Road Sharing
A Restorative Approach

A Bristol Mediation Project

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Contents:

Executive Summary 3
Introduction 4
The Project 5
Results 9
Evaluation 12
Conclusions/recommendations 14
With Thanks 14

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Grant Outline
Appendix 2 Promotional Flyer
Appendix 2B Expressions of Interest Form
Equal Opportunities Form
Appendix 3A & B Bristol Post Article
Appendix 4 Evaluation Form A
Evaluation Form B
Appendix 5 Analysis of Feedback
Appendix 6 Analysis of Change
Appendix 7 Things learnt/things will do differently
Appendix 8 Issues/Suggestions from Groups
Executive summary

‘Road Sharing – A Restorative Approach’ was an innovative project funded by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner through Bristol City Council, linked to Bristol’s status as European Green Capital for 2015. It was undertaken by Bristol Mediation, following a proposal put forward, which employed two part-time project coordinators for half a day each per week for 10 months.

The initial phase of the project included drawing up an information sheet and contacting in excess of 100 organisations in Bristol. The idea was to identify stakeholder groups of different types of road users, and work with these groups through small meetings to identify issues to be taken to a larger restorative meeting in February 2016. The stakeholder groups identified were: car drivers, cyclists, pedestrians, motorcyclists, bus drivers, lorry drivers, taxi drivers and disabled people.

As the initial recruitment was slower than expected, without sufficient members of any of the proposed stakeholder groups to hold individual meetings it was decided to hold small groups of mixed road users, using a peace-making circle as the restorative process. In this process participants hold a talking piece (we used a stone to signify roads) which is passed round the circle enabling people to have a voice. These groups worked well, as they could be tailored to participants’ availability, with 71 people participating. A further 25 people expressed interest in attending but were unable to attend the planned meetings through a variety of circumstances. Whilst a high number identified themselves as multiple road users (i.e. car drivers, cyclists and pedestrians) we asked all that attended to identify the group that they identified as their main mode of road use.

The results were very positive. Instead of regarding different road users as enemies and competitors, this project harnessed listening and consideration of other views, leading to a cooperative ethos. We conclude that this model of restorative working could be applied to many other situations, such as focus groups and hard-to-reach groups with fixed views.

Participants said the workshops met their expectations, were well organised, and they appreciated the opportunity to work with others to find possible ways forward. They had a greater understanding of other road users in the city, and they felt they had had a voice and felt heard. We used ‘before and after’ forms to capture any changes in attitude towards other road users, and these showed positive changes in attitude towards road users who were present in the group, suggesting that this method can improve attitudes towards other road users.
Introduction

This report describes the project and the outcomes which ran from June 2015 to March 2016.

The original idea came from a proposal written by Clive Gray, Public Health, in November 2014 which was presented to a meeting of the Restorative Bristol Board. This was focused on thinking about a possible restorative contribution to Bristol's achievement of European Green Capital status for 2015 to tackle the conflict experienced on the roads between different users. It was thought the best mechanism to achieve this would be an application from Bristol Mediation to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for this innovative piece of work. Accordingly Bristol Mediation applied and was awarded £10,000. (See Appendix 1).

This funding was a Community Safety Grant from the OPCC via Safer Bristol Crime, Drugs and Alcohol Partnership (Bristol City Council). The agreement included the preparation to enable a facilitated restorative conference between different road users in the city and a 6 minute short film to promote the work to wider communities.

Expected outcomes were:

- Improved communication between different and diverse groups of road users across the city
- Empowerment of road users in finding a way to move forward with this issue
- Improved understanding from different groups perspective of road use in the city
- Enablement of different groups to have had a voice and to have felt heard
- Enablement of groups to have had input from development stage through to post conference
- Increased input from a diverse range of people from across the city
- Development of restorative champions who can continue to develop and promote the work so that it goes wider
- Increased confidence in neighbourhoods/communities/roads across the city

Performance measures: Outputs:

**Quarter 1 (April to June 2015)**
- Recruitment of Project Coordinators
- Creation of restorative approaches groups

**Quarter 2 (July to September 2015)**
- Meetings to take place with each group to prepare for conference

**Quarter 3**
- Host and facilitate a conference with all working groups

**Quarter 4**
- To create a 6 minute legacy video and final report.
The Project

Quarter 1/Quarter 2

Two project coordinators were appointed from June 2015, to work half a day per week each for 10 months. Annali Grimes and Marian Liebmann were jointly appointed to take on this role with complementary skills to cover the work entailed.

The project coordinators first task, with the help of Jules Cox, Director of Bristol Mediation, was to produce a project outline to attract participants. This included a flyer for the projects as well as an ‘expression of interest’ form to enable accurate collection of personal details, diversity information etc, and both these documents were uploaded on to the Bristol Mediation website. (See appendix 2A & 2B).

Separate group meetings were booked in for different road users, e.g. a meeting for cyclists, a meeting for car drivers, a meeting for pedestrians etc. We hoped to include organisations and individuals, however spaces were limited.

‘Each small group will attend a two-hour meeting in November 2015, and will then choose two or three people to represent their interests at a larger all-day meeting in February 2016.

The large meeting in February will be run using a restorative approach. This means that the focus will be on expression of concerns, dialogue between different groups of road users and finding a constructive way forward. It is hoped that those who attend will gain greater awareness and understanding of other road users’ perspectives.’

Recruiting people for the small groups

We researched, through our own networks, links and the internet organisations, contacts and individuals in the following categories:

- Pedestrians
- Cyclists
- Motorbikes
- Car drivers
- Disabled/ elderly people
- Bus and taxi drivers
- Commercial vehicles
- Other street users (e.g. Playing Out)

Project Coordinators made contact with identified organisations and groups as well as promoting the project through Voscur, Restorative Bristol Website, Bristol Mediation website and social networking, and through existing networks using various forms of contact. Over 100 organisations were initially contacted in September with an initial low number of expressions of interest (9). However we later understood that this is the expected rate of response.
Quarter 2 - A change of focus for the small groups

It became clear that it would be a challenge to recruit equal numbers of participants from the different road user groups with similar availability, especially within the time and resources of the project, so the original idea of single-road user groups was revised. It also quickly became clear from the expressions of interest forms that were being returned that many prospective participants used several forms of transport.

