

Redland & Cotham Amenities Society



Report from the Chair
Student Liaison
Planning and Parks
Open Gardens
The Spring Talk



Number 211 - May 2026

Report from the Chair

Welcome.

This edition has the information about the Open Gardens visits which this year are on Sunday 14th June- we look forward to seeing you there. Thank you to all the residents who have opened their gardens and to the Open Gardens team who have put together a great programme of gardens.

Our public green spaces are looking amazing thanks to the hard work of the friends groups and gardening groups. The flowerbed at Cotham Gardens is full of flower and the green triangle at the top of Elm Lane looks amazing, thanks to the work of local residents who support these spaces.

We are awaiting the installation of the new sundial bench in Cotham Gardens. The bench supports have been cleaned up and the new curved 'slats' have been manufactured and are now being galvanised. Soon residents will be able to use the bench again. Bristol Parks dept have also refurbished the benches in the park and along Lovers' Walk, replacing the slats that had rotted or were damaged- all in time for people to enjoy sitting in the park and listening and watching the birds. One of the members of the park WhatsApp group posted a record of all the birds they had identified using the Merlin App on their phone on a morning walk- it is amazing how many different species can be found in our city parks.

Further on in the newsletter, there is a report about the planters on Cotham Hill. Many of the businesses have adopted a planter but we are looking for some volunteers who could take on weeding and general care of any of the 4 RCAS planters. Would you be interested in helping with this? RCAS will pay for any new and replacement plants. If you are interested in finding out more about this, do get in touch.

The RCAS admin team are planning to use the break between this newsletter and the next one in September to update our records and check that everyone who has asked to be sent email alerts is on our system. We are proposing to use an alternative marketing app which will be more appropriate for our needs and which will cost less than

Mailchimp, so will be making changes to the sign up form and will be in touch with you about any changes which affect you. The link to this issue of the newsletter is being sent to everyone who has currently signed up for email alerts, or whose email address has been added by us using your membership details. If you haven't seen the email from RCAS, please check your spam folder.

In March, the Redland Club hosted the Stage 1 meeting for our Area Committee (the grouping of wards who allocate the funding from developer contributions in mitigation of the impact of their developments) Chandos Neighbourhood Association are bidding for funding- which crucially includes the input of officers from Bristol City Council- to make improvements in Chandos Road to tackle issues of speeding cars using the road as a cut through, bins stored on pavements and streets, and the absence of bike racks in the street.

The process of choosing the successful projects continues on May 19th when CNA will find out whether they will be able to bid at the third and final stage meeting for each of their two Environmental Improvement projects, one addressing the bin issues and one to provide bike racks and planters. CNA have been working with the community on this project since before Covid and it would be wonderful to see a positive outcome to the extensive consultation and support locally.

Currently £66,000 is available for the wards in Area Committee 3- and there are bids for projects totalling over £200,000 in Clifton, Clifton Down, Cotham and Hotwells and Harbourside, but we are keeping everything crossed for the Cotham bid. Chandos Road is an amazing resource for our residents and the restaurants there that we are so lucky to have within walking distance of many of us are nationally praised. This project will support local business as well as tackle some of the less happy issues of such a densely populated area.

Finally, congratulations to Whiteladies Market on their 20th anniversary. Every Saturday morning since 2006, a variety of stalls selling delicious food and farm produce, crafts and plants are available at the corner of Apsley Road and Whiteladies Road; if you are not a regular customer, try it now!

PARKS

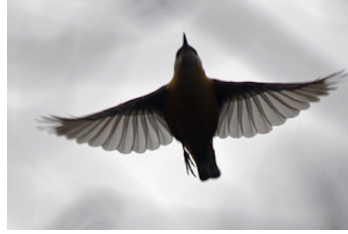
Redland Green

Eventually the deluge stopped and spring arrived in all its glory with wonderful displays of daffodils and fritillaries followed by lots of fruit blossom and now the hawthorns are ablaze.

