

BCDP Research Report

Attitude of Queen Square companies to the renewal of the square and to Bristol Legible City

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Key Points

- Most like the tranquillity that the square offers
- All respondents believe that the square is either adequately or well maintained
- There are concerns about security and petty crime
- There is no consensus on the right level of car parking to be allowed in the square
- 55% of respondents had not heard of *High Life*
- 86.5% of respondents thought that arts events in the square were either very important or moderately important
- Events involving the performing arts, some sports, food and children's events were favoured over rock concerts, and other overly-noisy and large events
- Events where drug and alcohol abuse is evident were criticised by a number of respondents
- 50% of respondents thought that BLC had made it easier for visitors to find their way
- 77% thought the new signposts very useful and useful
- 67% thought the on-street maps very useful and useful
- 49% thought the walking maps very useful and useful, and 46% had no opinion
- 40.5% thought the I+ very useful and useful with 47.5% having no opinion
- Suggestions for improvement in future BLC work included more information points, improved road signage, use of events/ what's on boards

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Introduction

In August 2002, as part of its long-term evaluation study of the Bristol Legible City (BLC) project, Bristol Cultural Development Partnership (BCDP) conducted a survey of the companies that have offices in Queen Square. The principal research aim was to investigate the impact of *High Life*, the series of artist-designed bird boxes placed in trees in the square. Questions were asked also to identify attitudes to the legible city signage and maps, and general views on the progress being made to renew the square. This is the first time a survey of this type has been conducted with companies in the square.

There are 81 companies in Queen Square. Questionnaires were returned by 44 recipients (a response rate of 54 %) and all but one were fully completed. All comments have been reported anonymously and results are recorded in aggregate form as a percentage of those responding to a specific question.

The report covers current occupiers of the square; their general views of the square; *High Life*; other arts projects in the square; general views on BLC; and specific views on maintenance and parking. Appendix one includes all the comments made.

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Queen Square

Queen Square plays an important role in the history of Bristol: home at one time to some of the city's wealthiest residents, it is the place where much of the Bristol riots of 1831 took place. It is now an office quarter and a place for leisure and open-air entertainment. There has been considerable investment in recent years with a lottery-supported project to return the square to public use. The result of this has been the removal of the dual carriageway that previously cut the square in half, creating a stunning new public space in the centre of the city.

The renewal of the square is welcomed generally, though some of the changes, such as parking, have been controversial, and there remain problems relating to security. These are covered later.

Those occupying the square are from the service industries. Among the businesses operating there are:

- Commercial and personal financial managers
- Specialist recruitment agencies
- Design consultants
- Solicitors and barristers
- Property agents
- Public relations/ marketing consultants
- Engineering/ environmental consultants
- Chartered accountants
- Market researchers
- Charities

Most are Bristol-based companies. Thirteen of those that responded were part of larger – in some cases international – groups. The number of employees based in offices in the square ranged from two to 270, with an average of 32. Peter Ennis, Chairman of the Queen Square Association, believes that there are at least 1,000 employees working in the square currently.

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General Views of Queen Square

The vast majority of views on working in the square were positive. One respondent commented: *'Have worked in the square for 20 years and it gets better all the time.'* Other comments included:

A wonderful working environment – recently transformed.

It's a magnificent place to work in the summer. Staff enjoy using the square in their lunch hour. Also has great views from the office windows.

Fantastic – it is a wonderful setting, at the heart of a very vibrant quarter of the city, yet easily accessible from rail and road networks.

Delightful square – we love it!

It's the most attractive working environment in Bristol.

An excellent place to work in Bristol city centre – a nice, beautiful place to work – as well as excellent location.

Now that the work has been largely completed, it provides an attractive outlook and environment for the office.

It is a very attractive location which both staff and clients appreciate.

Best place to be in central Bristol. So conveniently situated. Great ambience.

Wonderful. A pleasing aspect and a growing sense of community.

We love it! It is a beautiful environment and a unique blend of heritage and commerce.

Minor criticisms related to the distance from shops and banks, the absence of colour, and the lack of interaction between companies. More serious criticisms related to crime, parking and traffic.

