

Redland & Cotham Amenities Society



Report from the Chair
AGM Minutes and Accounts
Planning
Student Liaison
Pull-out Information Section



Number 205- December 2024

Report from the Chair

It was great to see so many members at the AGM, which made for a lively discussion about the future of the society. More about that later.

We heard from 3 of our local councillors about the way in which the council is now being run. The system is still bedding in and we are still waiting to hear about how the Area Committees are going to organise themselves. RCAS was v involved with the previous Neighbourhood Partnership organisation and I was on the partnership for some years working with the councillors to identify how council funding should be allocated within our partnership area. The new groupings of wards which have been listed on the BCC website may be up for further discussion according to Cllr Poultney, but there was no information about how this may come forward and when. As I have said before, with Redland & Cotham being in different groupings it is going to be more difficult to be effective.

We are very fortunate that in our area we have so many residents who are helping to keep our area looking good. As I write this, storm Bert (named from a list compiled from public suggestions apparently!) is responsible for a lot of rain. Luckily, the Redland Grove and Grove Park residents finished their work around Redland Grove greenspace, clearing leaves and trimming the epicormic growth, and the hedge along Lover's Walk by South Road, before the rain arrived. It is great to see how many local people are happy to put in so much effort. The residents of Limerick Road cleared up their road and collected up 30 bags of leaves, Chandos Neighbourhood Association members litter pick their area each month, individual members pick up litter in their streets, Street Scene group members clear tags and graffiti from street furniture and walls in our area and the members of the Friends of Cotham Gardens work each month on the park. Thank you to everyone who helps people keep the area looking good, our unsung heroes!

At the AGM, people were keen to discuss the proposal to stop the membership charge for RCAS and put forward many ideas for spending money in our account. You can see the accounts report later in the newsletter. We have built up quite a large pot of money

and have not been able to identify sufficient projects recently. Some suggestions were made at the AGM for spending some of the money but we need to be aware that any spending has to be in line with the charitable objects of the society, and that anything that involves Bristol City Council owned property or highways may be impossible to bring forward given the current council procedures and practices, and legal constraints.

Here are the objects of the society as set out in the updated constitution adopted in 1995.

"To promote such charitable objects for the benefit of the present and future community of Redland and Cotham as the Committee shall determine from time to time and in particular to further the maintenance, improvement and development of the cultural, architectural and other amenities of the said community and to provide or assist in the provision of facilities for recreation and other leisure time occupations of the said community in the interest of social welfare within the meaning of Section 1 of the Recreational Charities Act 1958"

Alterations to the constitution can be made at an AGM by the membership provided that no amendment permitting the expenditure of funds of the Society on any object which is not a charitable object is authorised.

The committee has agreed that it will take a further look at the options available and report back on their proposals in the next newsletter. It is clear however that many of the suggestions made at the meeting will involve a lot of additional time and effort.

As I said at the AGM, the committee is now down to 5 so we will not be able to carry out door to door surveys or leaflet drops unless some more people come forward to help. Thank you to the one person who did offer!

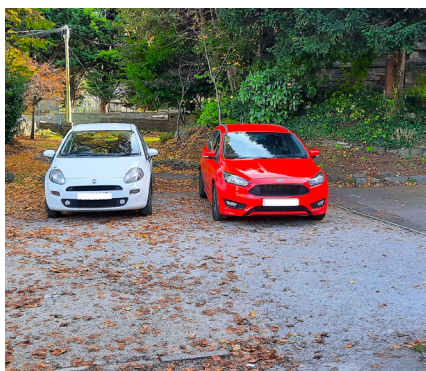
We could use some of our money to employ a marketing person to come up with a strategy to increase membership numbers, but without help, the committee will find it difficult to take on any

more work than they already do. Can you help? or can you identify a group or organisation that you could introduce to RCAS to help us widen our reach. As you have been informed, we have written to a number of organisations offering help with their projects and have supported Cotham Church and Elmgrove Centre with funding for infrastructure projects which we consider to be in line with our charitable aims. We are also hoping that Redland Parish Church will bring forward their project to open up the churchyard for community use which we have offered some funding support for.

Would anyone like to come on board and help us find new projects to support? or to help coordinate an outreach/ marketing project, or help with social media marketing. Do get in touch if you think you can help. Or if you know of anyone you think might be able to. Has anyone any ideas for a Spring talk? It would be great to hear from anyone!

In the meantime, I hope you all have a very good Christmas and with all our best wishes for the New Year. See you in 2025

Alison Bromilow



The resurfaced car park at Elmgrove Centre which RCAS helped fund with a small grant. The car park had previously been a muddy mess.

Minutes of the 52nd RCAS AGM

Wednesday 6th November 2024

Apologies have been received from Chris Shelley, Carol Parratt, Rob Harris, Nicky and Rob Slack.

