

An aerial map of Bristol, England, rendered in a monochromatic green and blue color scheme. The map shows the city's layout, including buildings, streets, and the River Avon. Overlaid on the map are various green and blue areas, likely representing parks, green spaces, and waterways. The text 'BRISTOL BID' is in a smaller, white, sans-serif font, while 'Green & Blue Vision' is in a larger, white, sans-serif font. The background image is a detailed aerial map of Bristol, showing the city's layout, including buildings, streets, and the River Avon. The map is rendered in a monochromatic green and blue color scheme, with the text overlaid in white.

BRISTOL BID Green & Blue Vision

"We need to raise our ambition for green and blue infrastructure in Bristol, increasing the pace, scale and impact of delivery, and work together to turn a vision into action."

Tom Swithinbank, Bristol BID

"Our new Vision recognises that greening our city is about more than environmental impact. Well-designed, attractive spaces can boost wellbeing, create pride in place and help businesses attract and retain talent. A beautiful city centre benefits everyone who lives, works and visits here, and I'm delighted to support this shared ambition for Bristol."

Charlotte Raynes, Chair, Bristol BID and Head of Strategic Change, ARAG

This publication has been led by MOOWD, on behalf of the Bristol Business Improvement District (BID). This Vision has been shaped through extensive consultation with businesses, partners and stakeholders across Bristol, bringing together a wealth of ideas and ambitions for the city. Working with MOOWD, we have translated that input into a clear vision, demonstrator ideas and opportunities for action. It provides a platform for Bristol BID and its partners to work together, attract investment and deliver greener, healthier and more resilient public spaces.

Contents

Foreword & Project Background	02
Ten Demonstrator Ideas	08
De-Paving Bristol	32
Appendix: Further Work	42
Appendix: Consultation Suggestions	44



Foreword & Project Background

"This vision demonstrates the exciting potential to transform our city into a place that is greener, healthier and more climate-resilient - an ambition which is shared through Bristol City Council's Blue and Green Infrastructure Strategy. We welcome the leadership shown by Bristol BID and the business community, and look forward to working with partners to unlock the investment and long-term stewardship needed to turn ambitious ideas into deliverable projects."

Councillor Abi Finch, Chair of Environment and Sustainability Committee, Bristol City Council

Foreword

A Provocation for Bristol

Thank you for taking the time to read our Green & Blue Vision. We're delighted to share this document and our ideas with you. We've developed this Vision to inspire, prompt conversation and ultimately encourage and enable change. Recent years of extreme weather - heat and rainfall - have shown us that Green and Blue Infrastructure is needed more than ever. We need to increase our ambition, raising the scale and impact of delivery. This means working strategically with partners, while maintaining a sense of urgency in delivery.

This calls for all stakeholders to raise their ambitions for the city and for investors to help us meet that ambition.

This Vision is the first of the recently formed Bristol BID following the unification of Bristol City Centre, Broadmead, and Redcliffe & Temple BIDs in November 2025. Bristol BID is a business-led partnership investing in a safer, greener, cleaner and more vibrant city centre, giving local businesses a powerful collective voice and delivering high-impact projects that make Bristol better for everyone. This Vision brings together the previous [Action Plan of Redcliffe & Temple BID \(2023\)](#) and the [Green Audit undertaken by Bristol City Centre BID \(2019\)](#).

The Bristol BID Vision identifies 10 demonstrator ideas for improvements, proposed new strategies for the city centre, and presents a number of commitments from us and asks for support. The ideas we have developed are not agreed proposals with the landowners; their intent is to provoke discussion and excitement and are a call for investment.

We are very passionate about the quality of the

public realm in Bristol City Centre; we know from many years of consultation and discussion with our business and their staff that investment in Bristol's built environment is a key priority, including new seating, green spaces, trees and public art. Making the city centre an attractive, sustainable and healthy place to work is very important for Bristol businesses and, as a result, we have set aside a budget of £500k to spend over the next four years to fund green and blue infrastructure.

Bristol BID will undertake a number of roles to deliver this Vision, from funding and delivering projects, contributing match funding to larger projects, paying for surveys and designs to kickstart larger projects and convening meetings, and delivering stakeholder engagement. We will also continue to respond to key consultations that impact the city centre, such as masterplans and major planning applications. Finally, we have invested in an Urban Gardener - one of the first in the country employed by a BID - to maintain our greening projects.

We would like to thank our consultant partners [MOOWD](#) for their support with our consultation and the writing of this Vision. We extend our thanks to everyone that has taken part in our consultation by sharing their thoughts and ideas for Bristol. It is clear from our consultation that we are not working alone in this space and will seek to align our work with a range of partners, in particular Bristol Parks, Temple Quarter, Harbour Place Shaping Strategy and [WWT's ambition for Bristol to become the first Wetland City in the UK](#).

We hope you enjoy reading this document and feel inspired to support us, help us, or make a change in your own business.

Work To Date

Bristol BID has undertaken a range of projects to date, contributing to improved green and blue infrastructure across the city. These include:



A Connected Approach

We're not developing this Vision in isolation, we're delighted that Bristol and the West of England are home to a number of ambitious strategies, plans and projects to improve our city centre.



To successfully deliver this Vision, we need partnerships, collaboration and support.

Our asks

- + Capital investment. Some of the ideas we've put forward are larger investments than the BID can deliver alone. We're seeking external capital funding in Bristol's public realm to help us deliver this work.
- + Ongoing revenue funding. We know that Bristol City Council needs more revenue funding to plan, deliver and importantly maintain green infrastructure. The council's climate and green infrastructure teams need more resource to plan and deliver projects and Bristol Parks needs ongoing funding to maintain both what is already there and what we'd like to see in the future.
- + Put forward your building or land as a suggested location for improvement – it doesn't matter if you've not got an idea or the funding to deliver it, we love to hear about locations that people want to improve. Your location could host something small like a few plants, a bench or mural, or something bigger like a green wall, tree or larger public realm scheme.
- + Let us know your ideas for greening around the city; if you spot an interesting location as you explore the city, please let us know and we can contact the landowner.

Our offers

- + We can fund design work, surveys and consultation, helping to produce designs that are ready for large funding bids.
- + We'll continue to invest in projects, both part funding or fully funding. In 2026, we've commissioned new green walls and part funded additions to the Floating Ecosystem programme.
- + To fund smaller projects within the BID area, we've launched a fund of £25k for businesses and landowners to apply for (maximum funding per project £5k). We hope this project will make more businesses aware of our ability to fund and deliver greening projects across the city centre. [To apply click here - Green Infrastructure – Bristol BID.](#)

- + Join our monthly lunchtime [Gardening Clubs](#) at Quaker Burial Ground or Temple Gardens book here. Bring your team and help make a difference in these beautiful parks in Redcliffe.
- + Book a walk with one of our team, we'll show you around Bristol City Centre visiting the work we've delivered and want to in the future; great for a team social and to get out of the office.

Consultation

In order to develop this Vision we have hosted a range of opportunities in early 2026 for people to share their views;

Our online [Placechangers Map](#) where over 100 different ideas were plotted following six Exploratory Walks - Redcliffe x 2, Temple Quay x 2, Canon's Marsh, Broadmead.

Two workshops:

- + Spike Island Greening and Public Realm Workshop, which focussed on Spike Island, a new area for the BID, gaining ideas and gauging interest.
- + Green & Blue Vision Workshop May 2026, which narrowed down the ideas put forward in the consultation.

These activities build on previous consultation and engagement, especially since 2021, when Redcliffe & Temple BID was established with a clear mandate to deliver improved Green Infrastructure for the area. Since 2021 we have held three workshops on this topic, six exploratory walks, and focus visits to Redcliff Street and Avon Street.



Design Competition

In September 2026 we launched a [Design Competition](#) seeking ideas for three Bristol City Centre locations. This competition is designed to provoke conversation about these public spaces and inspire a new way of thinking about these spaces.

The 3 locations are as follows:

- + Bathurst Basin
- + Hannover Quay
- + The Grove

The winners will be added to this document and will be discussed with Bristol City Council (the landowner) to help progress ideas towards the vision.

Conclusion

We hope you enjoy reading this document. Please support our work by letting us know your ideas for opportunities, partnering with us and championing green infrastructure in our city. If you have any questions about our work please get in touch: tom@bristolbid.co.uk

Thanks again to everyone who has contributed to this process via our consultations, our consultants [MOOWD](#) and everyone who supports this movement in Bristol.