No one was dissatisfied with the level of maintenance of the square: 58% considered it well maintained and 42% adequate.

Respondents were asked to say what it was that they liked most and least about the square. As expected, the most popular aspects were the trees and the tranquillity of the place. Location relative to the rest of the city was also important. Comments included:

A little bit of greenery and trees in the middle of the city. Lovely to sit out at lunchtime and get fresh air. An oasis of calm.

It is very peaceful, for the city centre of a large city.

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Green area in mass of concrete (the developments in the centre are a disaster in this respect!). Cool and calm atmosphere.

Elegant, tranquil setting in the heart of the city.

Well maintained and a lovely work setting. It is the nicest park in the centre of Bristol. Lovely offices are situated there also.

Ambience and accessibility. Impresses visitors.

Having the 'green' space to look at while working. It is more relaxing, it feels like you are working away from the hustle and bustle of the city centre.

Wide open space in city centre. Great location. Lots going on. Prestigious business address.

One respondent described the square as 'One of Bristol's great success stories in terms of urban renovation'. Another said: 'Queen Square has been transformed over the past 5/6 years – it is a major success in the creation of a living, human city of Bristol.' However, some of the restored features – namely the cobbles and the paths – which are in keeping with Queen Square's original design, were criticised. The cobbles

made an uneven surface to drive and walk on, and the paths could get messy. Among comments made were:

The cobbles, although attractive, can be difficult to walk on – especially in high heels!

The gravel paths are extremely dusty when dry and dirty your shoes and when wet flick up the dirt on the backs of your legs as well as your shoes.

The cobbled road is bad to drive on. The road will eventually (three to five years) end up like Welsh Back with massive dips and hollows.

Other aspects to be criticised included:

- Crime levels (particularly out of hours car/ bike theft, and vandalism).
- Litter (particularly broken glass from vandalism).
- Drug addicts and drunks.
- Insufficient/ inadequate seating.
- Disruption caused by restoration.
- Access by car (including parking).
- Bikes on the paths.
- Seagulls.

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Suggestions for future improvements, or changes that respondents would like to see, included:

- Improved security measures.
- Improved car access and better enforcement of one-way system.
- More flowers (including hanging baskets) and improved drainage of grass.
- More litter bins.
- More visible users including events, active frontages, hotels, food stalls and restaurants.
- A children's play area.
- Refurbishment of empty/ derelict buildings.
- Speedier completion of railings project.
- Restoring one building as a dwelling house and opening it to the public.

The Car and the Parking Issue

The Queen Square restoration is considered to be a flagship project in making practical progress in lessening the impact of the car upon the city. Car parking is needed, but in Queen Square it has been restricted and re-organised. This received a mixed response from occupants. Two respondents thought the on- and off-street parking in the square was 'great' and 'excellent', while some thought it 'adequate', 'good', 'reasonable' and 'improved'. One commented: 'It is important that

parking should be limited, as it makes the square better looking ... There are plenty of near-by car parks in Bristol for people to use.'

The majority of respondents found some areas for criticism. These included:

- Car crime and vandalism.
- Insufficient spaces.
- Waiting list for permits (some people still waiting after two years or more).
- Cost.
- Damage caused by wooden posts in parking bays.
- The permit system itself (some thought that the square should be all public parking).

Suggestions for improvement included an arrangement for short term parking (for visiting trades people), camera surveillance, more parking attendants, reserving spaces in The Grove for displaced forecourt users, and free parking after 6.30pm.

One respondent tentatively suggested: 'No traffic at all?'. Another, reflecting the need for balance, said: 'I would like to see the square properly maintained as a peaceful yet active environment that is safe for all to enjoy.'

High Life – The Bird Box Project

High Life is a BLC arts project based in Queen Square in which eight bird boxes have been placed in the trees. The artworks were created as a response to the square's ecology, history, design and use. They were intended to improve people's understanding and experience of the local environment. Of those who responded, 45% were aware of the project, and of these 18% were very aware of it. Among the positive comments received were:

The bird boxes are very good. Hope they are occupied! They achieve many of the aims [of the project], but cannot be said to improve understanding of the square. Opportunity there for future project on history of the square.

