

Bristol Student Community Partnership (BSCP) Minutes
23rd April 2023

Present:

<p>University of Bristol (UoB) Steve Smith (SS): Community Liaison Officer (Co-Chair) Liam O’Shea (LOS): Head of Public Affairs & Executive Communications Kirsten Slater (KS): Community Liaison Assistant, Secretary</p> <p>University of the West of England (UWE) Emma Dent (ED): Business Support Team Leader</p> <p>Bristol SU (Student Union) Ben Pilling (BP): Chief Executive</p> <p>Bristol City Council (BCC) Cllr Guy Poultney (GP): Councillor, Cotham Ward (Co-Chair) Cllr Tom Hathway (TH): Councillor, Clifton Down Ward Cllr Phillipa Hulme (PH): Councillor, Horfield Ward Cllr Paula O’Rourke (POR): Councillor, Clifton Ward, Lord Mayor Cllr Tom Renhard (TR): Councillor, Horfield Ward & Cabinet Member (Housing Delivery & Homes) Cllr Lesley Alexander (LA): Councillor, Frome Vale Ward</p> <p>Onn Kee Davies (OKD): Private Housing Team Leader Kurt James (KJ): Neighbourhood Enforcement and Street Scene Manager</p>	<p>Residents Groups Andrew Waller (AW): Noise Pages Sarah Cuthill (SCRG): Cotham Vale & Trelawney</p> <p>Bristol Waste Company (BWC) Izzy Davies (ID): Community Engagement Officer Lettie Aspey (LA): Community Engagement Officer</p> <p>Landlords/Letting Agents Pippa Barry (PB): Private Landlord John Hickey (JH): Private Landlord</p> <p>Avon & Somerset Police Sian Harris (SH): University Liaison Police Officer</p>
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Actions

Item 2 – Chair’s Welcome

- SS to note that the role of Chair to be reviewed again in twelve months.

Item 6 – HMO Licencing

- OKD to find out if properties under application/renewal can be flagged on Pinpoint. It was noted that there was a need to consider both technical and GDPR issues.
- OKD to find out whether it is possible to include email or telephone contacts for landlords/letting agents on Pinpoint.
- TR to confirm whether Planning Officers rely on Pinpoint information to gauge the density of HMOs in an area when considering planning applications (information may be available via a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD))

Post meeting note: Managing the development of houses in multiple occupation (SPD) [file \(bristol.gov.uk\)](https://www.bristol.gov.uk) includes information on how HMOs are identified

- OKD to provide information on the cost of HMO licensing and enforcement vs revenue brought in.
- OKD to confirm whether Council Tax information can be used to identify HMOs.
- GP to confirm whether retrospective planning permission may be given when an HMO has only been rented to students during term time so is not in 'constant' use for 10 years.

Item 7 - Student lettings introduction process

- SS to see if he can attend student registration days/events for some of the bigger letting agencies

Item 8 - Students on Move Campaign

- SS will pass on leaflets to any Residents Groups who are happy to distribute them as soon as they become available
- ID to provide a timetable breakdown of BW activities for Councillors and other stakeholders

Item 8 – Any other business

- LOS to report back to the next meeting of the BSCP regarding student references
- BP/SS to meet to discuss student involvement in the BSCP
- GP/SS to meet regarding the running of the BSCP meetings

1. Apologies:

Apologies were received from Chris Swinscoe (BCC Neighbourhood Enforcement Team), Jill White (Hampton Park Residents Group), Becky Gale/ Jonathan Mallinson (BCC Private Housing) and Izzy Russell (Student Living Officer, Bristol SU).

2. Chair's welcome

SS reported that it had been agreed his role as Chair for the BSCP would be reviewed after he had been in post for 12 months. As a result, he would like to propose that Cllr Guy Poultney (GP) be agreed as Co-Chair for the next 12 months. This would provide an elected representative in the role and a different perspective from the University of Bristol. LA and LOS seconded this motion, and it was agreed that Cllr Guy Poultney would co-chair the meeting with SS for the next 12 months.

Action: SS to note that the role of Chair to be reviewed again in twelve months

3. Approval the minutes of the previous meeting held 24 January 2023

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as correct.

4. Updates on Actions of Last Minutes

The following actions were commented on:

Civic University Agreement (CUA): AW reported that Residents Associations had discussed the CUA and given feedback to John McWilliams (JMW) but they had not received a response back. LOS

reported that JMW had been on leave, but a partner meeting to discuss the CUA was to be held next week.

Communications aimed at international students: SS confirmed that work on this area is a longer-term project which he would be taking forward with a focus on safety as well as issues such as waste.