There were 36 people present at the meeting all of whom were RCAS members.

Welcome to the 52nd Redland & Cotham Amenities Society AGM.

This address combined with the individual reports in our September newsletter is the RCAS Annual Report for 2024

This year, the committee has continued to

- monitor planning applications, including applications for works to trees,
- to work with others to make improvements to our parks and greenspaces, and our streets
- to work with others to address issues such as the impact of the large student HMO population in part of our area and of antisocial behaviour

We have been pleased to be able to support a number of small grant projects including sponsoring some tree planting in our streets and parks and supporting the parks groups for Cotham Gardens and Lovers' Walk and Redland Green.

We have been following up with the local community organisations who identified projects they are proposing to bring forward which will be in line with the charitable aims of RCAS as set out last year. We are always on the lookout for more projects to fund, particularly if we are also given support with the work to bring the project forward.

One of the highlights of the RCAS year is the Open Gardens Day. We had a wonderful selection of gardens to visit this year thanks to the efforts of the new Open Gardens team, Dave, Serena and Meg. We really appreciate the hard work that goes into making this event

such a highlight of the RCAS calendar and thank the volunteers who make this happen. The team would welcome an additional member so if you are interested do volunteer.

As always, my thanks go to the committee members who have worked hard as ever this year. Thanks too to the other people who work on behalf of the members in our task groups but don't attend committee meetings, that includes the planning group, the Open Gardens team and the parks workparty members. Also, a thank you to Andrew Waller and the Chandos Neighbourhood Association, especially Fiona McVey, for their work on representing the community in discussions with the university and specifically the current working party discussions with the vice chancellor Evelyn Welch.

A particular thanks to the newsletter distribution leader Kate Reading, and to all the members who have helped with the newsletter deliveries and with collecting the subscriptions from those members who do not pay by standing order. The society relies on their help to get the newsletter and the Open Gardens programme out to members and is always very grateful to the team for their invaluable input.

Business-

1. Approval of Minutes. The 2023 Minutes as set out in the December 2023 Newsletter. Approved by a show of hands

2. Annual Report and Accounts

The Treasurer, Peter Dunscombe, introduced the accounts and answered questions

- Adoption of the accounts

proposed by Simon Birch

seconded by Lois Goddard. Approved by a show of hands.

3. Election of officers and committee members

Each year we have to elect the secretary and treasurer to the society at the AGM.

Last year, in the absence of any other volunteers, two existing committee members took on the posts of Treasurer and Secretary.

I am incredibly grateful to them both for their help with ensuring the continuance of the society and also for their willingness to stand again this year.

- Secretary Melanie Gallop
proposed by Peter Dunscombe
seconded by Arnold Mayes. Approved by a show of hands.
- Treasurer Peter Dunscombe
proposed by Julie Hart
seconded by Judith Headley. Approved by a show of hands.

No committee members stand for re-election this year as they were all elected in 2022 and serve for a 3-year term.

Any Other Business

RCAS REVIEW:

RCAS Committee is very conscious that our membership numbers are slowly decreasing as shown in the current accounts. The committee continue to discuss what we can do to widen our membership. As suggested last year we offered free membership to under 40-year-olds, who were able to access the newsletter online but not receive a printed copy. We asked members last year to come forward with any suggestions that they might have. We also invited non-members to our spring meeting through committee street WhatsApp groups and have encouraged members to do the same.

We now feel that the society needs to respond to the changes in how people engage with their communities and update their processes to reflect those changes and to look at how the RCAS can continue to serve the community in the future.

Many people now are comfortable with receiving their news online and are not reliant on a physical newsletter. Newsletters are discarded after reading and join the other brochures and newsletters in recycling box. Younger members prefer to have the articles online where they can retrieve them if they need to later.

The newsletter editing and printing costs are the major expenditure for our society and the majority of the membership fee and gift aid goes to fund the production of the quarterly newsletters.

As mentioned earlier, the newsletters are delivered by our wonderful army of distributors, which saves most of the postage costs. We do have some postal members who receive the newsletter through the mail.

The newsletter distributors are also responsible for collecting the membership fee from people who have not made a Standing Order and they find this the less enjoyable side of their role, as it is often necessary to return several times to find the householder at home and with the money available to pay- not always the case now society largely has moved over to card payments. We currently still have 15-20% of our members who do not pay by Standing Order.

There is an increased usage of online chat platforms and social media such as Next Door, Facebook, Instagram, X and WhatsApp by the wider society as well as other platforms such as TikTok. These platforms allow people to connect with each other and are free to use so many people who are now used to interacting in this way are less likely to want to join organisations which do not have much of an online presence and cost them a subscription.

RCAS has no intention of stopping producing and delivering the newsletter for our current members, but given the size of our current account, we feel that we need to look at whether we should continue ask for membership fees when we currently have no major projects which they would be spent on.