It was therefore decided to invite participants from all of the road user groups to mixed meetings to fit in with their availability with morning, afternoon and evening groups arranged. Meeting times planned with little take-up were then cancelled. We were very grateful for the help from Mark Parry (Bristol City Council), who coordinated these room bookings for us in Brunel House.

Based on these amendments the original invitation was amended with the following changes:

‘There will be separate meetings taking place during October, November and December. We hope to include organisations and individuals. These will be run using a restorative approach. This means that the focus will be on expression of concerns, dialogue between different groups of road users and finding a constructive way forward. It is hoped that those who attend will gain greater awareness and understanding of other road users’ perspectives and enable people to work together and provide recommendations which will be considered in future developments in the city.

Each small group will attend a two-hour meeting, and will then express interest to be participating in the larger meeting in February 2016.’

Quarter 3

Additional contacts were made with repeat telephone calls/emails to all the organisations we had not heard from. This resulted in 11 further expressions of interest with more starting to come in, so that the total had risen to 61 by December 2015. Many of these were from pedestrians, cyclists and car drivers. But we also managed to recruit disabled people, taxi drivers and bus drivers. A large amount of time in this quarter was spent coordinating and running the small meeting groups as well as making contact with other linking agencies, e.g. Sustrans, Good Transport Plan etc.

Quarter 4

By January we were planning a large conference in February and researched suitable venues to ensure that there was a larger space as well as additional break-out space for smaller groups and for filming. An event was created via Eventbrite which was circulated to all who had attended the smaller meetings and shown interest in attending the larger meeting, as well as additional expressions of interest received. The response was low with limited availability from participants. In addition there were clear financial implications through the need for BSL interpreters on the day, additional facilitators and also the increased cost of a fully accessible and suitable venue.
After consultation between the coordinators, the Director of Bristol Mediation and BCC it was decided to change this to ensure the best possible outcome. It was felt that we had so much positive information from the small groups that it would be a better use of the limited resources to concentrate on evaluating the data we had, and to proceed with one final meeting which would be filmed. It was therefore decided to finish with one mixed group, filming this group as well as filming other participants of the previous meetings to ensure that the different road use groups were represented.

**How the small group sessions were run**

**For each of the 11 small groups, the aims were posted on the wall:**

- Use a restorative approach – all to have a voice and feel heard
- Get people talking and listening to each other
- Make suggestions to take forward to a larger meeting in February
- Feed ideas to Bristol City Council

**The ground rules were also posted on the wall:**

- Mobile phones off or on silent
- Uninterrupted time to talk
- Respect for each other
- Give others space to speak
- Speak for yourself
- Acknowledge and respect our differences
- Ask if anything else?

The small groups started with the coordinators introducing how the meeting would be run and the ground rules. All attendees were then asked to introduce themselves and their issues, then let the group choose which issues to pursue in exchange and dialogue. We had also asked participants to send in any issues they had, ahead of attending the group.

Each group was different, according to the composition of the group, and different issues were aired. The discussions were recorded by one of the facilitators on a flipchart, visible to all. A recording device was also used to capture what people had learnt and what they might do differently.

For one meeting, we had an observer (the film-maker, who wanted to get an idea of the nature of the meetings before planning the filming of the last group). She wrote:

> The restorative meeting I attended as part of the Road Sharing project was very interesting in content and process. People with differing needs seemed to settle once they realised the meeting would be held as a safe process and they wouldn't be vulnerable, once making their points, however controversial. The introduction made it very clear that each person would have time to speak in detail. At times I thought some might lose patience with how long others spoke for. But, having listened, they then understood that they too would be listened to. I felt they appreciated the
restorative approach. The summaries given were also very clear, which allowed people to move on, as they understood that their points had been noted and everyone’s views included.’

Collaboration with other organisations

We realised that our work might overlap with Sustrans’ Good Transport Plan for Bristol, so we met to discuss how best to work together. Due to differing time frames there was little possibility of active collaboration, however there was close liaison and we attended the launch of this work on 21 January. Jon Usher from Sustrans was also invited to be part of our last small group and agreed to be filmed so that we could capture his comments.

In addition we had a visit from the OPCC on 20 October, which was encouraging of our work. They emphasised the importance of bringing people together for dialogue, whether or not the project resulted in a large meeting or not.

Promotion/Media Interest

Whilst we were promoting the project to gain expressions of interest, the Bristol Post interviewed the Project Coordinators with an excellent and thoughtful article about the project in the Bristol Post on 29 September. (Appendix 3A & 3B)

This article engendered further media interest including national newspapers and Points West – unfortunately the slant of these other forms of media, without relevant information or contact with Bristol Mediation, had a negative impact on the project which was upsetting for Bristol Mediation, OPCC and Bristol City Council, however we had little control over the various misrepresentations. However, it certainly put the project on the map. There was also much traffic on social media, including a wave of anti-cyclist diatribes. Bristol Mediation posted a response on social media, giving the facts and encouraging people to sign up so that their voices could be heard, but none of those expressing strong views on Facebook came forward to the project.

As a result of this experience, we refused all further media invitations until the end of the project, with any additional media contact going through BCC PR Department. This matter will need careful consideration by Bristol City Council and OPCC, as there is likely to be further media interest at the end of the project, especially as it is a unique project, as far as we are aware. Handled carefully, this media interest could be very positive for BCC and OPCC.

In view of the original nature of this project, we would recommend publishing articles on the process and the results including circulation of the film. Possible outlets for these include the Restorative Bristol website, Resolutions (the Restorative Justice Council magazine), the Restorative Justice Council website, RJ Online (produced by Prison Fellowship International) and OPCC and Bristol City Council communications. Bristol Mediation will also publish the film and the report from this work on their website when the draft has been approved by BCC. Thought also needs to be given to the use of social media. As we have seen, it can be a haven for destructive criticism and venting of prejudice, but carefully handled, may be able to contribute to positive interest.
Results of the Project

Following the initial research and preparation work we coordinated and facilitated 11 small mixed meetings during November, December and January, 5 in the morning, 2 in the afternoon and 4 in the evening, with the best attended sessions being run in the mornings.

The dates were:

- November 3 (pm), 6 (am), 19 (evening);
- December 1 (two groups – am & evening), 2 (am);
- January 8 (two groups – am & evening), 19 (evening), 22 (pm);
- February 19 (am).