Student volunteering in the community: SS reported that he had made further connections with the Bristol Hub as well as Bristol SU and was forwarding on requests for volunteers to them.

5. Report back on UoB Vice Chancellor (VC) Residents Groups meetings

SS reported that two joint meetings with the UoB VC Evelyn Welch had been held to get as many Residents Groups represented as possible. Meetings were held on the 20th of March and the 3rd of April.

The meetings were well attended by Residents Groups who had reported that they were pleased to be able to meet with the VC.

SS had given an overview of the last twelve months in post. Later meetings had included Bristol SU Lettings and ID from Bristol Waste and went into more detail, but all meetings covered similar ground.

GP acknowledged that a lot of work had been done in the last 12 months and relations had improved. However, there were still serious problems which needed addressing and the positive work needed to continue.

LOS reported that he had moved to the VCs Office and would report on BSCP matters to the VC directly.

6. HMO Licensing

OKD was standing in for Jonathan Mallinson who was on holiday (both from BCC Private Housing).

In response to queries regarding licencing of HMOs in Bristol the following points were noted:

- Only fully licenced properties appeared on the PinPoint map.
- Properties that had applications or renewals pending would not appear on the map. This means that properties that appeared on the map may 'disappear' again while their renewal application was being considered.
- It could take 4-12 months for an application/renewal to be completed.
- The PinPoint map was updated every 4-6 weeks.
- A licence will last for 5 years and reminders were sent out when a licence was about to run out.
- Licencing is a three-stage process: Part 1 – application (with fee); Part 2 – confirmation of licence; Part 3 licence issued with payment of Part 2 fee.
- Planning permission for HMOs is considered separately to licencing.
- HMO regulations can still be enforced against unlicenced properties.

SS confirmed that most of the properties he had followed up on had outstanding applications or renewals. AW felt that there were still unlicensed HMOs flying under the radar. OKD requested that unlicensed properties are still reported to the Council so they could follow these up if necessary.

Post meeting note: Website for reporting unlicensed properties: [Unlicensed property \(bristol.gov.uk\)](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/unlicensed-property)

TR reported that he had the cabinet portfolio for Housing & Homes which including HMO licencing. He stated that BCC was looking at an updated licencing system to run across the city, this will be released for consultation when it is ready. In addition, BCC IT systems will be overhauled which should mean there will be more automation of the process from next year. (Note - TR needed to leave meeting part way through Item 6)

GP reported that he understood that licencing and related enforcement should be cost neutral.

As a result of discussions, the following **actions** would be taken:

- **OKD to find out if properties under application/renewal can be flagged on Pinpoint. It was noted that there was a need to consider both technical and GDPR issues.**
- **OKD to find out whether it is possible to include email or telephone contacts for landlords/letting agents on PinPoint.**
- **TR to confirm whether Planning Officers rely on PinPoint information to gauge the density of HMOs in an area when considering planning applications (information may be available via a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD))**

Post meeting note: Managing the development of houses in multiple occupation (SPD) [file \(bristol.gov.uk\)](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/file) includes information on how HMOs are identified

- **OKD to provide information on the cost of HMO licencing and enforcement vs revenue brought in.**
- **OKD to confirm whether Council Tax information can be used to identify HMOs.**
- **GP to confirm whether retrospective planning permission may be given when an HMO has only been rented to students during term time so is not in 'constant' use for 10 years.**

7. Student lettings introduction process - Penlane

SS had attended PBs introduction for students who are renting properties with Penlane. Penlane has a comprehensive introduction day for students which included going through tenancies, deposits, meeting the maintenance team expectations also anti-social behaviour, waste and noise.

In response to a question from SC, PB confirmed that students were given priority for houses where they were staying on for another year and cheaper rent.

It was agreed that it would be ideal if all landlords would run a similar scheme. PB reported that the event was also good from her point of view as a landlord.

Action: SS to see if he can attend student registration days/events for some of the bigger letting agencies

AW queried whether there could be greater interaction with landlords/letting agents at the BSCP, perhaps via a representative group.

JH & PB would be in favour of such a group, but it would need managing and organising and they did not have time to do this and there would need to be an incentive for landlords to join.

BP thought it would be good for Vicky Hanley (Head of Property Services) from Bristol SU lettings to be involved with the BSCP.

The SU was keen to have a register of good quality landlord/properties for students. It was acknowledged that this would need to be a voluntary charter scheme and with demand being higher than supply it would be difficult to get landlords to sign up as there was no benefit to them doing so.

