

THE BISHOPSTON SOCIETY
Winter 2010
Newsletter



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The Bishopston Society promotes high standards of planning and architecture in and around Bishopston, education in the geography, history, natural history and architecture of the area and aims to secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic or public interest

From our new Chairperson

Dear Members

Since taking over the Chair from Chris McConnell in September, I have noticed several local issues which have recently grown in significance, with implications for Bishopston's future - what develops from these will affect us all.

Gloucestershire County Cricket Club Development Application: after detailed consideration your committee has sent an objection to the current proposal. Our positions supports the stand of a new local residents' group, 'Howzat?' most immediately affected by the proposed development. For further details, please see the 'planning update' contribution to this newsletter.

Neighbourhood Partnership: a new (to me) community group open to local residents. Local councillors and representatives from the police attend and manage public meetings which address important local issues - trees; green space (or lack of it); the different needs of cyclists, motorists, and people on foot; the 'street scene', and anti-social behaviour; community groups and amenities. You could attend a forum and voice your concerns directly - or tell us, on your committee - together we can speak up more loudly and clearly for what you want. There is even a budget available for local projects. Your opinion can sway how money is spent.

The Bristol Civic Society: we have just become a non-profit group member of the Bristol Civic Society, reaching out beyond the boundaries of our neighbourhood to wider and longer-term issues of development throughout the city: sustainable energy, waste disposal, public transport, and major building projects like the huge sports/entertainment arenas under consideration (two of which affect our neighbourhood - the Memorial Ground and the Gloucestershire County Cricket ground). Often the interests backing such large-scale projects are at odds with the needs of people living nearby, who will be most adversely affected without receiving any benefits.

What kind of Bishopston do you want and need, now and in the future? You may feel alone in your opinions, without power to make yourself heard. I'm writing to let you know that you can influence how things develop in Bishopston - by becoming a more active member of this society, or even by getting in touch with your committee, to voice your concerns. People are listening. Together we'll have more energy, more influence on our own future.

Elinor Edwards

Planning in Bishopston - thoughts from an architect

With respect to domestic planning applications this has been a disappointing period. It is evident that, even during the current economic downturn, the Bishopston area is under significant pressure from residents wanting to enlarge their houses and from speculators keen to take advantage of infill sites. Whilst it is perfectly possible to enhance a property by enlarging it, if it is carried out sensitively, there is a strong risk that the increasing number of extensions which are of a poor or mediocre quality will with time actually detract from the character of the area. In our opinion the general standard of planning applications recently has been poor, with many badly designed and/or badly drawn with many inconsistencies and inaccuracies. The planners have tended in some cases to be weak and not to press for improvements in the design or even for drawings which are accurate and representative. There is a tendency for the planners to concentrate more on not losing planning appeals rather than trying to enforce local planning guidance. Areas of real concern are the steady increase of parking in front gardens and the proliferation of ad hoc boxy roof extensions. Parking in front gardens not only destroys the character and the enclosure of the street and the local microclimate but also significantly reduces on-street parking (as by law one is not allowed to park across a driveway-even if that driveway is not in use) which is essential in a high density neighbourhood like Bishopston. Unlike in previous years, conversion of a front garden into parking now requires planning permission. So we look to the planners to apply and enforce their own design guidance policy which calls for parking areas to occupy not more than a third of the width of any plot and to be screened by proper front boundary enclosures and planting. In order to maintain the special character of our local streets it is important that any boxy roof extensions are restricted to the rear of the property and not readily visible from the street.

However the picture is not all dark. There are some applications which have been properly designed and built and have really enhanced the property and hence the street and the neighbourhood. For example a group of houses at the top of Berkeley Road have been very positively enhanced by the addition of new stone bays with proper timber sliding sash windows and handsome boundary walls and piers with attractive stone capitals etc. Also no 25 Egerton Road has had an additional floor added in such a way that it looks as if it is original and no.30 Egerton Road has been restored with great care. Improvements like these not only raise the value of the houses in question but lift the whole area. Applications do not have to necessarily be in the traditional style to be acceptable. For example, the recent live/work houses in Prince's Place and the shops and flats of Egerton Court are both modern in their approach and fit in well with their surroundings. Another welcome development over the last year is the long awaited replacement of missing street trees which was paid for out of the Neighbourhood Partnership grant. Street trees contribute hugely to the appeal

of the Bishopston area and are of course essential to improve the local micro-climate of the city in these times of global warming.