We enjoyed it.... And it brought a few smiles.... Generally contributed to the gross national pleasure.

There were three negative comments about how unattractive and incongruous the boxes were. There were also concerns about whether they could function as homes for birds. One comment received was: *'anybody who knows anything about birds will tell you that they will not be used by birds.'*

However, the majority of criticisms were about the lack of publicity/ information about the project rather than its content

or purpose. One respondent commented: *'A great idea – shame I hadn't noticed it though!'*

Queen Square, Arts Projects and Events

In recent years the square has been the home for many different arts projects, in addition to *High Life*. These include rock and pop concerts, lunchtime and early evening jazz and open air cinema. Respondents were asked how important it was that the square hosted arts activities. Only 13.5% did not consider it to be important, and 41% thought it was very important. The majority thought it moderately important.

Respondents were asked about the kinds of events which should take place in the square. One wrote: *'So long as there is no damage to the square it should be utilised by the citizens of Bristol for whatever might be their interests.'*

Among the specific suggestions for suitable events were:

- The performing arts – music, theatre, film.
- Some sports – boules, skating, tai-chi.
- Arts and craft/ antiques fairs.
- Children's events
- Food festivals.
- Celebratory balls.

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To avoid creating a mud bath, summer seemed a more appropriate time for gatherings than winter, and the suggested frequency of events ran from weekly to quarterly.

There were a number of favourable comments about events already taking place. These included:

The lunch time jazz is great – as well as after work.

Existing events such as the Stella Artois cinema and the jazz provide life and energy, without being overly disruptive. The frequency is correct.

The jazz festivals were great and should definitely be repeated.

One person commented on the lack of publicity: *'You only tend to find out when you go out at lunchtime to find the marquees and bands playing.'*

Two respondents did not want any events to take place: one because they threatened the square's tranquillity and the other because they were inappropriate for a business area. For those who did want events, there was concern that these should be in keeping with the size, appearance and nature of the square, and that they should not damage the environment or create too much noise and congestion.

Among comments received about what kinds of events should not be held were:

- Anything that might damage the grass.
- Raves, rock concerts, mass meetings.
- Anything which affects access during working hours.
- Anything too noisy during office hours.
- Anything that is very loud or involves excessive alcohol.

Bristol Legible City

Looking at BLC in general, respondents were asked whether it was easier for visitors to Bristol to find their way around the city now the project had begun. Half thought it definitely was, 23% thought there was not much difference and one thought it definitely was not. The remaining 25% had no opinion.

Respondents were asked about their personal experience of four features of the project: the on-street maps, the on-street signposts, the printed maps, and the interactive I+ points. The best-received feature appears to be the signposts. These were considered very useful by 56% of respondents and quite useful by 21%. Only one respondent thought them of little use and the remaining 21% had no opinion. Second came the street maps with 35% considering them very useful and 32% quite useful. One thought them of little use and the rest had no opinion. The printed walking maps were considered very useful by 28% and quite useful by 21%. Two people thought them of little use and over 46% had no opinion. A couple of comments made specifically about the maps were with regard to distributing them more widely.

Finally, the interactive I+ points were considered very useful by 19% of respondents, quite useful by 21.5%, of little use by 12%, and 47.5% had no opinion.

Suggestions were then requested for additional measures which the BLC team could consider which would make it easier for visitors to find their way around the city, and make understanding Bristol more enjoyable and informative. One respondent said: *'An excellent project – I can't think of any improvements.'* Another found it difficult to make suggestions as *'I know the city too well'*. Among the suggestions that were received were:

- Information points, on-street maps, guides and walking maps available at more prime sites (eg: Clifton Suspension bridge, the zoo, At-Bristol, the market, Corn Street, Temple Meads).
- Improved road layout and signage, particularly around the centre.
- Events/ what's on boards.
- Multi-lingual and/ or picture signs.
- Clearer pedestrian paths including foot prints on the pavements.

