the most valuable relationship they have. But this can mean they have to choose between a safe place to live and keeping their pet. Street Paws aims to empower homeless people to keep their pet by their side. StreetVet provides free essential veterinary care to the pets of homeless people.

Both StreetVet and Street Paws are run by volunteers and welcome donations to help continue their work. Please visit their websites for further details.



Parks

REDLAND GREEN

It has eventually stopped raining and spring is well on the way. The blossom on the trees has been beautiful and the sun has managed to shine at just about the right moments!

The 77th Scout troop came and helped remove the patch of brambles next to the St Oswalds orchard and did a litter pick in a dry window.

The Redland Community Fun afternoon went ahead on the Spring Bank Holiday Monday based around Redland Church Hall where 400 teas and 100 childrens drinks were served with donated cakes! A bouncy castle, face painting and live music from Dr Jazz, The Velvetones and the Ukrainian Choir kept everyone entertained. The Redland Green Allotments Association had a stall selling plants and rhubarb and did a brisk trade between the showers! The Redland Club and Bowling Club offered taster sessions throughout the afternoon. Altogether a great fun community event with big thanks to everyone who helped with the organisation and those who came.

The ground is still very soft and muddy in parts and the cherry trees near the farm have been shedding large limbs in the high winds with the consequence that one of them nearest the play area will need felling. A new tree will be planted there and the space is up for sponsorship.

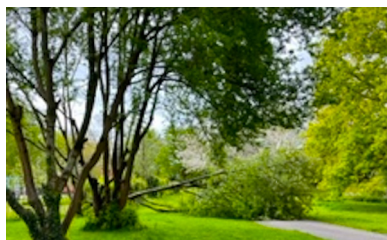
We look forward to a more clement summer.

Lois Goddard





77th Scout troop in action



Fallen cherry tree

Ukrainian Choir



Redland Green Allotments Association stall

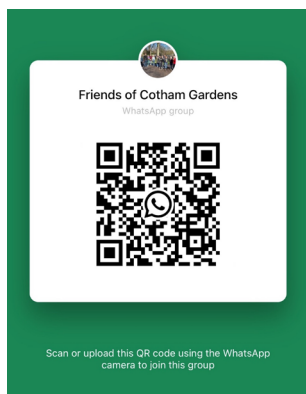
COTHAM GARDENS

We now have over 50 members on our Friends Of Cotham Green WhatsApp group, and regularly get 10 to 20 volunteers. We clean the paths, the children's playground and sandpit. We recently planted a wildflower bed opposite Cotham Gardens Primary School near the zebra crossing, which should attract lots of bees and insects to encourage biodiversity.

Volunteers dug out an area of turf where the previous flower beds had been located and have been planting perennial flowering plants which are attractive to pollinators for a permanent impact. In the meantime, for this summer, we have seeded the whole bed with wildflowers which are coming up thick and fast. Volunteers donated plants which will self-seed and gradually fill the bed, perhaps as successfully as the flower bed by the fence around the play area which is in glorious colour at the moment. Many plants have been donated by the birds using the fence as a perch, including the flowering cherry tree in the flower bed here.

The Friends of Cotham Gardens/RCAS are maintaining these beds. If you would like to help, please get in touch or come up on the first Saturday of the month and meet the other volunteers. Future projects will include repainting the Victorian lamp posts down Lovers Walk.

Date for your diary: FOCG Afternoon Social with Lucy of Roam Wild Coffee on **Friday 12th July from 4.00 pm till 6.30 pm**. This will enable Cotham Gardens Primary School parents and children to attend. We will have a licence and Lucy will be making some Espresso Martinis.



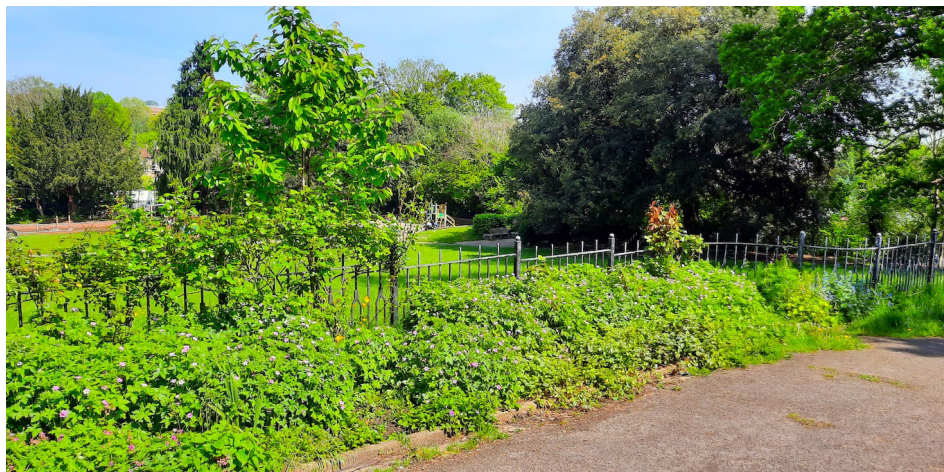
Join FoCG using the QR code above





Digging out the flowerbed

The flowerbed by the play area



Back cover photo of the volunteers working through the rain digging the flowerbed and still smiling....