We are proposing therefore to ask the members for their thoughts about the committee's proposal to remove the membership fee for a while, whilst opening up membership to the wider community for free to see whether, by making our conversations more accessible, we can attract a new audience.

The newsletter would be free to existing members but could only be made accessible online for new members who would not pay a membership fee.

Existing members who wished to change over to online access only would be welcome to do so.

If we agreed to cancel membership fees for a while, people would have to be asked to cancel their standing orders. Any monies received after May next year, because SOs were not cancelled, would have to be treated as voluntary donations.

The proposal was then discussed by the attendees who made the following points:

Cancelling Standing Orders would make it difficult to reinstate a paid membership in the future.

Direct debit would be a better way of collecting fees as the committee could then vary the subscription rate.

RCAS could spend some money on employing a marketing consultant to reach outside the current membership.

Newsletters could be delivered free to non-members who might then be persuaded to join (RCAS had tried that without success)

People could be encouraged to join by being offered funding for their projects (RCAS had been running the small grants funds for some years, but this had not been a successful recruitment route)

What can you do to improve your area through RCAS? We need to do these things and we need your help to do it.

What can RCAS do to help you improve your area?

Posters in noticeboards

Use councillors' newsletters to reach out to ward communities.

Other suggestions were made by the audience:

Mend pavements

Pay for cast iron historic streetlights to be painted (eg Redland Road/ Clyde Road)

Pay for Lovers' Walk pedestrian bridge to be repaired and painted

People value things they pay for more

Different membership types- but could need changes to the constitution

Free membership for a specific period eg 2 years for new members

All members could be expected to pay by Standing Order and any that don't will lapse membership. But RCAS could give award honorary membership to long term members.

New flyer, eg where did the play equipment come from / do you like spending other people's money?

Leafletting and delivering free newsletters.

Review RCAS aims to widen possible spending opportunities

Councillors could attend committee meeting to discuss future projects

RCAS should keep some funds in case a particular need arises

RCAS could hold more social activities to encourage new members (but the current committee does not have the capacity to do so)

RCAS pointed out that spending money on eg repairing pavements was not possible as the city council has a policy that precludes communities with more money to pay for highway repairs or any project which requires BCC staff input, because it would disadvantage less financially secure communities.

The Friends of Cotham Gardens had contacted Network Rail with a view to repainting the pedestrian bridge at Redland Station but the H&S issues of working over a live railway were a problem.

RCAS would raise the idea of paying for the painting of the historic cast iron streetlights with the council.

It was agreed by the meeting that

RCAS would not reduce the membership fee to nothing for existing members but would offer for a set period free membership to new members with a view to encouraging new members. (This would mean that our current members could encourage new members without having to press them to make financial contribution.)

New members would be offered the choice of becoming an online member or receiving the printed newsletter.

RCAS committee would look at current members who do not pay by SO and assess whether they could be offered honorary (free) membership- this would reduce work for distributors.

RCAS committee will look at carrying out a marketing exercise to look at how we can extend the membership to newer residents in our area. We could use some of our funds to help with this.

Guest Speakers: Councillors Martin Fodor, Guy Poultney, Serena Ralston.

Martin explained the new structure of the council decision making committees now there was no longer a mayoral system. Martin discussed the structure and makeup of the different committees and the mechanisms for decision making by the committees. The decision-making processes and structures are detailed at <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/council/how-council-decisions-are-made>. Martin told the meeting that there will be a public consultation on the next budget. This can be found on the BCC website at <https://www.ask.bristol.gov.uk/budget-2025-26>. The consultation closes at midnight Thursday 19th December 2024.

Guy spoke about the aim of the council to be more collaborative, inclusive and transparent so that there was more effective scrutiny of council decision making and aims. Guy said that the council aims to be working, via area committees, for more local decision making regarding the needs for individual areas. Guy noted that regrettably Steve Smith, who had worked so effectively as Student Liaison Officer at University of Bristol, has now moved to University of the West of England. Guy is seeking more council involvement with Bristol Community Student Partnership. The council will introduce a more re-use focussed scheme for the student end of year leaving as there is still too much land-fill waste.

Serena spoke briefly, in the short time available, about the committees she is a member of: Economy and Skills Policy, and Development Control A. Serena is also a member of Avon Fire Authority.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Leaf and Litter Clearing

Bristol City Council is under huge financial pressure and services that would previously have been carried out regularly, such as leaf clearing from pavements, are not happening as often as we would like. If you can, please get involved with leaf clearing or litter picking on your road. Do get your neighbours involved!