Post meeting note: BCC gives a £50 HMO licence fee discount for landlords who are accredited with [The West of England Rent with Confidence Accreditation Scheme](#). In reality this means they are an accredited member of the South West Landlords Association or the National Residential Landlords Association [Landlord Accreditation - South West Landlords Association \(landlordssouthwest.co.uk\)](#) or [Landlord Accreditation Scheme Overview | NRLA](#)

8. Operation Beech (OB) – Update on staffing and call out numbers

SH reported that there were issues with staffing post-Christmas and some OB shifts were not filled during February and March.

SH reported that the shifts are filled on a voluntary basis as overtime. During this period there was an unusually large amount of overtime available elsewhere, so the OB shifts were not filled. However, this period had been relatively quiet. Eleven reports were not attended, details of these were still sent on to the Community Liaison Office and followed up where possible.

There had been no further problems in filling upcoming shifts during April, May and June.

It was hoped that the low number of noise complaints meant that noise messages were getting through to students, although SH believed that the recent poor weather may also have had an impact on complaint numbers.

9. Students on Move Campaign – Bristol Waste (BW)

The following points were noted:

- A 2023 update paper from BW had been circulated prior to the meeting.
- The Big Bins were to be provided again this year alongside the BHF bins as part of the Bristol Big Give.
- Last year 40 bins were provided, 45 bins will be provided this year. Bins will be based in high-density areas. 60 tons of waste was collected last year.
- BW are aware that excess waste at bin sites can be an issue and the bins will continue to be collected every weekday. BCC Neighbourhood Enforcement Team will visit bin locations as they did last year.
- Hire bins would be available, but not all student properties had space for these.
- Students would be given access to recycling centres, without booking, in May and June when they show a Student ID.
- Bristol Waste engagement staff would be on the UoB campus pre and post examinations.
- SS reported that the BHF bins would be available from the last week of April to the end of July 2023.

Actions: SS will pass on leaflets to any Residents Groups who are happy to distribute them as soon as they become available

Action: ID to provide a timetable breakdown of BW activities for Councillors and other stakeholders

PB reported that this information would also be useful for landlords.

10. Quarterly Report

The content of the Quarterly Report was noted. SS reported that the number of incidents attributable to the UoB was well down and this meant that there were fewer community sanctions this month.

SS thanked everyone for their support at the VC meetings.

It was noted that the Induction Module and Halls to Houses documents were separate initiatives.

11. Any other business

Community Grants: Application forms for Community Grants had been forwarded to Residents Associations. Forms were to be completed by the end of June and any funds awarded in July was to be used by the end of December 2023. Funding would be agreed on a case-by-case basis. GP reported that if funding was undersubscribed Councillors could chase up groups who could use this.

Student References: JH raised the previously discussed issue of behavioural references for students leaving University Halls of Residence. Residents Groups were also keen to see these being provided.

GP noted that one problem would be that problems would normally be associated with a property rather than an individual student. Students would challenge reference decisions where they were not involved in an incident(s).

LOS confirmed that the University was looking at their legal ability to supply student references regarding behaviour.

Action: LOS to report back to the next meeting of the BSCP regarding student references

It was also suggested that 2nd or 3rd Year students could be told that they may not receive good housing references from their landlord/letting agents if they are found to have repeatedly behaved in an antisocial manner.

Student involvement in the BSCP: AW raised a concern regarding the level of student involvement in the BSCP. It was noted that the VC would also like to see more student involvement in meetings with residents. TH felt that this would also be a good introduction to local government.

SS confirmed that IR would normally attend as UoB student representative, but she had to give her apologies for this meeting. She would receive papers and minutes for the meeting even if she was not able to attend. There was not normally a student representative from UWE.

SS would also like to see student representatives at Residents Associations meetings.

It was agreed that it would be beneficial to consider if it would be possible to get greater student participation/input into the BSCP.

PB suggested that there could also be ways students could be engaged outside of the meetings themselves, for example the meeting outcomes could report back in the Tab.

GP also felt there would be some benefit in looking at the way the meetings were run, for example having police representatives for the whole meeting may not be needed as much of the meeting is not relevant to them.

Action: BP/SS to meet to discuss student involvement in the BSCP

Action: GP/SS to meet regarding the running of the BSCP meetings

12. Date of next meeting

24th July 2023, 2.00pm via Zoom.

<https://bristol-ac-uk.zoom.us/j/8197585057?pwd=VG5scHN5WUc3VGIPVG8rUVRKZ3M3Zz09>

Meeting ID: 819 758 5057

Passcode: 344548