Unfortunately, two stems of the condemned bird cherry in front of the Farm couldn't take the weight of the blossom and a strong wind and they came down mid- morning just missing a family and the mail van. As the debris blocked the access road we were very grateful for one of the allotment tenants helping us cut away the offending branches. The rest of the tree has now been cut down and will be replaced by a pear later in the year.

We have been very pleased to have had three Bronze Duke of Edinburgh volunteers from Redland Green School helping us paint lampposts and repair and paint benches around the Green. This is work in progress and will continue throughout the summer.





Michael Owen took these wonderful photos of a nuthatch in the Dell area



The Community Fun Day took place on Monday May 4th centred around the Redland Church Hall where free tea and cakes were served to live music provided by Dr Jazz and The Velvetones.

The Redland Green Allotments Association had a plant stall and sold fresh rhubarb. There was face painting, a bouncy castle, lots of games and Lego for children to play with and with the sun shining it was a very well attended joyful event.

A big thank you to all who volunteered to help and to the Redland Club and Redland Bowls Club for joining in and offering taster sessions. The day coincided with Star Wars Day which may explain the presence of the alien on the keyboard - 'May the Fourth be with you all' for the rest of the summer!

Lois Goddard
Chair of Redland Green Community Group

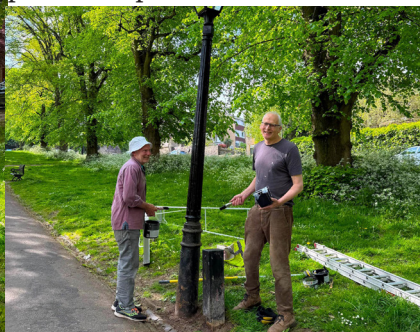


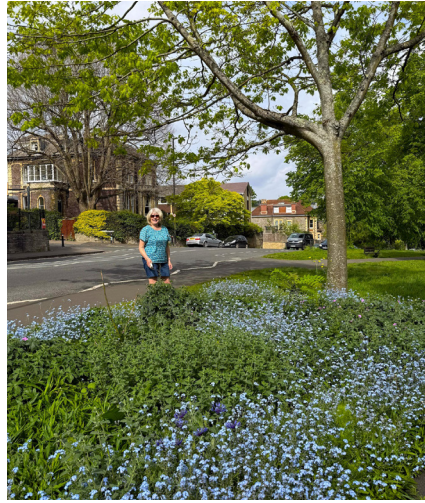
Cotham Gardens

The Friends of Cotham Gardens continue to meet on the first Saturday of each month and their collective hard work makes a huge difference to this green space. Recently they have cleaned and repainted the lampposts along Lovers' Walk in addition to their monthly activities of sweeping, clearing and weeding. Photos showing the team at work and the welcome results.

On the front cover you can see the new trees planted by the council just inside the fenced area. There will also be a new sundial bench arriving soon.

There will be a Pizza Party in the Park on Friday 17th July 3.30pm-10.30pm. All are welcome. See the poster on p23





Left one of the refurbished benches on Lovers' Walk

Below you can see Jack in the Green as he welcomes Summer at Cotham Gardens accompanied by dancers and musicians



SPRING TALK

The growth of Victorian Redland; how the middle class lowered the tone. Peter Malpas

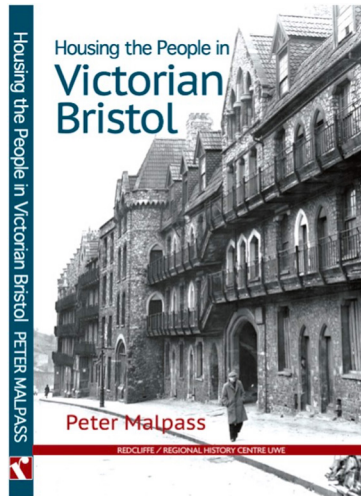
There was a packed hall for this fascinating talk from local resident Peter Malpas who focused on the change from the large mansions which were demolished or redeveloped to become housing for the influx of middle class residents. Peter shared his researches and illustrated the talk with maps (which are available on the Bristol City Council Know your Place website if you are interested in following up on the talk with some research of your own <https://maps.bristol.gov.uk/kyp/>).