Bristol Waste Company (BWC) can loan you and your group Litter Picking Kits so you can safely clean streets and park areas. <https://bristolwastecompany.co.uk/litter-picking-kit/>

You can request extra bags from BWC at <https://bristolwastecompany.co.uk/extra-bags/>

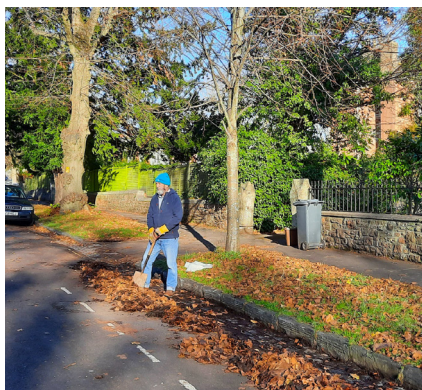
Then simply contact BWC for collection at <https://bristolwastecompany.co.uk/litter-collection/>

The residents of Carnarvon Road and Limerick Road recently had a communal street clear of leaves from the street trees. It was a great effort from all and you can see in the photo how many bags were filled. The bags were collected very soon after the collection request was made.





Photos above of Limerick Road communal leaf clearing and the bags waiting for collection by BCC



To the side and below photos of Grove Park leaf clearing and epicormic growth removal



RCAS Accounts 2023/2024

RCAS ACCOUNTS	2023/24	2022/23
Income		
Subscriptions	5430	5784
Gift Aid	1387	1205
Donations		1000
Interest	762	574
Other		75
TOTAL	7579	7264
Expenditure		
Newsletters	2785	4778
Meetings/Events	393	281
Overheads	620	382
Cotham Church		4500
Redland Green Tree		325
Roger Mortimer Tree		615
Cotham Gardens	244	370
Tree Forum		122
Whiteladies Gate notice board		218
Grants	455	
Other	60	
TOTAL	4557	11591
Excess Income over Expenditure	3022	(2952)

BALANCE SHEET		
Bank Accounts	42253	39581
Debtors (HMRC)	1100	1145
Held for CNA	(640)	(990)
Net Assets	42713	39736

Gift Aid

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

For a Gift Aid claim to be valid, you must have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities or Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) which you donate to will reclaim on your gifts for that tax year. Other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify. RCAS will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 of your subscription and any other donations.

If you have any concerns that your Gift Aid declaration may no longer be valid, please contact Treasurer Peter Dunscombe through the RCAS website (rcas.org.uk) or peterdunscombe@gmail.com

Planning

Updates:

Land At Home Gardens Redland Hill BS6 6UR Application for outline planning permission with some matters reserved - Redevelopment of the site comprising demolition of existing buildings and the erection of two new buildings to provide up to 60 residential units (Class C3) and up to 209 sq.m. (GIA) of flexible office space (Class E) to Whiteladies Road ground floor frontage, and associated works (Access, Scale and Layout to be determined now with Appearance and Landscaping reserved for future consideration).

The previous application for this site was refused by Bristol LPA and at appeal on the grounds of adverse impact on the adjacent properties at 7 and 9 St Vincents Hill. The revised design has moved the building further from these properties and reduced the height closest to them, and increased the green buffer. RCAS will not be commenting on the new application.

Garden Flat 52 Hampton Park BS6 6LJ Relocate shed, replace with 1-1/2 storey garage with studio accommodation above. RCAS has objected to the new proposal on the grounds of design and poor-quality accommodation for future residents. Extension of time agreed 24 Oct.

125 Redland Road BS6 6XX The replacement of two front dormer windows on the second floor. Revised design Approved.

New:

22 Chandos Road BS6 6PF Roof extension works to create additional floor for a new dwelling. RCAS has concerns about proposed access to first floor flat roof which could be used as a terrace which could be a source of noise to neighbours. Roof not protected with railing; safety issues.

Land To The Rear Of 132 Cotham Brow Demolition of existing garage at the end of the hotel gardens to form mews house with integrated parking and garden. RCAS do not think there are grounds for objection.



Make sure to add RCAS as a trusted contact so our emails don't go into your spam folder by accident.

RCAS COMMITTEE

CHAIR

Alison Bromilow 5 Grove Park BS6 6PP

alison@rcas.org.uk
942 5420

VICE-CHAIR

Vacant

SECRETARY

Melanie Gallop 1 Limerick Road BS6 7DX

melaniegallop61@gmail.com
07906 303947

TREASURER

Peter Dunscombe The Coach House 15a Archfield Road BS6 6BD

peterdunscombe@gmail.com
9245314

COMMITTEE

Kathryn Armitstead 52 Redland Court Road BS6 7EH

kathryn.armitstead@gmail.com
973 6070

Chris Shelley 29 Elmgrove Road BS6 6AJ

chris.shelley@csa-i.com
07850379575

PROJECTS/SMALL GRANTS

Chris Shelley

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

Planning Alison Bromilow
Dave Jones (Trees)
Simon Birch

dij@trenance.net
simon.birch7@gmail.com

PARKS

Chris Shelley
Melanie Gallop

UNIVERSITY LIAISON

Derrick Collier

EVENTS

OPEN GARDENS

Dave Jones
Meg Thomas
Serena Jones

rcasopengardens@gmail.com

COMMUNICATION

Membership Kathryn Armistead
Distribution Kate Floyd
Newsletter Melanie Gallop

OUR PUBLIC SERVICES

The Committee encourages members to make full use of the information and other services provided to them by the Council and other public bodies, including the various helplines and internet reporting arrangements. We often hear of problems and find that that no one has reported them, so nothing has been done. Regular reporting does raise standards.

