

# BS3 Campus

A New Vision for Regeneration in South Bristol

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## Introduction

BS3 campus started as a campaign to present a different vision for the regeneration of a 25 acre site in South Bristol that is due to be sold for development.

Behind this was an understanding that building houses does not build communities. Rather than this becoming a conventional housing estate development that the community doesn't want and that responds to a best price not best value objective, we have challenged the three public sector landowners to support a more ambitious vision. To use this site to create a platform for community and sustainable living; a new community developed and delivered through partnership.

If the principles behind the Localism Bill and Big Society relate to community empowerment and involvement, challenging old models, cutting through red tape, and helping people to help themselves then this is exactly what we aspire to achieve through bringing forward this vision.

We are suggesting a new development model is required. Not driven by the profit motive of a single housebuilder, which as we have seen too often creates sterile environments such as Bristol's Harbourside, but one that encourages the community to be involved in designing and building the homes and community they want and offers opportunity, financial support and skills training to help people onto the housing ladder.

I have been inspired along with many others to believe this is not just possible but that we could create something that would point the way for others to follow, right here in Bristol. The City Council and other public sector landowners are accountable to us, the residents of Bristol, and we seek to ensure that our voice is heard.

*David Parkes*

[www.bs3campus.org.uk](http://www.bs3campus.org.uk)

## What we hope to achieve

- To create Bristol's first low impact Sustainable Community
- To provide a range of Affordable Housing opportunities
- To provide workspace and a range of community, art and recreation facilities
- To create a safe and integrated environment that is owned, developed and managed through community partnership

## What form this will take...a new model for sustainable living

Plans drawn up by our architect Nash and Partners outline how this site could be developed with a range of new housing, commercial and community buildings, designed to preserve the valuable infrastructure of the college and amenity of the Northern Slopes which would otherwise be lost to a conventional housing development. The College campus would be transformed into a new sustainable village with a mix of housing and apartments, a commercial and community hub, a new health centre, sports and social facilities, studios and workshops. The character of the open space behind would be retained with social and self build housing linked to the Village with walkways and cycleways. A productive area would set aside for growing food with community allotments and orchards.



## Transforming the existing college campus into a new **sustainable village**

Bringing new life to redundant buildings



- **Workspace and Community space**

Adapting the Main College building to provide a commercial hub that would be at the heart of this community and a gateway to the village. Providing managed workspace, meeting space, studio space, education, training and workshop space, a community café, shops and crèche facilities. Providing onsite training and employment opportunities and space to rent on flexible and affordable leasing terms.

- **Sport, Recreation and Relaxation space**

Reusing the sports hall as sport, recreation, performance and function space. Using open space for both formal and informal play and relaxation space.

- **Workshop and Build space**

Reusing the College's workshop block for use as a built environment training workshop to demonstrate build techniques and offer training facilities/workshops for self builders.

- **Social and Medical Care**

A new on-site medical centre is planned with surgeries; chiropody/podiatry clinics; treatment rooms; district nurses office and a pharmacy. We would also support a range of on-site complimentary therapy practices offering classes such as yoga, massage, Tai Chi, etc.

- **A New Primary and Preschool?**



The College could once again become **a centre for learning**

Sharing skills, resources, responsibility and the experience

## Showcasing new housing models

### A new Co-Housing community

Cohousing is a way of living which brings individuals and families together in groups to share common aims and activities while also enjoying their own self-contained accommodation and personal space. Prospective homeowners will work together in designing and developing their homes and have the opportunity to use their own labour and skills in finishing their homes to their own specification. Space and cost saving can be achieved through sharing facilities such as laundry and guest bedrooms and using common services.



### A New Rented Housing model

A new partnership model for rented flats and apartments enabling tenants to share in future increases in the value of their homes. Well designed ecohomes that will offer tenants low cost living. Homes in the heart of the village that will be let at reasonable rents and offer tenants a unique opportunity to share in the capital uplift in their homes thus addressing their principle concern that they are excluded from the financial benefits of the property market. A model of ethical investment offering investors attractive income returns.



### Self Build Housing

Grant Shapps, the housing minister, recently announced that he wishes to see self build in the UK double over the next 10 years. Self build provides the opportunity to save maybe 30% on the cost of a home, provides a range of skills training and encourages community participation. At the College we wish to create a platform for self build development and assist self builders in providing help with finance and training.



We respect the value of the open areas of the Northern slopes and the challenge for us is to incorporate any build into that natural environment in a way that supports and compliments the landscape and respects the biodiversity and habitats of that area.

### Social Housing

We welcome the opportunity to work with social landlords in providing social housing as part of this development. Affordable rent and shared ownership models may be part of this. We also encourage Knightstone to review options for retaining and refurbishing their 70 boarded up flats in the heart of this site recognising the importance of finding viable solutions to refitting and upgrading existing housing stock.



