

THE BISHOPSTON SOCIETY

Winter 2011
Newsletter



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

www.bishopstonsociety.org.uk

Chairman's Report

Dear Members,

During 2010 some important changes in local and national government have brought challenges to The Bishopston Society, as well as to other local voluntary groups. We have reached out during the year to strengthen our links with them - Sustainable Bishopston, Friends of St Andrew's Park, the Bishopston anti-graffiti group and 'Howzat?', a residents' group protesting against the planned development of the Gloucestershire County Cricket Ground. (For an update, please see the Planning Report.) In addition, the Pigsty Hill West Neighbourhood Watch is keen to attract new members. And for an update on the Community Allotment and Forest Garden project, please see the contribution from Clare Hanson-Kahn.

Planning and licensing applications have taken an increasing amount of time during the year. Fortunately, a member has recently come forward and been co-opted onto the committee, to help monitor license applications - an especially important task since August. At that time the long-discussed CIA (Cumulative Impact Area) designation for the Gloucester Road in Bishopston came into effect. Some recent applications in our view test the new guidelines and threaten the already precarious balance between a vibrant night-life and the needs of nearby residents. It takes vigilance to preserve the unique 'High-Street' atmosphere of the Gloucester Road.

Another major change has altered the structure of the Neighbourhood Partnership and its role in shaping local decisions in a democratic and accountable way. What used to be the Steering Committee - in which Nigel Tibbs has taken an active part in recent years - has now become the Neighbourhood Partnership, to which participants are elected. Jenny Hoadley is now our representative. Her unopposed election was ratified at the AGM in September. Please see Jenny's report for details of this new way for citizens to affect how money is spent in their neighbourhood - and how you can make your voice heard.

The pace of change has been quickening and we need to keep on adapting. Along with the challenges, however, there are achievements to note. One of our members, Dennis Wright, has collaborated with John Hyde to write 'Bishopston: the Early Years', (price £12.99), published by The Bishopston, Horfield and Ashley Down Local History Society. To get your copy, please telephone Dennis Wright on 924 6268.

In addition to this traditional ink on paper newsletter, the Society can now offer a frequently updated website, thanks to the dedication of Nick Plant and his helpers, Simon Randolph and Dick Farrow. Photos add visual interest to the printed information. If you haven't already done so, do visit www.bishopstonsociety.org.uk It has even encouraged your Chairman to venture further into the digital age.

Elinor Edwards

Cumulative Impact Area - Alcohol Licensing

In the last newsletter it was announced that Bristol City Council was setting up a new Cumulative Impact Area (CIA) on the Gloucester Road. This was welcomed by the Society. It was hoped that it would result in a more disciplined approach to the issuing of alcohol licences and a concomitant reduction in alcohol related crime and anti-social behaviour. The CIA became operational from August 1st 2010, after which anyone applying for a licence within the designated area was required to demonstrate that it would be in some way beneficial to the area. This contrasts with the previous practice where the onus was on objectors who had to show that the permitted licence would result in an unsafe or harmful situation. The full CIA policy document, 'Statement of Licensing Policy' can be found on the BCC website.

The Gloucester Road CIA runs from a small section of the Cheltenham Road just below the Arches up to the Ashley Down Road junction on the Gloucester Road. It also includes a small section of Zetland Road up to the junction with Northumberland Road. A quick count shows there are a total of around 60 to 70 licensed outlets within this area. Roughly calculated, this equates to one alcoholic outlet for every 30 metres. Alcohol is not difficult to obtain!

Just before the CIA policy took effect, two new applications were approved - for the new Sainsbury's at the Junction with Zetland Road, and for an extension to the licence of the Chimphouse at 232 Gloucester Road. The Bishopston Society made objections to both of these, but they were still approved by the licensing committee. Would this have happened if the CIA policy had been in operation?

