

Agenda Item 7 – BCR NP Committee 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2015  
Bishopston, Cotham and Redland  
Constitution of our Neighbourhood Partnership

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## **1. Our Neighbourhood Partnership**

Bishopston, Cotham and Redland (BCR)

Neighbourhood Partnership (NP) is one of 14 Neighbourhood Partnerships established across the City of Bristol. Our Neighbourhood covers the three electoral wards of Bishopston, Cotham and Redland.

This document describes the role of the Neighbourhood Partnership and the way it carries out its functions. This section gives an introduction to our Neighbourhood Partnership. The following sections describe the way our Partnership works in more detail.

### **1.1 People**

The Bishopston, Cotham and Redland Neighbourhood Partnership is a constituted group, drawn from local people, to enable our community to have a greater say in what happens in our Neighbourhood. The Neighbourhood Partnership was established and is supported by Bristol City Council. We are able to set priorities and to make and influence decisions which have a local impact. We work with local groups, businesses, individuals, Bristol City Council and other services, and hold regular public meetings within the area. We are part of a move towards more local and participatory democracy.

Our Neighbourhood Partnership includes as members the Bristol City Councillors for our three wards. The rest of the Partnership members are made up from local people, including members chosen on behalf of local groups, businesses and services.

### **1.2 Purpose**

The purpose of the Neighbourhood Partnership is to improve the environment and quality of life for the residents – people who either live or work in the Neighbourhood – and to increase civic pride, community cohesion and community involvement by:

- Developing a local action plan and identifying local solutions to local problems wherever possible.
- Encouraging public, private and community and voluntary organisations to work together to deliver improvements to residents' quality of life.

- Tackling deprivation and discrimination in the Neighbourhood, and promoting equality of opportunity for all those living or working here.
- Actively engaging with local people across the Neighbourhood, seeking their views and active participation in improving the quality of all our lives. This includes seeking the views and participation of residents that are hard to reach.
- Co-ordinating community engagement to raise awareness of engagement opportunities as widely as possible.
- Considering regularly the results of community engagement activities, ensuring that wherever possible action is taken in response to the issues raised.

We value:

- Civic pride
- Protecting our public spaces
- Improving our Neighbourhood and making it sustainable
- Respect and compassion
- Equality and human rights
- Aspiration, energy, enthusiasm and creativity
- Personal responsibility and accountability
- Community development, involvement and 'grass-roots' action

### **1.3 Planning and Priorities**

The Neighbourhood Partnership is responsible for drawing up a Neighbourhood Partnership Plan, which looks up to three years ahead. It identifies the areas where the Neighbourhood Partnership intends to deploy its effort and resources.

As part of the Neighbourhood Partnership Plan, and through consultation with residents, our Neighbourhood Partnership identifies a number of priorities for our area.

The Neighbourhood Partnership Plan is reviewed regularly and is used to guide allocation of resources, including spending.

### **1.4 More details**

The rest of this document gives more details about our Neighbourhood Partnership in the following sections:

2. Members
3. Working Groups
4. Community Group Involvement
5. Meetings
6. Putting Forward Ideas and Raising Issues
7. Spending
8. Support from Bristol City Council
9. Further Information

## 2. Neighbourhood Partnership Members

The membership of the Neighbourhood Partnership must include all Bristol City Councillors for the local wards. A Neighbourhood Partnership is able to decide who it will include as additional members from those who live or work in the area.

### 2.1 Choice of Members

Our Partnership has chosen to include representatives of several local groups and services, and advocates for specific topics, as well as some appointed individual residents.

Membership entitlement is reviewed once a year, typically at the first Partnership Meeting of the Bristol City Council municipal year, usually held around June. Members may also be co-opted during the year to provide specialist expertise when needed, or to provide a better balance of interests.

The current Neighbourhood Partnership members are listed in an appendix.

The people who are the members of our Partnership currently fall into five categories.

