

Agenda Item 6

Bishopston, Cotham and Redland Neighbourhood Partnership (BCR NP)

Author: Roger Gimson, for the BCR NP Green Capital Fund Panel

Title: **Recommendations for the Allocation of the Green Capital Fund**

Date: 8th January 2015

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) The Bishopston, Cotham and Redland Neighbourhood Partnership has £10,000 from the Green Capital Fund to distribute to eligible projects, plus up to £2000 from our Wellbeing Fund. Applications were received for 9 projects. If the 6 projects which we **recommend** below are agreed, the funding required is £10,440, including £440 from the Wellbeing Fund:

- (a) **Bristol Friends of the Earth** – BCR Heatview: £2000 (with conditions)
- (b) **Friends of Horfield Common** – Horfield Common Edible Garden: £703
- (c) **Friends of St Andrews Park** – Perennial wild flower meadow: £1519
- (d) **Friends of Horfield Common** – Horfield Pond Improvement Project: £1973
- (e) **University of Bristol Student Union** – Love Where You Live, Cotham: £2875 (with conditions)
- (f) **Golden Hill Community Garden** – The Golden Hill Community Garden: £1370

2) We do not recommend funding the applications from **Sustainable Redland**, **Gloucestershire Cricket** and **Soil Association**.

1. BCR NP Green Capital Fund applications

1.1. Funds available

The total amount of project funding requested was £23,645 from 9 applications. This is against the £10,000 available from the Green Capital Fund, plus up to £2000 previously agreed as available from our Wellbeing Fund.

As a consequence, and with a wish to support long-term sustainable projects and to spread the funding across the range of criteria and the three wards, we recommend offering funding to six of the projects as detailed below. The total funding offered is £10,440, which would therefore require calling on £440 from the Wellbeing Fund in addition to the Green Capital Fund.

1.2. Summary of the applications and recommendations

Organisation	Project name	Main criteria addressed	Ward	Amount requested	Amount recommended
Bristol Friends of the Earth	BCR Heatview	Energy	BCR (see 1.3.1)	£2,000	£2000 subject to conditions (see 1.3.1)
Sustainable Redland	Drinking Water Fountain for Redland Green	Resources	Redland	£8,385	—
Friends of Horfield Common	Horfield Common Edible Garden	Food / Nature	Bishopston	£953	£703 (see 1.3.3)
Friends of St Andrew's Park	Creation of a perennial wild flower meadow	Nature	Redland	£1,519	£1519
Friends of Horfield Common	Horfield Pond Improvement Project	Nature	Bishopston	£1,973	£1973
Gloucestershire Cricket	Howzat for Healthy	Food	Bishopston	£1,970	—
University of Bristol Students' Union	Love Where You Live – Cotham	Food / Nature	Cotham	£2,875	£2875 subject to conditions (see 1.3.7)
Golden Hill Community Garden	The Golden Hill Community Garden	Food	Bishopston	£1,370	£1370
Soil Association	The Big Picnic	Food	BCR (see 1.3.9)	£2,600	—
Total				£23,645	£10,440

1.3. Details of the applications

Overviews of the projects are given here, with comments and recommendations by the Green Capital Fund Panel.

1.3.1. Bristol Friends of the Earth – BCR Heatview (£2000 requested)

This proposal would purchase low-cost infrared imaging cameras to carry out street surveys of heat loss from houses during cold winter months. The results would be

presented on an online map, with advice on how to access energy saving measures to reduce heat loss.

Comments: This is in line with local and national policies about improving the quality of housing stock and is an appropriate awareness-raising tool. The logistics required to carry out the project need to be demonstrated. It was proposed to cover streets in one of the three wards – we would prefer coverage of typical housing types in all three wards.

Recommendation: £700 for pilot work (including one set of equipment) to be carried out in February/March 2015, for a few streets in each ward, covering different types of housing. **Provided** the project can demonstrate successful data gathering, processing and website presentation of results, a further £1,300 to follow for wider coverage of streets in the three wards during November/December 2015. A report on the pilot should be submitted by 1st May 2015 to enable a decision to be made on releasing the second part of the funding.

1.3.2. Sustainable Redland – Drinking Water Fountain for Redland Green (£8,385 requested)

This proposal would install a drinking water fountain near the playground on Redland Green. The goal would be to reduce the use of bottled drinks, which have a high carbon footprint in delivery and disposal, and the negative health effects of drinks with high sugar content.