Since August, we have regularly monitored the licensing applications listed on the Council's website. There have been three. Of these, the one from a new shop, 'The Grape and Grind' (next to the Amnesty Bookshop) is the only one that has so far been granted a licence. The Society raised no objection, on the basis that there was no threat of late night sales and the quality of goods offered would enhance choice in the area. In contrast, there is an application pending for a licence extension at the McColl's store by the Arches. This application, if granted, would extend alcohol sales from 11 pm through to the early hours and is exactly the type of request which gives the Society most concern. We have made a strong written objection to this; acceptance of this application would surely undermine the whole rationale of the CIA policy. A third application is a puzzling one. It's from 'Portico Play' who have recently moved into the old 'Venue' offices on the corner of Overton Road and North Road. This establishment provides a service for pre-school children and their parents/carers. We do not wish to inhibit commercial and communal activity in the area. However, we do not understand why a pre-school facility should feel the need to sell alcohol on

the premises. We are attempting to get clarification on this case and meanwhile we have submitted a holding objection.

This last application raises questions about the boundaries of the CIA. Technically 'Portico Play' is on North Road which is not included in the CIA. However, being a mere 10 metres from the Gloucester Road, it is arguably an integral part of that commercial scene.

Both nationally and locally the issue of alcohol licensing has received considerable publicity. It seems to be accepted generally that the excessive liberalisation of recent years needs to be modified. The CIA initiative, while relatively modest, seems sensible and practical - if enforced responsibly. We shall have to wait and see.

Ross Barber

News about the Neighbourhood Partnership

So, what has been happening in the Partnership since last summer? Well we have allocated the £5,000 Older People Budget and £16,280 of the Wellbeing Budget to local organisations, and projects administered by Bristol City Council. These are listed below. Those of you who have attended the Neighbourhood Forums would have already had the chance to hear from some of the applicants about their projects. As it happens this time many of the projects particularly affect the Bishopston and St Andrews areas

The Older Person Budget

Good Shepherd Close Gardening Scheme	Support for Brunel Care residents to develop low maintenance garden plus workshop to include other elderly residents in the area
Sustainable Bishopston	Contribution towards energy saving workshops to be held locally in Bishopston - 10 places (50%) for the elderly
Patients Participation Group (Spence GP practice)	To provide equipment and cover CRB checks for volunteers to set up a monthly Saturday drop-in for older people who are socially isolated at weekends
Tyndale Circle Day Centre (for people who have dementia) (1) (2)	Appropriate chairs for the users Travel bursary for taxi fares for those members who do not have access to personal transport and are unable to walk to the Centre unaided

The Wellbeing Budget

Beaufort Badminton Club (Cotham)	To expand junior section - coach fees
Bristol City Council	To implement the second stage of the Waste Doctors project, to increase awareness and knowledge of tenants in multiple - occupied housing, particularly short term residents eg students about the waste management system of the Council
Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge	Development of publicity (newsletter, website and hire of meeting rooms) to increase membership and activity
Friends of St Andrews Park	Plants for shady area of the park
Redland and Cotham Amenity Society	To supply suitable trees at low cost for people to plant in front gardens to enhance the roadway and local environment
Scouts (1st Bristol)	Kitchen refurbishment of the Scout Hut (off Kings Drive/Bishop Rd)
Scouts (91st Bristol Scout Group)	Contribution towards trip to Belgium to visit WW1 sites
Scouts and Guides (St Andrews with St Bartholomew)	Seed funding for hut rebuild (knotweed treatment, repair of boundary wall and gate, expenses of the planning application)

There is still over £13,000 of the Wellbeing Budget to be allocated before March 31st 2011. **Deadlines for applications is 18th February 2011** - get an application form from Bristol City Council (Jenny Jones on 0117 903 6825 or by email jenny.jones@bristol.gov.uk). Please pass this information on to any local organisation which might be interested in applying for a small grant.