We must not underestimate the very special quality of the Bishopston area, which is why most of us choose to live here. Berkeley Road and particularly Egerton Road have a charming and unique quality which would best be preserved if they were within a Conservation Area. The more intricate planning requirements which govern conservation areas would inevitably involve both the planning department and the Bishopston Society in more work. However, the benefit would be that the character of the area would be protected and it would actually develop and improve over time. We only have to look at the lumpen flats and offices which have recently been built in Canon's Marsh in Bristol Harbour to realise once the character of an area has been lost there is no turning back. Bishopston still has real character and deserves our best efforts to protect and build on it.

Neil Embleton



How to organise a street party

Winter is here and the days are short, so maybe it's a good time to think of the warmth of summer and to start thinking about organising a summer party in your street.

Bristol is big on street parties with Easton and Bishopston topping the list of areas where roads are closed off throughout the summer for days of fun and games, meeting the neighbours and dancing in the street.

The Monmouth Road street party has become one of the highpoints of summer for those of us who live here. It was started five years ago by a group of residents who always enjoyed visiting the Cornwall Road party, just around the corner from us, and who got fed up saying "I wish we had a street party in our road".

It doesn't have to be a huge affair but whatever you do there are a few things you need to sort out first.

1. Is your road suitable?

To block off all, or part, of your road you first have to get permission and a licence from the City Council. This is not usually a problem unless your road is a major through route for traffic. You are also advised to inform the emergency services that your road is going to be closed for the day.

2. Are there enough people who want to take part?

We delivered a letter to each house in the road early in the Spring, outlining our plans and asking people what they thought, if they had any concerns or objections, or if they supported the idea. Although support was overwhelming it was not unanimous, so it's important that good communications are maintained so those with concerns do not feel left out of any plans.

3. Plan, chat, plan, chat

Deliver another letter (there are lots initially, until email lists are established) to each house inviting residents to an open meeting to discuss ideas for the party. These are sociable occasions and the venue moves from kitchen to kitchen as the plans take shape and jobs are allocated. Here are some of them:

*Apply for the licence to close the road. You can download the form from the City Council website and you should do this at least 6 weeks prior to your party.

*Apply for a music licence (not always necessary, ask the Council)

*Think about games, a quiz, bands, entertainment, a kids' talent show, how to

block off the road, making bunting, organising food, shelter (in case of rain), open gardens, clearing up.

4. Moving the cars out

One of the best things about having a street party is that you get to see and enjoy your road without any cars in it. It may only be for a day but having that space to play in once a year is very uplifting. Leafleting cars is another job that needs doing in the days leading up to the event, asking drivers not to park in the road on the day in question.

5. Food

In Monmouth Road we have a children's tea party around 4pm followed by an evening meal for adults. Our garden furniture is lined up down the middle of the road and places are set. One side of the road prepares savoury dishes and the other side does puddings, and the results are always delicious. We made a mistake the first year we did this when ALL the food, main courses and puddings, were brought out and placed on the tables at the same time. While the adults were enjoying their main courses the kids were scoffing all the deserts! Be warned.

Party day in Monmouth Road actually starts the evening before, when the bunting is threaded from house to house across the road. Barriers go up at each end of the road early the next morning to stop cars coming in and by mid morning the road is vehicle free and kids are cycling up and down, enjoying the space. The day is what you make it; some people start with breakfast in the road and are still out there chatting with neighbours way past midnight, whilst others come and go as they please. What's great is that you get to meet people who you never knew lived just a few doors away; older residents tell newcomers of life in the street in days gone by; and late in the evening young and old are all dancing in the street together.

Further information on planning street parties is available from the City Council and from Streets Alive, an organisation based here in Bristol. See their website for details: www.streetsalive.net

Rob Mackay

Primary School Places Update

After last year's crisis over primary school places which resulted in 300 families across the city - around 50 of whom were based in the Bishopston area - not being offered reception places for their four year olds, there has been pressure on Bristol City Council to find a long term solution to the local primary place shortages.