The majority of the large houses were located at the top of the Redland slopes along Redland Hill, few traces of those houses remain other than boundary walls and historic trees. Redland Court is an exception to this though the neighbouring Redland Green House located where Hartington Park now runs was lost.



You can buy Peter's book Redland: the making of a Victorian Suburb on the Avon Local History & Archaeology ALHA website or extend your studies into the whole of Bristol with his book Housing the people in Victorian Bristol £10.

Please get in touch with RCAS if you are interested in buying this book and we will forward your details to Peter.



The RCAS Living Here booklets 1 and 3 are still available in print form (and available if you contact us through the RCAS website) but we have now sold out of numbers 2 and 4.

We are in the process of digitizing these and they will be available on the website shortly. Sign up for our email alerts via the website if you want to be notified of their launch.



EV charging at home

In the past few weeks you may have noticed that some street lampposts have been converted to act as on street EV charging points. These EV charging points are being trialled in residential areas where there is little off street parking available for residents to have their own EV charging points. The 150 EV charging points are run by Fuuse and if you want to use one you first need to download the Fuuse app (<https://fuuse.io/driver-app>) which details the locations, prices and how to for the EV chargers.

At the moment you can only charge your electric vehicle on your own driveway and you cannot trail a cable over the pavement to charge your car.

A power cable running across the pavement, even if covered or inserted into a gully, is a trip hazard or access issue for disabled and vulnerable groups. If someone is injured, you as the homeowner or occupier could be liable.

Bristol City Council is in the process of setting up a citywide cross-pavement gully electric vehicle (EV) charging trial to help residents without off street parking safely charge at home using their own electricity supply. The cross pavement solutions, including creating channels for EV cables within the pavement, let charging cables pass safely across the pavement from a home charge point to an electric vehicle parked on the street.

The trial follows national guidance published by the Department for Transport and the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles and will inform a Bristol specific policy.

If you wish to express an interest in taking part in this trial contact Bristol City Leap.

<https://www.bristolcityleap.co.uk/domestic/cross-pavement-gully-charging-trial-expression-of-interest/>



This charging point is on Kings Drive where there are lots of driveways but hopefully there are charging points in areas where there are fewer.

Lamppost charging points for EVs are now at locations around Bristol. They have instruction posters on them.

Public EV charging is usually more expensive than charging at home though. Prices can vary considerably.



Planning Report

Decided:

25/13723/F | Retention of two external seating areas used in association with Bravas restaurant. | 7 Cotham Hill RCAS has objected to the retention of the permanent structure directly in front of the premises on the former parking bay area. APPROVED

25/10659/A | 2 digital 75" LCD display screens, one on each side of the Street Hub unit. | Pavement Outside Of 161 Whiteladies Road Bristol BS8 2RF APPROVED

25/10910/X | Application for Removal or Variation of Condition No's 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 12 following a grant of planning permission 07/00953/F - Demolition and conversion of existing property and erection of a mixed use scheme comprising 20 no. one and two bed apartments and 500 sqm. of Use Class B1 floorspace at ground floor, associated basement parking (21 spaces) and associated bin and cycle storage. | 58 - 62 Hampton Road Bristol BS6 6JA APPROVED

25/14734/F | Demolition of part of the existing boundary 1.6m high stone wall to provide vehicle access for EV charging points for the property. | Basement Flat 101 Hampton Road Bristol BS6 6JG RCAS objected to loss of boundary wall and on street parking on Auburn Road. APPROVED

26/10035/F New Dwelling. Demolition rear lean-to. New windows in rear elevation. Roof replacement including rear dormer roof extension with front velux. 23 Kersteman Road Bristol BS6 7BX RCAS Objected and planning permission has recently been REFUSED

Recent Planning Applications:

26/11293/H | Conversion of basement level garage and construction of a side extension to connect to the main house. | 20 Woodstock Road Bristol BS6 7EJ

Existing planning applications: not decided/ updates

25/15359/F | Demolition of existing garage and construction of new two bed dwelling. | 9 Meridian Road Bristol BS6 6EG Revised drawings have been submitted. RCAS is not objecting.