#### 2.1.1 Elected Bristol City Councillors

All Partnerships must include elected local Councillors as members. In our case they comprise:

- two Bristol City Councillors from the Bishopston ward
- two Bristol City Councillors from the Cotham ward
- two Bristol City Councillors from the Redland ward

The six Councillors form what is called the **Neighbourhood Committee** and are the only people who are allowed to make decisions on spending (see section 7) within the Partnership. For the purpose of running meetings (see section 5), the Neighbourhood Committee has a Chair and Vice-Chair chosen from within the Councillors and elected by them at the first meeting of the municipal year.

#### 2.1.2 Community Representatives

Our Partnership has chosen to allow several local community groups to have representatives as members. Members may be included to represent the following:

- Bishopston Society (at most 1 representative)
- Redland & Cotham Amenities Society (at most 2 representatives)
- Sustainable Bishopston (at most 1 representative)
- Sustainable Redland (at most 1 representative)
- BCR Neighbourhood Watch (at most 1 representative)

Representatives of community groups are expected to work not primarily in the interests of their groups but with a view to promoting the wider objectives of the Partnership.

A community group may send a substitute to a meeting if their normal representative is unavailable, provided this is agreed by the other members of the Partnership at the meeting.

### **2.1.3 Community Advocates**

We have identified several specific topics which we believe deserve a voice on our Partnership, but for which no single representative community group exists. We use the name 'community advocates' for members who are chosen for their experience and willingness to speak up on behalf of the following:

- Equality (at most 2 advocates)
- Local business/traders (at most 1 advocate)
- Student residents (at most 1 advocate)

Community advocates are expected to bring a general understanding of the topic for which they are advocating to discussions, and also, like other members, to participate with a view to promoting the wider objectives of the Partnership.

### **2.1.4 Individually Appointed Members**

Residents may also be invited to be members of the Partnership because of the individual contribution they can make. Their membership must be approved by a vote of the Neighbourhood Committee at a Neighbourhood Partnership Meeting.

### **2.1.5 Partner Organisations and Services**

Organisations that provide services within the area are also invited to send representatives to be non-voting participants in the Partnership. Such participants currently represent the following:

- Bristol City Council (through our Neighbourhood Partnership Coordinator)
- Avon and Somerset Police
- Bristol Student Community Partnership

Officers of other bodies may choose, or be invited, to attend Partnership Meetings if aspects of the agenda are relevant to them.

## **2.2 Annual approval of members**

Before the first Neighbourhood Partnership Meeting of the municipal year, the Neighbourhood Committee reviews the membership. It confirms which community groups should be represented and how many seats each group can occupy. It takes into account the size of the community group and whether each representative is fairly chosen (by election or otherwise) by the membership of the community group to represent them on the Partnership. It also confirms what positions are available for community advocates.

At the first Neighbourhood Partnership Meeting of the municipal year, the people occupying the positions of community advocate member are confirmed. Anyone who wishes to be

considered for one of these positions, whether they already hold the position or not, must provide a short written statement (maximum 200 words) stating their relevant experience and the aspirations they bring to the role. Statements must be sent to the Neighbourhood Partnership Coordinator for inclusion in the agenda of the first Neighbourhood Partnership Meeting of the municipal year, usually held around June. If there is more than one candidate for a position, the candidate(s) to be selected for the position(s) are chosen by a vote of the Neighbourhood Committee at that Neighbourhood Partnership Meeting, taking into account the views of the rest of the Partnership members.

### **2.3 Chair and Vice-Chair**

At the first meeting of the municipal year, the Neighbourhood Partnership elects a Chair and a Vice-Chair from amongst any of its members. The Chair has overall responsibility for setting the agenda of, and chairing, Neighbourhood Partnership Meetings, representing the views of the Partnership to others, and generally being available as a point of contact on behalf of the Partnership for anyone living in the community.

Our Partnership may elect other officers, such as treasurer and secretary, if required, but has not done so to date.