On March 24th 2011, the Partnership will be deciding on the criteria for the allocation of the Wellbeing Budget in 2011/12. Some of us feel that the current criteria should be widened. If you want to have a say, please complete the very short questionnaire on the Bishopston Society website or alternatively, contact the Secretary (Rose 0117-9424265) and we will send you a paper version in the post. Your views will be very useful to our discussion. **The Deadline for responses is 31st January 2011.**

There is another opportunity for you to have a chance of influencing the future of your neighbourhood: to help the Partnership develop a local action plan,

residents of all ages are invited to a day event "A Better Neighbourhood for Everyone" on January 29th 2011 at Charnwood House, Cotham Park Road 10am-3pm. To book a place (and lunch!) ring 0117-9036825, or email neighbourhood.partnership@bristol.gov.uk.

Neighbourhood Forums (see below the dates for the first nine months of 2011) continue to be a dynamic resource for getting action on your local concerns, but also a way for you to feed back what is working. Council officers and Police are present and I am impressed by the "can-do" attitude to get things done on issues like parking, community safety on the streets, street cleaning and graffiti, just to mention a few.

On a local note, you will be pleased to hear of two developments in the Bishopston area:

- The provision of a zebra crossing on the Kings Drive/Berkeley road junction
- An environmental survey to be undertaken of the Gloucester Rd from the Ashley Down traffic lights to The Arches by March 31st 2011. Volunteers will be needed! It will lead to an action plan for the next financial year on ways of improving the appearance and cleanliness of our highly regarded shopping street.

For more details of the work of the Partnership

- check the Council website: <http://www.bristolpartnership.org/neighbourhood-partnerships/bishopston-cotham-a-redland>
- or contact me as the Bishopston Society representative on the Partnership through our website.

DATES FOR THE NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUMS JANUARY- OCTOBER 2011

These are public meetings open to all local residents. They usually start at 7pm.

Tuesday 1st	March 2011	Bishopston
Thursday 3rd	March 2011	Cotham
Monday 7th	March 2011	Redland
Monday 23rd	May 2011	Redland

Thursday 26th	May 2011	Cotham
Tuesday 31st	May 2011	Bishopston
Thursday 29th	September 2011	Bishopston
Monday 3rd	October 2011	Cotham
Thursday 6th	October 2011	Redland

**DATES FOR THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP MEETINGS
JANUARY-OCTOBER 2011**

These are public meetings open to all local residents from 7pm. If possible have a look at the agenda and reports beforehand on the Council website (see above for the web address).

Thursday 24th	March 2011	at 7pm
Thursday 16th	June 2011	at 7pm
Monday 24th	October 2011	at 7pm

Jenny Hoadley

**BISHOPSTON, COTHAM AND REDLAND
NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP**

VOLUNTEER WANTED!

Exhibition Co-ordinator (February-August 2011)

Do you have some spare time? The Neighbourhood Partnership has an opportunity to be part of a Bristol-wide arts project in the new MShed Museum from July 25-31st 2011. The purpose is to show our achievements and work done in our area. Pictures, video, and art are all possible...but we need someone to organise us and think how best to display the hard work and talent in our communities!

The resources of MShed, The City of Bristol College and UWE would all be available to help develop the exhibition.

For more information contact Jo Holmes Tel:0117-9036898 or

Email Johanna.holmes@bristol.gov.uk

This is part of the Pride of Place programme sponsored by the Bristol Partnership

Community project

As you read this Horfield Allotment Association is awaiting the outcome of the lottery application they've submitted -- for £88,000 -- to develop the community allotment and forest garden on the Golden Hill site (behind Horfield prison).

This project will give access to food growing to people with physical and mental health problems and children and young people. It will also provide small starter plots for people new to food growing. The project will increase the skills and confidence of local people in growing organic food, composting and learning about healthy food -- through volunteering and training activities.

The grant is to carry out drainage, land clearance and landscaping on several derelict sites and to build wheelchair accessible pathways and raised beds and install a wheelchair accessible compost toilet. It will also fund the salary for a part-time project worker over three years to recruit community groups and volunteers and coordinate food growing and training activities on-site.

If we get the funding we hope local people will want to help out on work days and input their food growing knowledge through training workshops and as volunteers. Fingers crossed...