Conclusions

The renewal of Queen Square is one of the success stories of recent years in Bristol. It is clear from this research that there is a great deal of affection for the square, especially now that works are near completion. It is clear too that the added value of being in the square – as the place for arts events, for example – is appreciated generally.

As the research for this report was concluding, the *Bristol Evening Post* carried an editorial about the square. What they said endorsed what most of the residents felt. Despite the critical comments made about planners, and the negative comparison they made between the square and the centre, it is worth quoting part of this. They said that the restoration '*must rank as one of the finest achievements in recent years*'. Planners realised, they said, '*that in Queen Square they had a treasure that needed and deserved some tender loving care*'. They concluded:

It stands today as a remarkable testament to vision and dedication, a clever and sensitive balance between reinstating a classic design and accommodating the needs of a modern city ... Queen Square is now a place where people want to go, not simply a place on the way to somewhere else.'
(*Bristol Evening Post*, 5 August 2002)

Recommendations and Further Research

There are some clear recommendations that can be made. In terms of the square there needs to be greater marketing and publicity for arts projects and clarity on parking permits. The wish of some to have more interpretative material will be met partially by the publication of the history of Queen Square in January 2003, and by the introduction of the audible signs in 2003. There may be a case for specific interpretative material to be placed in the square as well. In terms of future research a good first step would be to ensure that all occupants receive a copy of this report so that the work undertaken so far can be built upon. It is also suggested that this research is repeated annually so that long-term views of the residents of Queen Square can be recorded.

Appendix

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Comments received

On High Life:

Very low profile – wasn't aware of it.

Probably not going to be successful because of the number of seagulls and pigeons and suitable food eg worms for breeding season. There is only suitable food for seagulls and pigeons and a lot of nests on rooftops (cliffs).

Better publicity would have been good.

Interesting.

Personally I felt the boxes rather incongruous.

A great idea – shame I hadn't noticed it though! As I was unaware that such a project was taking place I cannot contribute much feedback. But agree that it is a good project.

I have seen them, and wondered what they were!

Almost invisible, visitors unaware of them.

More publicity needed although this might encourage vandalism.

The bird boxes are very good. Hope they are occupied! They achieve many of the

aims set out above, but cannot be said to improve understanding of the square. Opportunity there for future project on history of the square.

It's a great idea.

A little silly!

We enjoyed it.... And it brought a few smiles.... Generally contributed to the gross national pleasure.

My husband noticed it and pointed it out to me. He said "have you seen that funny padlock thing"?!

No awareness of the project.

I was not aware of the project.

The Bird Boxes look cheap nasty and stupid and have no place in the Square.

At least one box appears to have gone. A general information board covering all boxes would be useful.

Lovely if they are functional and not just decorative. Do they cater for different types of birds? Are there bat boxes?

Passed us by I'm afraid.

Seagulls are a nuisance – do they perhaps deter other birds from occupying the Square?

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Awful and total waste of money. They are unattractive and anybody who knows anything about birds will tell you that they will not be used by birds.

On future BLC measures:

How about putting a symbol on buses if they are going to Clifton Susp bridge/ zoo/ @ Bristol etc? Day bus passes and maps available at these prime sites. Are there info points at the "park and rides"?

Resite the tourist information office nearer to train and coach stations.

Events boards – what's on guides.

Maps at various points eg: centre, Queen Square, King Street, College Green, market, Corn Street etc.

Road layout.

It would be nice to know what the heck BLC's are. Sort out the parking.

At sites of major interest eg Queen Square provide an 'historical story board'.

The centre traffic system is hard to get around and must be quite confusing for visitors. There is a lot of traffic congestion. Overall other areas are good.

St George's is a hidden gem – it took me three years to realise it was there!

Ensure all road names are clearly legible on all roads and at all junctions.

Re-think the hopeless road layout and traffic light timings in front of the Hippodrome on the centre!

Guides based at points of interest around the city tourist spots. Careful planning of one-way road systems.

Difficult really ... I know the city too well.

More at Temple Meads station.

Better public transport and simpler pedestrian paths and roads (one way systems and pedestrian only areas are poorly signposted).