Ten Demonstrator Ideas

"Since 1980 and originally the first urban Wildlife Trust, Avon Wildlife Trust is at the forefront of standing up for wildlife in our towns and cities. We know that when people have quality access to nature on their doorsteps and where they work, they will be happier, healthier and more connected. We are really excited to partner with Bristol BID to support this ambitious vision to recover nature in our city, whilst improving people's access to it so that Bristol can thrive."

Leah McNally, Chief Executive, Avon Wildlife Trust



Bristol BID Site Boundary: Ten Demonstrator Ideas Location Map

Overview

The Bristol BID Green Vision identifies ten demonstrator ideas that showcase how targeted, deliverable interventions can enhance the city centre through green infrastructure. Developed through site analysis, stakeholder workshops and technical review, each idea responds to a specific opportunity while contributing to a wider network of greener, healthier and more resilient public spaces.

Together, the ideas demonstrate how relatively modest interventions can deliver multiple benefits for people, nature and the local economy. They have been selected for their visibility, deliverability and potential to act as catalysts for wider investment, providing practical examples that can be implemented over the short, medium and longer term.

We hope these images provoke discussion about investment in Bristol's public realm to bring them to reality.

The 10 demonstrator ideas are;

- + **01: Queen Square** - Nature Play Network
- + **02: Brunswick Square** - Community Stewardship
- + **03: Bathurst Basin** - Seating & Planting
- + **04: Temple Quay** - Floating Ecosystem
- + **05: Museum Square** - Play, Planting & Public Art
- + **06: Narrow Quay** - Rest Space & Greening
- + **07: Gas Ferry Road** - Wayfinding & Greening
- + **08: Millennium Square** - Urban Greening
- + **09: Rivergate Corner** - Planting & Pocket Parks
- + **10: University Road** - Green Boulevard

Ten demonstrator ideas have been identified to illustrate how green and blue infrastructure can deliver meaningful change across Bristol city centre. Together they showcase a diverse range of interventions, demonstrating practical, deliverable ideas that can create healthier, greener and more vibrant places for people and nature.



01. Queen Square



03. Bathurst Basin



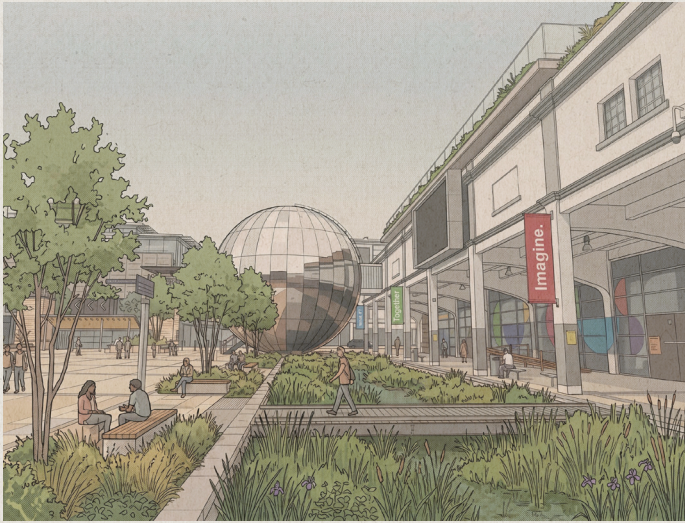
02. Brunswick Square



04. Temple Quay



05. Museum Square



08. Millennium Square



06. Narrow Quay



09. Rivergate Corner



07. Gas Ferry Road



10. University Road



Image Credit: MOOWD

01. Queen Square

Nature Play Network

Address: Queen Square, Bristol BS1 4LH

Intervention Area: 0.2 ha

Indicative Budget: £150k-£250k

Delivery Time-scale: 0-2 Year

Overview

Queen Square is a historic city-centre green space. This project introduces nature-based play, informal recreation and biodiversity enhancements to encourage greater everyday use while respecting the square's heritage character. By building on an existing green infrastructure asset, the project will support healthier lifestyles, stronger ecological networks and a more vibrant city-centre destination.

Key interventions include:

1. Nature-based play and exploration
2. Biodiversity and habitat enhancements
3. Informal rest and gathering spaces
4. Play on the way and incidental play

Increase biodiversity and everyday use of Queen Square through nature-based play and habitat enhancement.

Delivery Considerations

- + Respect the heritage significance and character of Queen Square.
- + Maintain flexibility for events and city-centre activities.
- + Deliver robust, durable and low-maintenance interventions.
- + Coordinate improvements with accessibility, drainage and pathway upgrades.
- + Minimise ecological impacts, particularly from lighting.
- + Establish long-term management and maintenance arrangements.

Benefits for Bristol

- + Encourages active lifestyles, play and recreation in a central location.
- + Enhances the quality and attractiveness of the city centre.
- + Enhances biodiversity through planting and habitat improvements.
- + Improves ecological value within a historic landscape setting.
- + Creates a more inclusive and sociable public space.



Tree avenue enhancement opportunity



Existing recreation lawn



Habitat enhancement opportunity



Nature play opportunity



Image Credit: MOOWD

02. Brunswick Square

Community Stewardship

Address: Cumberland St, Bristol BS2 8NL

Intervention Area: 0.2 ha

Indicative Budget: £150k-£250k

Delivery Time-scale: 0-2 Years

Overview

Brunswick Square is an established city-centre green space with a rich orchard heritage. This project builds on existing community growing by enhancing biodiversity, expanding the community orchard and creating opportunities for informal recreation. The proposals will strengthen local stewardship, encourage greater everyday use and transform the square into a vibrant community destination that supports wellbeing, nature and learning.

Key interventions include:

1. Community orchard expansion and edible planting
2. Biodiversity-rich habitats and pollinator planting
3. Community growing and volunteering spaces
4. Natural play and informal recreation
5. Interpretation, wayfinding and orchard heritage

Strengthen Brunswick Square as a community orchard through biodiversity, growing spaces and year-round community activity.

Delivery Considerations

- + Retain and enhance existing mature trees and landscape character.
- + Support community stewardship and long-term management.
- + Balance biodiversity improvements with accessibility and recreation.
- + Work with local organisations, residents and businesses.
- + Deliver robust, low-maintenance planting and infrastructure.
- + Maintain Brunswick Square as a welcoming place for relaxation.

Benefits for Bristol

- + Supports wellbeing and social interaction through community activities.
- + Increases biodiversity through orchard and habitat enhancements.
- + Encourages volunteering, food growing and environmental education.
- + Improves the quality and attractiveness of the local neighbourhood.
- + Creates a stronger identity rooted in the site's orchard heritage.
- + Increases everyday use and community ownership of the square.



Existing community orchard and landscape character.



Informal green space suitable for community growing.



Orchard setting with opportunities for biodiversity enhancement.



Existing orchard landscape with potential for interpretation.



Image Credit: MOOWD

03. Bathurst Basin

Seating & Planting

Address: Bathurst Basin, Bristol BS1 6SG

Intervention Area: 0.2 ha

Indicative Budget: £250k-£500k

Delivery Time-scale: 0-3 Year

Overview

Bathurst Basin is an important waterfront destination within Bristol's Floating Harbour. This project introduces seating, planting and SuDS to create a more welcoming, biodiverse and climate-resilient place to enjoy the harbour. Rain gardens and planted drainage features could capture and filter surface water before it enters the basin, helping to improve harbour water quality while creating new habitat. These proposals would encourage longer dwell times and strengthen connections along Bristol's waterfront.

Key interventions include:

1. High-quality seating overlooking the basin
2. Integrated planting and biodiversity enhancements
3. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and rain garden planting to manage runoff
4. A variety of seating types for different users
5. Improved public realm and pedestrian experience
6. Seasonal planting and habitat creation

Provide a more welcoming waterfront destination through new seating, planting and public realm improvements.

Delivery Considerations

- + Identify the most appropriate seating and SuDS locations across the basin.
- + Coordinate delivery with Bristol City Council, Bristol Harbour Authority and landowners.
- + Consider relationships with nearby residential properties.
- + Reduce opportunities for anti-social behaviour through good design and passive surveillance.
- + Deliver robust, durable and low-maintenance waterfront interventions.
- + Establish long-term ownership, maintenance and management arrangements.

