



52

BIG
IDEAS

FOR
BRISTOL



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FOR
BRISTOL



AS PART OF BRISTOL'S YEAR AS EUROPEAN GREEN CAPITAL IN 2015, WE, A BUNCH OF ARCHITECTS, DESIGNERS AND CREATIVE THINKERS HELD AN EVENT AT OUR OFFICE EVERY WEEK. THERE WERE TALKS, WALKS, DEBATES, GAMES, TASTINGS, PRESENTATIONS AND COMPETITIONS EXPLORING A WIDE RANGE OF SUSTAINABILITY THEMES. THE DISCUSSION AFTERWARDS INSPIRED IDEAS, IDEAS ABOUT MAKING THE CITY AN EVEN BETTER AND GREENER PLACE. WE WANTED TO SHARE THESE WITH BRISTOL TO TRIGGER FURTHER DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLY ACTION - SO WE PRODUCED THIS BOOK. WE'D LOVE TO HEAR WHAT YOU THINK. GET IN TOUCH BY VISITING: STRIDETREGLOWN.COM/52BIGIDEASFORBRISTOL

Big ideas

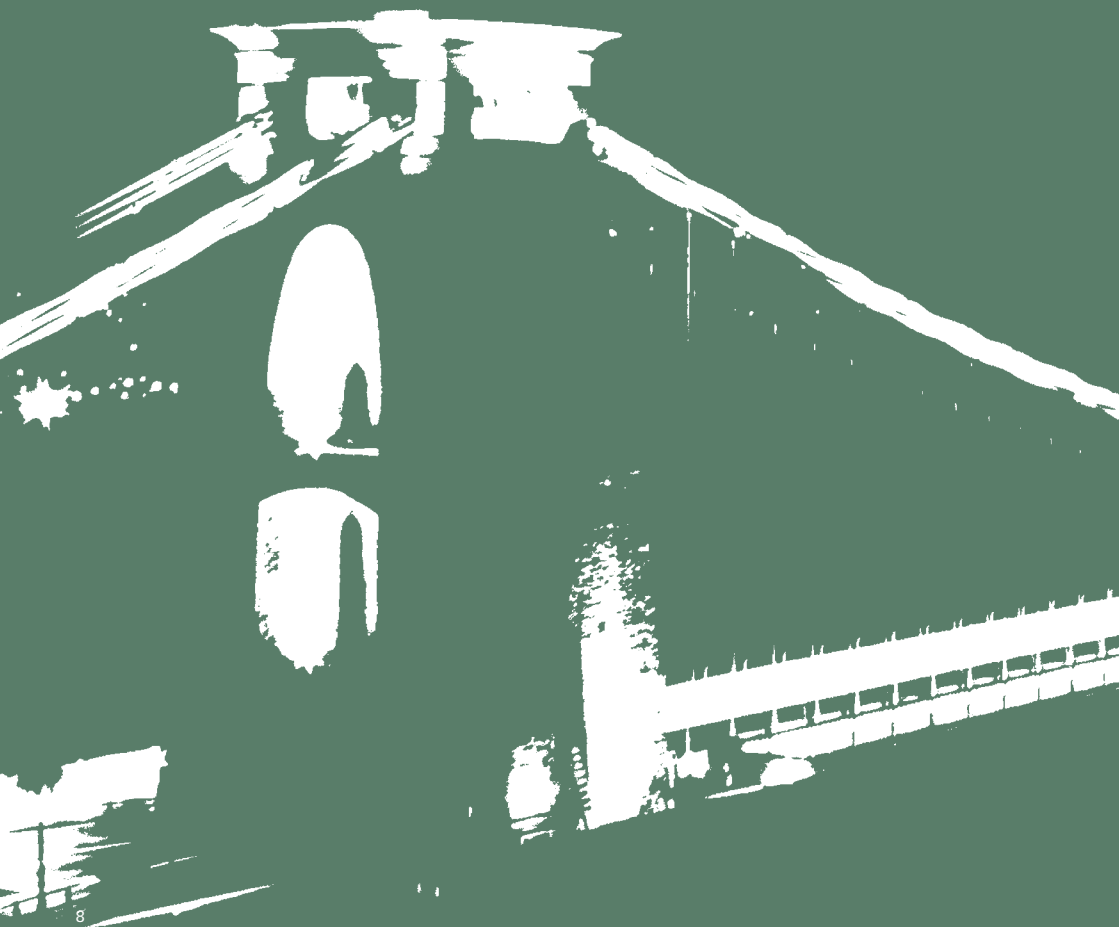
01	Colour Capital	11
02	Liveable-Bristol Awards	12
03	Bristol board game festival	13
04	Send local post by bike	14
05	ImagineBristol	15
06	Reinstate Pecha Kucha nights	16
07	Cable car	17
08	Breathable map	18
09	Quiet Bristol map	19
10	Food maps	20
11	Grey-to-Green: A 2025 goal	22
12	City workstations	23
13	The paving project	24
14	Park Street	26
15	Dye the Floating Harbour green	27
16	Harbour lights	28
17	College greened	29
18	The Downs turbine	30
19	Portway-Greenway	31
20	Bristol beach	32
21	New roofs either solar or green	33
22	Bristol's best trees	34
23	Bristol plant swap	36
24	Balloon Bristol	37
25	Bike hotel	38
26	Inter-company pedometer challenge	39

27	Park and...	40
28	Bristol netwalking network	41
29	Dawn chorus at work	42
30	Weatherometer	43
31	Wild walk	44
32	Bike escalator	45
33	Green carpets	46
34	Five-mile-market	47
35	Tai Chi on College Green	48
36	Castle Park winter gardens	49
37	Cycle shoals	50
38	The Big Sleep	51
39	[Power] cut	52
40	Harness people power in Cabot Circus	53
41	Bristol's nature capital	54
42	Cooking stations	55
43	Bristol's urban pentathlon	56
44	Harbourswim	57
45	Solar square	58
46	A good lighting plan	59
47	A to B, H 2 0. High speed water taxis	60
48	Strategic thermal imaging map	61
49	Temple mead	62
50	Self-build exemplar	64
51	Bristol's environmental footprint	65
52	Clifton rocks	66

Foreword

I've often heard it said that when you step out of Bristol's Temple Meads Train station you can feel the buzz in the atmosphere, it really feels like 'anything is possible' in this city. Bristol winning the coveted European Green Capital award is testament to the incredible energy and flare with which we do things here.