## **3. Working groups**

In order to carry out its objectives, the Neighbourhood Partnership appoints working groups (sometimes referred to as sub groups or task groups) to work on specific issues.

Neighbourhood Partnership members are each expected to participate in at least one or two working groups.

The current working groups are listed in an appendix.

### **3.1 Role of working groups**

Working groups can make recommendations to the Partnership on local issues and can propose items of expenditure for the Neighbourhood Committee to consider. They are not able to make decisions on behalf of the Partnership, unless they have been specifically delegated to do so.

### **3.2 Approval of a working group**

A new working group must be approved by the Neighbourhood Partnership members, including setting its scope, expected participants and whether it is ongoing or time-limited.

If it is ineffective or dysfunctional, a working group may be terminated, or its participants changed, by a vote of the Partnership members at a Neighbourhood Partnership Meeting.

### **3.3 Participants in a working group**

Working groups may include both members of the Partnership and other local residents. Each working group must include at least one member of the Partnership. A working group may take on new participants from the local community, but the Partnership retains discretion to approve or disapprove any working group participant.

### **3.4 Working group meetings**

A working group may organise its meetings and procedures to suit the work it is carrying out. Working group participants may choose a chair to set the agenda for, and facilitate, its meetings. The chair need not be a member of the Partnership. However, all working group meetings must include at least one member of the Partnership.

The date and time of a working group meeting must be communicated to all the working group participants at least 5 working days in advance of the meeting.

### **3.5 Working group reports**

When a working group has to make recommendations to the Partnership, the working group must present its recommendations in a written report. Working group reports will be made public, usually by being included as part of the official papers of a Neighbourhood Partnership meeting (see 5.1) – in which case they must be submitted by the required agenda deadline, or by being made available on the Partnership website.

The contents of a report should be reached by consensus among working group participants. If consensus cannot be achieved, the report must indicate any dissenting views of participants. In any case, the report must provide reasons for the recommendations being made, and name all the participants who have been involved in its preparation.

## **4. Community group involvement**

Community groups may become involved in the Neighbourhood Partnership in a number of ways.

A community group may have been chosen to provide one or more Community Representatives as members of the Partnership (see 2.1.2).

A working group (for example, the Parks Working Group) may be composed of participants representing identified community groups (in this case the community groups representing the parks in the Neighbourhood).

Community groups are able to submit items and/or reports for inclusion on the agenda of public Neighbourhood Partnership meetings, or ask the Chair for permission to speak at such a meeting (see 5.1).

In order for a community group to be recognised as being representative, it should:

- show that they are open to all residents in their area
- openly advertise their meetings, for example by email, website or Newsletter
- elect representatives by a general meeting at least once each year
- seek to represent a consensus view
- have written aims and objectives consistent with the aims and objectives of the Partnership

If groups do not hold an annual meeting to elect representatives they must explain how they ensure that they are representative and open to all.

## **5. Meetings**

To help carry out its work, the Neighbourhood Partnership holds a number of types of meeting during the year, as well as informal communications amongst members.

### **5.1 Neighbourhood Partnership Meetings**

The formal business of the Partnership is carried out at Neighbourhood Partnership Meetings, held in public at least four times a year.

The agenda for each Meeting is drawn up by the Chair in consultation with the Neighbourhood Partnership members and Coordinator (see 8.2) and it, together with any submitted reports or papers, are published on the Bristol City Council website and in public libraries at least 5 working days before the meeting. Additional items may be added to the agenda later at the discretion of the Chair. Members of the public and representative community groups may submit statements that relate to issues on the agenda, or other issues they wish to raise (see section 6). As much time as the Chair deems necessary is allocated in the meeting agenda for hearing and discussing statements from the public, normally not more than 30 minutes.

All decisions of the Neighbourhood Partnership, including those about allocating finance, setting local priorities and other issues, are made in public at these meetings. To take a decision, there must be at least one half of voting Neighbourhood Partnership members present, including at least three ward Councillors.