Chris Shelley



Student Liaison

Students on the Move 2024

As the academic year ends Bristol Waste Company (BWC) are launching the annual campaign to encourage all students at University of Bristol and UWE to recycle or dispose of unwanted items in a responsible and environmentally friendly way. The dates for the campaign are June 15th until July 5th. Collections will be daily including weekends this year to avoid any weekend fly tipping build up that has happened on previous years during weekends where there had been no collections.

The SOTM campaign has several types of resource available for students to use. In addition to strategic bin locations for SOTM and there are also the British Heart Foundation bin donation and collections. The SOTM 2024 campaign includes the following:

- It allows students to attend the Bristol recycling centres without registering a car/name.
- It allows students where appropriate to hire a 1100 litre bin for additional waste disposal and collection at their property and this bin can be shared amongst several properties.
- It allows students to arrange collections of bulky items via council desks/cupboards and the like - up to three items on one collection for a nominal fee.

The Halls to Houses Move Out information has been delivered and is now being cascaded to all first year students and has been further disseminated to all letting agents for dispersal amongst their second/third year tenant base

There has been a U1 bus stop campaign running all week until the end of the month and the focus has been Halls to Houses and SOTM campaigns.

With the assistance of the residents' associations there has been over 1500 SOTM 2024 leaflets delivered across the highly densely populated students' locations and lamppost posters are also being used to highlight the campaign.

Student Comms electronic billboards will also be utilised to educate and highlight the SOTM 2024 campaign. It is hoped that this campaign will greatly reduce the waste associated with student end of year.

However, any fly tipping you notice made during the campaign should be reported in the normal way and Bristol City Council (BCC) will ensure an early response.

Fly tipping- BCC website: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/streets-travel/flytipping>.

Bristol waste – hello@bristolwastecompany.co.uk for other matters relating to student waste complaints

BCC neighbourhood enforcement will carry on the excellent joint investigation work they did with BWC last year relating to suspected fly tipping student/landlord waste. BCC will use its powers to discourage and make examples of those who fly tip.

Gold Star Awards 2024

We didn't identify any suitable candidates for a Gold Star award in 2023 and we haven't been able to compile a long list for 2024. There is simply nothing suitable being built in our area. Possibly a positive sign that all the potential development sites have been used up.

But you might think differently. Do you have any nominations? For projects which make a positive contribution to the appearance of our area - and which are easily visible from public locations (no rear extensions). If so, please let me know.

Simon Birch

Vehicle dwellers in Bristol

Some people have raised questions about people living on streets in our area and particularly on the Downs. It is not an offence to live in vehicles and caravans on the streets; the police can only take action if there is anti-social behaviour as a result of this.

For some people, it is a lifestyle choice, but for many people it is the only option other than sleeping on streets or in parks. Given the shortage of so called 'affordable housing' and homes for rent, this has become a significant issue in Bristol. Bristol has the largest population of van dwellers of any city in the UK and, as of March 2024, an estimated 800 people were living in 600-650 vehicles in Bristol. Before the pandemic, there were about 100-150. The majority are around the Downs and in East Central around Eastgate.

At a recent cabinet meeting, the following information was given in response to questions about the way in which this can be controlled.

A question about the possibility of prosecuting people for parking on controlled parking areas such as residents parking scheme areas or where traffic parking regulations are in place such as around the Downs. The then mayor responded as follows:

Penalty Charge Notices can only be issued to cars, motorhomes, vans etc, but enforcement action cannot be taken against caravans, which are not registered with the DVLA and which do not have registered keepers to take enforcement action against.

We treat parking offences the same regardless.

RCAS understands that fines are only imposed after three notices have been issued. Since January 2023, Parking Services have carried out 388 visits, logged over 1,318 vehicles and issued 300 PCN's.

In response to a question about why people are not directed to move to the caravan park at St Anthony's in Avonmouth, the mayor responded:

Bristol does have Traveller site provision at St Anthony's Park in Avonmouth; this is a transit site for Gypsy Roma Travellers with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010 and can only be used by any one person/family for a maximum of 13 weeks/3 months at a time.

As explained in the report we believe that offering more sites might reduce the pressure on some of the areas where roadside encampments are common. However, we cannot force anyone to use them if they do not wish to do so.

The council have been attempting to create sites for vehicle dwellers across Bristol and have identified some sites as ‘meanwhile sites’ which are earmarked as development sites but are going to be vacant for a while. A site in Knowle West was set up and was quickly filled up. More sites are being sought.

A full report called ‘Vehicle Dwellers: The Bristol Model’ was presented to the cabinet on Tuesday 5th March 2024 under item 26 and can be found on the Bristol City Council website. The answers to the questions as reproduced above were given at that meeting and can be found in the Public Forum Question responses.