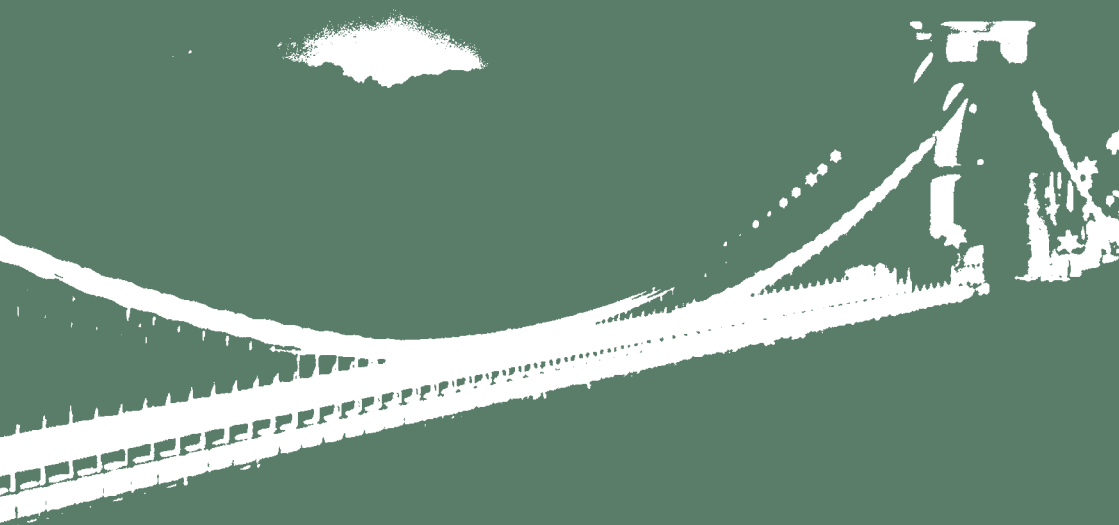
An idea can sprout into existence over a pint one evening and a few months later the Bristol network has channelled its energy and enthusiasm and it's not long before the whole world has heard about it! I've seen this time and again with many great ideas that started in the region.



As the Go Green Manager at Low Carbon South West I was privileged to hear the diverse approaches that organisations are taking to make their city a healthier, more vibrant and conscious place to live through sustainable approaches to business in 2015. The Go Green Awards ceremony was a truly inspirational evening, full of the buzz of what is possible and I can't wait to hear what everyone is getting up to this year.

Bristol is a leader in the field of making ideas a reality, very little gets in the way when we truly put our minds to it! So I heartily welcome these '52 Big Ideas' from Stride Treglown, some of which have already found a home in the Go Green Action Plan. Go forth, randomly flick to a page that takes your fancy and make it happen!

*Amy Nicholass, Go Green Manager
at Low Carbon South West*



THE IDEAS

IN WRITING up the 52 ideas we have tried to check that they are not already happening in Bristol. It's possible we have missed some as there are so many great initiatives underway in the city, in which case we hope that repeating them in this book might help draw attention to them.

Many of the ideas reflect our office's geographic position in west Bristol, as this is obviously a place we know best, and even though we might have suggested locations for many ideas to take place they might equally work in other parts of the city.

Colour Capital

WHAT is most unique about Bristol's architecture? Its brightly painted houses - creating the most colourful streets in the UK.

As with Bristol's association with street-art, these houses say something about the city's sense of fun and its reputation for self-expression and non-conformity.

Let's become the colour capital of the UK and provide grants to get more people painting their houses. These could be linked to installing external insulated render to make homes warmer and less draughty at the same time.

02

Liveable-Bristol Awards

A LIVEABLE-BRISTOL AWARDS would shine a light on the best residential design in the city each year, setting the benchmark to meet and rewarding quality and vision.

As well as more conventional award categories such as Best Newbuild, Best Sustainable Home, Best Development, it could include Best Eco-refurb, Best Street, Best Affordable development, Best Garden Design.



Bristol board game festival

BRING your board games along for an annual one-day event on the Harbourside and challenge other members of the public.

The festival would compliment other local initiatives like Playable City and Happy City. Could a Bristol boardgame league also be created?

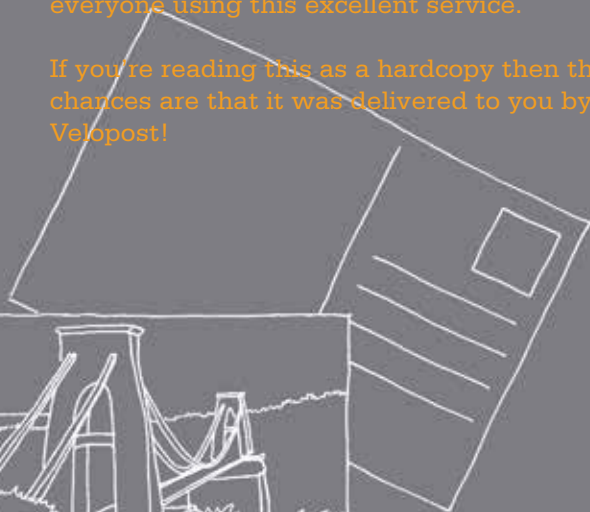
04

Send local post by bike

WE think all local mail should be delivered by cyclists to reduce carbon, congestion and pollution in the city.