Benefits for Bristol

- + Encourages longer dwell times, supporting nearby cafés, restaurants and local businesses.
- + Strengthens Bathurst Basin as a destination within Bristol's waterfront network.
- + Introduces habitat for pollinators and urban wildlife through diverse planting.
- + Creates attractive spaces for rest, relaxation and informal social interaction.
- + Captures and filters surface water runoff, helping protect harbour water quality.
- + Demonstrates how seating, planting and SuDS can deliver benefits for people and nature.



Existing hard waterfront with opportunities for seating.



Open basin frontage with potential for public realm improvements.



Harbour edge suitable for greening and biodiversity.



Existing quayside with opportunities for integrated planting.



04. Temple Quay

Floating Ecosystem

Address: Temple Quay, Bristol BS2 0EL

Intervention Area: 0.4 ha

Indicative Budget: £500k-£1m

Delivery Time-scale: 1-3 years

Overview

Temple Quay is a heavily engineered section of Bristol's Floating Harbour. This project introduces a network of floating pontoons, wetland planting and walkways to create a new waterside destination. Integrated seating, small-boat docking and kayak access would enable people to safely use and enjoy the water. Native planting would soften the hard harbour edge, improve habitat and support water quality, while the adaptable structure responds to changing water levels.

Key interventions include:

1. Floating pontoons with integrated wetland planting
2. Connected walkways providing access across the water
3. Benches and informal waterside seating areas
4. Docking spaces for small boats and water users
5. Native aquatic planting and habitat creation

Establish a floating ecosystem that brings people closer to the harbour while improving habitat, access and recreation.

Delivery Considerations

- + Coordinate delivery with Bristol City Council, the Harbour Authority, landowners and water users.
- + Maintain safe navigation routes and access to existing harbour infrastructure.
- + Develop robust anchoring and pontoon systems that accommodate changing water levels.
- + Integrate accessible walkways, edge protection and water-safety equipment.
- + Establish long-term management of planting, pontoons and docking facilities.

Benefits for Bristol

- + Creates new aquatic and marginal habitat within a hard-edged urban waterway.
- + Provides direct, safe access to the harbour for kayakers and other water users.
- + Establishes an attractive destination for seating, recreation and social activity.
- + Supports improved water quality through floating wetland planting.
- + Demonstrates how ecological infrastructure can animate Bristol's historic harbour.



Existing harbour edge with potential for a floating destination.



Strategic waterfront location connecting to the wider harbour.



Opportunity to connect people to the water's edge.



Open water space suitable for access and recreation.



Image Credit: MOOWD

05. Museum Square

Play, Planting and Public Art

Address: Museum St, Bristol BS1 4RN

Intervention Area: 0.2 ha

Indicative Budget: £150k-£350k

Delivery Time-scale: 0-3 Year

Overview

Museum Square is an important civic and cultural public space within Bristol city centre. This project introduces integrated play, planting and biodiversity enhancements to encourage greater everyday use while strengthening the square's role as a welcoming public destination. By combining nature-based play, public art, greening and improved public realm, the project will encourage movement, social interaction and longer dwell times while creating a healthier, more attractive and biodiverse city-centre space.

Key interventions include:

1. Nature-based play and informal recreation
2. Integrated planting and biodiversity enhancements
3. Sensory and pollinator-friendly planting
4. Interactive public art and creative features
5. Improved seating and public realm spaces

Curate a more active Museum Square through integrated play, planting and public realm improvements.

Delivery Considerations

- + Respect the civic and cultural character of Museum Square.
- + Integrate play within the wider public realm rather than creating a conventional playground.
- + Combine planting, biodiversity and activity into a cohesive landscape.
- + Deliver robust, durable and low-maintenance interventions.
- + Establish long-term management and maintenance arrangements.

Benefits for Bristol

- + Increases footfall and dwell time, supporting nearby businesses and cultural destinations.
- + Enhances biodiversity through climate-resilient and pollinator-friendly planting.
- + Encourages healthier lifestyles through play, movement and outdoor activity.
- + Creates a greener, more welcoming and inclusive city-centre destination.
- + Strengthens connections between people, nature and Bristol's cultural heart.



Existing civic square with limited landscape interest.



Open space suitable for integrated play and seating.



Hard public realm with opportunities for greening.



Existing arrival space with potential for public art.



Image Credit: MOOWD

06. Narrow Quay

Rest Space & Greening

Address: Narrow Quay, Bristol BS1 4

Intervention Area: 0.2 ha

Indicative Budget: £150k-£350k

Delivery Time-scale: 0-3 Year

Overview

Narrow Quay is one of Bristol's most important waterfront destinations. This project introduces integrated seating, planting and public realm improvements to encourage people to stop, rest and spend more time along the harbour. By combining comfortable places to sit with biodiversity enhancements and improved access to the waterfront, the scheme will strengthen wellbeing, social interaction and climate resilience while celebrating Bristol's blue infrastructure and enhancing the harbour experience.

Key interventions include:

1. Integrated seating within planting and greening
2. Pollinator-friendly and climate-resilient planting
3. Shaded spaces for rest and informal gatherings
4. Improved accessibility and harbour views
5. Interpretation celebrating the harbour environment

Create a more welcoming waterfront destination through integrated seating, planting and nature-based public realm improvements.

Delivery Considerations

- + Coordinate with Bristol Harbour Authority and stakeholders.
- + Prioritise harbour safety, maintaining safe access, visibility and movement along the water's edge.
- + Respect heritage and conservation requirements.
- + Integrate planting around utilities and operational needs.
- + Retain flexibility for events and waterfront activities.
- + Establish long-term landscape management.

Benefits for Bristol

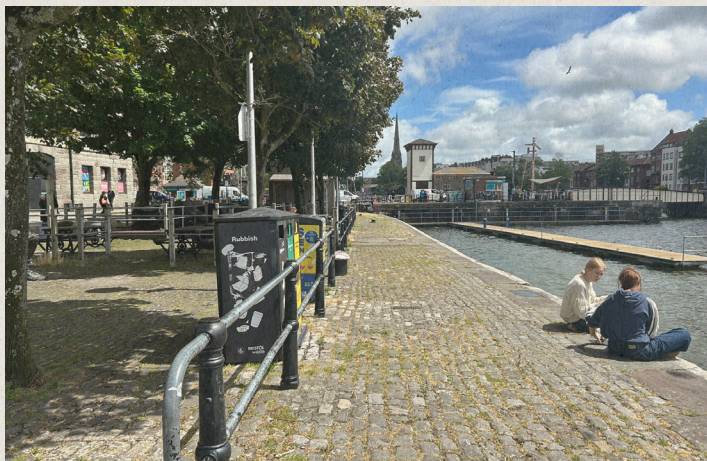
- + Increases footfall and dwell time along the waterfront.
- + Enhances the quality and attractiveness of Narrow Quay.
- + Increases biodiversity through integrated planting.
- + Improves climate resilience with additional shade and greening.
- + Supports wellbeing, social interaction and inclusive public space.



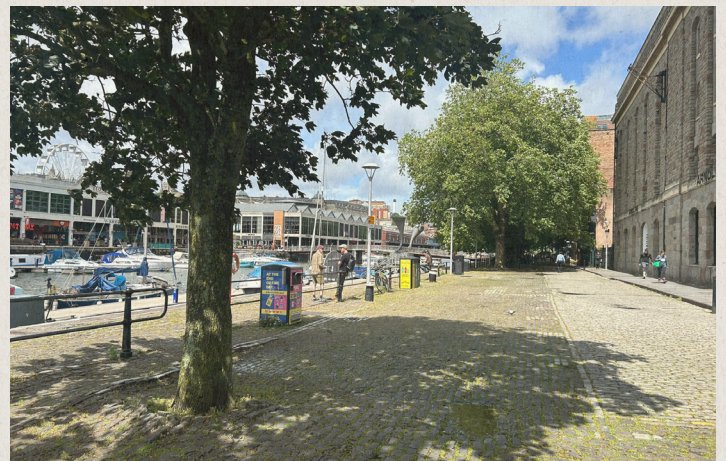
Existing waterfront promenade.



Existing public realm suitable for biodiversity enhancements.



Harbour edge with opportunities for integrated seating.



Underused space beneath mature trees.