Bishop Road Primary and Sefton Park Infants both agreed to take an extra 30

pupils into their reception classes in September 2009 but neither school will have capacity to do so again this year.

However, planning permission has been granted for the construction of a primary school on the Brunel Field site which lies between Gloucestershire County Cricket Club's ground and the Persimmon Homes 'College Mews' development off Ashley Down Road. The planning permission provides for the building of a new one form entry primary and for the school to be expanded to two form entry if the Council can successfully negotiate with the developers to acquire additional land.

It is proposed that the new school be run by Ashley Down Junior School as the council cannot open a standalone school because of competition rules. Under the proposals, Ashley Down Junior School would expand and become an all-through primary, offering places at the new site as well as continuing to provide junior places at its current site for children moving up from the infant school.

These proposals are being consulted on at the moment and are opposed by many of the current Ashley Down schools parents who say they cannot see any advantage to pupils at the existing schools.

Work is due to start on the £5 million new school in January and it's hoped that the first 30 pupils will start in September, although they will have to be in temporary accommodation at first. Where this temporary accommodation will be has not yet been announced.

School admissions officers have admitted that if there is a high level of over-subscription for reception places in the Bishopston/Ashley Down area again this year, alternative places will have to be offered 'out of area' due to lack of capacity locally. Last year, places were offered at Upper Horfield and Cabot primary schools to families in Bishopston before the additional places at Sefton Park and Bishop Road were confirmed.

The 'catchment areas' (or Areas of First Priority) for Bishop Road and all of the other primary schools in the North Bristol area have been scrapped following a legal challenge. Admissions to all the local schools will now be based solely on distance (measured as the crow flies) from home to school if the child has no siblings already at the school in question. This may mean that different clusters of streets become 'no school' zones from previous years.

The council is keen to stress that it has learnt lessons from last year's admissions debacle and that plans are already well advanced to ensure a repeat of the crisis is avoided but unsurprisingly, those parents applying for 2010 places are anxious and will be waiting nervously for their offer letters at the end of January.

Liz Haydon-Turner

Co-founder, Bristol Primary Admissions Crisis group. 21 December, 2009

The Bishopston Society 2009 AGM

Around 65 people attended The Bishopston Society AGM in September with Stephen Williams our local MP as the guest speaker. Stephen Williams spoke about his long-standing ties with Bristol, from first coming here as a student and his time as a local councillor. He talked about the appeal of the City and places like Bishopston including the Gloucester Rd. He referred to his own attempts to live to a more sustainable lifestyle and highlighted some of the green issues facing Bristol. He opposes the expansion of the airport and argued for more sustainable solutions (e.g. Portishead Railway). Questions and answers covered a range of topics including the Severn Barrage. The ambitious proposals to expand the Gloucester County Cricket Club (GCCC) were also raised and the fact that he had expressed his support for it.

Alison Orton then gave a brief presentation on behalf of HowZat? a residents' campaign formed opposing the proposed development of GCCC. (See HowZat? and Planning Update articles elsewhere in this Newsletter). Other local issues were also raised in the meeting and at the end of the evening Stephen Williams discussed individual points with people who stayed for refreshments.

The business of the meeting was dealt with swiftly as written reports of the work of the committee were given out to everybody. Elinor Edwards has taken over from Chris McConnell who has been chair for several years. Chris was thanked for all her work, support and hospitality. Membership is currently around 170 and we look forward to enlisting some more active members.

The spring public meeting has been arranged for 7.30 pm Monday 22nd March 2010 in the front hall of the St. Michaels and All Saints Church at Pigsty Hill (speaker to be arranged).

Nigel Tibbs

Howzat Local Residents Group - the campaign continues...

Most of you are aware of Gloucestershire County Cricket Club's (GCCC) plans to expand their current 3,886 seat ground in Nevil Road to a sports stadium with 18,500 permanent seats (20,000 including temporary seats). The venture would be funded by building accommodation for 350 students in the stands.

HowZat? is not opposed to the modernisation of the ground, but believes that the current plans are in excess of what is needed to keep International Cricket in Bristol. We are campaigning for an alternative solution which would enable a redevelopment to take place while maintaining the character of the surrounding area and minimising the impact on the local community.