Some decisions, including those on spending, are delegated by Bristol City Council to the Councillors who form the Neighbourhood Committee (see 2.1.1). These decisions are made as part of Neighbourhood Partnership meetings. There must be at least half of the Councillors on the Neighbourhood Committee present to take a decision. An overall majority of votes is necessary to pass a decision, with the Neighbourhood Committee Chair having a casting vote in the event of a tie.

All members are required to declare, near the beginning of a meeting, if they directly or indirectly have any personal interest in a matter on which the Partnership has to make a decision.

Minutes of these meetings are recorded, including decisions taken, and are made available on the Bristol City Council website and in public libraries no more than one month after the meeting.

## **5.2 Neighbourhood Forum Meetings**

*The role of the Forum Meetings was under review at the time of writing, and may result in changes to this section.*

The Partnership also holds public Neighbourhood Forum Meetings in each of the three wards prior to each Partnership Meeting. These provide a less formal occasion for members of the public to raise local concerns, suggest ways to improve our Neighbourhood, and to discuss the work that the Partnership and local services are doing in their ward.

The chair of a Forum Meeting is decided locally, and need not be a member of the Partnership. However, it is expected that at least two members of the Partnership attend each forum.

Once a year, it has become the custom in our Partnership to hold a combined Super Forum for all three wards together, to which guest speakers are also invited.

## **5.3 Informal Partnership Meetings**

The Partnership members may arrange informal meetings, not open to the public, as necessary to discuss ongoing business and to prepare for formal meetings. However, if decisions are required, they must be brought to the formal Neighbourhood Partnership Meeting and discussed and decided in public.

## **6. Putting Forward Ideas and Raising Issues**

Members of the public, either as individuals or representing local interest groups, may put forward ideas to, raise issues with, or ask questions of, the Neighbourhood Partnership in a number of ways.

To bring an issue to the attention of the Neighbourhood Partnership at any time, it is possible to contact either the Chair of the Partnership or the Neighbourhood Partnership Coordinator using the contact details on the Bristol City Council website (see section 9).

If the matter can wait until one of the public Forum or Partnership meetings, it can be raised either by submitting a written note in advance, no later than 12 noon the working day before the meeting to the Democratic Services Section of Bristol City Council, or by

attending the meeting in person and asking the Chair for permission to speak during the meeting.

If the matter requests the formal support of, or a decision to be made by, the Partnership, it should be presented in writing for inclusion on the agenda of a Neighbourhood Partnership Meeting. Papers for inclusion on the agenda, usually no longer than one side of A4 paper, must be sent to the Democratic Services Section of Bristol City Council at least 12 working days before the meeting. During the meeting the Chair may ask the submitter to briefly summarise the content of the paper in person prior to a discussion taking place. The Chair also has the discretion to allow any member of the public to speak during the meeting.

Raising an issue with the Partnership does not prevent a member of the public also raising it with the Councillors in their election ward, who may be able to get a quicker response concerning Council-specific matters. If it remains unresolved, it may be brought to the next Partnership meeting.

## **7. Spending**

Each Neighbourhood Partnership is delegated responsibility for spending certain budget items each year by Bristol City Council. A Partnership can also be consulted on setting priorities for spending which remains the responsibility of the City Council, such as that on roads, parks and other services.

By law, and as delegated by Bristol City Council, the local Councillors who make up the Neighbourhood Committee within the Partnership have the final say on the spending of Council money. However, they are expected to take into account any relevant views expressed by other members of the Partnership.

Expenditure approved by the Neighbourhood Committee must focus on local priorities that are significant in terms of improving service delivery and environmental conditions, community safety, promoting well-being, encouraging, community engagement and involvement, and creating a sustainable legacy and identity within neighbourhoods.