Comments: This project requested a substantial amount of funding, though it is not clear who would pay for the water, or any maintenance costs. A nice idea, but expensive for the potential results – people could already be persuaded to re-use bottles and fill them with tap water, and any educational impact could already be done in schools.

Recommendation: not to fund.

1.3.3. Friends of Horfield Common – Horfield Common Edible Garden (£953 requested)

This project proposes to create an edible garden within the Ardagh site on Horfield Common. It would involve the local community in planting, growing, harvesting and using the food produced, as well as providing an additional point of interest for visitors to the site.

Comments: It meets the criteria, is community-based, a visible public project, long term, using shared tools. A significant element of the cost is a lockable tool store.

Recommendation: £703. The project has already received an award of £250 from the Naturesave Trust towards the same goals, so we are proposing to provide the remaining balance.

1.3.4. Friends of St Andrews Park – Creation of a perennial wild flower meadow (£1,519 requested)

This project proposes to create a more sustainable wild flower meadow in St Andrew's Park by excavating sufficient top-soil to enable appropriate conditions for long-term management of the meadow.

Comments: It meets the criteria, is long term and visible, and involves the community.

Recommendation: £1519 to fund in full.

1.3.5. Friends of Horfield Common – Horfield Pond Improvement Project (£1,973 requested)

This proposal would provide better access to the existing pond on Horfield Common, which has already been improved and attracts local children and families. It involves the construction of access steps and a viewing platform that would better enable educational activities about the natural ecology of the pond. The construction plans of the viewing platform and the contractor have been approved by the Council.

Comments: It meets the criteria and has long-term educational and community benefits. We asked whether a ramp could be provided instead of steps, to allow better access for the less able (c.f. Golden Hill Community Garden dipping pond). However, providing sufficiently level access would probably require a new entry point and tarmac path across the Common to reach it (which would have to be provided by the Council). We hope this could be looked at in more detail for consideration in the future, but that the project as originally proposed should be carried out for completion in 2015.

Recommendation: £1973 to fund in full.

1.3.6. Gloucestershire Cricket – Howzat for Healthy (£1,970 requested)

This proposal includes healthy exercise through playing cricket and healthy eating through growing and cooking food, targeted at 120 pupils at one school. GCCC already run a community programme to encourage greater involvement with cricket.

Comments: Access to healthy food is one of the eligible criteria, but part of this project addresses healthy exercise, which is not. There appears to be no funding from the school, although it involves curricular activities. Additional funding would be required to include other children in future years at the same school. A substantial part of the money requested would be for the professional services of those already employed by the cricket club and the use of its existing facilities.

Recommendation: not to fund.

1.3.7. University of Bristol Student Union – Love Where You Live, Cotham (£2,875 requested)

This project proposes to create a community group involving student and non-student residents of seven streets, about 250 houses, in Cotham. It hopes to improve student community relations by sharing the use of front gardens for growing food and wild flowers, using shared materials.

Comments: It meets the criteria, is a community project, and fits with the Partnership's wish to be positive about local student voluntary action and neighbourliness. However, it is not clear whether the hopes for widespread community involvement are realistic.

Recommendation: £1500 initially to host meetings and show what could be achieved in some sample gardens. **Provided** the project can demonstrate significant potential involvement of student and non-student residents by spring 2015, a further £1375 to support planting of more gardens. A report on the expected final number of participants and how some sample gardens have been improved should be submitted by 1st May 2015 to enable a decision to be made on releasing the second part of the funding.

1.3.8. Golden Hill Community Garden – The Golden Hill Community Garden (£1,370 requested)

This proposal aims to bring back into use an overgrown part of the Horfield allotment site. It will allow 8 new raised beds to be built by volunteers for growing food, especially beneficial to those with reduced mobility who cannot manage allotment plots. Construction will include workshops to allow participants to learn how to build raised beds for others.

Comments: It meets the criteria, is community-based, has a long-term impact, and will be part of a well managed scheme overall. We particularly like the consideration that has been given to sustaining the involvement of those who can no longer manage full allotment plots. In addition it enables two current Community Garden users to move on to semi-independence before getting their own allotment.

Recommendation: £1,370 to fund in full.

