



Bristol One City Homes and Communities Board

Date/time	10:00 -12:30, 21 October 2025	Venue	The Guangzhou Room, City Hall
Co-Chairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Oona Goldsworthy, CEO, BrunelcareCllr Barry Parsons, Chair of the Homes and Housing Committee, and Cllr for Easton		
Attendees	Alex Cobb, WECA; Alex Raikes, SARI; Alison Browning, WECIL; Anna Klimczak, Brighter Places; Anna Smith, Quartet Community Foundation; Anya Mulcahy-Bowman, Wellspring Settlement; Claire Coleman, Caring in Bristol; Cllr Barry Parsons, Bristol City Council; Daisy Pitcher, Shelter; Imogen Oxley, Bristol City Council; Jamie Gill, 1625 Independent People; Jez Sweetland, Bristol City Council; Joe Edgard, One50StudioLTD; Judith Langdon, City Office; Karen Mercer, Bristol Temple Quarter; Lois Mawhinney, Bristol City Council; Louise Davidson, Bristol City Council; Maria Perrett, Lockleaze Neighbourhood Trust; Mol Horler, Bristol Fair Renting Campaign; Oona Goldsworthy, Brunelcare; Paul Hassan, ACH Refugee Integration Services Provider; Pete McNeil, Centre for Sustainable Energy; Reverend Nicola Harris, Diocese of Bristol; Zoe Metalfe, AtkinsRéalis;		
Arrival & Networking			
All			
Chair’s welcome and introductions			
OG Welcomed the board and then announced a shift in the agenda, adding time for AR to share about community cohesion, MH to share about the Fair Rents Campaign, and JG to share about the Sleep Out to start off the meeting.			
Community Cohesion – Alex Raikes, SARI			
AR began by sharing that this has been a really difficult time for SARI – possibly the hardest things have ever been. It was noted that there has been a rise in hate crimes against racial minorities as well as other minorities including homophobic attacks and attacks on people with disabilities. Some of these incidents include physical attacks. AR shared that referrals to SARI are up by 91% from South Gloucestershire, and 45% from South Bristol.			
AR shared observations that what we are seeing right now appears to be more of a sustained rise rather than the static, trackable incidents we have seen previously. AR also drew connection between the increase in hate crimes targeting vulnerable people who are alone, the flags that are put up in mass on public property, and Facebook groups, that intend to increase public fear and division. To summarise, AR shared the belief that this is part of a wider global far right movement influencing the UK through social media, misinformation, and targeting people’s anger.			
Board members then added how the rise in social media as a news source in combination with algorithms provides an added challenge to community cohesion. Board members also highlighted how people are more vulnerable to being radicalised because they are feeling minoritised and insecure partially due to the cost-of-living crisis, partially due to feeling judged and pushed out by the left-wing.			
The board then briefly discussed initial ideas about what they can do collectively to support community cohesion, such as:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increasing civic engagement and building trust			

- Listening to those we disagree with
- Encourage fact checking – we can't tackle the global movement, but we can tackle people's interpretation of information.
- Connect with the work of Civic University Agreement who are also looking at community cohesion

ACTION: Can board members – particularly those working in communities – come back next time with tangible examples of what board members can do to work together to support community cohesion.

ACTION: Set up a meeting to focus on this topic.

ACTION: City Office/Board Support Officer to circulate Voscur's report about community cohesion and ask to come and share more about it at a future meeting.

Bristol Fair Renting Campaign – Mol Horler, Bristol Fair Rent Campaign

MH began by drawing a connection that housing insecurity can cause feelings of bitterness and stress that contribute to community tensions. Therefore, the provision of secure housing opportunities could support community cohesion.

Bristol Fair Rent Campaign is working to tackle the issue of affordability in the private renting sector. MH highlighted that the strain on council/public resources can be alleviated by a fair, affordable, regulated private sector. The Bristol Living Rent Commission found that there is substantial public support for rent regulation to provide a long-term framework for private renting in Bristol.

The Bristol Fair Rent Campaign believe that Bristol is in a strong position to be a pilot city for rent control and they would like to have a longer conversation with the board about how they can use their networks to work with the government to make this a reality.

ACTION: Add a discussion about how the board can support rent controls as a future agenda item.

ACTION: MH will share a briefing of the Fair Rent Campaign after the meeting.

Sleep Out - Jamie Gill, 1625 Independent People

Sleep Out 2025 on Thursday 13th November

Start Time: 7pm

Where: Lloyd's Amphitheatre

Sleep Out is 1625 Independent People's biggest fundraising event of the year, dedicated to making a positive impact on the lives of young people who are facing homelessness or leaving care in Bristol and the South West. While it's not meant to replicate the harsh reality of rough sleeping, it is a challenge that helps raise vital funds and awareness to support young people facing homelessness. It is a chance to stand in solidarity with young people facing homelessness.

You'll hear directly from the young people they work with, there will be live music from local artists and opportunities to buy food and drinks from local food vendors. There will also be a silent disco.