Replacing the city centre with something that became an eye-catching focal point.

Signs should be multi-lingual. Picture signs might be useful.

Foot prints on pavements directing walkers.

An excellent project – I can't think of any improvements.

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On working in Queen Square:

It's a lovely place to work but quite a walk to facilities, eg banks, shops, etc.

Very pleasant.

Wonderful. It's a beautiful location to work.

Generally good.

The square is much improved especially now road is removed from middle. It does seem to lack colour as there is only the grass and trees. Much quieter now buses can't come round as well.

Fantastic. Not so good at night. Three smashed windows on building in one year and car crime.

A very pleasant environment. But from a business viewpoint the parking is poor.

Delightful.

Like it – pleasant, green location near city facilities.

Good unless you have to bring a car for work purposes.

A pleasant environment when not being disturbed by workmen/ jazz etc.

Great except for the crime.

Pleasant.

Have worked in the square for 20 years and it gets better all the time.

A wonderful working environment – recently transformed. Would like to see some active users eg restaurants/ hotel.

It's a magnificent place to work in the summer. Staff enjoy using the square in their lunch hour. Also has great views from the office windows.

Nice place to work. Close to shops, easy to access M4/M5, central. Relaxing environment.

Fantastic – it is a wonderful setting, at the heart of a very vibrant quarter of the city, yet easily accessible from rail and road networks.

A very pleasant working environment.

Pleasant environment. Too much broken car windows glass!

The disruption during enhancements has been a frustration but final outcome is favourable with exception of many outstanding 'snagging' items.

Delightful square – we love it!

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It's the most attractive working environment in Bristol. People don't seem to interact between companies as much as they could do.

Very high quality environment and access to services.

An excellent place to work in Bristol city centre – is a nice, beautiful place to work – as well as excellent location.

Now that the work has been largely completed, it provides an attractive outlook and environment for the office.

Nice – except for parking.

It is a very attractive location which both staff and clients appreciate. Parking is expensive and often difficult though.

Best place to be in central Bristol. So conveniently situated. Great ambience.

Wonderful. A pleasing aspect and a growing sense of community.

It is a very pleasant working environment. Car parking is an issue but this is of course throughout Bristol. The new proposed road tolling system will be a significant inconvenience for us.

Fantastic place to work, no air conditioning, lots of stairs, but charm aplenty.

We love it but have to move as our building has no suitable disabled access – Sob! Sob!

Very pleasant but very difficult to access. Public transport is poor and parking becoming increasingly expensive and more competitive because of poor public transport.

Good location. Parking is very limited/ sparse and expensive. Number of permits very/ too limited.

A very enjoyable environment.

Much improved!

Pleasant – good – quiet. Difficult entry – poor parking.

Very attractive location.

Great!

Great location but bad traffic congestion.

Pleasant.

We love it! It is a beautiful environment and a unique blend of heritage and commerce. Unfortunately this is marred by the very high incidence of crime and vandalism.

A wonderful location to work.

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On what is liked most about the square:

A little bit of greenery and trees in the middle of the city. Lovely to sit out at lunchtime and get fresh air. An oasis of calm.

Green grass and trees.

The tranquillity.

Its appearance and location, and cafés in the area.

Peaceful, not much traffic and no street beggars.

It is very peaceful, for the city centre of a large city.

The greenery and outlook.

Green area in mass of concrete (the developments in the centre are a disaster in this respect!). Cool and calm atmosphere.

Trees.

The trees and proximity to town ie bank, post office, market, SPAR etc.

Peace.

Open, trees, life.

That it has been returned to its original layout now (quiet and green).

General environment/ visitor parking.

Elegant, tranquil setting in the heart of the city.

Well maintained and a lovely work setting. It is the nicest park in the centre of Bristol. Lovely offices are situated there also.

Ambience and accessibility. Impresses visitors.

Lack of traffic. Green grass (could be more verdant though). No wine bars, pubs, shops (there are plenty of those nearby).

The address and its links with business.

The sense of quiet.

Ambience.

Ambience and setting for buildings has improved.