1.3.9. Soil Association – The Big Picnic (£2,600 requested)

In an existing programme of work by the Food For Life Partnership (FFLP), 14 Bristol schools will establish food growing at their school sites. This proposal is for a day at which five schools in our area who have been involved with the FFLP programme can demonstrate what they have been doing, including putting on workshops to interest other schools and the wider community in growing and cooking their own food.

Comments: This comes under the criteria of food sustainability, and we applaud the work that has already been funded by FFLP. However, we don't consider the marginal additional benefit of a one-off celebratory and demonstration event, as proposed, will have a long-term impact on a wider audience.

Recommendation: not to fund.

1.4. Reminders for funded projects

As stated in the application guidelines, all funds awarded under the Green Capital grants must be spent by the end of 2015. Final reports must be submitted no later than one month after the completion of the project. Any unspent funding must be returned to the Neighbourhood Partnership for reallocation to another project.

All funded projects are asked to mention the source of funds as Bristol 2015 through the Bishopston, Cotham and Redland Neighbourhood Partnership, and to use the Bristol 2015 logo and the BCR NP logo, in any signage or publicity about their project.

2. Criteria and Process

2.1. Funding criteria

The funding is aimed primarily at projects which deliver against one or more of the following priorities:

- Increasing people's access to affordable, healthy, sustainable **food**.
- Enabling more people to access affordable **energy**.
- Inspiring and educating people about **nature** and how to care for it.
- Providing activities and initiatives that help people re-use, repair, and share materials (**resources**).
- Helping people discover more sustainable **transport** (e.g. walking, cycling or public transport).

There was no expectation that a project would meet more than one priority, and our partnership was prepared to consider proposals that delivered other goals that fit within the overall objectives of the Bristol Green Capital Partnership.

2.2. Application and assessment process

The availability of Green Capital grants was publicised from mid August and application forms and guidelines were available on the BCRNP.org.uk website from 10th September. Unfortunately, the Bristol City Council website had conflicting details, some of which, despite our requests, were not changed until near the submission deadline. So some submissions used the BCR form and some used the BCC form. However, the key elements on which recommendations were based were common to both forms. Inclusiveness to equalities communities was a consideration.

A workshop for potential applicants to BCR NP was held on 8th October, which proved popular and successful. The deadline for applications was 13th November.

The BCR NP Green Capital Fund Panel met twice to review the applications, and asked some applicants for further details. Recommendations were drafted by mid-December so that they could be finalised and put on the agenda of the NP meeting for 26th January 2015. In early January, each applicant was informed of the recommendations, where they could address any concerns, and of the date and place of the NP meeting which they could attend and at which final decisions would be made.

3. Further funding availability

3.1. Bristol Green Capital Neighbourhood Partnership Grants

Each of the 14 Neighbourhood Partnerships were initially awarded £10,000 (a total of £140,000) from the total available fund of £250,000. Bristol City Council has decided that the remaining £110,000 will be distributed across the Partnerships to the 22 wards with the greatest need (based on deprivation, environmental criteria and low volunteering levels). None of our three wards qualify, so no further funds are available for our Partnership from this source.

Though the panel agrees that deprivation and environmental criteria are appropriate factors in grant distribution, we ask the NP to request BCC that volunteering levels should not be used as a criterion for funding eligibility in the future. We, like Neighbourhood Partnerships in all areas, are continually looking for volunteers. Anything that dissuades people from volunteering, including the possibility of grants being withheld, defeats our aim of achieving greater community involvement.

3.2. BCR NP Small Grants Fund

The BCR NP Small Grants Fund (formerly called the Wellbeing Fund) has already set aside up to £2000 to supplement our Green Capital grants. Its existing funding criteria include transport, parks and green spaces, neighbourliness and food sustainability. It is therefore possible for additional project applications to be made to this fund. The deadline for applications for the next round of BCR NP Small Grant funding is 30th January 2015.

3.3. Bristol 2015 Small Grants Fund

Bristol 2015 has established a completely separate Small Grants Fund for Green Capital project proposals that can benefit the city across more than one neighbourhood. The first round of grants from this fund has already been decided. There will be a second and final round to allocate the remaining £75,000, with an application deadline of 27th February 2015. See www.bristol2015.co.uk/get-involved/apply-grant-funding/ for details.