The good news is that there is already a company doing this, Velopost! Let's get everyone using this excellent service.

If you're reading this as a hardcopy then the chances are that it was delivered to you by Velopost!



ImagineBristol

AN ideas competition for the city open to architects, designers, students and members of the public to come up with grand ideas for the city, explained on a single sheet of paper. Each year there would be a prize and an exhibition.



06

Reinstate Pecha Kucha nights

NOW a worldwide phenomenon, these events allowing people to share their thoughts and ideas are being held in over 800 cities, but the last registered session in Bristol took place in 2011.

The 20 x 20 presentation format is fast moving - 20 slides, 20-seconds-per-slide, ensuring it never gets boring.

It would give a stage for lots of different speakers, with the potential to showcase interesting work and exciting ideas.



Cable car

CITIES should think big, bold and ambitious. This is an idea that has previously been suggested by others, but never got off the ground (excuse the pun).

A cable car would be a great addition to Bristol's travel options - perfect for bypassing Bristol's topography (and traffic!) and a fun way of getting from A to B.

Imagine travelling across the city from above.



08

Breathable Bristol map

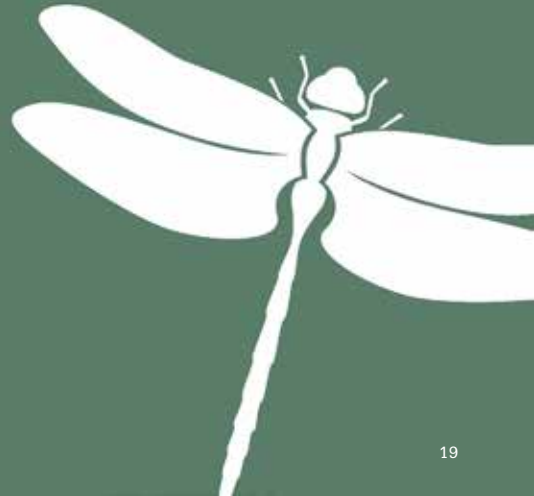
WE SHOULD produce a colour-coded map to show what the air quality is for each street in Bristol based on an annual measurement.

This would help cyclists and walkers, especially commuters, choose the best routes and highlight which areas need to be tackled, whilst stimulating discussion about what should be done to improve bad areas.



Quiet Bristol map

A SISTER publication of the Breathable Bristol Map. In this case a noise map would identify zones of calm in the city, where the sound of nature wins over traffic.