Brabazon new town announcement - Alex Cobb, WECA

AC provided an update on the recent (September 2025) announcement by the government's new town task force that Brabazon is one of 12 locations across the UK recommended for 'new town' designation.

AC began by presenting an update about plans for Brabazon and wider West Innovation Arc. The key updates are:

- Following lots of visits from MHCLG officers and the New Towns Taskforce, the task force published an independent report in September which recommended Brabazon as one of twelve sites to be considered by the Government to be designated as a 'New Town' for specific focus.
- A final decision on which sites the Government will progress will follow a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) due to conclude next spring.

AC shared two main focuses of the West Innovation Arc project:

1. How do we deliver this development in a way that's not just an island that ignores places around it?
2. The ambition is that the area will be a driver of the regional economy but there are currently a few fundamental constraints mostly surrounding transport and housing affordability.

AC emphasised the importance of the development including and respecting the existing communities and supporting the economy of the wider region. Although most of the area is in South Gloucestershire, not technically Bristol, geographically the areas are in Bristol and therefore there is great opportunity if the development is connected to the wider region. As a result, AC emphasised that a key priority is to improve transport both between the south and the north of Bristol – from Temple Meads to Brabazon – and from east to west – between the three urban centres of the Western Innovation Arc: Brabazon, Bristol Parkway Station and the Bristol and Bath Science Park.

The Board then discussed different concerns to do with the development. One focus was on what processes should be used to engage with the local communities to ensure that their perspectives are involved in the development process. Another focus was on whether the housing would be affordable, and AC shared that it is looking like around 30% of the housing will be affordable – a mixture of social rent, shared ownership and properties 20% below market-rate.

AC closed the conversation by sharing that while there is great support for this project among Ministers, the process will be very complicated. Both the scale of the project and the fact that the area is already developed means that there are many delivery and engagement challenges. However, this area is a great opportunity to meet Bristol's housing needs (with ambitions of building up to 40,000 homes) and the New Town status would provide a hook allowing delivery to be better and faster, and hopefully for homes in the area to be more affordable.

One City Plan - Judith Langdon, City Office

JL provided an update on the new One City Plan, including a reminder of the new missions, and then move into a conversation about action plans and how boards might begin to develop them.

The goal is to have agreed on board-owned action plans by the end of the January board meetings. This initial conversation will focus on how City Office can support boards to reach that point, ensuring their plans are aligned with and actively contribute to the delivery of the One City Plan.

JL opened her presentation by sharing that the ambition is to make the One City Plan something that feels relevant, a social movement that is genuinely unifying to organisations in Bristol. One city approach can bring long term commitments that transcend political and financial cycles – looking at community cohesion as a long-term process.

The new One City Plan 2025 is now live. It involves a mission-led approach that focuses on what things we can best make an impact on. The key missions are:

1. In Bristol, we are creating an inclusive, sustainable and equitable economy that provides good work and addresses structural inequalities.
2. In Bristol, the circumstances that we grow up in will not determine our chances in life.

3. In Bristol, we are creating the conditions for communities to be connected and cohesive with trust in institutions and in each other.
4. In Bristol, we are collaborating to create a climate resilient city where everyone is empowered to act on climate and nature recovery.

JL asked the board to consider how they can contribute to the missions for example looking at how housing can support young people or how housing can be green.

ASK: all boards to develop action plans which support the delivery of the missions. These plans would cover the next five years starting from Jan/Feb 2026 to be signed off for the next meeting ideally.

Action plans don't have to be limited to mission delivery, but ideally, they would be supportive. They can be wholly new activity or derived from goals set out in previous plan iterations, they can be direct action, influencing, enabling, symbolic or policy.

JL then asked the board how One City can support them in creating an action plan.

EVENT: 8th December, 10am-3pm: there will be a cross-board workshop. Invitations will be coming out imminently.

Board members then discussed what their action plan priorities would be:

- It would be useful to have a current map of what people are already doing so that the actions add value.
- There was widespread agreement that the actions at least initially should start off with shorter term goals to provide something meaningful that can be clearly shared with the public to help build trust and gain momentum.
- It was suggested that perhaps a focus could be shifting the conditions that hold the problems in place such as reducing barriers to accessing University, as an example of a narrower focus.
- The actions should be based on problems that resonate with local communities in need and it was suggested that perhaps the board could really think about how they communicate with local communities and think about new options, such going out to Lockleaze and Hartcliffe, have a walk around and talk to people locally.

LD mentioned that this board was discussed at DMT for housing. LD mentioned concerns about whether households felt that this board is relevant to them and raised the question of how the board can be more joined up with the Bristol Housing Partnership to deliver more meaningful work and make us more relevant to households we hope to support.

ACTION: Invite JL to discuss how the board can be more joined up with the Bristol Housing Partnership to deliver more meaningful work and make us more relevant to households we hope to support.

ASK: Hold future Board meetings in venues in our communities.

OFFERS: venue offer from Bristol north food bank and Bristol Temple Quarter Community Hub

10-minute break

Small Sites Aggregator - Jez Sweetland, Bristol City Council

JS to provided update on the Small Sites Aggregator, the approach aimed towards making small council owned sites more viable for developing social rent homes to help tackle the ongoing housing crisis and temporary accommodation challenges with a priority to move households with children out of long-term managed homelessness.