25/15048/F | Demolition of the existing garage and construction of a single storey dwelling. | 19 Burlington Road Bristol BS6 6TJ RCAS has objected on design grounds and on loss of parking, also on living standards of future residents because of lack of natural daylight, view and outlook and insufficient outdoor amenity space- previous application for 2 storey dwelling withdrawn. Local residents have provided evidence of unauthorised works including tree felling.

25/14777/F | To subdivide the first three floors (basement, lower ground floor and ground floor) to create two flats from single flat. | 12 Woodstock Road Bristol BS6 7EJ Misleading information submitted; RCAS objected.

25/13320/F | Change of Use from dwelling house (C3) to small House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4). No internal or external alteration proposed. | First Floor Flat 71 Cranbrook Road RCAS has objected. Withdrawn.

24/02736/P Land At Home Gardens Redland Hill Bristol 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. Many objections made. Planning committee decision still pending.

Alison Bromilow and Simon Birch

Cotham Hill Planters

The 12 planters along Cotham Hill have now been positioned and produced a bright display of daffodils to greet the spring sunshine. The planters greatly improve the ambience along Cotham Hill, providing welcome greenery in the urban surroundings.

RCAS have provided the plaques on the planters detailing the sponsor for each. We are also currently paying for a gardener to maintain 4 planters. We know that many of you are keen gardeners and we would welcome volunteers to look after these 4 planters. We will of course provide funds for additional plants and horticultural requirements.

If you would like to volunteer and take care of the 4 planters please contact us on info@rcas.org.uk or alison@rcas.org.uk



COTHAM GARDENS

PIZZA

Party

IN THE PARK

FRIDAY 17TH JULY 2026

3.30PM – 10.30PM



BAR



ROAM WILD COFFEE



MUSIC

FAMILIES WELCOME!

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOURS!



— BY —
FRIENDS OF COTHAM GARDENS

SPONSORED BY REDLAND AND COTHAM AMENITIES SOCIETY

Student Liaison

Bristol Student Community Partnership (BSCP), the main forum for discussion of university impacts on residential areas like ours, will be five years old in June, when its next meeting takes place. It seems an appropriate moment to review what it does and ask what, if anything, it has achieved.

It's essentially an advisory body, set up and ultimately controlled by the University of Bristol (UoB). UWE (University of the West of England) is also a member, though it has only just returned to the fold after going missing in action for a couple of years.

The partnership's stated aim is "supporting and promoting positive community cohesion"—which is vague enough to cover just about any university-related issue, and more importantly avoids putting a name to any of the problems the partnership might be called upon to consider: for example, night-time noise, mismanaged household waste, car parking and other day-to-day impacts that a large and growing student population have on longer-term residents.

The Zoom Experience

To date, all meetings have been held on Zoom or Teams. This was unavoidable in June 2021, when we were still emerging from the pandemic, and it has continued for reasons of convenience. But it dehumanises discussion—it's difficult to make a passionate appeal to a sceptical audience over an internet video link.

Meetings typically attract 15-20 attendees—UoB usually fields one or two senior administrators as well as its Community Liaison team; UWE is more likely to be one person. Various public agencies routinely attend: Bristol City Council's Neighbourhood Enforcement Team (NET) and BCC's Private Housing Service (PHS) (the people who license HMOs); Bristol Waste; and the police—either or both of a local officer who oversees Operation Beech and the constable assigned to UoB (the university and its students are her beat). UoB's student union is represented, plus a couple of landlords, and finally ourselves—residents. Presiding as chair is Cotham councillor Guy Poultney.