GCCC submitted 2 planning applications in October: A full application for the

rebuilding of the Mound Stand (next to the City of Bristol College/ Ashley Down Conservation Area) and a 'hybrid' application for the rest of the development - with the student accommodation only in outline form. Initially it was intended that the Mound Stand Application would go to committee in December and the hybrid application in January 2010. After protests from Howzat? it was decided that both applications will be heard together in January - but we now hear that this is likely to be deferred.

The Bishopston Society and HowZat? have both made submissions to the City Council Planners opposing the current proposals. HowZat?'s concerns include:

- * The scale of the expansion, which is too big for the site
- * The lack of planning restrictions on the use of the stadium
- * The inappropriate building of 5, 6 and 7 storey blocks of student flats next to a conservation area and the planned new Bishopston Primary School
- * The impact on traffic and parking in a highly congested area - on match days when traffic management is completely inadequate and parking spaces will be considerably less than at present, and
- * On non match days when an expanded 400 place conference centre and increased leisure facilities will have less parking than at present
- * The completely unworkable 'no car within 1.5 km' agreement which the students occupying the blocks will have to sign - and the suggestion that this can be policed by local residents
- * The impact on traffic on Ashley Down Road, where College Mews will become the entrance to the new stadium, the student accommodation, the conference centre, the new school and the City of Bristol College.

We recently attended a Planning Briefing with members of the Planning Committee, where the developers spoke about building an 'Iconic Entrance' to the new stadium. Interestingly this will be in the middle of the student blocks!

We have had enormous support for our campaign from local residents at meetings, a Gloucester Road Street Stall and by e-mail. You will have seen our colourful red and yellow window posters. This has resulted in a very encouraging number of objections to the planners - but we would still like more! Objections can still be considered - so if you haven't yet written please consider doing so! Full details of how to do this are on our website www.howzatgccc.org.uk or on our window poster - copies available from Alison Orton Tel: 0117-9244107

We would like to thank the Bishopston Society for its support and look forward to continuing our campaign to try to get the best possible outcome for the area!

Alison Orton

Amnesty Bookshop, 103 Gloucester Road

Many supporters of the Amnesty International charity would probably not associate this human rights organisation with second hand bookshops. They would probably also be unaware that these shops have become important generators of income for Amnesty. However, there are six such outlets scattered across the country in Hammersmith, Newcastle, Brighton, Cambridge, Great Malvern and of course, Bristol, on the Gloucester Road. Of the six bookshops, the Bristol one, now in its 11th year, is by far the most successful in terms of its annual net takings which have almost invariably increased, year on year. The remarkable success of our local shop must of course derive in no small part from its location, situated within an exceptionally literate and bibliophilic local community made up of significant numbers of teachers, lecturers, and other professionals who are so generous both in their never ending donations of unwanted books to the shop and in their equally regular purchases of its second hand books.

The sheer volume of books donated, together with the rather cramped size of the shop which limits the shelf capacity for displaying books for sale, are the two factors that have made possible a policy which allows the shop both to select books for sale of consistently good quality and also to price them very competitively. This in turn has ensured the high turnover which is ultimately responsible for the financial success of the shop.

The shop is run entirely by unpaid volunteers, involving a weekly rota of around 40 or so individuals organised into half day teams of between three and five people. As a result of such a large and ever changing workforce, continuity and consistency in the small details of day to day organisational matters just occasionally operate less smoothly than they might, but this only adds to an already interesting work situation! However, the issues arising from this unusual way of organising and using volunteers are moderated and resolved through regular open discussion meetings which allow disparate views to be heard and which ensure consensus is reached. The fact that many of the volunteers have worked for years in the shop is ample testimony to their loyalty and commitment to both the shop and the Amnesty organisation.

In addition to its wide range of books, the shop also stocks a large collection of sheet music as well as CD's, DVD's and collectible vinyl records. The more valuable books that are received among regular donations are not normally to be found on the shelves. Having been identified during the sorting process, these are dealt with separately, being listed on the internet and sold on line, mainly through ABE Books (www.abebooks.co.uk) where the best sale to date was of a copy of 'Lord of the Rings' which raised over £1000. Through Bristol auctioneers Dreweatts, an alternative channel for the sale of collectible books, the shop made further record sales with a first edition of H G Wells' 'War of the Worlds'

sold for £1,000 and for an early P.G.Wodehouse book 'The Red Bat' which achieved £750.