The style.

Pleasant, quiet green environment that is attractive on the eye.

Classy historic space.

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Having the 'green' space to look at while working. It is more relaxing, it feels like you are working away from the hustle and bustle of the city centre.

It's nearly finished! Once the work has been completed, it will be possible to give a full description of the positive aspects of the square.

Green.

The architecture and its location in terms of the rest of the city and the harbour.

Trees are amazing. Most of the buildings except those used as call centres are attractive. Cobbled road service.

The relative calm and sense of tranquillity.

The overall atmosphere, tranquillity etc.

Absence of buses.

The oasis of peace – the green lung.

The grass and the historic buildings (although many contain good modern offices).

Proximity to centre/ train station. Clean. Pleasant to look at/ walk around.

*Scenic, cultural, central.
The green open space.*

The open space and the chance to relax in the middle of the city.

Wide open space in city centre. Great location. Lots going on. Prestigious business address.

The trees and grass, the way it is kept clean and tidy, the peacefulness.

Ambience.

The open space, trees, architecture and community.

Attractive buildings and good location ie near docks, shops etc.

On what is liked least about the square:

Need more seating. A little too far from shopping/ banking/ food shop facilities. More facilities, please!

Cans, bottles, rubbish in the mornings.

The cobbles, although attractive, can be difficult to walk on – especially in high heels!

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The gravel paths are extremely dusty when dry and dirty your shoes and when wet flick up the dirt on the backs of your legs as well as your shoes. Driving on cobbles.

The shingle walkways.

The cobbles – dangerous and waste of money.

Getting here from outside Bristol by road.

The open top rubbish bins and rubbish blowing about and collecting in corners.

Noise.

Drainage, security, crime.

The disruption we have had to endure during the last two years – and had to work through.

Noise. Difficult to get our clients here (road system/ signage poor).

Posts dividing parking spaces which have caused hundreds of accidents.

Crime.

Constant building works at present and speed cars go round square.

Still tatty buildings in some cases. Not enough flowers. Pavements still poor in some areas.

Inflexibility of egress from the square for traffic.

Studs on crossing points too harsh on elderly, infirm and ladies formal footwear – dangerous.

Vandalism and crime (especially out of hours).

Cars.

Drunks/ drug addicts and the lack of crime prevention. Every week there is a pile of glass where a car has been broken into.

Seagulls.

Not receiving our parking permits.

People playing football.

No opinion.

Use of square as a football pitch. High crime levels especially targeting cars/ bikes owned by Queen Square-based employees. Lack of rubbish bins.

Lack of designated, motor-cycle parking.

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It is a tranquil place to work (except when it's covered in builders).

Night-time and petty crime. Cars are regularly broken into and glass often litters the parking bay.

1) The paths are often cycle paths – is that the aim? 2) The hypocrisy of the development programme in that too much value is placed on the perceived cultural needs of Bristolians – quite insulting to the intelligence – not to mention the fact that funds would be better used elsewhere in the city.

Traffic wardens. Limited car parking. High speed traffic.

Parking difficulties. Not easily accessible by car.

The cobbled road is bad to drive on. The road will eventually (three to five years) end up like Welsh Back with massive dips and hollows.

The path surface, state of the grass, fast bikes riding across the square.

Crossing the centre by car to get to it.

The benches – they are horrendously uncomfortable!

The crime rate and lack of visible policing.

Trying to get into it particularly from the SW ie Park Street/ Clifton/ Westbury side of the city. The 'new' traffic scheme around the city centre is absurd.

On events in Queen Square that should be held:

Any music, theatre, film.

Events that do not encourage large crowds, especially in winter as the grass gets messed up for weeks following. Music is fine provided not too loud during working day. Why no licensed buskers? (NOT beggars!)

None that close off the square on weekdays – we have a business to run.

Don't mind any events being held but there does not seem to be enough publicity about what events are going on. You only tend to find out when you go out at lunchtime to find the marquees and bands playing.

Any music/ film.

Cinema, music, arts and craft fairs.