ington (Water) 26.5
Brewery (Ales) 25
Flavours (Eggs & Preserves) 27.2

10

Powell Butchers (Meat) 16.1

POWYS

ire Meats (Meat) 16

7 Jus (Apple Juice) 9.6

8 Gwatkin (Cider) 23.7

ne Farm (Ice Cream & Sorbet) 21.3

10 James Gourmet (Coffee) 2.8

mond & Son (Fruit & Potatoes) 1.7

farm (Beef, Game & Veg & Firewood) 1.8

m (Bacon, Pork, Veg & Flowers) 2.0

m (Asparagus & Blueberries) 2.5

ly Farm (Cured meats) 10.6

Pork (Sausages) 13.2

ts Farm (Chicken & duck) 17.0



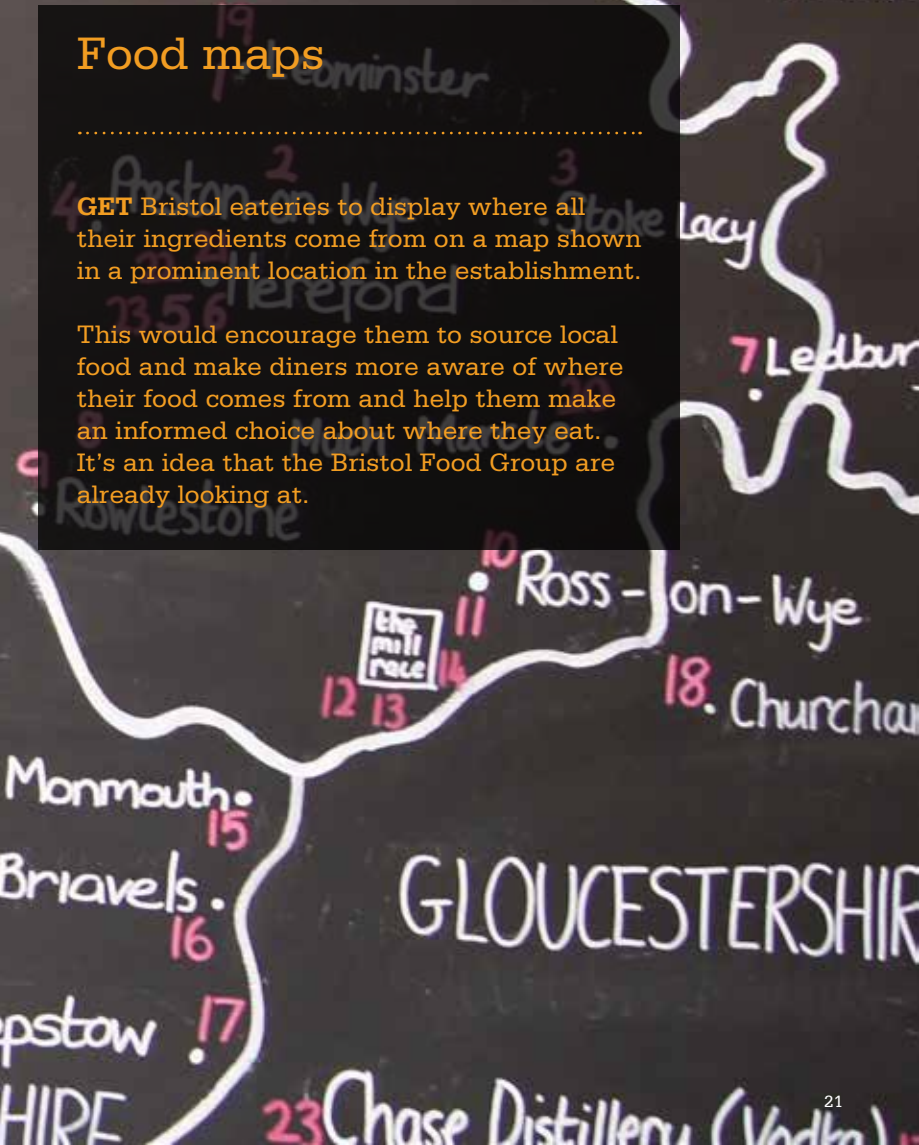
SHROPSHIRE

WORC

Food maps

GET Bristol eateries to display where all their ingredients come from on a map shown in a prominent location in the establishment.

This would encourage them to source local food and make diners more aware of where their food comes from and help them make an informed choice about where they eat. It's an idea that the Bristol Food Group are already looking at.



11

Grey-to-Green: A 2025 goal

LET'S plant more trees. One of the best ways to help cities adapt to climate change is to reduce hard surface. Trees and green space reduce flooding and create cooling in summer, as well as providing a range of health benefits.

A simplistic map showing what percentage of the city is green through aerial photos, which would include tree canopy, could be created.

Current estimates put Bristol at 15%. We can then target to increase this by 2025 through tree planting, green roofs and green space. Many international cities are already way ahead in this area. Annapolis in the US for example has a canopy of 44.5% cover.

City workstations

MOST public seating in the city is not conducive to social interaction - benches do not allow sitters to face each other and few have tables.

What about well designed fixed furniture that could be used for meetings? They could even include solar charging stations. With modern technology we can work just about anywhere - let's make the city's parks and waterfront more work-friendly.