### **7.1 Partnership-managed budget items**

The main budget items which the Neighbourhood Committee directly controls are:

- Small Grants Fund
  - available to make grants to improve the wellbeing of the community in accordance with the Neighbourhood Partnership Plan
- Clean and Green
  - available for environmental projects
- Community Infrastructure Levy
  - a levy on local planning applications to support community projects, 15% of which is allocated to the Neighbourhood Partnership

## **7.2 Council-managed budget items on which Partnership is consulted**

Spending by Bristol City Council on which the Neighbourhood Partnership must be consulted and can set priorities:

- Highways maintenance, including road surface dressing and footpath resurfacing
- Minor traffic schemes
- Council-owned community centres and buildings
- Section 106 money – costs imposed on local development schemes to offset their impact on the area

## **7.3 Spending constraints**

Any spending by the Neighbourhood Partnership is subject to the same rules and processes as Council procurement. For example, it will usually be necessary to get three quotations when proposing to spend between £2,500 and £10,000 on the purchase of goods or services, and to use the Council's own procurement processes for larger amounts.

# **8. Support from Bristol City Council**

As well as delegating some items of spending to the Neighbourhood Partnership, Bristol City Council provides some Council officers who can assist the Partnership in carrying out its work.

## **8.1 Area Neighbourhood Manager**

This Council officer is responsible for bringing together shared services across five Partnerships, in our case around the North Area of the City. They also manage the Council staff who work with these Partnerships, and coordinate themes that span the whole City.

## **8.2 Neighbourhood Partnership Coordinator**

This Council officer (previously known as Area Coordinator) is the main liaison between the Neighbourhood Partnership and the Council, supporting and developing the running and work of the Partnership. Each Coordinator is responsible for one or two Neighbourhood Partnerships.

## **8.3 Neighbourhood Officer**

Part of the role of this Council officer is to support the Forums and other community engagements for the Partnership, as well as helping problem solving and delivery of Neighbourhood priorities.

## 9. Further Information

For the latest news on what is happening in our Neighbourhood Partnership, see the dedicated website run by members of our Partnership [www.bcrnp.org.uk](http://www.bcrnp.org.uk), or find us on Facebook [bcrnp](https://www.facebook.com/bcrnp) or Twitter [@bcr\\_np](https://twitter.com/bcr_np).

Further information about our Neighbourhood Partnership, and others in the Bristol area, is available on the Bristol City Council website [www.bristol.gov.uk](http://www.bristol.gov.uk) in the section on [Council and Democracy > Neighbourhood Partnerships](#).

The Chair and the Coordinator of our Neighbourhood Partnership can be contacted via Bristol City Council ([neighbourhood.partnerships@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:neighbourhood.partnerships@bristol.gov.uk)).

Submissions of papers or statements to be considered at Neighbourhood Partnership Meetings can be submitted to the Democratic Services Section of Bristol City Council ([democratic.services@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@bristol.gov.uk)).

Documents setting out the Terms of Reference for the Neighbourhood Committee, and the financial operating framework within which they work, can also be found on the Bristol City Council website, as can the agendas and minutes of Neighbourhood Partnership Meetings.

This Constitution may be changed by our Neighbourhood Partnership and is subject to the approval of the Neighbourhood Partnership Members at a Neighbourhood Partnership Meeting.

# Bishopston, Cotham and Redland

## Members of our Neighbourhood Partnership 2014/15

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### 1. Elected Bristol City Councillors

These Councillors form the Neighbourhood Committee within our Partnership:

- Martin Fodor (Redland ward)
- Fi Hance (Redland ward)
- Neil Harrison (Cotham ward) – Neighbourhood Committee Chair
- Tim Malnick (Bishopston ward)
- Anthony Negus (Cotham ward)
- Daniella Radice (Bishopston ward) – Neighbourhood Committee Vice-Chair

### 2. Community Representatives

These are the members who are representatives from community groups:

- Alison Bromilow (Redland & Cotham Amenities Society) – Neighbourhood Partnership Vice-Chair
- Roger Gimson (Sustainable Redland)
- Jenny Hoadley (The Bishopston Society)
- Liz Kew (BCR Neighbourhood Watch)
- Gavin Spittlehouse (Sustainable Bishopston)