Image Credit: MOOWD

07. Gas Ferry Road

Wayfinding and Greening

Address: Gas Ferry Road, Bristol BS1 6

Intervention Area: 0.2 ha

Indicative Budget: £150k-£250k

Delivery Time-scale: 0-2 Year

Overview

Gas Ferry Road is a key waterfront route connecting several of Bristol's most important visitor destinations. This project introduces a harbour discovery trail using wayfinding, interpretation and public art to encourage people to continue exploring beyond the SS Great Britain. By celebrating Bristol's maritime heritage, working harbour and blue infrastructure, the project will improve navigation, support local businesses and create a more engaging waterfront experience.

Key interventions include:

1. Harbour discovery trail linking key destinations
2. Wayfinding with maps, walking times and markers
3. Maritime heritage and harbour interpretation
4. Blue infrastructure and ecology storytelling
5. Family-friendly discovery and learning features

Strengthen connections and encourage exploration of Bristol's harbour through wayfinding, interpretation and storytelling.

Delivery Considerations

- + Integrate with the wider city-centre wayfinding strategy.
- + Maintain a simple, intuitive and accessible route.
- + Coordinate with harbour stakeholders and businesses.
- + Use durable, waterfront-appropriate materials.
- + Minimise visual clutter and respect harbour character.
- + Establish long-term management and maintenance.

Benefits for Bristol

- + A welcoming, shaded place to dwell along the harbour loop.
- + Creates a stronger, connected visitor experience.
- + Celebrates Bristol's maritime heritage and identity.
- + Improves awareness of harbour ecology and blue infrastructure.
- + Encourages walking, exploration and active travel.
- + Makes the waterfront more engaging for residents and visitors.



Existing arrival space requiring stronger identity.



Harbour route suitable for improved interpretation.



Underused streetscape with greening opportunities.



Existing connection with potential for enhanced wayfinding.

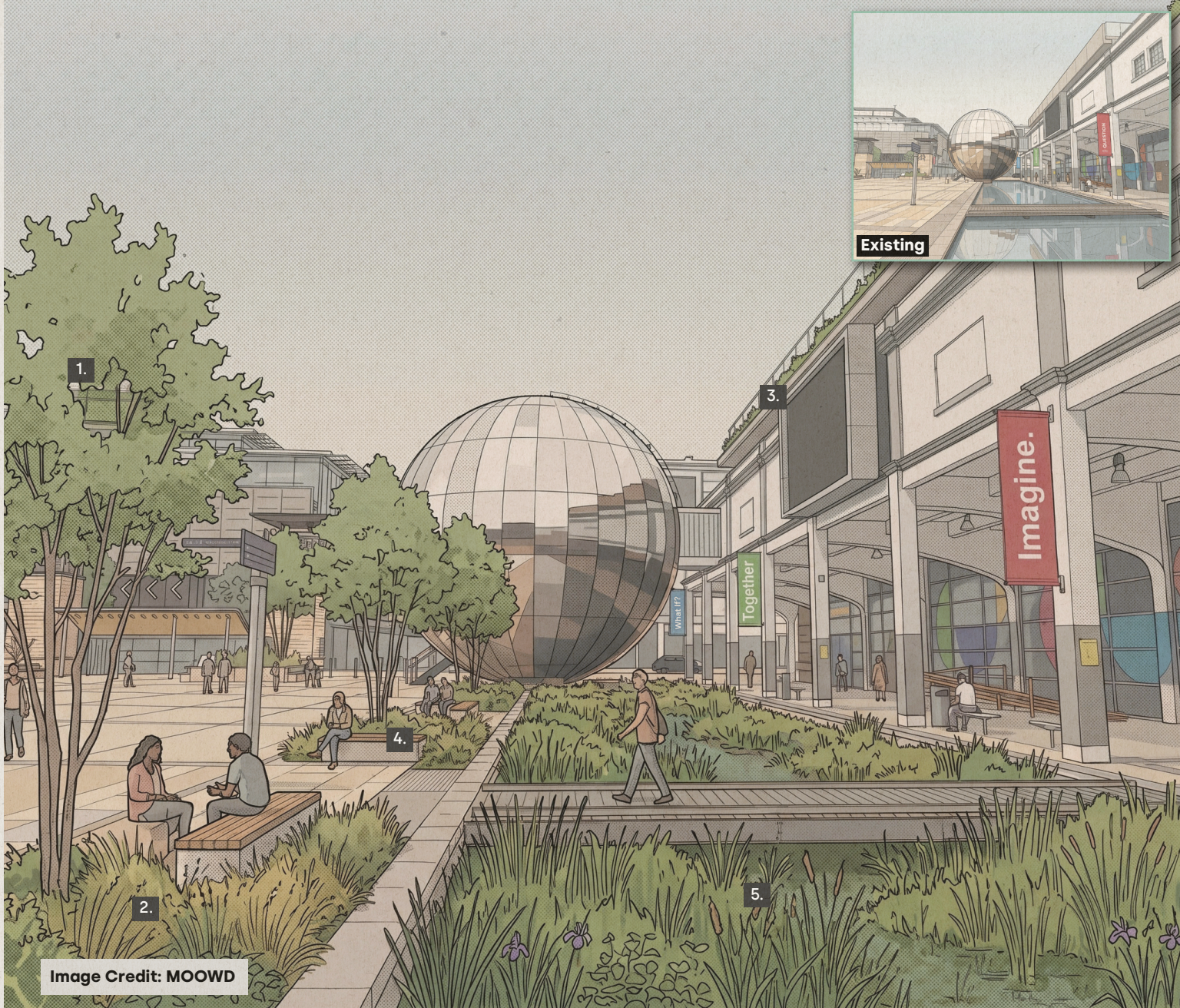


Image Credit: MOOWD

08. Millennium Square

Urban Greening

Address: Explore Lane, Bristol BS1 5SZ

Intervention Area: 0.9 ha

Indicative Budget: £150k-£750k

Delivery Time-scale: 1-2 Years

Overview

Millennium Square is one of Bristol's principal civic and cultural spaces. This project introduces targeted greening to improve shade, biodiversity and year-round comfort while maintaining the square's important role as a flexible events destination. By integrating additional planting, living green walls and seating, the project will soften the hard landscape, reduce urban heat and create a greener, more attractive city-centre environment.

Key interventions include:

1. Additional tree planting for shade and thermal comfort
2. New planting beds and pollinator-friendly landscapes
3. Upper level planting to existing roof to support more comfortable rooftop environment
4. Integrated seating within planted areas
5. Sustainable drainage opportunities where feasible

Increase biodiversity and climate resilience within Millennium Square through targeted greening and urban habitat enhancement.

Delivery Considerations

- + Maintain flexibility for events and city-centre activities.
- + Assess structural feasibility of green wall installations.
- + Coordinate planting with underground services and infrastructure.
- + Deliver durable, low-maintenance planting and irrigation systems.
- + Establish long-term management and maintenance arrangements.
- + Work collaboratively with surrounding stakeholders and institutions.

Benefits for Bristol

- + Creates a greener, more attractive civic destination.
- + Improves visitor comfort and encourages longer dwell times.
- + Enhances biodiversity through new planting and living green walls.
- + Reduces urban heat and improves the city-centre microclimate.
- + Supports local businesses, culture and tourism.
- + Demonstrates climate-responsive city-centre regeneration.



Existing civic square with limited planting.



Public space with opportunities for biodiversity.



Hard landscape suitable for green infrastructure.



Existing event space with potential for climate adaptation.



Image Credit: MOOWD

09. Rivergate

Planting and Pocket Parks

Address: Rivergate, Redcliffe, Bristol BS1 6

Intervention Area: 0.9 ha

Indicative Budget: £150k-£550k

Delivery Time-scale: 1-4 Years

Overview

Rivergate is a small but highly visible city-centre site, following the exact historical course of the medieval Portwall. The project introduces new planting, biodiversity enhancements and upgraded public realm to transform an underused hard-surfaced space into an attractive green destination. By creating a welcoming pocket green space, the scheme will improve the pedestrian experience and provide a demonstrator for future city-centre greening initiatives, while celebrating it's key historical significance.

Key interventions include:

1. Replace areas of hard surfacing with planting
2. Introduce pollinator-friendly and seasonal planting
3. Create rain gardens and SuDS features where feasible
4. Upgrade seating and street furniture
5. Integrate interpretation or public art reflecting local identity

Improve the arrival experience at Rivergate through targeted city-centre greening.