The contacts given here are believed to be correct as at November 2024



USEFUL CONTACTS

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL (BCC)

Reporting street issues

Litter, fly-tipping, fly-posting, graffiti or tagging, roads that need cleaning, overgrown trees or hedges blocking pavements, potholes, blocked drains and street light problems.

The best way to report these issues to Bristol City Council is to use the Report a street issue page on the BCC website. **<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/residents/streets-travel/report-a-street-issue>**.

You can report most issues there by completing the online reporting form. Remember to record the reference number so that you can chase this up, if necessary.

(You can telephone the Customer services number 0117 922 2100 but it is an automated service which is very slow to respond, and requires the service officer to complete the form for you.)

CITY COUNCILLORS for the Society's membership area

Redland Ward	Martin Fodor	07884 736101
	Fi Hance	0117 353 4720
Cotham Ward	Mohamed Makawi	07584 182566
	Guy Poultney	07557 184819
Clifton Down Ward	George Calascione	073866 98689
	Serena Ralston	073866 98758

Councillors' postal address: City Hall, College Green, BS1 5TR

Email addresses: cllr.first.name.surname@bristol.gov.uk

PLANNING DEPARTMENT - GENERAL ENQUIRIES

Website: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/planning-and-building-regulations>

Planning applications can be seen online

You can look at documents and also comment on a planning application.

If you need computer access Bristol Libraries have public use computers at all libraries.

PRIVATE HOUSING POLICIES (including landlords)

Online reporting at www.bristol.gov.uk/housing/private-tenants/problems-with-your-property

Email: private.housing@bristol.gov.uk

Website: www.bristol.gov.uk/private-landlords/private-housing-policies-and-performance

REFUSE AND RECYCLING

Make Bristol Waste Company (BWC) your first point of contact, then the council (BCC).

BWC - 0117 304 9580

<http://www.bristolwastecompany.co.uk/> for all waste and recycling issues, including new bins and missed collections

BCC Refuse & Recycling - 0117 922 2100

Information and queries: www.bristol.gov.uk/bins-recycling

NOISE POLLUTION

Report online at: www.bristol.gov.uk/pests-pollution-noise-food/noise-pollution

or email: pollution@bristol.gov.uk

To report a persistent alarm 0117 922 2500

POLICE

The Neighbourhood Policing Team can be contacted on 101

Websites www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/your-area/redland/

www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/your-area/cotham/

Redland, Cotham and Clifton Down Beats

Adam Dolling

Neighbourhood Inspector

Jonathan Scott

Neighbourhood Sergeant

Jeremy Burstow (Clifton Down)

Neighbourhood Constable

David Pires (Clifton Down)

Police Community Support Officer

Mark Jackson (Redland & Cotham)

Neighbourhood Constable

Morgan Davies (Redland & Cotham)

Neighbourhood Constable

West Country Crimestoppers

0800 555 111 (call is free; your name is not required)

OPERATION BEECH POLICE PATROL

Dedicated police patrols to address student parties and anti-social behaviour by students

Patrol operates 8pm - 2am on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday **Text 07773 816248**

UNIVERSITIES

For queries or concerns about student households the relevant contacts are:

University of Bristol (UoB)

Community Liaison Officer

Mark Aston

Email:

community-living@bristol.ac.uk

Website:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/accommodation/>
Search for Community Liaison Officer

University of the West of England (UWE)

Community Liaison Manager

Rich Barnston

Email:

community@uwe.ac.uk

Website:

Search 'UWE Community liaison'

If you do not know which University is involved, we suggest you contact both. It is helpful if you tell RCAS of any problems (email: info@rcas.org.uk)

Cotham School Cotham Lawn Road BS6 6DT Application for Planning Permission for Works to install 3no. CCTV poles and cameras. Lights should not impact on surrounding properties.

127 Redland Road BS6 6XX Conversion of an existing garage attached to the side and addition of a first floor above to create a 2-bedroom dwelling. RCAS have objected.

Salisbury House Kersteman Road BS6 7BY Construction of an attached single dwelling with associated works.