A total of 71 people took part in the small groups. A further 25 people expressed interest but were unable to attend due to their other commitments. The groups included a mixture of road users: cyclists, pedestrians, car drivers, motorcyclists, taxi drivers, bus drivers, disabled people including blind people, young, middle-aged and older adults. This included individuals as well as representatives from other groups in the city.

![Road Users](image)

While cyclists, car drivers and pedestrians presented themselves readily for the groups, we had to work hard to ensure that taxi drivers, bus drivers, motorcyclists and disabled people were represented. We were ultimately successful in finding these, and the only unrepresented group was lorry drivers, despite our sustained efforts with haulage, waste management organisations etc.

However, this categorisation is only part of the picture, as many participants used several forms of transport as appropriate, e.g. pedestrian/ bus/ bike/ car.
Road sharing
a restorative approach

We also gathered data on area of Bristol that people live, gender, age, disability and ethnic background:

![Pie chart](chart1.png)

**Age**
- Under 16
- 16-24
- 25-49
- 50-64
- 65-74
- 75+

![Pie chart](chart2.png)

**Ethnic Origin**
- White British
- Black British
- Black Caribbean
- Mixed Ethnicity
- White Other

![Pie chart](chart3.png)

**Disability**
- Disabled
- Visually Impaired
- Hearing Impaired
- Preferred not to say
- Not disabled

![Pie chart](chart4.png)

**Area of City by Postcode**
- BS1
- BS2
- BS3
- BS4
- BS5
- BS6
- BS7
- BS9
- BS13
- BS14
- BS15
- BS16
- BS22
- BS37
- BA3

**Organisations**
We were keen to involve organisations as well as individuals. In all 34 people were involved as individuals and 37 as members of an organisation. There were also several participants who, while working for an organisation, attended the groups as individuals.
Organisations represented

- Access for All
- Alliance for Greater Transport
- Bristol City Council – Neighbourhood Officer
- Bristol City Council – Sustainable Transport
- Bristol Cycling Campaign
- Bristol Motorcycle Training Centre
- BPAC – Bristol Physical Access Chain
- Case Communications
- Cyclists Touring Club
- Cycle Sunday
- Destination Bristol
- Easton Energy Group
- First Group
- Kiddical Mass
- Lifecycle
- Motorcycle Action Group
- National Taxi Association (local branch)
- Playing Out
- Royal National Institute for Blind People (RNIB)
- Sustrans

Additional Groups

We realised that some groups of people were not represented, particularly disabled and young people because of difficulty taking part in the mixed sessions. The coordinators therefore liaised with appropriate agencies and managed to hold separate sessions for the following groups which had not been included:

Fairfield High School: A group of Year 9 and Year 10 students
D/deaf people’s group, brought together by Trish Vallance of Bristol City Council, with the help of Clive Gray of the Restorative Bristol Board.

We also liaised with LinkAge with a view to holding a group with their service users, but in the end they were not able to arrange this within the timescale of the project. However, we had several participants in the older age bracket, so we feel their voices have been included. We also spent considerable energy trying to arrange a student group from UWE but in the end the students did not have suitable availability.

Filming

In view of the huge amount of positive material gathered, we decided, in consultation with Bristol City Council and OPCC, not to run the proposed large group, but to run one last small group which would be filmed.

This took place on 19 February and went very well with 8 participants. Our film-maker Lee Cox also filmed several participants from the previous groups, to ensure representation from the different road user groups and to elicit their views on the value of this work. We met to discuss this filming and look at the material we had before this was edited into a 6 minute film, which will be shared with OPCC and Bristol City Council (and other agencies that were involved in this project) in a couple of months’ time after the editing has been completed.
Evaluation

We evaluated the group sessions in several ways with assistance from Dr Nikki McKenzie of UWE in developing this:

- Before-and-after forms on attitudes to other road users
- A feedback sheet at the end of the group on their experience of the group
- A final round in which we asked all participants to say one thing they had learnt, and one thing they might do differently.

The precise items depended on the make-up of the group. For instance, in a group which included motorcycles, someone said ‘I learnt about issues for motorbikes, I didn’t know about them before’ and then ‘I will have more respect for motorbikes on the road.’

For each participant we had a form with basic data, a ‘before-and-after’ form concerned with attitudes to different road user groups, and responses to a questionnaire about their experience in the small groups.

A volunteer with Bristol Mediation from UWE worked with us to analyse this data, linking this to each group’s make-up. This data was then matched with the target outcomes set at the beginning of the project. The evaluation forms are included as Appendix 4 and the results for the questionnaire are shown in Appendix 5.

Concerning the process of the group, people said the workshops met their expectations, were well organised, and they appreciated the opportunity to work with others to find possible ways forward. They had a greater understanding of other road users in the city, and they felt they had had a voice and felt heard. However, they did not feel more confident using the roads in the city.

Charts from this data

From the ‘before and after’ forms, we hoped to map any shifts in attitude. Although one two-hour group might not be expected to produce much change, if any, 8 groups showed a positive shift, while 2 showed a small negative shift (there were only 10 groups to be evaluated this way, as we did not use the ‘before and after’ questionnaire with the school group.)

Our research assistant analysed the figures from the ‘before and after’ forms and produced graphs based on these (see Appendix 6). These showed positive changes in attitude towards road users who were present in the group, suggesting that this method can improve attitudes towards other road users.

Our question to participants ‘Is there one thing you have learnt?’ and ‘Is there one thing you might do differently?’ elicited interesting answers, and showed that, even in a two-hour group session, learning can take place which may result in people changing their behaviour. The full list is given in Appendix 7.
In addition to the above, we have a huge amount of data on people’s views and thoughts that they were keen to be shared within the group and to local authority other groups that may be able to influence change in the city. We have tried to organise it to be readable and user-friendly, and include this as an Appendix 8.

Discussion

Our original approach – small stake-holder groups feeding in to a larger dialogue process was based on an assumption that there would be a coherent view from each group, and that this would be in conflict with other groups, as in a standard large-scale dispute scenario. However, we did not find this to be the case. There was much variation of issues within each group of road users, and considerable agreement between different groups of road users. This made for interesting group processes and much learning from each other. As facilitators, we also learnt from each group, as different issues were presented and discussed.