Our aim is to showcase different housing models across the whole of the development and reach a wide spectrum of housing need, not simply provide for those at the top of the social housing register.

..Creating a sense of **security, wellbeing and belonging** in a supportive community

## A safe and car free environment

The Village will be a car free zone creating a safe and quiet environment to live, relax, play and meet. Car parking will be provided for residents and guests adjoining the village. Reducing the impact of roads on this environment is a key aim and this will also help reduce overall development costs. We anticipate introducing a community car pool scheme, subsidised through the community company and encourage use of alternative transport.



## Open Space and Growing space

A large proportion of this site will be retained as open space for the enjoyment of the wider community. This forms part of the green lungs of South Bristol as is part of a wildlife corridor that extends to the outer reaches of the City. We wish to retain the character and biodiversity of this space and the community will take responsibility for its stewardship and management.

It is intended that there are areas of allotments and orchards within this area that will provide opportunity for growing food on a cooperative basis and for the benefit of the community.



## Stewardship

The overarching objective of creating a low impact community from an urban landscape on this scale, and to do so on a commercial basis, is a great challenge.

We aim to build passive housing, and demonstrate new forms of sustainable construction techniques. We plan to undertake an initial energy audit and work with energy generation companies and other advisors such as Centre for Sustainable Energy in Bristol to optimise the energy use on this site. We recognise that collective community responsibility is a key element of sustainable living.



## Who will deliver this?

Building a new community is an interesting and challenging objective, particularly on this scale and within this socio/economic environment. To a large degree this will be a learning experience. We therefore are looking to bring together a range of skills and resources to help deliver this.



### 1. The Landowners

We have invited the three landowners to support us as partners in this project recognising that their policy objectives are completely aligned to our vision. Their knowledge, skills, resources and influence would all be valuable in helping make this happen. We have presented to them a partnership model that offers them real value in terms of financial, social and environmental benefits.

### 2. The Local Community

The BS3/4 community extends through Bedminster, Southville, Knowle, Filwood, Windmill Hill and Totterdown. We hope to bring all sections of that community together around this project and lift, support and inspire this community to believe that they can be part of creating something of major significance and real value.

There are areas of social and economic deprivation in South Bristol with large estates of postwar housing, high unemployment, benefits dependency and poor infrastructure. These areas have seen little major investment, regeneration or improvement over many decades. The challenge is to be relevant to that community which why we seek to offer opportunities for employment and training along with affordable housing on this site beyond the limited aspiration of a private housing estate.

This project's aim is to create a new vision of community living; one that is built on shared ownership, social responsibility and shared values. Community involvement in the design of this model is paramount.

### 3. Delivery Partners

To put this site in the hands of a single commercial housebuilder is we believe totally inappropriate. To remove valuable social infrastructure to replace it with a range of standard private and social housing in an area that is dominated by such housing is a short sighted objective. Not only is this not what the community wants but the site itself is not well suited for such a development.

The intention is to work with a range of delivery partners from both public and private sector, working to a common goal. This is likely to include public sector agencies; private developers; investors; self build organisations and housing management organisations.

We do not limit our vision to standard models of delivery. In so far as we set out with the intention of developing new models, new pioneering organisations may emerge as partners. We encourage entrepreneurial thinking and seek to demonstrate we can offer value for money solutions and commercial returns for all shareholders, stakeholders and partners.

## Structure and Ownership

In the appendix we have set out a preliminary structure diagram that identifies various elements of this project.

The fundamental shift in thinking starts with the objective that the platform for this development would be a community owned company (CIC). This preserves the long term integrity of the development and binds the various parties in ownership and collective responsibility for its long term management. It also provides an affordable platform for development.

Representatives of that organisation would include the landowners, partners, stakeholders, occupiers and community representatives and a management company. This not for profit organisation would hold title to the estate and be responsible for its management.

The leasehold structure and payment of groundrents enables a flow of funding through that company to the landowner(s) by which we can offer continued participation and financial reward through the partnership. Through this mechanism we offer an alternative to the sale of the site for profit but at the same time offer the landowners profit participation.

Importantly this would also provide a flexible and affordable platform for development. One by which the upfront land costs are minimised helping the financing of self build homes and other housing models. One that preserves the existing assets and brings them into re-use for the community at affordable rents.