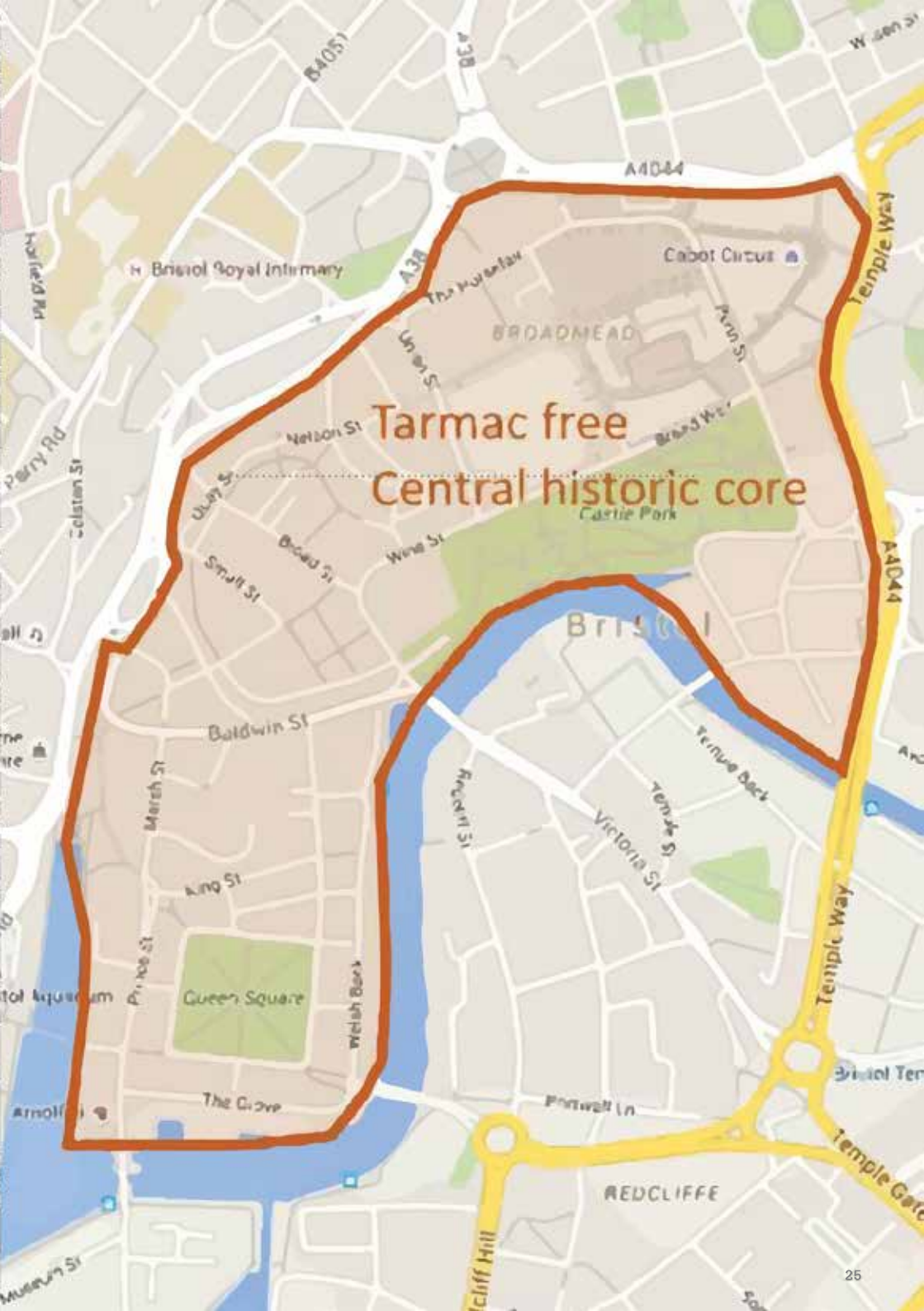
13

The Paving Project

MANY of Europe's cities boast a fabulous historic city centre, with no tarmac in sight. Instead, there are beautiful paved and cobbled pedestrian-friendly areas evoking a great sense of quality and history.

In Bristol, many beautiful old streets have been tarmacked over and the character of the city is fragmented. We should uncover these and identify an area to be entirely tarmac-free.

Residents and businesses could sponsor pavements and take real ownership of their city centre.



Tarmac free
Central historic core

H Bristol Royal Infirmary

Cabot Circus

BRADOMEAD

Castle Park

BRISTOL

Queen Square

REDCLIFFE

14

Park Street

IMAGINE a boulevard of trees up this beautiful Bristol thoroughfare in place of the parked cars along the right-hand side.

Trees could be interspersed with cycle hoops, seating and planters, making it a nicer environment for shoppers and a positive link with College Green. After all, it's called Park Street, not Parking Street.

Dye the Floating Harbour green

IT'S been done elsewhere and has created a stunning effect for a few days.

The dyes are natural and have no impact on wildlife or water quality.

The event would highlight what a wonderful asset that the Floating Harbour is and could be used to raise awareness about water quality in Bristol.

16

Harbour lights

LIKE the previous idea this would be a stunning spectacle - in this case thousands of lanterns floating down the centre of Bristol.

It could tell us information about the waterflow and for one summers evening, turn the Floating Harbour into a beautiful glittering display.

College greened

THE façade of City Hall on College Green (which let's face it, for Bristol's most prominent building is not the most inspiring) transformed into a living planted wall.

It could also include edible planting at lower levels. It would give a new meaning to 'College Green' with the Council's offices making a strong statement about Bristol as a Green city.

18

Observatory

Camera Obscura

Wind Turbine

The Downs turbine

IT'S an idea we proposed some years ago, before Bristol was awarded Green Capital status - a single wind turbine in one of Bristol's windiest spots... the Downs; did you know the Observatory started life as a windmill?

Its central location would be a highly visible symbol of Bristol's commitment to being a sustainable city and with an internally climbable shaft and viewing platform it would also be an exciting and educational visitor attraction, just walking distance from Bristol Zoo.

Portway-Greenway

EXTEND the road tunnel currently below the Suspension Bridge all the way down the Portway.

The spectacular Avon Gorge would be restored to a haven for nature instead of being filled with diesel fumes and traffic noise.

It would offer walkers and cyclists a unique route to the Downs along the top of the tunnel roof, which could be greened like the New York Highline.

20

Bristol beach

THERE was an artificial beach in the city some years ago and it was extremely popular. Let's do it again and this time make it permanent!

There should also be a safe open-air place to swim next to it, that would unquestionably be a huge draw in the summer.



All new roofs either solar or green

PARIS and other cities have implemented this initiative and there is no reason why Bristol couldn't enforce something similar for all new buildings.

Roofs are a hugely underused resource that could be helping us meet Climate Change targets or introduce more nature into the city.

22

Bristol's best trees

AN ONLINE tool mapping Bristol's oldest or most beautiful and valued trees, as voted by Bristolians.

An interactive website would let the public upload photos of their favourite specimens to create a fantastic virtual resource of treasured trees for everyone to discover and enjoy.



23

Bristol plant swap

THE NAME says it all - one day every other month. Queen Square. Bring your unwanted plants.

Pick up a free new plant for your garden/balcony/windowsill/office and see Bristol looking like the last day of the Chelsea Flower Show.



Balloon Bristol

BRISTOL is famous for hot air balloons. We should create a world class museum in the city celebrating this link and giving visitors the opportunity to enjoy a bird's eye perspective of Bristol from a year-round tethered balloon, which was once a popular fixture in Castle Park.

25

Bike hotel

A PURPOSE-MADE facility at the city's main transport hub, Temple Meads, for Bristol's ever growing cycle population to store their bikes and gear in a manned, safe, clean, state-of-the-art building.

There are already some inspiring examples of these types of buildings in Europe and as the UK's forward-thinking cycling city it would celebrate this status and make it easier for even more people to bike to work.



Inter-company pedometer challenge

TEAMS from offices and potentially schools across the city challenging each other with a virtual Bristol to John O'Groats race.

It would create healthy competition between teams and promote the benefits of active lifestyles.

Which company or school class will do the most steps and get there the quickest?





Park and...

IN 2014 we had Luke Jerram's hugely popular Park and Slide - a water slide down the length of Park Street.

This could become an annual fixture with a changing theme each year.

Park and Zorb, with zorbers being channelled to end up safely on College Green; Park and board, a winter version with Park Street transformed over a weekend for snowboarders with artificial snow; Park and Roll, an office chair race...

London has an annual Red Bull sponsored Soapbox Derby, so let's have a regular Bristol event and have more fun on Park Street!

