

## Which way forward?

**The Experimental Road Closures in Bath Buildings and Richmond Road went in during early December, so are about half way through the experimental period. Their future has yet to be decided.**

Avon's overall plan is to reduce through traffic in residential areas and to improve provision for public transport, pedestrians and cyclists. The prime intention of these closures is to curb the rat-running through Montpelier, especially in view of the increase in traffic using Bath Buildings in recent years and the future traffic volume which will be generated by the Spine Road.

Montpelier Conservation Group and other interested local groups conducted a traffic survey in July 1990 to establish numbers of vehicles travelling through

during rush hours and this was submitted to Avon.

The closures are experimental. In early June, the effects will have to be assessed by Avon. If any residents or traders write to them by early June, those comments have to be passed on to the Planning, Highways and Transport Committee. It is this Committee which decides whether the closures should stay or be removed, or whether an alternative scheme would be more appropriate. Writing to Avon County Council is the only way to ensure that your views are heard.

If the closures were to stay, consideration would then be given to how they could be built to fit into the streetscape. Some road signs would have to remain, but they could be modified to fit in with a permanent scheme.

The closures were discussed at our March meeting and will be discussed again at another open meeting of the group on April 5. By then everyone will have had time to evaluate the effects of the measures so this will be an opportunity for informed debate, with discussion on alternatives if participants so wish.



Back to the future? - Bath Buildings in 1990.

### History Notebook: Chapter Seven: Victorian Expansion

By 1835 Montpelier had become sufficiently important to be incorporated within the city of Bristol. During the next decade its population grew to a size that justified the provision of two local churches, St Barnabas (1843) and St Andrew's (1845). However, the really significant growth that transformed Montpelier from a semi-rural suburb to a densely populated inner city area occurred in the second half of the century.

Between 1860 and 1880 the population of Bristol soared as rural immigrants came to the city in search of work. The demand for housing could only be met by building on gardens and smallholdings in the suburbs. Montpelier was ideally placed for such development, close to the city yet having plenty of open land. It was the subsequent boom in speculative building that completely changed the character of the area.

Initially developers concentrated on infilling the gaps between the Georgian villas and terraces, but then moved on to the low-lying fields near Cutlers Mill Brook. In the 1860s, Brook and Albany roads were built, followed by Banner and Norrisville in the 70s. Finally Shaftesbury Avenue (1880s), Wellington Avenue and the Fairfield Road area (1890s) completed the Victorian development.

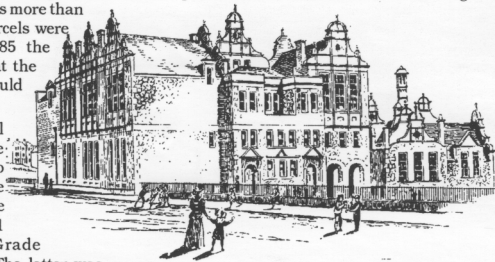
Rows of shops were built in St Andrew's Road and Ashley Hill and most other streets had a corner shop. There were 12 public houses and a number of jug and bottle beer retailers.

Many residents found work at Derham's Boot and Shoe Factory in St James Barton which, at busy periods, employed 2000; at Perry's Carriage works in Stokes Croft and in the building trade. More jobs were created with the opening of Pillers' Malthouse in 1876.

The arrival of the railway in 1874, followed by the extension of the tram service along Cheltenham Road, increased personal mobility and commercial activity. The busy station had its own staff and resident stationmaster but for day excursions in the summer of 1886 they had to be augmented by an extra clerk, 4 porters and 12 ticket collectors. During the 1880s more than 3000 parcels were

handled each year. In 1885 the Railway Committee ruled that the name on the station board should have only one 'L', not two.\*

Until the 1890s educational needs had been met by the parochial schools adjacent to the two churches but in the 1890s two more schools were opened: Colston's Girls' in 1891 and Fairfield Higher Grade (illustrated right) in 1898. The latter was built at a cost of £25,000 to accommodate over 1000 pupils. The fee was 5d a week, reduced to 2d for the infant department.