Delivery Considerations

- + Sensitivity to the historical importance of the old city wall.
- + Maintain pedestrian movement and accessibility.
- + Deliver robust, low-maintenance planting suited to an urban environment.
- + Coordinate with surrounding public realm improvements.
- + Explore opportunities for sustainable drainage.
- + Establish long-term management and maintenance arrangements.
- + Confirm ownership and delivery responsibilities.

Benefits for Bristol

- + Creates a greener and more welcoming route into the city centre via a historically significant route.
- + Improves biodiversity through new habitat and pollinator planting.
- + Enhances climate resilience with integrated green infrastructure.
- + Encourages people to stop, rest and spend time outdoors.
- + Demonstrates the value of small-scale urban greening projects.



Existing hard landscape with greening potential.



Pedestrian route suitable for landscape enhancement.



Underused public space with opportunities for pocket planting.



Existing seating area with potential for biodiversity improvements.



Image Credit: MOOWD

10. University Road Green Boulevard

Address: University Road, Bristol BS8 1

Intervention Area: 0.5-1 ha

Indicative Budget: £250k-£1.5m+

Delivery Time-scale: 1-5 Years

Overview

University Road is a key pedestrian corridor linking the University of Bristol with the city centre, museums and surrounding civic destinations. This project transforms the street into a greener, climate-resilient public space by introducing trees, planting, seating and places to pause. Integrating SuDS would help capture and manage surface water while creating additional opportunities for biodiversity and urban greening. By reallocating underused highway space, the scheme will create a high-quality civic environment for all to enjoy.

Key interventions include:

1. Street planting and urban greening
2. Pocket parks and informal seating spaces
3. Reallocation of parking for people and nature
4. SuDS and climate-resilient rain garden planting
5. Improved public realm and pedestrian experience
6. Temporary trials leading to permanent improvements

Transform University Road into a more natural civic boulevard through street greening, public realm improvements and people-focused spaces.

Delivery Considerations

- + Coordinate with the University of Bristol, Bristol City Council and local stakeholders.
- + Review parking, servicing and highway requirements.
- + Consider phased delivery beginning with temporary interventions.
- + Respect the civic, heritage and educational character of the area.
- + Integrate SuDS, biodiversity and climate resilience where possible.
- + Establish long-term management and maintenance arrangements.

Benefits for Bristol

- + Creates a greener, more welcoming city-centre environment.
- + Supports biodiversity through new trees, planting and habitat creation.
- + Manages surface water while reducing urban heat.
- + Encourages walking, social interaction and outdoor activity.
- + Strengthens connections between key cultural, educational and civic destinations.
- + Demonstrates the value of high-quality green infrastructure investment.



Existing streetscape dominated by carriageway.



Public realm with opportunities for urban greening.



Wide highway suitable for people-focused improvements.



Existing corridor with potential for a green boulevard.



De-Paving: Unlocking Bristol's Green Potential

"So far over 600 local businesses have engaged in the Climate Action Programme – delivered by Bristol Climate & Nature Partnership in partnership with Bristol BID. We know there is an incredible appetite for climate and nature action locally, with existing projects from Bristol BID already increasing access to and enhancing green spaces for all in the city centre. This vision represents a new step forward for Bristol – one filled with hope and ambition for a city centre that is full of life, nature and high quality green space that benefits both people and wildlife"

Lizzi Testani, CEO, Bristol Climate & Nature Partnership



Image Credit: MOOWD

Overview

As part of the engagement and project process, MOOWD identified de-paving as a primary city-wide initiative that could dramatically increase green infrastructure across Bristol City Centre. Through research and strategic experience, this section explores what a de-paving strategy could look like and how it could benefit Bristol City Centre. It is not a fully worked strategy, but a proposition - an argument for why a coordinated, city centre-wide approach to de-paving could unlock a significant amount of the city's green infrastructure potential, and an illustration of what such an approach might look like in practice.

Bristol City Centre contains extensive areas of redundant, underused or over-specified hard standing - from oversized highway margins and forecourts to civic squares and harbourside quaysides. Across the Green & Blue Vision engagement process, participants repeatedly returned to hard surfacing as one of the single greatest constraints on greening the city centre, and one of its greatest untapped opportunities. A

number of the ideas already contained within this Vision - including Rivergate, Millennium Square, University Road and the harbourside seating and planting proposals at Narrow Quay and Bathurst Basin - already point, implicitly, towards de-paving. What is missing is a shared framework that could connect these individual ideas into something bigger than the sum of their parts.

This proposition represents a development of the BIDs work and the level of intervention needed, moving away from planters to think about progressive ideas to dramatically reshape the public realm.

It sets out what that framework could look like: a way of thinking about de-paving that could, if taken forward, be developed into a fully worked strategy in its own right. A de-paving strategy will also support Bristol's Wetland City ambitions, helping to identify opportunities to slow surface water run off and improve water quality.

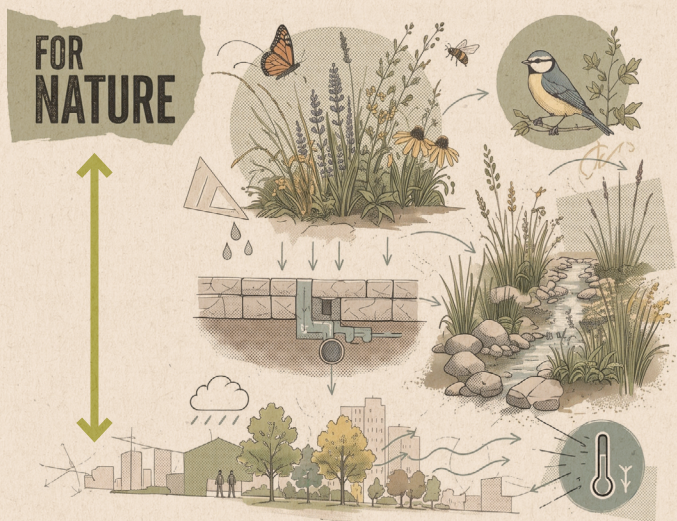
Why this could matter for Bristol

FOR BUSINESS



For business, a visible city centre de-paving programme would offer tangible evidence of investment in the public realm, helping build confidence among businesses, investors and landowners across the BID area. Greener, more attractive streets and spaces tend to support footfall and dwell time, benefiting the trading environment for surrounding businesses. Because de-paving can be delivered through community and partnership models rather than capital works alone, it also offers a comparatively low-cost, scalable way of demonstrating environmental commitment.

FOR NATURE



For nature, every square metre of hard surface replaced with soil and planting directly increases the extent of soft, permeable ground within the city centre, creating new habitat and strengthening ecological connectivity between existing green spaces. It would also reduce surface water runoff and improve climate resilience by increasing infiltration and enabling sustainable drainage features, while helping address urban heat and the urban heat island effect by replacing heat-absorbing hard surfaces with vegetation.

FOR COMMUNITY



For the community, de-paving opens up opportunities for community-led delivery and stewardship, building a stronger sense of ownership and pride in the city centre. It would improve the everyday experience of moving through and spending time in the city centre by softening hard, exposed surfaces while importantly retaining accessibility for those in mobility aids and with pram. Delivered well, it could establish a replicable model that grows across the city centre over time, building long-term momentum for a greener Bristol.

What a De-Paving Strategy could look like

Identifying the opportunity

Before any hierarchy of intervention can be applied, the underlying opportunity needs to be found and tested. GIS-based data mapping offers a fast, city-wide starting point - cross-referencing aerial and satellite imagery, impermeable surface layers, land ownership boundaries, and existing utility and drainage records to screen the whole BID area for redundant, oversized or underused hard standing. This kind of desktop analysis is well suited to building an initial long list quickly and consistently, rather than relying solely on sites that happen to have come up through workshops and engagement.

Desktop mapping alone cannot capture everything, though. On-the-ground surveying - walking each candidate site, checking surface condition and drainage, looking for hidden services or structures below ground, and observing how a space is actually used day to day - would be needed to ground-truth the GIS analysis and rule sites in or out with confidence.

A future strategy would likely combine both methods: GIS-based desktop screening to identify the full extent of the opportunity across the city centre, followed by targeted on-ground survey of the most promising sites to confirm feasibility before any design work begins.

To ensure funding and space maximises the opportunity to deliver multiple beneficial outcomes it is important that all partners consider the potential wider return on investment of proposed schemes. Partners should explore opportunities to evaluate existing schemes and benchmark against those in other cities. As this vision develops we will develop targets for the number of interventions we need to deliver.