Existing planning applications: not decided

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

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

Alison Bromilow and Simon Birch

Student Liaison

In the last Newsletter, it was reported the very effective University of Bristol (UoB) Community Liaison Officer (CLO), Steve Smith, was leaving, much to the dismay of local residents. In searching for a replacement the UoB invited residents from the Bristol Student Community Partnership (BSCP) to be part of the selection process, which has gone some way to alleviating the worries that past gains might be lost. Recently the UoB have announced his replacement, Mark Aston, who will take up the post on 4th December.

Mark is described as ‘... a former Police Officer, who most recently led internal disciplinary investigations within the police. He impressed University colleagues and residents with the care he took in his role, his commitment to successful communities and his calm and authoritative manner.’ The UoB are also planning a comprehensive induction and training programme for him, which all looks very positive. It’s also reassuring that, like Steve Smith before him, Mark is former police officer. As many have noted, police training seems ideal in providing the skills needed for the role of CLO.

Again, the UoB has reassured residents to continue reporting student anti-social behaviour by email to < community-living@bristol.ac.uk > or via text message to Operation Beech on 07773 816248, which operates on Wed, Fri, and Sat evenings till 2.00am. This is valuable as it can specifically deal with ‘live’ disturbances on the night (see more below).

The last newsletter also noted that Working Parties were being organised between residents and the UoB and some have now taken place. These are ongoing and wide ranging, and although I didn’t attend any, the summary below is based on notes released so far.

‘Working Party - Disciplinary Process’

This was considered something of a success by residents who attended.

Student Resolution Service (SRS)

- Attended by several senior university staff involved in the discipline of students who, for the first time, explained in detail

how the investigation and subsequent discipline worked under SRS procedures. SRS emphasised that each complaint is judged on its own merits.

- In general the response time for dealing with complaints requiring consideration of sanctions is 21 days. The UoB recognises that any monetary fines need to be proportionate, as some students are already financially distressed whilst for others a fine is of little consequence.

- The UoB is adamant that if a complaint escalates to the SRS then personal witness information needs to be disclosed to students as required by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator, although it appears this information is limited to names and addresses.

- The UoB intends to produce a standard form for requesting release of a complainants personal information, but the students receiving that information will be explicitly informed that it can only be used in relation to that specific complaint. Wider use outside the complaint, such as on social media, would be considered serious misconduct.

- The UoB agreed with residents that publicising the outcomes - anonymously - of disciplinary proceedings to the wider student community would help educate on what is unacceptable behaviour. This will be discussed more fully in future meetings.

- It's notable that a Student Ambassador attending the Working Party explained that any disciplinary process can be very intimidating to students, who may be unaware of the impact they caused. To the writer, this is a very good reason why 'kitchen chats' by the CLO are to be encouraged, as they can be a very effective 'education' to students without resorting to the SRS.

Submitting Complaints (Evidence)

- All complaints received are investigated by the CLO and the students interviewed, usually within 48 hours. This can take time as student address details are not 100% accurate, and council information on landlords/agent for student HMOs is no longer accurate.
- Evidence needs to be sufficient to initiate an investigation with as much detail as possible e.g. the address of a student house. Photos/videos are helpful but not essential as acquiring these can put a resident at risk.
- Complaints from a single resident are given the same importance as from multiple residents. This is because the UoB recognises some residents are surrounded by student houses, and this 'isolation' means they are significantly affected but have little corroboration of incidents.
- All complaints are logged by the CLO even if decision is not to proceed to the SRS. This helps build up a pattern of behaviour.

Operation Beech

- This is provided by the local police service but is commissioned by the UoB. Officers volunteer ad hoc as a form of overtime, so there can be inconsistency in how complaints are handled. To counter this residents have suggested a standard letter from the UoB, signed by the Vice Chancellor, which officers can present to the students involved, stating what behaviour the UoB expect and that the disturbance should cease. This UoB has been agreed this should be implemented.
- It's worth noting that as Op Beech uses police officers who wear body-cams, this will capture the interaction with students and their attitude which can be valuable evidence if a complaint escalates to the SRS.

'Working Party - Education and Communication to Students'

- There is little information on this except for comments provided by Andrew Waller, who attended, in his The Noise Pages Newsletter (by email dated 28/10/24).

- This Working Party appears to have been less successful, possibly because it is more wide ranging in scope, and although residents attending did provide detailed recommendations to the UoB it's not clear how receptive the university has been.

- It's understood the intention is for this Working Party to be ongoing, so future developments may be more positive.

Derrick Collier



Parks

Cotham Gardens

The Friends Of Cotham Gardens (FoCG) working parties go from strength to strength with more members – young and old - joining every month. The area which covers Cotham Gardens includes the children's playground, Lovers Walk and across to Redland Grove. It is constantly in need of litter clearing, leaf sweeping and minor maintenance, for which the FoCG team turns out on the first Saturday of every month starting at about 9.30 and carrying on until noon or when we've finished.

Most recently the group has planted 7 new fruit trees in the area at the top of the hill which will hopefully add to the already well stocked area with trees and fauna.