There is also the point mentioned previously in this report that many people use a variety of modes of transport, as appropriate, so they are able to see issues from several points of view. And many times participants emphasised that we are all human beings, who sometimes make mistakes, and need to develop tolerance and empathy for each other.

What is clear from the responses is that the groups were appreciated by almost everyone who took part, as a safe and welcoming space where they could air their issues and be listened to.

There were also positive shifts in attitude towards types of road user, where they had been part of the group. As in traditional restorative justice, the changes in attitude resulted from direct meetings of participants sharing their views and issues. However, while it is clearly valuable to provide processes which enable individual change, this may not be enough to effect system change.

This leads us to suggest that a restorative approach would be useful for many situations where contentious issues are at stake – using mixed groups to bring problems to the fore in a way that is not adversarial and can engender a change of attitude. This could also have applications for hard-to-reach groups with fixed opinions, or for incidents of ‘road rage’.

At some point it would be useful to involve decision makers in a larger group including some of the small group participants, to share the findings of the project using a restorative approach. It would also be useful for planners to be involved, to let people know why things are planned in certain ways and how things are taken forward – judging by the results of the project, this could result in greater understanding from road users.
Conclusion of the Pilot Project

This project took off in a different direction from the one originally envisaged. We started with a traditional ‘stakeholder model’ and finished with a more flexible restorative model. It has shown the power of small groups of different road users meeting to share their issues using a restorative approach. The model used was a peace-making circle with a talking piece worked well and provided the environment for people to feel safe airing their issues.

The results showed that people found the groups useful and enjoyable, and learnt something which enabled them to consider how they might make a change towards other road users. There are many possible applications for these groups, in terms of using a restorative approach in different situations where contentious issues are at stake. We hope the project will provide a blue-print for further work in this area and for further consultations/developments locally.

Recommendations

In view of the original nature of this project, it will also be worth publishing articles on the process and the results. Possible outlets for these include the Restorative Bristol website, Resolutions (the Restorative Justice Council magazine), the Restorative Justice Council website, RJ Online (produced by Prison Fellowship International) and OPCC and Bristol City Council communications. There may be others.

Our recommendations moving forward are therefore to:

- Bristol City Council to respond to the suggestions/comments of participants in Appendix 8
- Publicise the project and its results
- Restorative Bristol to hold a restorative meeting between decision makers, planners and some of the group participants
- Consider using the restorative approaches workshop with hard-to-reach groups Avon and Somerset Police to consider using restorative approaches for incidents of ‘road rage’

With Thanks:

Thanks are due to our Sponsors, Office of the Avon and Somerset Police Crime Commissioner and Bristol City Council, Marian Liebmann & Annali Grimes, Project Coordinators. Andre Jotle and Bryher Bloor (volunteer assistants with Bristol Mediation), all of the individuals and organisations who assisted, and participated in the project and the making of the film, Clive Gray from Public Health, Trish Vallance and Mark Parry, Bristol City Council, Restorative Bristol Board, Lee Cox and the filming and editing crew.
Appendix 1

The Agreement between Bristol Mediation and Bristol City Council

This funding was a Community Safety Grant from the OPCC via Safer Bristol Crime, Drugs and Alcohol Partnership (Bristol City Council). The agreement between Bristol City Council and Bristol Mediation was signed on 14 April 2015.

The agreement was as follows:

1. The funding will be used to prepare and enable a facilitated restorative conference between different road users in the city.
2. The funding will be used to create a 6 minute short film (approx) which can be used to help promote the work at the conference to the wider communities.
3. This Agreement is to be governed by and construed in accordance with English Law.

Outcomes expected:

- Improved communication between different and diverse groups of road users across the city.
- Empowerment of road users in finding a way to move forward with this issue.
- Improved understanding from different groups perspective of road use in the city.
- Enablement of different groups to have had a voice and to have felt heard.
- Enablement of groups to have had input from development stage through to post conference.
- Increased input from a diverse range of people from across the city.
- Development of restoration champions who can continue to develop and promote the work so that it goes wider.
- Increase confidence in neighbourhoods/communities/roads across the city.

Performance measures:
Outputs:

Quarter 1

• Recruitment of Project Coordinator

• Creation of steering groups to include, but not limited to:
  1. Pedestrians
  2. Cyclists
  3. Taxi Drivers
  4. Private Drivers
  5. Commercial Vehicle Drivers
  6. Bus Drivers
  7. Disabled Road Users

Quarter 2
At least 1 meeting with each steering group to prepare for conference

Quarter 3
Host and facilitate one conference to include all working groups

Quarter 4
Create a 6 minute legacy video of the conference

General Outcomes Expected

• 70% of participants have an increased understanding and awareness of other road user needs on completion of the conference
• 85% of participants feel satisfied with the process
• 85% of participants feel more tolerant to other road users on completion of the conference
• 100% of participants have an increased understanding of restorative approaches on completion of the conference
• 100% of participants felt they had an opportunity to have their say throughout the process

Monitoring expectations:

Safer Bristol monitoring forms are to be submitted quarterly to your Safer Bristol Contract Manager on the following dates:

1. 1\textsuperscript{st} April-30\textsuperscript{th} June 2015 – Monitoring due date Friday 11\textsuperscript{th} July
2. 1\textsuperscript{st} July-30\textsuperscript{th} September – Monitoring due date Friday 10\textsuperscript{th} October
3. 1\textsuperscript{st} October-31\textsuperscript{st} December – Monitoring due date Friday 16\textsuperscript{th} January 2016
4. 1\textsuperscript{st} January-31\textsuperscript{st} March 2016 – Monitoring due date Friday 10\textsuperscript{th} April
Bristol is well known for its clogged streets and air pollution problems, as cars, bikes, buses, taxis and Lorries compete with each other on its narrow congested roads. Disabled road users and pedestrians have a hard time too. These issues can lead to a lot of conflict and ‘road rage’.

What can we do?

In the year that Bristol is European Green Capital, the Police Crime Commissioner is funding a project to bring road users together to discuss ways forward. It has awarded £10,000 to Bristol Mediation, the established independent local organisation which helps citizens resolve conflicts. Two part-time project workers have been appointed who will make contact with small groups of road users, to listen to their views and concerns.

There will be separate group meetings for different road users, e.g. a meeting for cyclists, a meeting for car drivers, and so on. We hope to include organisations and individuals, however spaces will be limited. Each small group will attend a two-hour meeting in November 2015, and will then choose two or three people to represent their interests at a larger all-day meeting in February 2016.