Bristol netwalking network

IT'S SOMETHING we've been trialling as a company and could be expanded to get other companies and local groups meeting and talking to each other while getting exercise and fresh air. Let's move meetings outside and enjoy Bristol's parks and green spaces.



Dawn chorus at work

30 MINUTES of birdsong played in offices across Bristol on a Friday morning. A great way to start the weekend!

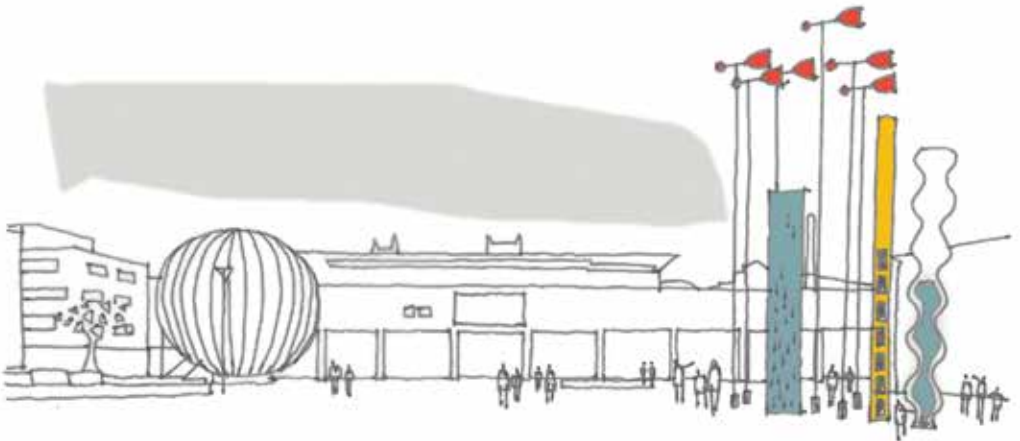
It could also happen in the city's larger shops and in Temple Meads and could be championed by Bristol's own BBC Natural History Unit.



Weatherometer

IN MILLENNIUM SQUARE, an interactive weather-responsive display feature that provides a highly-visible, interpretation of local environmental data - rainwater levels, air quality, temperature, solar collection, in a fun and educational way.

It could be a collaboration piece between an artist, @Bristol and Aardman.



31

Wild walk

IMAGINE a 1km wildflower strip joining the city centre to the Botanic Gardens on the other side of Downs.

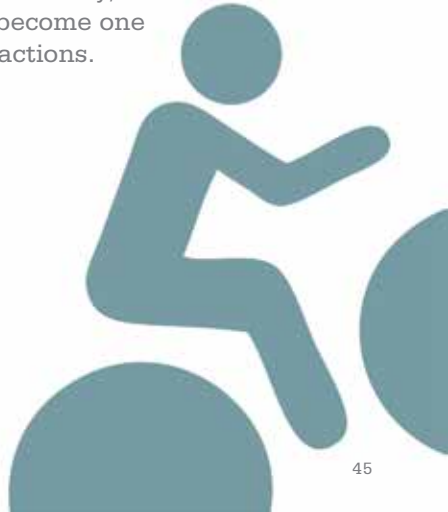
Green space in Bristol is quite disjointed and this would be a unifying idea for a linear route that would create a beautiful summer fixture, enticing walkers to this undervalued botanical attraction.

Bike escalator

BRISTOL is Britain's cycling city but unlike 2014's European Green Capital, Copenhagen, our challenging contours probably put off quite a few would-be cyclists.

A device inset into one of Bristol's most hilly streets, Park Street, would help cyclists get up this iconic hill and get more people on their bike.

It's not so far-fetched, having been already been implemented in other topographically-testing cities, like Trondheim in Norway, where their bike escalator has become one of the city's biggest tourist attractions.



Green carpets

One way to literally green up some of our public space is to introduce artificial grass.

In some circumstances this material can be more suitable than natural grass because it is extremely hard wearing and needs no irrigation.

Some of the city's grey and uninviting spaces could be greened into welcoming, pedestrian-friendly places overnight.

Five-mile-market

A MARKET with one rule - only things made or grown within five miles can be sold.

It would highlight the great diversity of produce and creativity within the city and encourage shoppers to buy local.

Tai Chi on College Green

A ONE-OFF mass Tai Chi event in Bristol's most prominent public space. If it was popular it could become a regular event.



Castle Park winter gardens

THINK Eden Project in Bristol city-centre. This south-facing park is poorly visited despite its fantastic central waterside location.

Imagine a large enclosed, warm, year-round space filled with subtropical planting and cafes.

It could also be used for food production and transform this area into one of Bristol's most exciting destinations.

37

Cycle shoals

AN APP that all cyclists can register with to find out where other cyclists are and join up with to navigate the city's streets in safe 'cycle shoals'.



The Big Sleep

GETTING everyone to sleep under the stars for one night. In their gardens, on their patios, in tents, and even on the Downs.

The Downs is for the people of Bristol - for one night a year let's let people camp out and enjoy it under canvas!

39

[Power] cut

THE NEW CUT diverted the flow of the Avon in the early 1800's to create the Bristol Docks, the area which now forms the iconic harbourside which Bristol is famous for.

Why don't we re-purpose this engineering feat for the 21st Century by utilising the water to produce regular renewable energy for the city?

This has been proposed before, including in recent years, but tidal stream technology is advancing at such a pace that surely now is the time to look at this idea again.

Harness people power in Cabot Circus

CABOT CIRCUS has probably the highest footfall in Bristol.

We could be exploiting the kinetic energy produced by all these steps by installing proven kinetic-capture technology into special paving that would convert this energy into electricity.