FoCG / RCAS organise various social events, on a roughly quarterly basis ranging from simple local social community get-togethers for neighbours and park users, to our now annual Carols in the Park, held in partnership with the City Church on Elmgrove Road, which this year takes place on Saturday 9th December. These are very popular and we look forward to meeting our local neighbours and visitors.

We always welcome new members with open arms, so please join our WhatsApp group to keep up to date with planned activities.

RCAS is funding the installation of some defibrillators in the local area, and there will be more news on this in due course.

Each day, children (and adults) leave their clothes, bags and shoes in the playground and volunteers pick them up and put them onto the railings next to the gate. We have now agreed with the staff that empty the bins in the park that, rather than them collecting up the clothes and sending them to landfill, we will, after a week or so, collect them, wash them and take them to a local charity shop. So check your children and grandchildren's clothes are marked- best to put in a mobile phone number- then we can try to reunite people with their lost items!

For some months, a young woman has been rough sleeping in Cotham Gardens in a quiet corner of the park. Volunteers notified

Streetlink as recommended on the BCC website. StreetLink sends details of the person to the local support service, St Mungo's Broadway, who will help them find somewhere to stay and give support. BCC fund St Mungo's Broadway to do this.

She left in mid November. We hope that she has found somewhere safe to stay during this cold weather.

And finally, a big thank you to all our regular FoCG working team!

Chris Shelley



Redland Green

We are now into the season of long shadows, grey or crisp sunny days and possibly snow sprinkled over the garden! Will we have a very cold winter or will the weather warm up again? Certainly it has taken a while for the trees to lose their leaves but wow what fantastic autumnal colours we have enjoyed. This tree by Redland Church seems decorated ready for Christmas but will probably have bare branches by then. Will the fallen leaves have been cleared or will we need a working party to clear the paths? Watch your emails for dates. The Council has taken possession of some very large wheeled noisy blowers which have visited the park once this autumn and did a fair job of blowing the leaves onto the grass.

Talking of working parties, a stalwart group of volunteers planted daffodil bulbs in the play area and on the mound by the tennis courts in a torrential rain storm a few Sundays back. The bulbs were donated by Bristol Lions among others and I appear to be doing a Trump impersonation in the photo!

Hopefully the weather will be more clement for the **Singing of Christmas songs scheduled for Friday 13th December 2024 by the play area from 5.45pm to 6.30pm**. Hot chocolate and mince pies will be served courtesy of the Redland (Tennis) Club. All are welcome, wrap up warm and bring a torch.

A popular event for 2025 will be the RCAS Open Gardens on Sunday afternoon of June 15th and will feature gardens in the North West of Redland. If you would like to participate, or know a neighbour who has a great garden and needs to be encouraged to participate contact the RCAS team. Let us hope the meadow by the Metford Road steps will be blooming gloriously thanks to Julie Parker and her team's efforts. We trust our garden at Redland Green Farm will recover from the snow and ice by then.

Wishing you all Seasons Greetings
Lois Goddard



11 Hartington Park

Timothy West CBE

Following Timothy West's recent death we thought you might enjoy reading his childhood memories taken from Living Here Book 4 Estates of Redland.

"My parents took a flat in Hartington Park, in, I believe, no 11, so I lived there for a few months before moving around the corner into Clarendon Road.

I was 5 or 6 at the time, and I think that I was still going to the Infants department of the Collegiate School, which was at the top of Redland Road, to which I walked every day with my lifelong friend Peter Davey who lived across the road at no. 15.

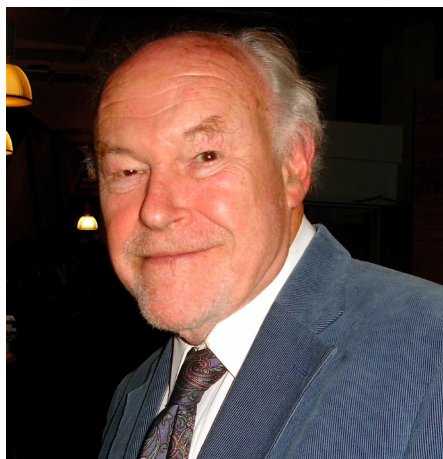
My most vivid memory of that period was waking up in the middle of the night convinced that it was morning because of the pale sunlight playing on the bedroom ceiling. I got up and drew the curtains to see the whole of Bristol's city ablaze after the worst air raid of the war. The heat was so intense that the sky was an unearthly pale pink, not at all the conventional colour of fire; and this had given me the illusion that day had broken.

I don't know why we were not that night in our 'shelter' in the boot cupboard under the stairs. That was where we normally retreated during air raids, and rather looked forward to the experience. My father, Lockwood West, who at the beginning of the war was Leading Man in the Little Theatre, signed up as a war reserve policeman, 'C' division, and had to guard a number of unexploded bombs, which must have worried my mother, but I don't remember feeling in any danger.

