



Bristol: Social Action Plan 2018 - 2020

The Mayor's
call to action

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Reading Volunteers thankyou at the Mansion House. Includes a mixture of volunteers, teachers, BCC staff and children. (Photograph by Bristol City Council).

The Mayor's call to action

A city that works for everyone..

Bristol is a wealthy, expanding city and an economic powerhouse, where productivity is above the national average and business density is the highest outside of London. Our employment rate is the highest of the 10 UK Core Cities and the number of people claiming Out of Work benefits is now at a historic low.

However, not everyone benefits from this success; over a third of people on benefits live in the seven poorest wards of the city - Lawrence Hill, Filwood, Ashley, Whitchurch Park, Hartcliffe, Hillfields and Easton.

In addition to where you live, we know that many Bristolians suffer disadvantage by virtue of their ethnicity, disability, housing status and family background.

But this does not have to be the case! Ensuring that everyone benefits from the future prosperity of the city is good economics and an absolute priority for me. Since coming in to office in May 2016 I have focussed my attention on building an inclusive city, a city where the needs of all its citizens are met.

My experience to date has convinced me that one of the keys to success in addressing our major challenges lies in people helping each other through social action. By 'social action' I mean people coming together to help improve their lives and solve the problems that are important to them and their communities.

Under the banner of Cities of Service, Bristol has been working for the last four years with other cities in the UK and the USA to learn more about the potential of people power to address the key challenges facing cities. I am passionate about the role a Mayor can play rallying support for people that are getting active in their communities to serve the common good.

Since my election there are a few key issues I have focussed on that I believe can best be addressed through social action. They are:

- Giving all children and young people the best start in life
- Ending Rough Sleeping
- Creating a cleaner and healthier local environment
- Improving mental health and wellbeing



Marvin Rees, Mayor of Bristol (Photograph by BCC).

I want to mobilise all parts of the city to address these issues and to ensure that the city's institutions co-ordinate their input for the benefit of all. For this reason today I am publishing this call to action which goes out to everyone in this great city.

Mobilising Bristol to address the big challenges

One of the first things we need to do is to make use of technology, linking people with opportunities to make a contribution and organisations with people and communities that are seeking help.

We know that just over 60% of Bristol's population gives their time at least three times a year in support of their communities¹ and

a growing number of employers are including paid 'volunteering leave' in their standard job contract. Increasingly employers are sponsoring staff volunteering as a way to give their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policies real impact whilst, at the same time, providing staff with new learning and development opportunities.

There are over 500 voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations who are members of Voscur with hundreds

more community groups, sports and social clubs all enlisting the help of local people – a workforce that runs into the tens of thousands.

Our two Universities are amongst the largest employers in the city, over 10% of Bristol's population are students, and many university and college courses require their students to gain experience in the 'real world' as a part of their courses, in all sorts of social and community settings. As well as this students and staff volunteer in their

own time to 'give back' to the city that is giving them an education. Last year over 500 young Bristolians joined the National Citizen Service (NCS) supporting all sorts of good causes during their summer holidays.

I believe that everyone has something to give – every citizen, young or old; regardless of background, ethnicity or disability has a contribution to make to their community, and through that to the city as a whole.

¹Quality of Life Survey 2017



Staff from Premier Inn, Finzels Reach after a tidy-up at St. Michael's on the Mount primary school. (Photograph by Dominic Murphy, Bristol City Council).

The Plan

Our Strategic Objectives

1. Giving our children and young people the best start in life:
 - All children achieve the national standard for reading by age 11;
 - All children to have access to breakfast clubs in term time and, where it's needed and to a lunch club during the school holidays;
 - Closing the employment opportunity gap for our children and young people in Bristol's job growth sectors;
 - Every young person in the city has their aspirations raised through access to meaningful work experience.
2. Ending rough sleeping in Bristol:
 - To ensure that no-one who can accept help will be left on the streets during the coldest months of the year;
3. Creating a cleaner and healthier local environment:
 - To make Bristol's streets measurably cleaner by 2020;
4. Improving mental health and wellbeing:
 - by increasing awareness of mental health issues and
 - by reducing loneliness and isolation amongst all of our citizens.



Boy reading with the Lord Mayor, Clare Campion-Smith at Bristol Read Aloud Week.

(Photograph supplied by BCC Trading with Schools team).

Our approach

We will take action to:

1. Mobilise Bristol citizens to enable them to make their contribution to the future of their communities and the city as a whole;
2. Tap into the enthusiasm of civic institutions, companies and faith groups to work together to address citywide priorities;
3. Take successful projects to city scale so that as many as possible can benefit from them.
4. Utilise digital technology and communications to make it easy for people and organisations to take action, share information and collaborate on new projects to meet identified needs.

Priorities for action:

1. Social action goals

1.1 All children achieve the national standard for reading by age 11.

Why?

Evidence shows that poor reading at age 11 feeds into much reduced life chances. In short, reading and poverty are directly linked:

- You are twice as likely to be unemployed if your reading is poor;
- If you have a job you will earn less;
- You are more likely to suffer poor health;
- The cost of this to the economy could be over 2% of GDP by 2025;²
- In Bristol this would mean at least an additional £150m per year into the Bristol economy by 2020 or £300 for every man woman and child in the city.