For more information: clarehansonkahn@blueyonder.co.uk

Clare Hanson

Society web site feedback appeal launched as next generation planned

Bishopston Society's web site is now 18 months old. It was launched in its current form in June 2009. Its content has built up slowly but surely since then and now offers a popular and informative resource for members and a showcase to the public. We are now working towards the next generation of the site as we are determined it will go further in helping our organisation become an authoritative voice in the area. As readers will readily see by visiting www.bishopstonsociety.org.uk the web site offers members news, meeting announcements and reports as well as articles and photos featuring Bishopston. We now have regular updates on our work with the Neighbourhood Partnership, and have started fuller reporting of the work the committee carries out routinely on your behalf on local planning applications. Complementary work on licensing is also coming online and you can contact any officer of the society via the site.

The site attracts up to 1800 visitors per month and generates enquiries from outside. We have lost track of how many other web sites link to ours, but we know there are lots and we get a healthy number of hits via Google.

Future plans include "virtual visual display boards" highlighting good and bad local architecture, the digital equivalent of the display boards that many members will have seen at events. In addition to developing the Planning section, we also aim to grow our archive of older newsletters, etc. tracing the development of Society since 2003, and we hope to draw more attention to our developing relationships with other local organisations...

....BUT this is the right time for Bishopston Society, as a membership organisation, to pause before racing ahead, and to ask a vital question: how would you, the members of the society, like to see the web site developing, and what's missing? What do you LIKE about the site as it currently stands, and what if anything, do you DISLIKE about what we are doing or publishing to the online world?

We have therefore launched an appeal for feedback to help guide the Committee's web working group on our next-generation web site. Please contribute your views on the above questions, or others. You can do this via the web site via www.bishopstonsociety.org.uk - look for the article "web site feedback sought" and follow the instructions there, or use the "Contact" facility. Alternatively, just email your views to webeditor@bishopstonsociety.org.uk.

We look forward to hearing from you and will report further on web development plans...

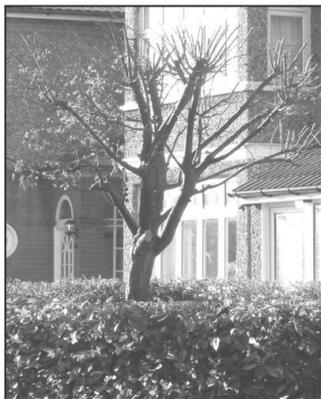
Nick Plant

Garden trees and their pruning

"I Think that I shall never see, a poem lovely as a tree..." so sang Paul Robeson, and left to their own devices he is quite right. Trees are inherently beautiful things and unmolested by man usually get on very well - 400 million years of evolution have seen to that.



However, extraordinary damage to trees goes on in the name of "pruning" which spoils their natural beauty and damages their resistance to disease. Here are just a few - a very few - local examples. I am sorry if anyone is upset by seeing one of their own trees shown below but it upsets me just as much!



As all of us enjoy trees so those which are large and clearly visible from a public place may be subject to a tree preservation order. There are currently around 800 orders in Bristol and once a tree has one, then apart from a number of exceptions, you will need permission from the Council before any work can be carried out. See <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/content/Environment-Planning/Planning/tree-preservation-orders.en>. Also if you live in one of Bristol's 33 Conservation areas (See <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/environment-and-planning/conservation/conservation-areas/>) there are more general restrictions and you will need to notify the council of any proposed works to a tree. This applies to anything with a trunk of more than 75mm girth and so can apply to hedges and large shrubs. You then must wait 6 weeks from registration

(called a S211 notice) before carrying out the work. These points apart, there are no restrictions on arboricultural work to garden trees but this does not mean anyone should "have a go" unless they know what they are doing.