Neil Murison refers to the railings being removed from all the houses during the war; for some reason those of no 14 were spared. This to us, the boys of the neighbourhood, was conclusive evidence that the owner (an elderly widower called Mr Parkes who used to shout at us when we rattled sticks along the said railings) was actually a German spy.

I remember visits to the 'Little' with my mother, which carried on throughout the war; Steam driven lorries making deliveries to the pub in Lower Redland Road. Barrage balloons on the Downs; Beautiful dark blue buses, the peace time cream relief now painted grey; Playing trains on Redland Green – each bench represented a station between Paddington and Temple Meads (I was potty about trains even then)”

The Little Theatre was located on Colston Street and operated between 1923 and 1963. It was turned into a bar for the Colston Hall in 1980 and has since been re-purposed as a music venue (the Lantern) as part of the Bristol Beacon.



Timothy West
photo credit John Thaxter

The benefit of urban trees in reducing the effects of flash flooding

There has been plenty of coverage in the press recently about flash flooding and the water runoff which can overload the combined sewer and rain drainage systems and result in pollution of rivers.

It is worth describing the role our urban trees can play in reducing the rate of water runoff, and delaying the time the peak water flow reaches the drains, which helps the sewerage system to cope better.

The first is what is termed 'Interception', this is when rainfall falls on the leaves and branches of a tree, some of the water is retained on the surfaces, and hence water takes longer to reach the ground. To give an illustration of this mechanism, the total leaf area on a tree is many times the ground area underneath the tree, up to 10 times depending on the type of tree, hence why the leaves can retain a lot of water when wetted. We can experience the effect of interception when standing under a tree on rainy days, and we get some shelter from the worst of the rain. Some of the intercepted water is evaporated back into the atmosphere before it even reaches the ground.

Secondly, the root system of the trees improves the drainage of the ground so that water soaks into the ground and doesn't run straight into the drainage system, this is termed 'Infiltration'. Both living and decaying roots create small channels through the soil in which the water can then flow. Ash tree roots are particularly good at improving the infiltration of the soil, so their demise from Ash die back is also a sad loss to our natural flood defences.

Thirdly, water is absorbed by the root system and evaporated to the atmosphere through transpiration from the leaf pores, again avoiding water going into the drainage system. Visual evidence of this can be sometimes seen on damp days in the countryside where you may see mist patches just above trees, this is the evaporated water condensing.

Pitt, 2007, Deeprout blog, Woodland Trust, Wikipedia

Dave Jones



Aesculus Indica (Indian Horse Chestnut) sponsored by RCAS planted on the Granny Downs.

FRIENDS and NEIGHBOURS may want to join RCAS

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

We prefer to collect subscriptions by Standing Order in order
to reduce work for our distributors. We will supply a Standing
Order mandate form on request. For those who do not wish
to use Standing Order, subscriptions will be collected by
distributors in May

Those wishing to join should contact the Membership Secretary

Kathryn Armitstead
52 Redland Court Road
Redland
Bristol
BS6 7EH
Email: membership@rcas.org.uk

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

Alternatively, please complete a new member form which can
be found on our website, rcas.org.uk under the 'contact us' page

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

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

EV Charging at home

We have reported before on the dilemma facing BCC and many other councils about EV charging at home particularly in conservation areas like ours. EV infrastructure is poor outside London and the South-East. In Bristol EV charging at home means that you must be able to park your vehicle on a driveway as cabling should not cross pavements for safety reasons. As more people buy or lease EVs there will be pressure on BCC to allow front gardens to be turned into spaces for vehicle charging, changing the look of the streets, and degrading the environment in terms of biodiversity through the removal of planting and habitat. There will also be an increase in the pressure put on the sewer system as the natural rain drainage systems of planting are replaced by hard nonporous surfaces used for driveways.

One answer may be the use of EV battery swapping which is more commonly used in China and is now being more widely used in Europe. Battery swapping stations are energy stations where vehicle batteries can be swapped, the whole process is automated and often takes less than 3 minutes. The EV battery swap stations does require the standardisation of batteries that many vehicle manufacturers in Europe and the USA have previously rejected.

However, over the next few years this may change. Many vehicle manufacturers are reliant on the Chinese market for sales and if the Chinese market requires standard battery sizing then this may lead to a change in European markets. In Europe there is already a move to more battery standardisation and battery swapping (see the Reuters article and BBC Business Daily podcast detailed below). This would mean that instead of disruptive work on streets and yet more street furniture there could be changes to existing fuelling stations to include EV charging. No need to alter front gardens either!

<https://www.reuters.com/business/autos-transportation/inside-chinas-electric-drive-swappable-car-batteries-2022-03-24/>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/w3ct5znx> BBC Business Daily Can battery swapping boost EV sales?