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The recent jazz events were successful, despite the music being generally awful. There is huge scope for music events at least weekly in the summer. Also street theatre. The petangue league should also be continued.

Anything with horses. Falconry displays (may help with pigeons). Tai-chi.

Every year – cinema, skating rink, boules, concerts.

None – I enjoy tranquillity.

Art, music, parties, sex.

Limited music sessions (jazz or classical) during lunch hours (as present) or early evening.

Small scale entertainment. Corporate entertainment (balls etc). Boule competition.

Musical events (probably not major gigs etc which tend to draw big crowds and drink etc). Performing arts.

More events should be taking place especially in the summer months ie festivals, fetes, shows, small concerts for the public to enjoy.

Music, balls, festivals (food?), boules (we enter every year!)

Music events. Performing arts generally. Programmed quarterly.

Music. Stella cinema. Petangue.

Live music.

Something could be done every two-four weeks. Concerts. More cinema. Inter-company sports day. Sport competitions.

Artistic/ cultural – small scale – occasional.

The lunch time jazz is great – as well as after work. Could also do orchestra.... Other music types.

Existing events such as the Stella Artois cinema and the jazz provide life and energy, without being overly disruptive. The frequency is correct.

Cultural – antiques fair.

As current.

Upmarket cultural/ arty. Not 'over noisy' events. Low key sporting events. Not more than once monthly.

So long as there is no damage to the square it should be utilised by the citizens of Bristol for whatever might be their interests.

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Not sporting events. Would be likely to spoil grass and tree areas.

Raves, rock concerts, mass meetings.

Sports events, with the exception of boule which is currently played.

Large events in wet conditions.

Organised/ full contact ballgames by student residents.

Big, grass trashing, thousand+ people events.

Nothing that would encourage very drunk/ drug behaviour, as this might increase break-ins in Queen Square. Chilled out is better.

Anything as a regular basis preventing easy access to the square for rest/ relaxation during working hours.

Modern pop.

Anything which affects access during working hours.

Fairs. Pop concerts. Car rallies. Protest meetings etc. Food sellers. Ball games.

Large scale popular events which would, quite possibly ruin the Square (grass, surrounds etc).

Football, pop concerts.

Open air events where drugs are openly taken.... A very salutary experience at the recent Stella Artois open-air film events (needs "policing").

Political rallies, 'reclaim the streets' meetings, musical events as predominately Queen Square is inhabited by businesses during the week. Weekends could be viable provided security of the buildings can be guaranteed.

Anything too noisy during office hours could be avoided.

Loud musical events that start before offices have emptied particularly where they impinge on parking for visitors.

Zero: all events have caused noise, restricted parking and disruption to my business.

Little restriction.

Anything which would damage the grass.

Rock concerts.

Those that attract unruly or large crowds and could damage the infrastructure or ambience of the square.

'Raves'! Events likely to lead to an increase in crime, litter, excessive noise or damage.

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On parking:

Thought everything was metred. More free parking please. Parking can be very difficult.

It seems to work. Need to be careful that there remains a balance between the permit parking and pay-and-display. Parking for business visitors is a major draw to companies in the square.

The wooden posts are too low (below wing mirror) and have caused damage to several cars.

It is impossible for our company to obtain a parking space, even though we've been on the waiting list for two years.

Excellent as we use it daily and also for our visitors.

'Great'. I have a leased permit.

OK. Heaven only knows what the walled off areas in front of each building will become. I suspect that they will be host to dossers and rubbish.

Apart from the expense, many parking bays are permit holders only of which not all used daily. Waiting time for permits too long. I have been on the list for two years yet most are empty!

It would be adequate if it was all public. Disagree with some companies having permits. Alternatively this should apply to all businesses in the Square.

Adequate.

It would be useful for some sort of visitor/ tradesman (short time) arrangements eg. photocopier servicing.

Acceptable.

Good to remove off street and re-instate original railings all round. Wooden posts are ridiculous waste of money and oak trees to save undentable planes.

Good.

Parking as is, is fine. Charging for parking after 6.30pm is absolutely outrageous.