There are good reasons for carrying out pruning (removal of deadwood, reducing risk from falling branches, reshaping the tree or increasing the yield or quality of its fruits) and many different pruning techniques. As far as garden trees are concerned the usual reason for pruning is that they have grown too big for a small garden. Unfortunately pruning usually encourages further rapid growth so the first thing to be said is that prevention is better than cure. If you are going to plant a tree, do your homework and make sure the choice is appropriate to the site you have in mind. All trees start off small but many will end up extremely large. One small garden in Bishopston has been planted with a small Eucalyptus two feet from a bay window. Now most Eucalypts are not tolerant of frost, so it may not survive this winter, but if it does, then unless it is one of the rarer bush varieties it may well grow to 25 metres in height. On the other hand early coppicing creates a multi-stemmed bush, which can be kept under control by chopping back the stems to the ground every year or every few years. This works particularly well with Eucalyptus gunnii, E. globulus, E. dalrympleana and E. pauciflora .

Other good choices of trees for small gardens include:

Pittosporums - many are small but all respond well to pruning

Sorbus (cashmiriana, vilmorinii)

Malus (various species)

Various Acers - if the site is not too sunny

Hollies - make a nice contrast and trees provide decoration for Christmas

But what do you do if you find the previous owner of your house has left you with a large tree which is now taking up most of the garden or reducing the light to a room? It is not simply a matter of cutting off a few branches. Not only have the right branches to be removed but they must be removed in the right way at the correct point. If this is carried out correctly the wound will heal without damage.



A large branch has been removed correctly

You only have two choices: use a qualified (and appropriately insured) tree surgeon or to do it yourself. If attempting it yourself there are a few important guidelines.

1. Do not attempt a tree over 15 feet in height or if the tree is in a difficult position - for example overhanging the adjacent property.
2. Do not attempt branches greater than 5 cm in diameter.
3. Only use the correct HAND tools which should be sharp. A minimum kit would be a heavy duty lopper, an extension pruner, a pruning saw and a 24 inch bowsaw. Powertools should not be used.
4. **Know what you are doing** and this means reading a suitable book beforehand. My favourite is The Pruning Handbook by R.L.Hudson, now out of print but there are many second hand copies on Amazon, starting at less than a pound!
5. Only prune trees which are your own! While under the Common Law you have the right to remove the nuisance associated with a tree encroaching onto your property, it is it much better to liase with its owner first.
6. Stick to deciduous trees; conifers are more difficult for several reasons.
7. Plan what you are doing and let your neighbours know if it is likely to affect them in anyway.
8. Do not be in a hurry; remove one branch at a time, and then look at the result from all angles.
9. Prune at the right time of year; pruning at different times has different effects and these are not the same for all trees and bushes.

If done carefully and thoughtfully, pruning is enjoyable and rewarding and even trees which have been rendered unsightly can be brought back to natural beauty, although it may take several years to achieve this and it maybe quicker to replace your misshapen tree with a new well chosen specimen.

Chris Stephens

Planning Update

The Bristol Green Spaces Plan recently underwent a round of consultation, with some significant implications for Horfield Common. In early December Wellington Hill (in the neighbouring Horfield Ward) was one of 8 sites which the Cabinet announced had been withdrawn for sale because of the public response. We have expressed particular concern about the financing of the Area Green Space Strategy by means of selling some sites for development.

It is hoped that Bristol North Baths Scheme which has continued to be a

casualty of the building recession will take place soon. Repairs to the chimney have been followed by two planning applications to re-site the Orange telecommunications apparatus which would otherwise remain on the pavement but close to the library and apartments when the new scheme is built. Some concern has been expressed about the appearance of the (three) emitters, especially as the chimney is listed as part of the Baths building. They could possibly be re-sited somewhere else such as attached to the tower of the former Methodist Church (now Nailsea Electrical) alongside the site.

We welcome the decision to grant planning permission to a proposal on Pigsty Hill (148-154 Gloucester Road) for the replacement of a derelict row of shops with affordable flats and town houses. However we strongly objected to a recent application to demolish 25 Seymour Road (circa 1830-32) and replace it with an entirely unsympathetic scheme of five town houses. This application has been refused by the planners but a revised set of proposals has been submitted. Unfortunately to the disappointment of local residents, ourselves (and no doubt the planners), a recent application to English Heritage to have the old farmhouse listed has been rejected and it now looks inevitable it will be demolished.