The large meeting in February will be run using a restorative approach. This means that the focus will be on expression of concerns, dialogue between different groups of road users and finding a constructive way forward. It is hoped that those who attend will gain greater awareness and understanding of other road users’ perspectives and work together to find positives way forward to reduce conflict on the roads.

The project will be evaluated using questionnaires and filmed interviews of participants before and after the large meeting. And Bristol Mediation will communicate the ideas and results of the restorative conference to relevant local agencies so that these can be given further consideration. This will also tie into the Good Transport Plan that Bristol Green Capital Partnership are currently developing for the city.
If you or your organisation wants to share your views and concerns by joining one of the small groups, please download and complete the form on the Bristol Mediation website

http://bristol-mediation.org/Road Sharing A Restorative Approach/.

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Marian Liebmann       Tel: 07903 447518
E-mail:               roaduse@bristol-mediation.org
# Road Sharing – A Restorative Approach

## Road User Form

Please return the form to [roaduse@bristol-mediation.org](mailto:roaduse@bristol-mediation.org) or by post to

Bristol Mediation, Unit 43 Easton Business Centre, Felix Road, Bristol BS5 0HE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your Name:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Area or Post code:</td>
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<td>Email:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phone:</td>
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Are you Part of a group or organisation: Yes / No

Name of Organisation:

In order of preference which is your predominant way of using the roads? (choose 3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cyclist</th>
<th>Private Driver</th>
<th>Motorcyclist</th>
<th>Pedestrian</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disabled Road User</td>
<td>Taxi Driver</td>
<td>Bus Driver</td>
<td>Commercial Vehicle Driver</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statutory Services</td>
<td>Other – please state</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We are asking you for the following information to ensure we have a balanced representation across the city. Your personal details will not be shared with any other organisations and will be treated as private and confidential.

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FORM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preferred not to say</td>
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**Age:**

<table>
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<th>16 – 24</th>
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<td>25 - 49</td>
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<td>50 - 64</td>
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<tr>
<td>65 - 74</td>
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<tr>
<td>75 or over</td>
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<td>Preferred not to say</td>
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Please email this form to: roaduse@bristol-mediation.org
Council funds scheme to find peace between cars and bikes

Esme Ashcroft

THE city council is spending £10,000 on a project to end hostility between drivers, cyclists and other road users. The Road Sharing Restorative Approach programme – thought to be the first of its kind in the UK – is taking a different approach to tackling road rage.

It could recommend mediators are stationed on roads to calm people down, or that lollipop ladies are taught conflict resolution skills.

Charity Bristol Mediation is running a consultation on how the city’s roads can be shared in peace and harmony. During the eight-month process, the mediation experts will approach different groups of road users, including car drivers, cyclists, parents, disabled people, teenagers, taxi drivers and lorry drivers, for their views on why the city is such a hostile place to travel in.

But the consultation, launched in June, will not deliver a definitive result, just a report of suggested changes the council may or may not choose to implement.

Annal Grimes, one of two coordinators of the Road Sharing Restorative Approach consultation, said: “What we are doing is promoting a non-confrontational, restorative approach to the issues we have surrounding our road usage in Bristol.

“This is something which affects every single person in the city from parents who are too scared to let their children walk to school because of traffic to people who do not want to take public transport because of the cost and reliability factors.

“The point is to get different road users together to listen to each other and to put themselves in each other’s shoes.

“Everyone contributes to the problem and

COMMITTEE ROUTE

Two-year wait for roadworks is almost over

LONG-awaited repairs to a busy route in Dundry are to be carried out – nearly two years after problems with the road were first discovered.

Traffic lights were put up on Broadoak Hill in December 2013 after it was noticed that the roads were subsiding. Investigations revealed that a water main under the road – a busy commuter route from Dundry into South Bristol – had burst, causing the water to seep underneath and cause damage to the carriageway and supporting bank.

The area was fenced off and the lights put in to control traffic while the work took place.

Once Bristol Water dug up the road, which is narrow and windy in places, it was revealed that further repairs were needed to upgrade the pipes.

The start of the repair work was delayed due to the fact that structural surveys of the road and the retaining bank had to be carried out.

The work to repair the pipes was completed in April and the work to restore the road handed over to North Somerset Council.

But no repairs to the road have yet been carried out because authority leaders said the cost should be covered by Bristol Water.

The delays in the repairs angered local residents, many of whom use Broadoak Hill to commute into Bristol and are fed up of having rush hour times of day.

Now North Somerset Council has reached an agreement with Bristol Water to fund the repairs, which will be mostly covered by the firm’s insurance, which will start on October 1 and cost £167,000.

Traffic signals will be in place from October 1, with the road being closed from October 5. The work is expected to take eight weeks and diversion routes will be put in place.

North Somerset Council executive member for highways Councillor Elfyn Ap Rees said: “We realise the frustration that local residents and regular users must have felt over the length of
drivers, for their views on why the city is such a hostile place to travel in.
But the consultation, launched in June, will not deliver a definitive result, just a report of suggested changes the council may or may not choose to implement.

Annali Grimes, one of two coordinators of the Road Sharing Restorative Approach consultation, said: “What we are doing is promoting a non-confrontational, restorative approach to the issues we have surrounding our road usage in Bristol.”

“This is something which affects every single person in the city, from parents who are too scared to let their children walk to school because of traffic to people who do not want to take public transport because of the cost and reliability factors.

“The point is to get different road users together to listen to each other and to put themselves in each other’s shoes.

“Everyone contributes to the problem and everyone is a victim.

“The car driver who drives too fast along a road can unsettle the cyclist, who in turn can cause stress to a disabled person on the pavement.

“Everyone is too concerned with their individual conflict, and this is about looking at the broader picture.”

Bristol Mediation is currently collecting written responses to the road sharing debate, and will begin running small focus group meetings in November.

Volunteers from the scheme will also undertake questionnaires to identify specific issues which occur on Gloucester Road and Stapleton Road.

The consultation will culminate in a large debate in February next year, from which a report of suggestions will be written and submitted to the city council.

———

THE ROAD SHARING RESTORATIVE APPROACH

The Road Sharing Restorative Approach consultation will run alongside a transport plan for the city, which is developing by the charity Sustrans.