Customers visiting the shop know that any purchase they make goes towards the work of Amnesty. They will always find information there on the organisation's current international campaigns and details about the local Bristol branch of Amnesty and its meetings are also displayed in the shop.

The shop is about to reach a major landmark. Total gross takings over the eleven years since it opened will reach £1 million early in the New Year. Given the continued and indeed increasing generosity of local booklovers, it is more than likely that the second million pounds could be reached well before 2020!

(a volunteer and a personal view) **Simon Randolph**

Update on Neighbourhood Partnerships

As part of Bristol City Council's intention to devolve decision making about local government services to local communities, the wards of Bishopston, Redland and Cotham form one of 14 Neighbourhood Partnerships across the Bristol City area. A Steering Group consisting of representatives from the Bishopston Society, the Redland and Cotham Amenity Society, and other voluntary and statutory organisations and interested individuals have been working with ward councillors and Council staff to make the intention a reality. For 2009/10, the Partnership had a budget from the Council of £30,000 to spend on local projects to enhance the "Well-Being" of the area.

I have recently joined the Steering Group as one of the Society's representatives, and attended the second public forum on December 8th. 55 residents attended (mainly from Redland and Bishopston wards), 4 of the ward councillors, local police and Council staff. This meeting had two objectives: the public were asked to vote on how to spend the "well-being" budget; there was a presentation and a Q and A session about the next steps in the Council's local devolvement plan.

The Steering Group had previously examined the grant applications, and given that demand outstripped the budget available, decided that no one project should receive more than £5000. It proposed that in addition to meeting the local criteria (transport and traffic, local environment, young people, and parks, trees and green spaces), there should be a "small grants pot" to support local voluntary sector initiatives (this had worked well in other Partnership areas). The following was approved by the meeting by a show of hands:

<u>Project</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Ward</u>
Youth project (previously agreed):start up grant for Bishopston Youth Club at St Michaels	£1900	B
Whiteladies Farmers Market: professional advertising to further develop the opportunities for growth of the Market	£3000	R , C

<u>Project</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Ward</u>
Waste Doctors: personalised support to houses of multi-occupation to improve recycling rates	£5000	All
St Andrews Park Signage: part funding for a series of information boards about the history, flora and fauna of the park	£5000	R
Traffic Measures: part funding for a pedestrian crossing on Cotham Rd opposite the new entrance to Cotham School	£5000	C
Pavement Planting Pots: 5 pots, to be maintained by local residents, to be allocated to areas where planting trees is not an option	£2000	B
Street Trees: 10 replacement trees for those felled by the Council, and 8 trees for new locations	£5000	All
Small Grants Pot: small capital payments available for local voluntary initiatives	£3100	All

Councillor Bev Knott then gave a presentation about the next steps in Council's plan to devolve Council budgets to a neighbourhood level. This has been done successfully for many years in other local authorities and Bristol is keen to roll it out quickly on a "learn as we go along" basis. Each Partnership will have a Neighbourhood Committee which will include all the ward councillors, who are legally delegated to make the financial decisions. The first meeting of the Neighbourhood Committee for our Partnership is on March 4th 2010. Attached to the Committee will be a group of about 15 to 20 people (which, in the first instance, will be the current Steering Group) to debate the issues and assist the councillors in their decision-making. The Bristol Equalities Forum will also ensure that at least one local person is an equalities champion and Council staff will be present to advise the Committee.

In addition there will be open local public forums three or four times a year. Unfortunately the date of the next one was not announced at the meeting.

For our Partnership area, through the Neighbourhood Committee, the Councillors will be able to make decisions on a budget of over £70,000 (for 2010/11) which will include the Well-being budget, recycling banks and highways. The Committee will also be able to influence the spend of a further £765,000 covering street cleaning, park and open spaces and the priorities of community safety and community engagement staff working in our area. (Bristol City Council cabinet minutes 10/12/09.) This is not "new money" but actual Council service budgets. The Council expects that in future years more budgets in other service areas will be devolved either for spend or influence.