At present the arrangement works but once spaces are reserved for displaced forecourt users there will be little availability for visitors. Suggest reserved spaces are created in The Grove etc.

Very limited – often parking taken up by lorries, delivery vans etc which makes it difficult to manoeuvre.

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Looks better now only round middle.

*Expensive, and difficult to find spaces
not reserved.*

On balance, not too bad.

*Insufficient public/ metered spaces.
The bollards marking the spaces are hit
frequently and should be removed.*

*Too many spaces lost around the edge
during refurb. On street needs camera
surveillance in evenings.*

*OK but overnight parking high risk due
to increased risk of car crime.*

Prefer no cars at all.

*Like all parking in Bristol, it is very
expensive and penalises people who
have to use their cars for things like
client visits.*

A reasonable deal.

*It is important that parking should be
limited, as it makes the square better
looking although in Queen Square it
has been done well. There are plenty of
near-by car parks in Bristol for people
to use. However, space should be left
here for visiting clients and two spaces
left for each company at least.
However, we have yet to receive our*

*parking permit, although we are
apparently allowed two spaces – where
are they?*

Acceptable.

No opinion.

*Badly organised by parking services.
More police and parking attendant
intervention needed. More security
required!*

*Off-street good, but more spaces should
be designated for general use and not
reserved for tenants of the square. On-
street bad and rather spoils the
impression of the square.*

Keep the same. It is not too intrusive.

*The wooden posts seem to cause
problems with our clients' cars and I am
not sure protect the trees.*

I have a permit so it is fine.

*Quite awful. No concessions are made
to the business needs of the square. It
need not be a thoroughfare for traffic
but some sort of permit parking scheme
should be considered for residents.*

Limited/ expensive.

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Parking is a very difficult issue for those working on Queen Square. The current arrangements are not convenient for office working hours.

Adequate.

It is now a lot less offensive.

Parking is difficult.

Should be restricted to residents and company staff only.

More for visitors.

It has improved but there is inadequate business parking (ie for tenants of the square) and over-zealous policing.

OK and very necessary.

General views about the square:

*Better connection with the water.
Empty building on corner. Empty/
derelict building on Prince St corner.*

I'm looking forward to the railings being erected in front of the office.

Hanging baskets on the lamp posts.

No ball games near cars.

Convert one building back to a dwelling house and open to public.

More events.

Cigarette bins needed everywhere!

Children's play area. Better rubbish bins – there are a lot of large take-away containers as the square is very popular on nice days.

Please get rid of the eyesore boards advertising the architects etc.

Less thugs breaking into cars and nicking bikes. Good drainage of grass areas. Removal of oak posts at front of parking bays.

One of Bristol's great success stories in terms of urban renovation – puts the city centre to shame. Introduce some active frontages/ users.

More activities taking place. More bins placed around the square. Ice-cream vans in the summer.

Queen Square has been transformed over the past five/six years – it is a major success of the creation of a living, human city of Bristol.

Camera surveillance to protect a) parked cars, b) tourists on Brunel ride. Refurbishment and upgrade of existing vacant property. Improved security/ surveillance and deter out of hours crime.

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*More active office association to
encourage organisations to interact.*

No traffic at all?

*Improve access to Queen Square by
road. Particularly from the centre/
Baldwin Street approach (ie only access
via Welsh Back).*

*Speedier completion of black railings
project. Better enforcement of use of
one-way system required.*

*The work seems to be done... let it
settle down and bed in.*

CCTV and a police/ securuf. Better ein.

Methodology and Acknowledgements

The main source of data for this study came from a self-completed questionnaire sent to representatives of all companies in Queen Square. Research was also conducted into the history of the square (for a forthcoming BCDP/ Redcliffe Press publication) and one interview was held with Peter Ennis, Chairman of the Queen Square Association. We are grateful to those that responded and to Peter Ennis as well as to Jerry Baker, Alastair Brook and Chris Heath in Bristol City Council for the information that they provided and for discussions.

This is one of a series of reports providing details of BCDP research. Some are published as the final report of a project; others may be working papers. Whatever the status of each report, they are put forward for comment and debate.

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