The Good Transport Plan sets out nine guiding principles and invites people to put forward suggestions and comments about how to make transport better.

Once everyone’s views have been collected, the transport plan will be revised and published later this year.

The nine guiding principles are:

1. Improve Bristol’s public transport network.
2. Establish a well-connected walking and cycling network.
3. Increase the use of low emission vehicles.
4. Reduce the number of heavy vehicles on our roads.
5. Create a ‘Living Heart’ for Bristol from public spaces that put walkers and cyclists first.
6. Work with communities to improve residential streets.
7. Create flexible and sustainable travel options for employees.
8. Support children in travelling more actively and sustainably.
9. Make sustainable transport an easy and enjoyable transport option for everyone.

For more information about the Good Transport Plan visit the Sustrans website, www.sustrans.org.uk

April and the work to restore the road handed over to North Somerset Council.

But no repairs to the road have yet been carried out because authority leaders said the cost should be covered by Bristol Water.

The delays in the repairs angered local residents, many of whom use Broad Oak Hill to commute into Bristol and are sat in tailbacks during rush hour times of day.

Now North Somerset Council has reached an agreement with Bristol Water to fund the repairs, which will be mostly covered by the firm’s insurance, which will start on October 1 and cost £167,000.

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North Somerset Council executive member for highways Councillor Elfyn Ap Rees said: “We realise the frustration that local residents and regular users must have felt over the length of time it has taken to resolve this issue.

“We have been working with Bristol Water to carry out in-depth investigations to establish the cause of the road collapsing as well as having detailed discussions with Bristol Water over the reasons for the problem and their contribution towards the cost.

“We now have reached agreement on this to the benefit of council tax payers and are now able to get on and repair the carriageway.

“Once we have embedded the carriageway, we hope to open the road to traffic when it has been resurfaced and the cause of the problem has been resolved”.

The diversion route is via Limeburn Hill, the B3150, A38 Bridgwater Road, Bishopsworth Road, Roman Road, Church Road, Grange Road, Queens Road and vice-versa.
Appendix 4

Road Sharing – a restorative approach evaluation

We are evaluating this project as we go along so it is very helpful to us if you could fill in this short form. All of this data will be stored according to the Data Protection Act 1998. This will be used anonymously and will be fed into the larger meeting in February and also into our final report at the end of this project. We will also ask you to fill in another form at the end of this meeting today.

Name ...........................................................................................................

Main mode of transport ...........................................................

Please tick how you feel towards each group of road users in the city, with 1 being negative, 3 being neutral and 5 being positive

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Many thanks for filling this in!
Road Sharing – a restorative approach evaluation

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Main mode of transport …………………………………………

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Please tick how you feel towards each group of road users in the city, with 1 being negative, 3 being neutral and 5 being positive

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Any additional comments/suggestions
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Appendix 5

The following charts are an analysis of the responses from the second part of the evaluation (shown in Appendix 3)

Did you feel this workshop was well organised?

Did you appreciate the opportunity to work with others to find possible ways forward?
Did this workshop meet your expectations?

Yes
Neither
No

Do you now feel more confident using the roads in the city?

Yes
Neither
No
Do you now feel you have some greater understanding of other road users in the city?

- Yes
- Neither
- No

Do you feel like you had a voice and felt heard today?

- Yes
- Neither
- No
Meeting 1: Within this first meeting, we can see that the attitudes towards car drivers have become more negative; this is interesting as there were several car drivers in the group. The attitudes towards pedestrians have improved; with only one pedestrian being represented in the group, they have had a clear impact. What is most interesting about this group is the conflicting views between car drivers and other road users; possibly the car users in this group have realised the impact their driving can have on other road users, and this has added to the views of other road users.

Meeting 4: The attitudes towards cyclists have become more negative - this could be due to having no cyclists in the room to put their point of view. By contrast, the presence of a motorcyclist led to more positive attitudes towards them as road users. This suggests that views may vary depending on who is at the meeting. Road users speaking for themselves seem to have a positive impact on other road users’ views, as one might expect.
Meeting 5: in complete contrast to Meeting 4, there were cyclists at this meeting and the views of them became more positive, notably from a car driver, so this shows how the meeting can have a positive impact. The same situation happens here with taxi drivers as there were two in attendance. On a further note, attitudes towards lorry drivers became more negative, but with no one to represent them, they could not share their issues.

Meeting 10: This group included several cyclists and motorcyclists; the attitudes towards both these groups have improved significantly. This shows that people airing their views has a positive impact, counteracting the often-expressed annoyance of car drivers with other road users. Meetings like this can thus have a positive impact on attitudes.
Appendix 7

‘One Thing I Learnt’ and ‘One Thing I Might Do Differently’

Meeting 1 - 3/11/15

Learnt:
- Cycling measures
- Awareness of others
- Failure of measures
- Looking at the bigger picture

Do differently:
- Not to use horn suddenly
- Respect for cyclists
- Cycle on the road
- Drive more safely
- Promote common decency and tolerance
- Try to improve on consideration
- Remember motorcyclists
- Talk to groups of cyclists and motorcyclists about blind people’s guide dogs
- Try to find training for mobility scooters

Meeting 2 - 6/11/15

Learnt:
- Benefit of motorcyclists
- Need mind set change from authorities
- Motorcycle issues
- Importance of Highway Code
- Confirmed lack of knowledge of motorcycles
- Others’ opinions
- Can address these issues without arguing
- Changes in registration of motorcycles

Do differently:
- Consider motorbikes more carefully
- Use electric bike more
- Smile at motorcyclists
- Pay more attention, be a more considerate driver
- Find out more about motorbikes and the Highway Code
- Smile back
- Pay more attention to motorbikes
- More consideration, especially for cyclists
Meeting 3: 19/11/15

Learnt:
- Everyone has a dissatisfaction, for or against cyclists
- We are all a bit intolerant
- Good to hear other people’s views
- Lovely group, good to talk and listen

Do differently:
- Think about how bad car drivers might feel if hit a cyclist – become a better cyclist
- Less subservient as a cyclist to bigger vehicles, be more assertive
- Speak up more about this topic
- Be more tolerant

Meeting 4: 01/12/15 AM

Learnt:
- More insight re visually impaired people, pedestrians and cyclists
- Transport providers have similar problems and want similar results
- Different perspectives
- More awareness of issues for bus operators