JS started off with a short presentation about the Small Sites Aggregator plans. JS shared that these plans come from a desire to scale up and speed up social housing and housing delivery despite issues with planning taking time and the HRA's lack of money.

JS shared that these plans are based around three main issues:

1. There are 1000s of small, complicated sites that are currently left empty as public ownership developers don't want them. A lot of them are not appropriate for housing but there are still many that are, however, they are not viable individually.
2. There is a construction skills crisis, and the land is often not appropriate for traditional avenues. Therefore, there is a question of who is going to build the homes.
3. Finally, who is going to pay? There is no money left from government. How would you create a methodology that would allow investors to open these homes as social and council housing. Need to create scale to commission this.

Good news:

- In May MHCLG announced small sites aggregators action programme which comes with funding. This plan was reviewed again this week.
- Lloyds Bank agreed to support the development of this initiative through Lloyds Banking Group's Social Housing Initiative.
- The Small Sites Aggregator will be piloted in Bristol, Sheffield and Lewisham. It aims to use an innovative public private partnership to tackle the commercial and planning barriers that have long held back small residential developments, particularly sites with room for under 100 homes.

JS explained that the idea is that by bundling together small, disused brownfield plots, the programme will create a stable pipeline of sites that can be planned, financed and delivered at scale. This will attract private capital, enable the use of Modern Methods of Construction, and support a steady flow of work for SME builders – helping to fast-track affordable and social housing while boosting local jobs.

JS further highlighted that while these homes will not be cheap, with 50% being social housing and all houses zero carbon, costs will be saved long-term due to its provision of quality social housing with very low long-term maintenance costs and fast delivery.

JS ended by emphasising that this group will be important for stewarding conversations about how these plans deliver our shared priorities – for providing a counter-narrative to battle any issues and public disapproval.

Board members then discussed the positives of this project. MP shared a personal story of someone who was homeless in Lockleaze who had an overwhelmingly positive experience moving into a snug home in Fishponds. MP shared that this person was able to get back into education and employment, and they found the home cheap to maintain.

It was also suggested that perhaps communities should be able to choose how to use those small sites that are not viable for housing – perhaps using them as spaces for new community assets.

Delivery numbers were discussed, JS flagged that while numbers aren't huge any they are significant as they focus on fast delivery of housing which is a important outcome for Bristol.

JS closed this discussion by challenging the board to think of how they can collectively get ahead of this story by sharing the broader challenges in the city and how this meets those needs. Jez anticipates some push back once the sites are announced and asks that the board is promoting the programme by focusing on the outcome it will deliver. It would be great to think about how the board can be a real advocate for this process in Bristol.

Update on the Homes for Bristol event - Louise Davidson, Bristol City Council

Homes for Bristol: A Conversation about Affordable Housing Delivery was held on 16th September at City Hall, bringing together residents, policymakers, housing providers, and community leaders for a city-wide dialogue on the future of affordable housing.

LD began by providing an update on the Homes for Bristol event. The event in mid-September brought together residents, policymakers, housing providers, and community leaders for a city-wide dialogue on the future of affordable housing and narratives around affordable housing. One focus of the event was discussing myths that people in Bristol are hearing about housing.

ACTION: LD will send out reflections from this event shortly.

LD then introduced a question for the day about next steps, asking:
What is our commitment as a board to create an environment to speak up, control narrative and challenge misinformation?

The board then discussed this challenge:

- ZM shared that AtkinsRéalis has been working with open university to develop a concept to go out and record lived experiences, anonymise them and have them as avatars - including children's voices. This would not be a big expense as it is more abstract – just the voices.
OFFER: ZM to bring those resources in to work collaboratively with other partners to share lived experiences
- MH shared concerns that a narrative focusing on people looking to buy housing excludes a proportion of people who rent and don't see buying a house as a realistic part of their future.
- LD shared that although this project is focusing specifically on narratives surrounding housing provision and engaging people in the planning process, if we create a successful comms strategy for this, our learnings could be transferred to a wider focus on housing in the city and renters specifically.
- Board members discussed what the communication and engagement focuses should be. Members shared options such as myth busting, building confidence, emphasising the consequences of inaction. It was highlighted that simplicity is essential, with a key message of giving power back to communities.
- CC shared that they have a comms person in a group that is looking at how homelessness is communicated which could inform the board.

ACTION: CC will send an email out after this meeting about Caring in Bristol's work on how homelessness is communicated.

ASK: Volunteers for who will commit to working up some proposals about key points the board can commit to communicating.

Volunteers: ZM, PH, MP, MH, NH, KM, AB, CC

ACTION: LD to email board members to coordinate working up these proposals.

AOB

ASK: A Bristol City Council private housing representative to come and talk about new licensing and standards in the private sector.

PM shared information about fuel poverty, explaining that private rental properties not good enough for private market, with lots of EPC fraud.