Bristol's nature capital

A STUDY to assess the equivalent monetary value of Bristol's ecosystem, its individual trees and natural features in the city centre.

It would help us understand and value their contribution to providing water attenuation, shading, air quality, habitat, visual and physical amenity, stress relief and wellbeing.

Cooking stations

FACILITIES on the harbourside and in park spaces for the public to BBQ and cook at.

This happens in other cities and would tie in well with Bristol's wellbeing and sustainable food initiatives.

Herb and vegetable planters could be installed next to them, as well as food waste and compost bins.

43

A person is seen from behind, climbing a steep, textured rock face. They are wearing a dark blue t-shirt, dark shorts, and a large black backpack. A red rope is attached to their harness and extends upwards. The rock is a mix of brown and grey tones with some small green plants growing on it.

Bristol's urban pentathlon

TEAMS would compete in a number of different challenges around the city, inspired by the topography and natural settings of our local landmarks and spaces e.g. cycling up Vale Street - allegedly the UK's steepest residential street, climbing the Gorge, kayaking the Avon...

Bristol's harbourswim

AN ANNUAL race held one weekend in summer along the Floating Harbour.

It would undoubtedly be an extremely popular event, watching competitors swim through the city centre and it would highlight issues regarding water quality in the city.

New laws could be introduced to limit boats in the harbour to people/solar/wind or biofuel powered only.

Solar square

FRANCE is putting in 1000km of solar roadway. Bristol could convert Millennium Square into a huge solar collector by swapping conventional paving for PV paving.

These could power the TV screen in the Square and neighbouring buildings in the Harbourside development.

Many photovoltaic pavements also have inbuilt LED lights so that the floor surface can produce exciting lighting effects or even mark out different sports pitch arrangements. Anyone for basketball?

A good lighting plan

STREET lighting effects how we perceive Bristol at night, how safe we feel, how much energy the city uses, how much of the night sky we see and the health of the city's nocturnal natural species.

Bristol needs a joined-up lighting strategy which responds positively to all these issues, in the same way that the Good Transport Plan is has produced a vision for the City's road and street network.

47

A to B, H 2 O. High speed water taxis

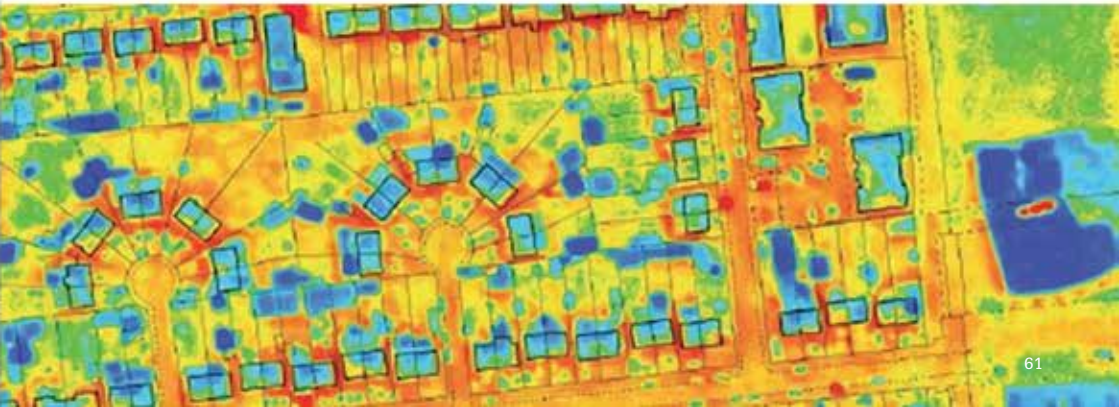
THE floating harbour is an underused resource in Bristol's sustainable transport strategy.

High speed electric boats could be used between 7 and 9.30am to ferry commuters from Temple Meads to several stops in the centre and beyond, skipping the traffic and providing a convenient and exhilarating way to get to work.

Strategic thermal imaging map

BRISTOL wants to be carbon neutral by 2050 and most carbon is expelled in the heating of our existing building stock. Thermal imaging software can help us tackle this by identifying where buildings are losing heat from poor insulation and construction.

Pictures are normally taken from street level but in this idea aerial thermal photography could create heat maps of whole areas of Bristol. By showing hot or cold roofs this would quickly and simply highlight which buildings are losing the most heat, so that one-by-one we can tackle the worst performing properties.



49





Temple mead

URBAN bee station.

Some of our most biodiverse environments are along road edges and railway tracks, where nature is largely left to its own devices and seeds and pollen are carried in the air movement of passing vehicles and trains.

Hives at Bristol's main train node could produce and sell highly marketable mead and honey at the station.

50

Self-build exemplar

THERE'S a self-build housing revolution happening but Bristol's barely seeing any of it. The Council should identify land for those wanting to build their own home, as others are doing around Europe and in other parts of the UK.

Alternatively all new large residential developments could be required to set-aside plots for self-builders. These could be models for good development – zero carbon, affordable, formed around communities and help deliver some of Bristol's much needed new housing.