### 3. Community Advocates

These are the members who are chosen as advocates on specific topics:

- Lesley Welch (Equalities advocate)
- *vacant* (Local business/traders advocate)
- *vacant* (Student residents advocate)

### 4. Individual Members

These are local people appointed to be members by the Partnership for their individual contributions:

- Nick Clark – Neighbourhood Partnership Chair

### 5. Partner Organisations and Services

These are the non-voting members who represent services provided to our area:

- Andrew McGrath (Bristol City Council – Neighbourhood Partnership Coordinator)
- Matt Jones (Bristol City Council – Neighbourhood Officer)
- *tbd* (Avon & Somerset Police)

## Bishopston, Cotham and Redland

# Working groups of our Neighbourhood Partnership 2014/15

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Our Neighbourhood Partnership has chosen to form working groups (sometimes referred to as subgroups or task groups) to work on specific issues. Working groups may include local people who do not have to be members of the Neighbourhood Partnership.

The following working groups currently exist.

### **1. Highways**

The Highways working group prepare information about Highways projects, such as priorities for road and pavement work, for decisions by the Neighbourhood Committee.

Participants in the group are the six elected councillor members of the partnership.

### **2. Small Grants**

The Small Grants working group administers the allocation of Neighbourhood Partnership Small Grants Fund grants to local groups and organisations. It meets to review applications, assess them against the NP priorities and prepare the bids for decisions at Neighbourhood Partnership meetings.

Participants in the group are Cllr Fi Hance, Jenny Hoadley (chair), and Andrea Stott.

### **3. Street Scene**

The Street Scene working group meets monthly and provides a forum for Residents, Councillors, Waste Service Officers, Enforcement Officer, Neighbourhood Officers, and Police Officers to tackle any Street Scene issues not primarily dealt with by Parks, Highways or Tree working groups.

These include:

- dealing with obstructions such as bins, A-boards, overgrown hedges
- dealing with waste issues, unsightly graffiti and rubbish
- encouraging reporting by Street Champions and practical problem solving work by Street Scene Volunteers
- dealing with street issues not necessarily the responsibility of Bristol City Council, such as those involving BT, the Post Office, etc.

Participants in the group are: Alison Bromilow, Cllr Fi Hance, Liz Kew, Mon Lougee, Cllr Daniella Radice, and Rob Umphray (chair).

### **4. Communications and Engagement**

The Communications and Engagement (C&E) working group helps promote the work of the Neighbourhood Partnership and organise the annual Community Festival.

The C&E group meets every 6 weeks to plan how to get more people in the Neighbourhood to be aware of the Neighbourhood Partnership organisation and how they can have a voice in decisions. The C&E group works with the Neighbourhood Officer to agree how wider engagement through targeted visits can be organised and how to publicise and organise the Forum meetings.

Participants in the group currently are Alison Bromilow, Nick Clark, Alice Darley and Cllr Daniella Radice.

## 5. Trees

The Trees working group monitors the care, replacement and planting of new trees in public places.

It reviews street trees (and may also review private or parks trees) to identify works to trees and new locations for planting trees.

Participants in the group are Bev Knott, Anthony Negus, Vassili Papastavrou, Clive Stevens (chair), and John Tarlton.

## 6. Parks

The Parks working group is responsible for liaising with community groups for the local parks.

The BCR NP community parks groups and participants for each park are:

- Ashley Down Green
  - **Friends of Ashley Down Green** Julia Jones
- Cotham Gardens
  - **Friends of Cotham Gardens** (through RCAS) Alison Bromilow
- Horfield Common
  - **Friends of Horfield Common** Sam Thompson
- Redland Green
  - **Redland Green Community Group** John Waldron and Rod Symonds
  - **Redland & Cotham Amenities Society** Alison Bromilow
- St Andrew's Park
  - **Friends of St. Andrew's Park** John Mayne and Steve Perry