A hierarchy of intervention

A future strategy could then work with a simple hierarchy of intervention, matching the level of ambition to each site's constraints, ownership and function. Thinking in these terms early on helps show that de-paving does not have to mean an all-or-nothing choice between leaving a surface untouched and ripping it out entirely, there is a spectrum of options in between that could be applied across a historic, heavily serviced city centre without stalling on the most difficult sites.

Full de-paving

Complete removal of hard surfacing and reinstatement of soil, substrate and planting or naturalistic ground cover. This would tend to suit redundant hard standing with limited utility conflicts and no highway or heritage designation. Sections of University Road currently given over to parking are the kind of sites where this could be tested first.

Partial or permeable retrofit

Selective removal of paving to create tree pits, planting pockets, rain gardens and SuDS features within a surface that otherwise remains in use. Something close to this is already emerging for Millennium Square, where planting and green wall interventions are proposed alongside a retained events surface, and could equally apply to Museum Square.

Surface permeability upgrade

Where full or partial removal is unlikely to be feasible - typically because of services, heritage constraints, harbour authority requirements or structural loading - impermeable paving could instead be replaced with permeable paving, resin-bound gravel or reinforced grass, reducing surface water runoff while retaining a trafficable or load-bearing surface. This is likely to be the more realistic option for the harbourside quaysides at Narrow Quay, Bathurst Basin, Wapping Wharf and Gas Ferry Road.

Where the potential is greatest

The following sites are put forward as illustrations of where this potential is most visible, drawn directly from the ideas and evidence already gathered through this project process. They are not a fixed programme, but a way of showing what could be possible - ranging from immediate quick-win demonstrators to longer-term, more ambitious propositions.

Demonstrator sites

- + **Rivergate** - a largely hard-landscaped corner already flagged as a quick-win demonstrator; strong potential to test what full de-paving could look like.
- + **Millennium Square** - extensive hard surfacing around a major civic and events space, where a partial retrofit around the ventilation columns and margins could add planting and green wall infrastructure without compromising event capacity.
- + **University Road** - a movement corridor with underused parking and hard surface, where reallocating carriageway and forecourt space could support a much greener boulevard character.
- + **Museum Square** - a civic and cultural setting where planting and play could be woven into the existing hard landscape rather than added on top of it.
- + **Harbourside quaysides** - Narrow Quay, Bathurst Basin, Hannover Quay and Gas Ferry Road - where permeability upgrades and planting margins along the harbour edge could be explored, balanced against harbour authority, heritage and operational constraints.



Demonstrator Project: University Road
Image Credit: MOOWD



Demonstrator Project: Gas Ferry Road
Image Credit: MOOWD



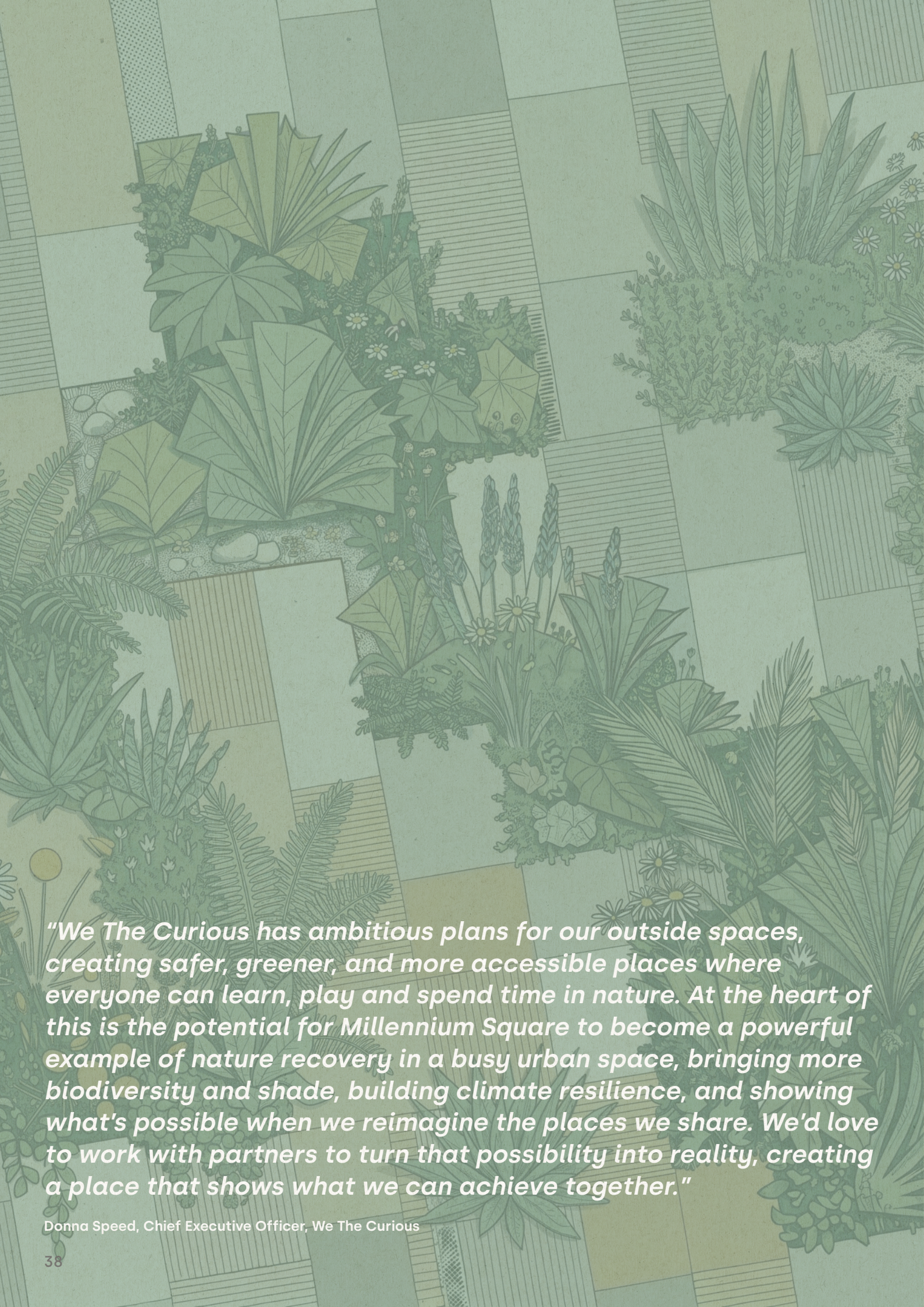
Demonstrator Project: Anchor Road; We the Curious
Image Credit: MOOWD

Additional, Depaving opportunities

Alongside these larger demonstrator ideas, the engagement process also surfaced a number of smaller-scale opportunities. Individually modest in scale, these sites are important precisely because of that — with fewer constraints and a lower cost of delivery, they could be brought forward quickly, well ahead of the larger schemes, to start building visible momentum for the wider proposition:

- + **Rope Walk / Temple Back East** - planting.
- + **St Thomas Street** - introducing greenery to soften what is currently a grey, hard-surfaced street.
- + **Water Lane** - removing areas of brick paving to create a rain garden.
- + **Albion Dock** - additional planting.
- + **Anchor Road; We The Curious** - planting combined with sustainable drainage (SuDS) features.
- + **Council building** - a further small-scale depaving and planting opportunity identified through the engagement, with location and scope to be confirmed.

This is a starting list, not an end point. A dedicated city centre-wide hard-surface audit, mapped against the BID boundary, would likely reveal further sites - both large and small - not yet captured through the workshop process.



"We The Curious has ambitious plans for our outside spaces, creating safer, greener, and more accessible places where everyone can learn, play and spend time in nature. At the heart of this is the potential for Millennium Square to become a powerful example of nature recovery in a busy urban space, bringing more biodiversity and shade, building climate resilience, and showing what's possible when we reimagine the places we share. We'd love to work with partners to turn that possibility into reality, creating a place that shows what we can achieve together."

Donna Speed, Chief Executive Officer, We The Curious

Learning from other Cities

De-paving is an established and growing movement internationally, and any future Bristol strategy would not need to start from first principles. A number of precedents already show what is possible:

- + **Depave (Portland, USA)** - a community-led model in which volunteers physically remove unwanted asphalt and concrete to create community gardens, rain gardens and green space, showing how de-paving can be delivered at low cost through community stewardship rather than capital works alone.
- + **Operatie Steenbreek and the NK Tegelwippen ("tile-lifting") campaign (Netherlands)** - a national movement encouraging residents and businesses to lift paving stones from gardens, yards and public realm and replace them with planting, run as a friendly city-versus-city competition that has proven effective at building public engagement and momentum.