Bristol's environmental footprint

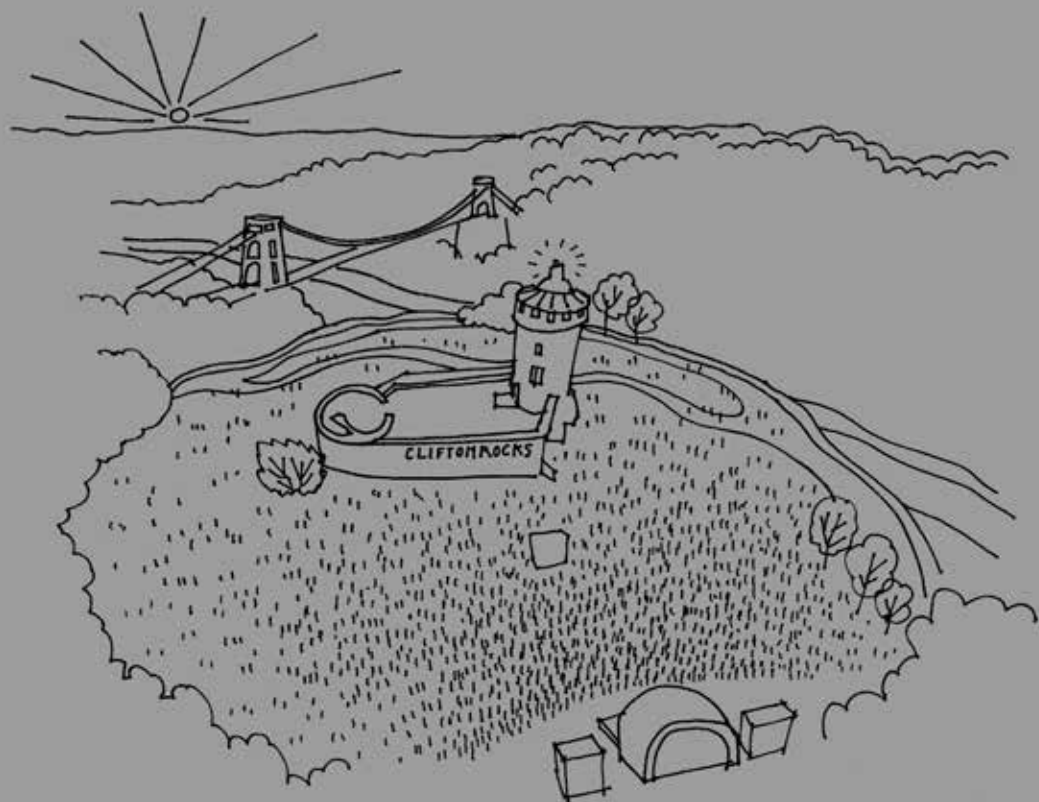
MAPPING Bristol's geographical size if this was calculated showing the area of land that Bristol actually needs for food, energy, resources and water. It would be a powerful graphical illustration of how much land the city needs to sustain itself. Bristol could set out to join one of the other global One Planet Cities.



Clifton rocks

NOT the historic Clifton Rocks railway but an idea for an annual music festival in one of Bristol's most special places, the setting of Clifton Observatory.

This commanding location was an iron age fort and now a grassy bowl enclosed by woodland on one side, with views over the Clifton suspension bridge and Avon Gorge on the other - a natural amphitheatre and place of gathering. Let's breathe life into this underused magnificent space, which may not have heard the sound of drums for 2000 years...



A big thank you...

TO THE STAFF of Stride Treglown for organising a sustainability event or talk every week in 2015 and contributing to this book. To Amy Nicholass from Low Carbon South West for the foreword. And to the following guest speakers who came to our offices as part of our 2015 Green Capital programme and inspired us:

Maddie Bartlett – *Bristol Nature Network*
Kevin Barton – *Robert Bray Associates*
Richard Bland – *Clifton and Hotwells Improvement Society*
Dave Broadway – *Velopost*
Oliver Baxter – *Herman Miller*
Fiona Campbell – *Fiona Nutrition*
Jon Clark – *Forest of Avon Trust*
Graham Cossons – *Hoare Lea*
Gavin Crook – *Hoare Lea*
Christian Cunningham – *Firepower Fitness*
Julie Doherty – *Avon Wildlife Trust*
Max Drake – *Urban Fringe Dispensary*
Richard Hatfield – *Greenheart*
Alex Hyslop – *Herman Miller*
Innes Johnston – *Max Fordham*
Doug King – *Doug King Consulting*
Sara King – *Ecosulis*
Mandy Leivers – *Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project*
Joe Middleton – *Bristol Nature Network*
Clare Reddington – *Playable City*
Neville Rye – *WSP*
Chris Sherrington – *Eunomia Research*
Chris Sperring – *Hawk and Owl Trust*
Martin Taverner – *Ty Mawr Ecological Building Materials*
Alison Wright – *Surplus Supper Club*

Further reading

<http://www.100ideas.co.uk/>
<http://www.sustrans.org.uk/about-us/vision-reality-bristol/good-transport-plan-bristol>
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<http://www.bristolbeekeepers.org.uk/>
<http://www.cliftonrocksrailway.org.uk/>
<http://www.cliftonobservatory.com/>

STRIDE TREGLOWN

WE ARE an employee-owned practice of over 300 people. We are architects, interior designers, landscape architects, town planners, urban designers, project managers, building surveyors, environmental consultants and graphic designers. Originating from our Clifton headquarters, we now operate from ten offices across the UK and UAE, with sustainability at the core of everything we do, from the places we design to how we run our business. In Bristol, we recently designed Filwood Green Business Park, a landmark green office development for Bristol's year as Green Capital of Europe, as well as a new apiary facility for Bristol beekeepers.

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stridetreglown.com

52 BIG IDEAS FOR BRISTOL

BRISTOL was named Green Capital of Europe in 2015. This book has been inspired by the city's spirit, drive to be more sustainable and its sense of fun – traits which apparently influenced the Green Capital judges. It's a collection of 'what ifs...', suggested changes, new policies, imagined events, proposed initiatives.

We hope that they will spark your interest, trigger discussion, inspire further ideas, and even take action. If so, let us know!

stridetreglown.com/52BigIdeasForBristol