Do differently:
- Take insights back to bus depot to create more awareness
- Talk to team and make better links with other transport operators
- Make Neighbourhood Partnership more accessible
- Be more mindful, and more visible as a pedestrian
- Give buses another chance
- Consider using buses

Meeting 5: 01/12/15 PM

Learnt:
- Buses not subject to emissions checks
- Issues about out-of-town taxi drivers

Do differently:
- Be nicer to taxi drivers
- Check taxis are from Bristol
- Careful to cyclists/ not aggressive
- More understanding for cyclists at traffic lights
- More patience for bikes
Meeting 6: 02/12/15

Learnt:
- Learnt about traffic through eyes of different road users
- Learnt about Playing Out organization
- Roads from children’s perspective
- Bus drivers’ difficulties
- Different claims for everyone
- Learnt a lot
- Hear all viewpoints
- Different perspectives, young and old

Do differently:
- More polite to bus drivers
- Look into Playing Out scheme for children
- Keep to the rules more
- More sympathy and awareness of children
- Would like to take the train then cycle to work
- Cycle more
- Try to smile at 5 people whilst on the roads
- Thumbs up to bus drivers

Meeting 7: 08/01/16 AM

Learnt:
- Bus drivers fearful as well
- Bus drivers’ perspective
- Many ways to integrated road use, need to find what fits in Bristol
- Commuters’ perspective
- How people view other road users
- Educate bus drivers

Do differently:
- Hug a bus driver
- As cyclist, line up behind buses on the right
- Share new perspectives with others
- Get bike serviced
- Campaign for cycle path outside BRI
- Invest in ‘go pro’ camera
- Write a diary
- Really glad to come, so do more meetings like this
- Educate trainee bus drivers re cyclists
Meeting 8: 08/01/16 PM

Learnt:
- Knock-on effects of actions
- Cyclists’ perspectives

Do differently:
- Give more space
- Look out for cyclists on Pero’s Bridge
- Don’t hold grudges

Meeting 9: 19/01/16 (Deaf Group)

Learnt:
- Learnt a lot
- Got stuff off chest
- Interesting evening
- Thanks for listening – good to offload and to share
- Traffic light issues for deaf people, can’t see waist-high signals
- Deaf people can’t hear, so there’s issues – need visuals
- Interesting to hear views on cyclists
- Everyone has different views

Do differently:
- Be more confident as pedestrian
- Future is better
- Participate in more groups like this one
- Try cycling
- Cyclists not as dangerous as once thought
- Have more respect

Meeting 10: 19/02/16 (Filmed group)

Learnt:
- More info on Sustrans
- Start making more aware choices around mode of transport to use
- Believe in the goodwill of people
- Feeling from all participants that we all want safer roads
- Feelings expressed, interesting to get motorcyclist view.
- Pleased with the consensus reached at the end of the meeting. Exposing vulnerabilities and also to realise responsibility.

Do differently:
- Consider getting an electric bicycle and do less driving
- Think twice before being aggressive to motorcyclists
- Think about language used during training, not slag off other road users
- The priority of teaching children about the Highway Code etc - will use position as school governor.
- Listen more to gain better understanding of other road users’ perspectives
- Lobby the local authorities: What are they doing about Active Travel?
Appendix 8

Issues and Suggestions from Restorative Road Sharing Groups

This appendix contains a digest of the issues and suggestions that came up in the small mixed groups. The main motivation for participants in attending the groups was to make their voices heard, and to enable them to pass on their views and suggestions to the OPCC and Bristol City Council.

We do hope that BCC will be in a position to accept these and respond accordingly. Participants understood that funding for this project and similar is limited however we feel that some of these suggestions could be identified as quick wins without considerable cost to implement.

Not everyone agreed on suggestions, of course, so we present a wide range of views. However, on some issues there was a fair amount of agreement, and we hope these may be prioritised for future action.

We understand that Bristol City Council may have already implemented or be about to implement some of the suggestions put forward by participants from previous development work—people are not always fully informed about existing services and facilities, or about plans for improvements. We would be interested in how Bristol City Council will respond to this Report/Appendix, to ensure that the participants of this project are aware of future developments.

1. Attitudes On The Roads

There was a perception that there was a lot of disrespect on the roads, towards many user groups, particularly cyclists. Several of the groups came to the conclusion that it is divisive to divide people into sectarian groups in this way. They emphasised the common humanity of people—often fallible and making mistakes. They acknowledged the bad behaviour of a few people in each category, but suggested the norm is generally courteous behaviour.

Suggested ways of enhancing this:

- More Restorative Road Sharing Groups like the one they attended
- Structured opportunities to experience road use from other road users’ points of view—this could be done by schemes for (e.g.) cyclists to sit with lorry drivers or possibly simulated videos might have a place. The film produced by the project also has a place.
- Everyone is part of the problem and everyone is part of the solution—try to promote this idea and discourage the ‘us’ and ‘them’ attitude
- Encourage a more relaxed attitude on the roads—less rushing
- Publicise common courtesy on hoardings / backs of buses
- Use the restorative model for other situations requiring focus groups
- Use a restorative approach for hard-to-reach groups, e.g. helping trainee HGV drivers to see cyclists’ point of view, or for people involved in ‘road rage’ incidents
- Use a restorative approach for Speed Courses for motorists caught speeding
2. **Infrastructure**

Participants felt that there were infrastructure issues that made it difficult to travel well. They acknowledged that many of these were the short-term funding that makes it difficult for BCC to plan ahead in the way that is needed.

Suggestions included:
- Better consultation procedures so that people can have a voice and feel heard
- Look at other countries and learn from them. Countries mentioned as having useful measures and experience include: Denmark, France, Germany, Netherlands, Scandinavia, Spain
- Learn from other cities in the UK re traffic flow, e.g. Plymouth, Glasgow
- Continue plans for keeping lorries away from city streets and residential areas.

3. **Sustainability Issues**

These were of concern to most participants, but they often felt hampered in their efforts to make progress in these areas.