Depave, Portland, USA

- + **Cours Oasis (Paris)** - a programme systematically de-paving and greening the city's schoolyards to reduce urban heat and create accessible green space, illustrating how a de-paving idea can be rolled out incrementally across a large public asset base.
- + **Grey to Green (Sheffield)** - an award-winning scheme converting redundant inner-ring-road carriageway and pavement into a swale-based green corridor, showing that UK highway authorities can deliver de-paving at a meaningful city-centre scale.

The common thread across these examples is that the most successful programmes pair a small number of high-visibility flagship schemes with a broader, lower-cost, incremental programme delivered in partnership with communities and landowners. A Bristol approach could look to strike a similar balance.



Cours Oasis, Paris, France



Operatie Steenbreek, Netherlands



Grey to Green, Sheffield, UK

Questions a future strategy would need to answer

- + How below-ground utilities and services may shape de-paving opportunities at candidate sites, including where planting can be designed to work alongside existing infrastructure.
- + Where highway adoption, ownership and maintenance responsibilities would sit for each site, particularly along routes and reservations owned by Bristol City Council.
- + How a city centre drainage and flood risk assessment could help sequence sites, prioritising locations where de-paving would deliver the greatest surface water management benefit.
- + Where Harbour Authority and heritage or conservation constraints would apply, and where these point towards a partial or permeability-upgrade approach rather than full removal.
- + What a realistic phasing looks like, starting with low-risk, high-visibility quick wins to build momentum, evidence and public support ahead of larger schemes.
- + Who would hold long-term maintenance and stewardship responsibility - potentially community groups, businesses and Avon Wildlife Trust - and how this would be agreed before delivery.
- + How a 'dig once' approach could ensure opportunities for de-paving and planting are considered whenever pavements or roadways are opened up for planned works.



Park Street, Bristol, UK

Image Credit: Bristol City Council



Bristol City Centre, Bristol, UK
Image Credit: Bristol City Council

Next Steps

Turning this proposition into a working strategy does not need to wait for a single, fully resolved plan. We propose a short sequence of practical next steps that could establish whether the idea holds up and begin building the evidence and support needed to scale it up:

- + Commission a city centre-wide hard-surface audit combining GIS data mapping with on-ground surveying, mapped against the BID boundary, to confirm the extent of the opportunity and test the sites identified in this section.
- + Identify a demonstrator project as an early proof-of-concept site, to demonstrate what full de-paving looks like in practice and build the evidence base for further sites.
- + Convene Bristol BID, Bristol City Council and Avon Wildlife Trust to discuss roles, appetite and resourcing for a shared delivery partnership.
- + Check planned highways, drainage and public realm works for opportunities to fold de-paving into schemes that are already being delivered, reducing cost and disruption.
- + Explore funding routes - including developer contributions and climate or greening grants - to support delivery beyond the BID's own resources.
- + Use the outcome of the first quick-win site to make the case for a fully worked de-paving strategy, with its own costed programme and governance, as a follow-on piece of work.

Appendix: Existing Ideas



"This is an ambitious and inspiring vision for Bristol's city centre, recognising green and blue spaces as essential natural infrastructure that can deliver lasting benefits for people and nature, building resilience to a changing climate. The collaborative approach behind this action plan demonstrates both the appetite for, and value of, investing in nature-based solutions. WWT welcomes the opportunity to work with Bristol BID and partners to help realise this vision, which aligns with our own ambition to support Bristol to become the UK's first Wetland City."

Peter Lee, Programme Lead - Wetland Cities, WWT



Freshford Lane, Ridge and Partners

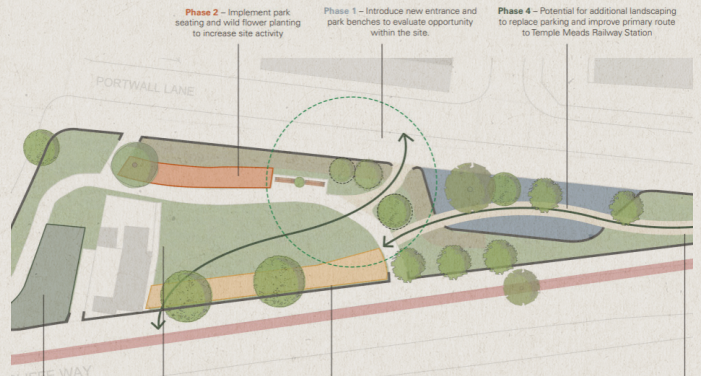


Oxford Street, The Urbanists



Wildflower Meadow, Land Use Consultants

future phases



Portwall Gardens, Ridge and Partners



Rope Walk, Stantec

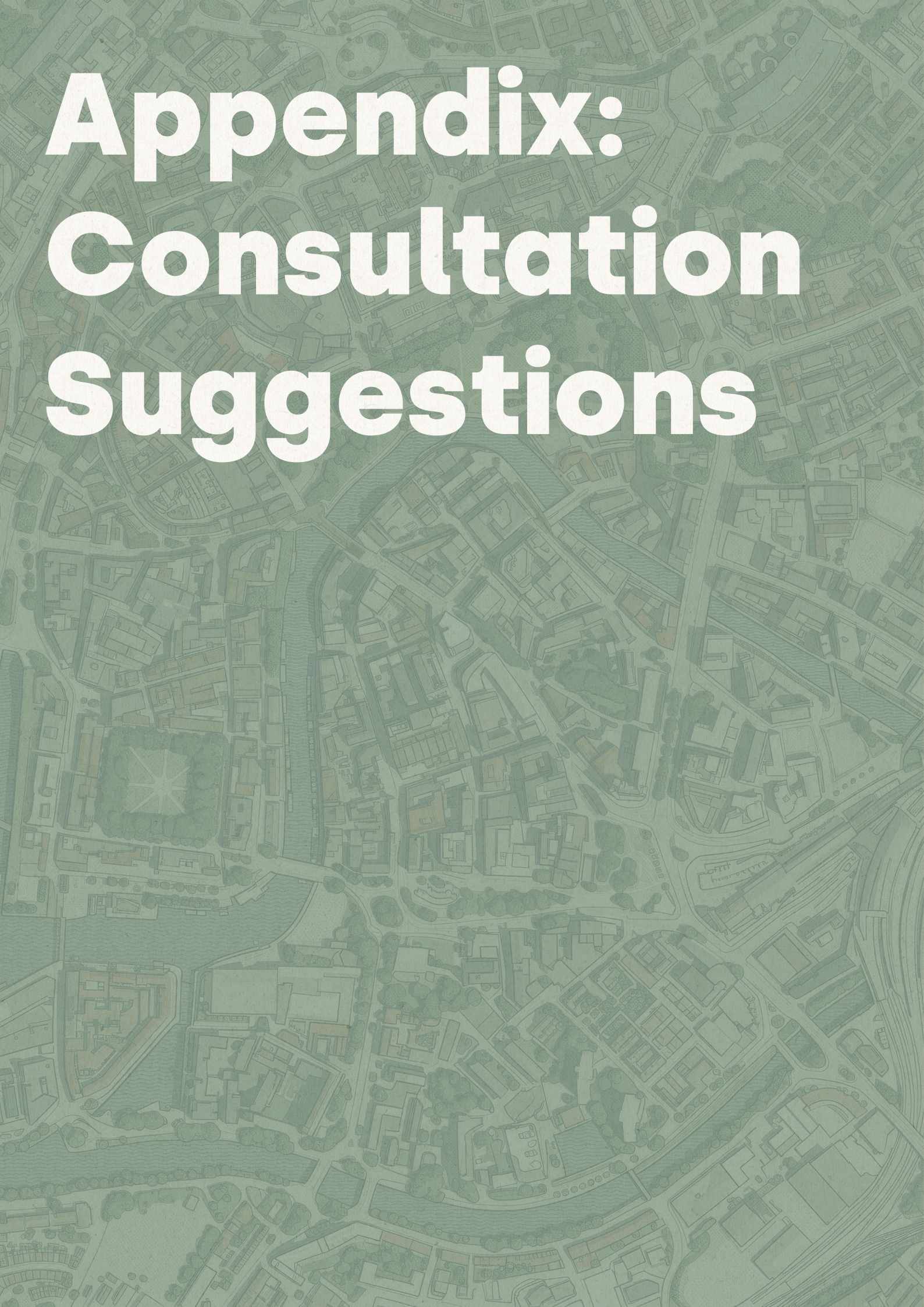
Existing Ideas

Since the BID's Green Audit in 2019, the BID has commissioned a range of consultants to develop ideas for green spaces in Bristol.