\* With acknowledgements to 'Bristol Suburban' by Mike Oakley. Next issue: The Floods

**Take a Spring walk around Montpelier's history!**  
A guided MCG walk around the area will take place on Sunday May 16th, starting at 3pm from outside The Bristolian Cafe. This is a free event, just turn up. The walk takes about 1 1/2 hours. Children especially welcome.

### LAST MEETINGS

The March meeting has been mentioned on the front page; the theme of the February meeting was 'Focus on Picton Street'. During the discussion, those attending split into groups to exchange ideas. The problems which were brought up included: Parking on pavements/double yellow lines Lack of well-designed lighting Lack of voice for traders Appearance of the street Shops as residences and/or no window displays Picton Lane traffic Refuse collection and traders' litter Congestion and deliveries Size of delivery vehicles Speed of traffic Lack of general or residents' parking No green area

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INTERESTING EXHIBITIONS

Ugly metal shutters  
Kerb crawling  
Derelict sites  
Loss of original street furniture  
Fly posting and graffiti  
Lack of focal point for the area  
Various solutions were put forward and some may be considered at a future meeting for formal submission to the appropriate council.  
The scheme for the **Old Full Marks site**, which was displayed at this meeting, has since been withdrawn by the developer.

### NEXT MEETINGS

April 5: Discussion on the road closures  
May 3: Initial discussion on Montpelier Trader & Business Directory  
June 7: Report on year's activities & AGM

**Get tropical!**  
Terrific tropical food at  
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### PLANNING Update

Whilst we endeavour to be accurate at the time of going to press, we cannot guarantee it and recommend checking details at Bristol Planning Department.

- There are planning applications in for:
- 164 Cheltenham Road (behind Kwik-Fit) - demolition of existing buildings and construction of 9 terraced houses of 2/3 storey plus 6 car parking spaces (Bristol Churches Housing Association)
  - 68 Bath Buildings - 3 storey extension to rear of property for shop, storage and residential
  - 25 Bath Buildings - change of use to hostel for the homeless
  - 63 Shaftesbury Avenue - reconstruction of 2 storey rear annexe
  - Colston's Girls' School - demolition of 3 chimney stacks
  - Colston's Girls' School - 2 externally illuminated school name signs on Cheltenham Road elevation
  - 166 Cheltenham Road - conversion of dwelling house into 1 maisonette, 2 flats
  - 202 Cheltenham Road - from lock-up to take-away
  - Unit 6 Ashley Trading Estate (John Sheppards) - open storage in car park
  - 1 Clifton Villas - conversion of existing property into 3 flats
  - 3 Richmond Road - fell/replace lime tree
  - St Pauls Church, Portland Square - change to offices, with new driveway access to rear
  - 25 Fairfield Road - fell acacia, sycamore saplings and acacia stump
  - 84 Richmond Road - fell Leylandii and Eucalyptus, prune Leylandii conifer screen

- Approvals have been given for:
- 50 Richmond Road - fell eucalyptus to rear
  - 10/12 Picton Street - retail ground floor and offices and stores to first and second floors
  - 107 York Road - remove or prune mature cypress at front
  - 219 Cheltenham Road - change of use to financial services and offices
  - Metropole Site (part of ground floor), Ashley Road - vacant to betting office
  - 241 Cheltenham Road - satellite antenna
- Refusal has been given for:
- 4 Picton Street - partial window replacement

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### RECYCLING

25 years  
Congratulations to Frank Ham on 25 years of continuous milkbottle recycling in Montpelier!



If you wish to order doorstep delivery, please telephone Frank

These are the dates of the third Fridays in coming months for Resourcesaver kerbside collection: **March 19, April 16, May 21, June 18, July 16, August 20, September 17.** Collection starts at 8am.

RE-USE • REDUCE • REPAIR • RECYCLE

Montpelier Conservation Group is concerned with all local issues and meets on the **first Monday of every month at Cheltenham Road Library at 7.30pm - all welcome!** Note AGM date: **JUNE 7.** Montpelier Conservation Group may be contacted via the Chair,