The Freehold Landowner

Community Company

**Social Housing**

**Private Affordable Housing**

**Community Assets**

**The College Hub**

**Health Centre**

Affordable Rent  
Flats

Self Build Housing

Management co

Management co

Practice manager

Shared Equity  
Houses

Cohousing and  
self finish housing

Allotments  
Open Space  
Common areas  
Sports centre  
Performance venue  
Build workshops  
Car pool

Shops  
School and crèche  
Workshops  
Training space  
Studios  
Workhub  
Management offices  
Community Cafe

GP surgeries  
Clinics  
Treatment room  
Midwives office  
District nurses office  
Pharmacy

Self Build  
Housing

Tenantshare  
rented flats

## The principles behind this vision

1. New models are what are required. The problem has been that land and development procurement has been run the same way forever and new thinking is unlikely to come from City Hall or the big corporate housing companies and agencies.
2. Public land is a public asset and should be used to maximum benefit. This goes way beyond price.
3. Sustainable development is not simply about constructing buildings to high design standards. Collective responsibility is needed to achieve real social and environmental change within our society.
4. We should respect the concept of profit or fair reward for risk. The expectation that land should be for free is a constraint. Only by demonstrating that we can create commercially viable models will we achieve real credibility.
5. Community engagement is in many instances a process by which Authorities seek to get buy in to their proposals. It is often at best consultation, not involvement and both parties can be left feeling unheard and wearied by such a process. We seek different ways of engaging community and responding to their voice.
6. We seek to engender PARTNERSHIP in this process of landowners, developers, funders, community, occupiers and agencies. Seeking consensus, respecting their aspirations and recognising the benefits and real value that this will bring to each.
7. Talking about ideas is only the first step. Ultimately it will be down to a few enlightened pioneers to demonstrate what is possible and others will be drawn to follow. We seek to lead by example to show what is possible and therefore inspire others in self belief, not by negative campaigning.
8. The College campus represents an opportunity to challenge preconceptions and deliver an alternative vision. There are those that have said this cannot be achieved. It is therefore up to us to show it can.
9. If we don't extend this vision to the least able in our society we will simply be relevant to a minority and thus exclude members of our community. Building self belief amongst the disadvantaged and bringing them into our community is at the heart of what we aspire to achieve.

## Our supporters

Bristol Green Capital  
Ashley Vale Self build  
community  
Bristol Zero Carbon  
Bristol Cohousing forum  
Ethical Property  
Foundation  
Ecos Trust

Nash and Partners  
Creating Excellence  
George Fergusson  
Knowle West Media  
Centre  
Ecomotive  
Bristol Community  
Land Trust

Re:build  
Climate Works  
White Design  
Noma Architects  
UK Cohousing network  
Centre for Sustainable Energy  
Coexist  
Forum for the Future

Bedminster Quakers  
Local residents  
Students from Bristol's Shift  
Design course  
Bright Green Futures  
Centre for Sustainable Energy  
Connolly and Callaghan

## Testimonials

I believe this kind of project is essential for the progression of humanity.

Ade Morley, Forest farming Uk

It would be great to have an inspiring community area and for Bristol to be leading the way in sustainable building

Louise Dark, Holmesdale Road BS3

I am very excited about this project and would love to get involved.

Caroline Wilson, Weymouth Rd BS3

Great idea, hope you pull it off.

Alice Human Richmond Road BS3

An excellent idea. Just what Bristol needs and should be doing.

D Weinreb U Shoot photos BS3

This could breathe the kind of new life and attitude into an area that has got lots of potential but could do with a bit more support and inspiration.

This is a timely and important proposal

Rob Hopkins, Transition UK

This is terrific stuff. Inspirational.

Alastair Sawday, Sawday Publishing

Anything that improves the quality of life in Bristol South should be welcomed with open arms.

Lesley Panetta, Weymouth Road BS3

This is an inner city area with no facilities for young and old alike. There is no reason why it could not be the greatest success in Bristol. RIDE ON!

Schemes like this add to a city, in a way that ordinary suburban housing developments never can.

Lon Barfield Designer and Author

Add something memorable to the map of Bristol rather than something mediocre!

Very interested in this project as a progressive concept & also due personal interest,

Sarah Thomas, Long Ashton

i.e. need for affordable rehousing for self & daughter within positive community - v exciting ideas, would love to be part of this!

This is a wonderful opportunity to have a hugely positive effect on many people's lives.

Neil Elliot, Bristol Co-housing forum.

Living only minutes from the proposed development site, I find the potential of this project exciting and with a community arts background I am keen to be involved.

Andy Joyce, Weymouth Road BS3

Great idea, great use of space! This is the way to go- de-centralised autonomous spaces for the benefit of community- it makes me happy to know that there are people out there that care! Good luck!

China Denbigh Street, Bristol BS3

We have a self build just down the road...it's been great for the community and WAY better than a bunch of rabbit hutches no-one wants to live in.

Von Icke, St Werburghs