

Redland / Cotham Neighbourhood Maps Project

Project Summary

Sustainable Redland was formed in 2005 to promote a more sustainable approach to living in our locality. It is part of Transition Bristol and the Transition Network and has representatives on the Bishopston, Cotham and Redland Neighbourhood Partnership. It has inspired many initiatives, including the twice-monthly Whiteladies Road Farmers and Fair Trading Market.

We have been given a grant by Bristol City Council under the Active Neighbourhood Transport Grant, Round Two. Our proposed project is to create neighbourhood maps for the Redland/Cotham area that will encourage more people to walk and cycle to local facilities instead of using their cars. We will do this with the help of the local community, and will produce and distribute the printed maps door-to-door, as well as in local shops and businesses. Online versions of the maps will also be available.

The main goal is to reduce unnecessary travel by car, especially short local journeys, and instead to promote walking or cycling to local facilities, such as schools, shops, healthcare, sports, social and faith meeting places. Additional goals are to encourage people to use local businesses who offer local sustainable products. At a deeper level we would like to reinforce engagement in the community, and greater care for the physical environment.

According to Sustrans, a quarter of all car trips are less than 2 miles, and half of them could be replaced by sustainable journeys using existing facilities. They identify that lack of information about the alternatives to the car, and motivation to try them out, are key barriers to change. This project will help break down the mindset that leads people to unthinkingly jump in the car to go shopping when they could just as quickly, and more healthily, walk to local shops. It will also make local people more aware of the facilities that exist within walking distance in their local area, and the best ways of getting to them.

Bristol suffers from high car ownership and crowded roads, leading to congestion, pollution and damaging carbon emissions. Less use of cars will benefit health through reduced pollution, and provide a more pleasant experience for walkers and cyclists. Walking and cycling can help improve health and reduce obesity. In the long-term, reducing transport carbon emissions by using more local, sustainable products will also help limit the effects of climate change.

The project arose from a public meeting called by Sustainable Redland in February 2013, and was also mentioned at the Redland Neighbourhood Forum meeting that month. We propose to collect data for the maps by involving local people through stalls at local fairs and markets. We will involve local schools and students in drawing up the maps. The completed printed maps will be primarily distributed by door-to-door delivery, since we are mainly targeting those who would otherwise not use the local facilities. However, maps will also be made freely available for collection in local shops, cafes, library and waiting rooms.

According to the 2011 Census, Redland and Cotham together have almost 10,000 occupied households. It is an area of high car ownership and also relatively high income, leading to many people driving out of the area to get both their weekly and their 'top-up' shopping, as well as other goods and services. The Whiteladies Road and Cotham Hill shopping areas have already been identified as ones in which local independent traders need more support. It therefore makes sense to encourage better use of local facilities while reducing use of cars.

The project has been awarded a grant of £3600 towards creating and deploying the maps. Most of the grant will go towards the costs of printing and distributing the printed maps. It is planned to create the maps over the coming year, for distribution in March 2014.

If you would like to be involved in the project in any way, please contact Roger Gimson at Sustainable Redland (email: roger.gimson@gmail.com), or see our website: www.sustainableredland.org.uk.