In addition, we are very disappointed with several recent planning decisions over the last few months. These include approval for the building of 12 "Cluster Flats" (32 student rooms) to replace 3-9 Ashley Down Road and at 11 Brynland Avenue replacing a stone wall and hedge with a car space and low wall with nearly 2 metre high wooden cladding. Wooden fencing, removal of front gardens for car parking and unsightly roof extensions and other inappropriate developments are becoming all too commonplace in our streets with consequent loss of the character and amenity to the area.

We are also concerned about an application for Sancta Theresa in Claremont Road which is a classic case of "garden grabbing" - the limited size of the garden can only reasonably accommodate one new house rather than the two units being proposed. We also objected to an application to build four houses to replace a row of garages in Arundel Road which has since been refused by the planners. This is a very restricted site which sits above the level of adjacent gardens and proposals should ideally be limited to single storey to avoid overlooking and overshadowing. We have also objected to a proposal to replace a sign shop at 377 Gloucester Road with a restaurant and take-away. We are particularly concerned about the possibility of a licensed premises in a section of the Gloucester Road which consists almost entirely of retail activity. After four applications and two appeal refusals, yet another application has been submitted for 20 Falmouth Road (at the corner with Manor Road). Whilst this application is better than the previous one there is still strong opposition to the development within the garden area of the existing house. In addition the detailed design of the proposed development is not in sympathy to the surrounding buildings.

Finally Gloucestershire County Cricket Club has decided to scale back their proposals for permanent seating from 18,500 to 8,000. The local residents' group Howzat? is currently seeking clarification on this and other plans including the enabling development which requires detailed planning permission.

Nigel Tibbs and Neil Embleton



Garages at Arundel Road (left)
20 Falmouth Road (below right)
Santa Theresa in Claremont
Avenue (below left)



Neighbourhood Watch - why join?

Pigsty Hill West Neighbourhood Watch operates in the area off Gloucester Road, near Dave Giles the Butcher and Bristol Tools. Jo Young, one of the co-ordinators, explains why you should support your local watch.

Despite being a great place to live, the fact remains that Bishopston is a burglary hotspot - and when it actually happens to you, it's a huge shock. It's not about losing the stolen 'stuff' - it's about finding out that someone has forced their way into your home, helped themselves - and once it's happened, there's nothing you can do about it.

However, there are a few simple 'tricks' you can employ to make your home less tempting to opportunist burglars and I see Neighbourhood Watch as a crucial way of telling residents about the risks and how to minimise them. I certainly wish I'd known how to get 'our' burglar to walk on by!

That's what drives the three of us who run this watch - me and my neighbours, Scott Alexander-Bown and Sean Sage. We don't want our neighbours to become victims of crime, so we send out messages from the police and newsletters (with tips and suggestions), communicating almost entirely by email.

This is an effective, low maintenance way to run the watch, but what we desperately need is more residents in our watch area to join us, and among our members, people willing to be 'contacts', which means offering to lend a hand on the few occasions we need more manpower, for example, to do some kind of door drop to the whole watch area (which usually only happens once or twice a year), or to post messages to an email-free (often elderly and more vulnerable) neighbour.

Our watch has recently extended to cover the whole of Hatherley Road, Melbourne Road, Falmouth Road and Manor Road, turning a large watch into an epic watch! If you value your neighbourhood and community, make sure you support your local watch by joining up, and consider offering to lend a hand occasionally to help it continue to run and be of benefit to as many residents as possible.

For more information on Pigsty Hill West Neighbourhood Watch, please email: pigstyhillwest@gmail.com

Jo Young

Next Public Meeting of the Bishopston Society

This will take place at 7.30 pm on Monday 4th April 2011 at St. Michael's Church Halls on Pigsty Hill.

Our Guest Speaker will be Bev Knott, Councillor for Bishopston, who will talk to us and take questions on The Neighbourhood Partnership and how it affects you.

With the Government wanting people to be more involved in decisions affecting their neighbourhoods and what happens locally, this is an issue in which we must become more participatory if we want to influence and help prioritise the way in which our local environment can be improved.

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 booklet can be obtained from Lionel White (0117 9445687)