One of the keys to this working successfully is the Council appointment of an Area Co-coordinator who will ensure that the Committee structure works with good administrative backup and that there is liaison across Council staff working in their different specialities. Council staff and councillors are being trained to improve their liaison skills and ability to promote devolved budget management.

In my view, another key to success is that decision-making processes, like the use of the Well being budget, are made public and are seen as being transparent, fair and equitable.

Bristol City Council can only be commended for wanting to extend local democracy. It will only work, however, where the community engagement is such that people feel they can get involved if they so wish, the issues are debated using a variety of accessible methods and resulting decisions are seen to be influenced by local residents. Email for your comments on the future work of the Partnership :jenny.hoadley@blueyonder.co.uk

Minutes of the public meeting will be sent to attendees and will be posted on the Neighbourhood Partnership webpage on the Bristol City Council website. Email Jo Holmes at the City Council (johanna.holmes@bristol.gov.uk) or ring her (0117-9036898) for the latest developments.

Jenny Hoadley

Planning Update

There is possibly a slight increase in the planning application numbers and building activity as we hopefully climb out of the recession. A start on the Bristol Baths Scheme has been reported but no confirmation of this. We continue to try and respond to the more important applications where architectural and planning standards are undermined or where community views and interests are not being taken into account. Neil Embleton's article in this issue provides an insight into how the Society tries to promote better standards, not only to maintain the many traditional features of Bishopston but to enhance the environment wherever possible.

We are aware of the need to maintain the appeal of Gloucester Road in the context of wider Bristol, in particular local shops and well established cafes. However there is a need to resist increasing pressure towards it becoming a "24 hour economy". We therefore support the police and Bristol City Council in a proposal for sections to become a "Cumulative Impact Area" which would enable more controls over licensed premises.

We have recently opposed one or two applications in the Gloucester Road because they are likely to disrupt the particularly precarious balance between those who want a 'vibrant' street scene late at night and the needs of local residents wanting time and space to be quiet. One such case is an application from the Chimp House bar/restaurant, 232 Gloucester Rd, seeking to extend its hours until midnight during weekdays and until 2am at weekends. We also supported local residents and planners in an unsuccessful appeal by 232 Gloucester Road to extend its garden opening hours which can be particularly disturbing to nearby residents. Another application we opposed was from Southern Fried Chicken, 299 Gloucester Rd seeking to extend its operating hours (until 4.30 am at weekends) which was refused by the planners. Again there can be unpleasant effects

in having late night fast food outlets near where people live (innumerable taxis, music from cars, unfinished food and rubbish etc).

We would like to hear the views of members and local residents about the Gloucester Road. We generally oppose moves for shops to be converted to houses, although there can be exceptions, such as those in isolated and unviable locations e.g. 235 Gloucester Road. We recognise the value of cafés along the Gloucester Road including the contribution in attracting people who might also use local shops. However we think there should not be too many cafes as they not only take the place of shops but can fundamentally change the identity of stretches of the Gloucester Road. This situation is made worse when some, over time, succeed in becoming licensed premises, bars and restaurants.

The Berkeley Road Methodist Church (formerly Floors to Go) has recently been taken over by Nailsea Electrical. The building has been smartened up to some extent but in the process has been festooned with signs of all shapes and sizes which have been erected without planning permission. We have found the Planning Department to be very slow to enforce non compliances and this issue is still dragging on after several months without any resolution in sight. One long-standing problem with this building is the ever worsening state of the raised pavement plinth around the perimeter. This has been deteriorating over the last 30 years to the point that it is extremely unsightly and dangerous. We understand that it is Building Control rather than Planning who can enforce repairs on the grounds that it is unsafe to the public, which is problematic in this case as the raised area is rarely used as a pavement. We must explore all avenues to get this longstanding eyesore remedied.

The ambitious plans of Gloucestershire County Cricket Club (GCCC) present a major challenge not only to residents who live next to the ground but also to us all living in the wider area. The club are seeking to vastly expand their ground and develop a number of other uses (including multi-storey student accommodation) in what is an already high density inner city area. We have strongly opposed the planning application proposals on a number of grounds. Bishopston is already experiencing unsustainable pressure on its limited local resources, including roads and parking. If these proposals go ahead, their effects will bring about a yet further deterioration in the quality of life of local residents. The provisional date for the two GCCC applications in question to be considered by the City Council is 10th March 2010, so there is still time to make a response. (See the article by the local campaign group HowZat? and their web site for more details.)