Suggestions include:
- More links between trains/ buses/ bikes/ cars, so that people can choose the most sustainable form of transport for their particular journey
- Implement a system like Transport for London – Transport for Greater Bristol (**but does Travel West already do this?**)  
- Incentives for car-sharing schemes and easily accessible information about the schemes available
- Encourage employers to offer more flexitime/ homeworking options to ease rush-hour congestion
- Use Bristol’s status as a tourist city to enhance public transport
- When improvements are made, celebrate being a Public Transport City
- Training for all

4. **Cyclists**

Most people agreed that cyclists were vulnerable on the roads. While most cyclists behaved well, there was concern about those who raced past traffic, wore dark clothing, jumped traffic lights and rode on pavements. However, it was acknowledged that there were sometimes reasons for these actions, as there have been fatalities involving lorries turning left at traffic lights.

Some suggestions from the groups are:
- Consider a London scheme in which cyclists turning left are allowed to proceed on red, to minimise the risk of being crushed by heavy lorries
- Consider a scheme from other countries, in which there are separate lights for cyclists, enabling them to move off 30 sec before motor traffic
- Make sure cycle lanes are wide enough for bikes
- Have a public awareness campaign for cyclists to have a bell, bike lights and wear helmets and high-vis clothing, especially in the dark. Participants felt that encouragement would be more helpful than enforcement, although the latter might be needed on occasions.
• Have a public awareness campaign aimed at motorists to respect cyclists.
• Several participants suggested that the Highway Code needed re-visiting for cyclists – perhaps BCC can suggest a revision to the government.
• Consult with cyclists re proposed improvements (probable BCC does this already, however some participants did not find some cycle measures useful).
• Continue the availability of lessons for adult cyclists to help more begin cycling
• Incentives for battery-powered bikes

5. Motorcyclists
The groups that contained motorcyclists were very interested to hear from them, as most people knew little about them. They were surprised to hear about the thorough training they undertake. Motorcyclists themselves felt they were often overlooked, as they have different needs from cyclists and from cars.

Suggestions included:
• Have an awareness campaign to highlight motorcyclists’ needs, and to re-adjust public views of motorcyclists as reckless teenagers – most are middle-aged professional people.
• Consult with motorcycling organisations about their needs

6. Cars
Many participants were car drivers as well as cyclists. Others needed to drive for their work or because they had disabled dependents. They expressed frustration at the continued congestion of the city. The 20 mph speed limit was seen as frustrating for motorists, but accepted as making for greater safety on the roads. Car parking is a big issue for many, especially disabled people.

Suggestions:
• Park & Ride schemes could stay open longer, enabling car drivers working late to leave their cars there

7. Buses
There was real sadness that the bus services, although improved, are still inadequate. We gained the impression that many more people would take buses if they were cleaner, friendlier, and provided more cross-city routes – but above all, more reliable. Students we spoke to feel forced to buy and use cars to get to their lectures on time at UWE. Disabled people often lack the confidence to use buses.

Specific suggestions are:
• Improved reliability
• Visual and verbal bus stop information on the bus, for deaf and blind/visually impaired people respectively
• Get the bus companies to cooperate and have a city-wide fare and ticket scheme
• Less pollution from buses
• Better pay and conditions for bus drivers to reduce stress and turnover
• More evening bus services so that people don’t need cars to go out in the evening
• Educate bus drivers to allow plenty of time for disabled people to get on/off buses.
8. Taxis
The small group which included taxi drivers was very illuminating. They complained about taxis from other cities coming to Bristol and taking their customers, but serving them poorly because they did not know Bristol. Some of the deaf participants had been particularly confused because they were used to not able to communicate with the taxi drivers apart from giving them their address.

Suggestions included:
- Informing the public about the situation concerning taxis, in particular advice to vulnerable groups about which taxis are safe to use
- BCC action against any taxis which are acting illegally in Bristol
- Standard taxi fares

9. Children, elderly people and disabled people
Disabled people, elderly people and parents of children often felt they were ‘bottom of the list’ for travel considerations.

Suggestions included:
- More awareness of all road users of children and their needs
- Safety training for all
- Visual and verbal information on buses for deaf and blind/visually impaired people (see above)
- Traffic light crossing signals needed at head height as well as waist height (for deaf people) and with sound (for blind/visually impaired people)
- Crossings may need to allow longer for disabled people and elderly people to cross safely
- Continuation of bikeability courses for children
- Children and family bike rides
- Support for organisations like Playing Out, which makes streets available for playing on a monthly basis.
- There needs to be some sensible provision for disabled people in electric wheelchairs and scooters
- There needs to be some public education about the importance of parking spaces for disabled people
- Blind people need to know plans for the city centre, as they have to plan their journeys meticulously
- Playing Out would like to be involved in discussions about new roads, as they may be able to facilitate discussion amongst neighbours concerning the effects on children

10. Shared Paths/Spaces
These seemed to cause a lot of frustration, with children, old people and disabled people feeling at risk. Most people felt that cyclists and pedestrians needed separate spaces, but acknowledged the difficulty this poses in Bristol.

Suggestions included:
- Education about responsibilities on shared paths
- Education for cyclists about pedestrians on shared paths, especially elderly people who may not hear them coming
- Find way of giving right of way to most vulnerable users
- Establish a ‘rule of the road’ for shared paths.
11. Highway Code
Few people had read the Highway Code recently, and wondered if it needs updating.

Suggestions included:
• Asking government to re-visit it and re-publish it.
• Have a public awareness campaign to help people be more aware of it, whatever their state of experience on the roads
• Some participants have also suggested revising road priorities in favour of cyclists and pedestrians, rather than always assuming that cars come first. In some countries, cars give way to bikes, which give way to pedestrians
• Have a major campaign for everyone about safety on the roads
• Make it available in schools and teach it to children.

12. Particular Danger Spots
Participants mentioned particular danger spots, where they felt that road markings were confusing and unhelpful. They contrasted these with places where they felt that even complicated road layouts were made manageable by good road markings.

Good layouts and markings:
• Bedminster Bridge roundabout and traffic flow
• West Street

Poor/ confusing/ dangerous layouts and markings:
• The Bearpit roundabout
• Baldwin Street/ Queen Charlotte Street junction
• Broadmead – Galleries Car Park
• Old Market Street bus stops in middle of road
• Redcliffe Hill
• Pedestrian crossings too close to roundabout on Redcliffe Hill
• Bus station road markings towards Gloucester Road
• Temple Meads drop-off; and new road proposal will affect taxis adversely.