On the residents' side we have an informal network of about 10-12 groups and associations (the "RAs") stretching from Redland, Cotham and High Kingsdown across to various parts of Clifton. This emerged from a group email conversation I set up as part of my Noise Pages activities. Initially, UoB restricted us to just two delegates. I attended the first meeting in 2021 as main spokesman, accompanied by RCAS's very own Alison Bromilow. At subsequent meetings, the second seat rotated among the groups. Over time, the two-person rule has relaxed, and the current RAs coordinator is Fiona McVey (Chandos Neighbourhood Association). Hampton Park & Cotham Hill Community Group has its own seat. After a couple of years' break, I resumed attending in February, now representing RCAS.

So, with all the right people in the "room" and five years' worth of quarterly meetings under our belts, we've got all the problems sorted, yes? Not even close ...

A Poor Advertisement

If you recall the chart of annual complaints I displayed in the last issue, you'll remember that a decade ago, the university recorded an average of about 240 noise and waste complaints annually in the three years from 2016. Jump to the present day, on the right of the chart, and for the most recent three years, the average is almost identical at around 250 (or will be, if the current academic year continues its present course). In other words, ignoring the bulge in the middle of the chart—the effect of the pandemic, a huge anomaly created by one-off factors—it's apparent we've made no material progress on complaints. Not much of an advertisement for the BSCP.

As to why we're failing to get to grips with the problem, there are several weaknesses in how the BSCP and its members operate:

- UoB is a bureaucratic body that tends to focus on process rather than results. On top of that, students frequently get the benefit of the doubt (no surprise there, perhaps) and community complaints against wayward households often result in verbal warnings, with only a small number attracting disciplinary penalties.

Additionally those few formal outcomes aren't publicised (even in anonymised form), so they have no educational or deterrent value. The university often asserts its wish to be a good neighbour, but the purely advisory BSCP offers no mechanism to hold it to account beyond simple persuasion. We don't do votes!

- Meanwhile, the city-council participants such as NET and PHS are basically spectators—happy to answer questions but rarely if ever taking the initiative. For sure, they lack resources, but they still hold powers to do things the university can't. With a bit of wit and collaboration, things could be done.
- Landlords are conspicuously missing from the conversation. As noted, two do in fact attend BSCP meetings—and it is good to have them—but they're not equipped to mobilise the property sector more generally. Most complaints are about activity in HMOs, and we need to engage the owners of those properties. PHS isn't volunteering to do so.
- The Student Union (SU), likewise, is represented but not engaged in an institutional sense. This isn't the fault of the individual representing the SU at any given moment; it's more of a structural issue. But as with landlords, we need direct engagement. Peer pressure—students talking to students—could be one of the most powerful tools.

With all this in mind, I intend to present the BSCP with a “partnership challenge” when we meet on 11 June. After discussion with Cllr Poultney, I've submitted a proposal that urges a collective effort to make a difference.

Mobilising Landlords

At its core, I'm pitching both short-term and longer-term steps to bring landlords into active support of our aims. Short-term, I propose we designate a small pilot area (I have one in mind) and ask UoB to contact all the HMO landlords there (roughly a dozen). We would then invite them to meet and discuss ways they, UoB and other BSCP partners can help each other. I'm asking PHS to attend to give the regulatory viewpoint.

Most crucially, we need landlords to set clear expectations when students express interest in renting their properties. It needs to be spelled out very explicitly what the lease says about night-time activity at the property, and what the likelihood is of complaints from neighbours if tenants ignore the landlord's and university's guidance. And they need to know this before they sign a contract.

Longer-term, I want PHS to raise awareness among landlords of the six paragraphs in their HMO licences that relate to control of anti-social behaviour (ASB). With thousands of licensed properties in the city, PHS says it doesn't have the resources to police compliance on ASB. Yet its published enforcement policy pledges to do so, and with a little creativity and only modest effort, it could nudge landlords to pay attention.

It really shouldn't be that hard—no sensible landlord wants 100 or so people using their property for a mini rave. Indeed, when you think about it carefully, it's ultimately in the interests of everyone—landlords, university, neighbours, council and, yes, students themselves—to stop disruptive behaviour upsetting the tranquillity of our suburbs.

Please Get in Touch

If you have a comment on any of the above, or any other student-related issue, please contact me at thenoisepages@gmail.com. I'd love to hear from you!

Andrew Waller