Finally Bristol City Council has recently published its Core Strategy which will be subject to an independent examination next year. This document (which replaces its Local Plan) is out for consultation until 15th January 2010 and sets out how Bristol will be developed until 2026. The strategy is planning to achieve a target of 30,000 new houses (including urban extensions into the Green Belt)

although at this stage it remains unclear whether the Government's target of 36,500 houses will be adopted. The local implications of the new strategy are difficult to assess but the main concern must be that it could place even greater housing pressures on inner city areas like Bishopston. Further details can be viewed on the council's website: www.bristol.gov.uk/bdf

Nigel Tibbs

Quality of Living

Recently, I sat beside a lady on the 76 bus. I recognised her from her dog-walking in Bishopston. Our short journey to the centre of Bristol allowed a brief and friendly conversation. How some shops come and go! We both remembered when the closed Threshers was Burton's and the outfitter of her father. My father's tailor was Case & Edwards of Zetland Road - a survivor still. I learnt that she attends a church in Corn Street. By contrast, I was en route to a pub lunch with friends in Flax Bourton (X1 from the bus station). Unlike solitary journeys by car, my quality of living went up a notch.

Enjoying cycling is a mainstream promotion for Sustainable Bishopston and we were pleased to have two representatives from CyclingCity Bristol at our autumn AGM. They had undertaken a survey of 2500 households in Bishopston, receiving positive cycling responses from 800. Bishopston cycles currently twice as often as the Bristol average (4% of journeys). Advice on repairs and bike maintenance is at hand. Training, planned and quieter routes and cycling in groups are available. Contact cyclingcity@bristol.gov.uk. One member of our audience volunteered for training there & then!

Not everyone can cope with a bicycle. But, 'walking is as close to a Magic Bullet as you'll find in modern medicine. If there was a pill that could lower the risk of chronic disease like walking does, people would be clamouring for it' Jo-Ann Manson, Prof of Medicine, Harvard University. Walking is beneficial for heart and chest health and for the avoidance of diabetes and obesity. It improves muscle strength, balance and co-ordination. It improves emotional and mental well-being. Our local shops, parks and commons can give us rewarding exercise.

Our involvement with The Bishopston Society, in the Neighbourhood Forum and Partnership will also improve our Quality of Living. It will give residents the chance to influence environmental and recycling issues, highways and minor traffic concerns and other items of community engagement. Meanwhile a website www.recyclenow.com advises plainly what is available in BS7 now. If you want a free report from the Energy Saving Trust on the energy efficiency of your home, you can complete a Home Energy Check questionnaire, obtainable from myself ian-baker@blueyonder.co.uk or by phone on 9249406.

Ian Baker

Hon. Sec. Sustainable Bishopston

Horfield Apple Day

The Autumn "Apple Day" at Horfield Organic Community Orchard took place in October. It attracted a lot of families and entertainment was provided by morris dancers. There was the chance to learn about apple pressing and taste the variety of apples that are grown there. The next public event at the orchard is Wassail which will take place on January 16th 2010 2-4 pm.



Help Bishopston have the voice it deserves by becoming a member!

As a member you would receive two newsletters a year and be consulted on local issues. We hold two public meetings a year with plenty of topical discussion. Depending on your interests, you are also welcome to join the committee or become involved with its work and activities.

Name _____

Address (please print) _____

Telephone _____

(Evenings & Week-ends)

E-Mail (please print) _____

Signature: _____

Subscriptions - cheques should be made payable to The Bishopston Society - £5 per annum for individuals or £7 per annum for two adults living at the same address. Please return this form with fee to: Richard Farrow, 25 Monmouth Road, Bishopston, Bristol, BS7 8LF or hand in at the meeting in a sealed envelope - if you require a receipt, please request.

NB Your details will be held on a database for contact purposes.

If you have new neighbours, perhaps you could let them know about The Bishopston Society. Extra copies of the leaflet can be obtained from Lionel White (0117 9445687)