We continue to welcome new ideas for public spaces and greening opportunities in the city centre.

This page includes examples of this work:

1. Wildflower Meadow at Bristol Cathedral, Land Use Consultants
2. New seating at Freshford Lane, Ridge and Partners
3. A new design for Portwall Gardens, Ridge and Partners
4. Bringing vibrancy to Rope Walk, Temple Quay, Barton Willmore now Stantec
5. A new vision for Oxford Street, The Urbanists



Appendix: Consultation Suggestions



Consultation Suggestions

Throughout the consultation process, many interventions were suggested across the city. These can be found in the table within this appendix.

Idea	Location	Streetview link	Theme
Planting And Seating	Albion Dock	18 Hannover Pl - Google Maps	New Planting
Floating Ecosystem	Amphitheatre	Bristol, England - Google Maps	Floating Ecosystems
Suds Planting Next To We The Curious	Anchor Road	Anchor Sq - Google Maps	New Planting
Planting Outside Sainsbury's	Avon Street	Avon St - Google Maps	Planting: improved
Space For Planting	Bathurst Basin	7 Trin Mills - Google Maps	New Planting
Seating Along This Stretch	Bathurst Basin	7 Trin Mills - Google Maps	Seating
Berkeley Square, Meadow, Seating,	Berkeley Square	Bristol, England - Google Maps	New Planting
Remove Green Walls, Maintain Beds	Bread Street	New Kingsley Rd - Google Maps	Green Wall
Improved Planting	Brunswick Square	9 Brunswick Square - Google Maps	Planting: improved
Greening And Tree Planting	Canons Way	10 Canons Way - Google Maps	New Planting
Children's Play Ground	Castle Park	33 Wine St - Google Maps	Play
Floating Ecosystem	Castle Park	Castle Bridge - Google Maps	Floating Ecosystems
Wildflower Meadow	Castle Street	87 Castle St - Google Maps	New Planting

Cathedral Walk Playground	Cathedral Walk	Canons Way - Google Maps	Play
Thin And Diversify Planting	Cattlemarket Road	Cattle Market Rd - Google Maps	Planting: improved
Tree And Bed Improvements	Champions Square	Bristol, England - Google Maps	Planting: improved
Remove Seasonal Planting	College Green	Bristol, England - Google Maps	Planting: improved
Play Features On College Green	College Green	Bristol, England - Google Maps	Play
Floating Ecosystem In The Moat	College Green	Bristol, England - Google Maps	Floating Ecosystems
Improve Planting and remove parking	Counterslip	Passage St - Google Maps	Planting: improved
Green Wall Along Frontage	Cumberland Road	134 Cumberland Rd - Google Maps	Green Wall
Murals On The Back Of Roxy	Fairfax Street	48 Fairfax St - Google Maps	Art
Improved Planting And Tidying Up	Freshford Lane	Freshford Ln - Google Maps	Planting: improved
Spike Island Play Area	Gas Ferry Road	Bristol, England - Google Maps	Play
Window Vinyls On The Empty Units	Gas Ferry Road	24 Gas Ferry Rd - Google Maps	Art
Signage Encouraging People To Continue On Harbour Loop	Gas Ferry Road	28 Gas Ferry Rd - Google Maps	Wayfinding
Planting In The Car Parks	Gas Ferry Road	https://maps.app.goo.gl/sqE-Hec7gHdksCGKUA	New Planting
Turn Car Park Into A Playground	Hannover Place	Bristol, England - Google Maps	Play
Seating Next To The Marina	Hannover place	Bristol, England - Google Maps	Seating
Public Realm Around Hannover Place	Hannover place	Bristol, England - Google Maps	Public Realm
Tell History Of The Railway Track	Hannover Quay	Hannover Quay - Google Maps	Art
Create A Sand Garden	Hannover Quay	1 Hannover Quay - Google Maps	New Planting
Improve Space Next To Spitfire	Hannover Quay	Bristol, England - Google Maps	Public Realm
Paddling Pools Into Ponds	Millennium Square	Bristol, England - Google Maps	New Planting
Improvements, Shade, Planting	Millennium Square	Millennium Square - Google Maps	New Planting
Green Wall Up Ventilation Columns X 10	Millennium Square	Millennium Square - Google Maps	Green Wall
Play In This Square	Museum Square	Museum St - Google Maps	Play
Seating	Museum Street	Museum St - Google Maps	Seating
Remove Car Parking	Museum Street	Museum St - Google Maps	Public Realm
New Seating Including Shade	Narrow Quay	Bristol, England - Google Maps	Seating
Redesign Of Oxford Street	Oxford Street	24 Oxford St - Google Maps	Public Realm
Seating Harbourside	Passage Street	Bristol, England - Google Maps	Seating
Add Some Swings Or Play	Portwall Gardens	Bristol, England - Google Maps	Play

Remove Car Parking To Extend Park	Portwall Gardens	21 Portwall Ln - Google Maps	Public Realm
Tidy Up The Central Reservation Planting	Princes St	Prince St - Google Maps	Planting: improved
Planting On The Grassy Bank	Pump Lane	Pump Ln - Google Maps	New Planting
Planting Beneath Trees	Queen Square	21 Queen Square - Google Maps	Planting: improved
Play In Queen Square	Queen Square	21 Queen Square - Google Maps	Play
Potted Plants	Redcliff St	138 Redcliff St - Google Maps	New Planting
Green Wall	Redcliff St	Redcliff St - Google Maps	Green Wall
Floating Ecosystem	Redcliffe Quay	Redcliffe Quay - Google Maps	Floating Ecosystems
New Park While Development is pending	Redcliffe Wharf	Redcliffe Way - Google Maps	Play
Signposting route from Redcliffe Wharf to M Shed Wapping Wharf	Redcliffe Wharf	Redcliffe Way - Google Maps	Wayfinding
Tell The Story Of 'This History' Better	Rivergate	3 Rivergate - Google Maps	Wayfinding
Access To Little Pocket Park	Rivergate	3 Rivergate - Google Maps	Seating
Planting In Unused Corner	Rivergate	3 Rivergate - Google Maps	New Planting
Signposting To Explain Route From Finzels Reach To Temple Quay	Rope Walk	Bristol, England - Google Maps	Wayfinding
New High Quality Seating	Rope Walk	3 Temple Back E - Google Maps	Seating
Potted Plants	Rope Walk	3 Temple Back E - Google Maps	New Planting
Improved Planting And Tidying Up	St Johns Graveyard	John St - Google Maps	Planting: improved
Add Greenery	St Thomas Street	61 St Thomas St - Google Maps	New Planting
Open Up Entrance To Temple Gardens	Temple Gardens	Church Ln - Google Maps	Public Realm
Play Area On Plot 3	Temple Quay	Bristol, England - Google Maps	Play
Floating Ecosystem	Temple Quay new bridge	3 Glass Wharf - Google Maps	Floating Ecosystems
Improve The Planting Here	Temple Street	142 Temple St - Google Maps	Planting: improved
Tidy Up This Bed And Plant	The Friary	Bristol, England - Google Maps	Planting: improved
Seating, Perhaps Temporary	The Grove	Prince St Bridge - Google Maps	Public Realm
Floating Ecosystem	Totterdown Basin	Avon St - Google Maps	Floating Ecosystems
Public Realm Scheme	University Road	34 University Rd - Google Maps	Public Realm
Remove Bricks, Create Rain Garden	Water Lane	5 Water Ln - Google Maps	New Planting
Green Wall And Improved Planting	Water Lane	142 Temple St - Google Maps	Green Wall
Green Wall In Existing Bed	Water Lane	5 Water Ln - Google Maps	Green Wall
Table Tennis Tables	Waterfront Square	Bordeaux Quay - Google Maps	Play
Seating And Planters	Waterfront Square	Bordeaux Quay - Google Maps	Seating



This Vision is a call to action, to build on Bristol's ambition and turn ideas into visible change. By working together, we can create a greener, healthier and more resilient city centre for everyone.