Intervention: Reading in Primary schools.

This project focuses on schools that are in need of support either by virtue of underperformance or lack of access to volunteers. Volunteers are recruited and trained to deliver a ten session 'block' of reading support, working with two 6/7 year olds each week. Testing indicates that the average progress per pupil is in excess of six months (26 weeks) during that time. Since September 2014 the project has grown from supporting 5 schools to working in 35. As of April 2017 179 volunteers had been recruited and trained, improving reading for 425 pupils who had been identified by their teacher as in need of support.

Our ambition for the future: to provide a reading volunteer for EVERY child that needs one. To achieve this we calculate that we need to provide 300 volunteers across Bristol's schools every year.

² Save the Children (2014) Read on Get on – how reading can help children escape poverty

³ Assuming trend growth in GVA remains the same as 2011-14



Myung Lee, CEO of Cities of Service USA.
During a visit to St George C of E Primary School,
November 2017. (Photograph by Dominic Murphy, Bristol City Council).

1.2 Closing the employment opportunity gap for our children and young people by collaborating with our rapidly growing technology sector.

Why?

The Joint Spatial Plan⁴ indicates that over the coming years there will be a shortage of lower skilled jobs in Bristol;

- Automation and Artificial Intelligence (AI) will reduce the number of low skilled jobs over the coming decade;
- As business increases its use of tech our young people need to be in a position to take advantage of this change;
- Bristol Bath area is the best place in Europe for tech start-ups which is already creating a labour shortage;
- There are very low levels of women employed in tech industry;
- This is a huge opportunity for our young people, for those underrepresented in these new industries and for those that come from more deprived backgrounds.

Intervention: Code Club.

Volunteer-led after school clubs in Bristol primary schools inspire children to learn about coding and its potential uses in real life. We prioritise schools and communities located in our most disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Since November 2015 the number of active Code Clubs has risen from 35 to 93, including new clubs starting up in libraries and community buildings such as the St Paul's Learning Centre.

Our ambition for the future: to provide a Code Club in every school that wants one and in community venues, including libraries and children's centres, across the city.

⁴ <https://www.jointplanningwofe.org.uk/consult.ti/JSPPublication/consultationHome>



Children at West Town Lane Academy attending their volunteer-led Code Club.

(Photograph by BCC, with permission of West Town Lane Academy).

1.3 Every young person in the city has their aspirations raised through access to meaningful work experience.

Why?

Bristol continues to have deprivation 'hot spots' that are amongst some of the most deprived areas in the country yet they are adjacent to some of the wealthiest;⁵

- More than 85,000 people live in areas of the city identified as in the most deprived 10% nationally for Education, Skills and Training deprivation;
- More than half of Bristol's most deprived areas for Education, Skills and Training are in South Bristol;
- Ethnic minorities in Bristol experience greater disadvantage than in England and Wales as a whole in education and employment and this is particularly so for Black African people⁶

⁵ Bristol City Council (2015), *Deprivation in Bristol*

⁶ CoDE and The Runnymede Trust (Jan 2017), *Bristol: a divided city?*

Intervention: Meaningful experiences of work.

For the last eighteen months, the WORKS programme, which is part of our Learning City initiative, has been engaging with employers across the city to provide a thousand experiences of work, mostly for our year 10 students.

Employers have a lot to offer, not merely in terms of work placements, but also in supporting schools and our young people so that they can learn about work and

make good choices about their future careers. This is particularly important for young people who may not easily get this sort of opportunity.

Ambition for the future: We will recruit volunteers from business and local communities to provide a meaningful work experience programme backed up by mentoring for our most disadvantaged young people including those who have experience of being looked after by the Council.



Meaningful experience of work.
Learning City initiative.

(Photograph by Rawpixel on Unsplash).

1.4 Bristol's streets will be measurably cleaner by 2020.

Why?

According to our 2015/16 Quality of Life survey 73.8% of people who responded identified street litter as a problem, 30.3% identified anti-social graffiti as a problem and 63.4% of residents felt that dog fouling was a problem in their local area.

- 3,700 tonnes of litter was dropped on Bristol's streets last 2015/16;
- During 2016/17 1,366 tonnes of waste was fly-tipped across our city costing the tax payer an estimated £492,000 for removal and disposal;
- Between 2015/16 the amount of waste collected from Bristol parks went up by 55%;

Intervention: Clean Streets Campaign.

The Mayor's Clean Streets campaign was launched in the autumn of 2016 and has seen a significant increase in social action aimed at improving our local environment. With the support of the Bristol Waste Company's community engagement team primary schools, community groups and businesses have been organising their own clean-up events. During last autumn's 'Litter Blitz' 507 volunteers gave over 1200 hours of their time and collected over 500 bags of rubbish! Now we need to build on this...

Ambition for the future: we will engage with the National Citizens Service (NCS)⁷ summer programme to recruit hundreds of 16 and 17 year olds to create clean-up and recycling projects We will also use our new website (www.candobristol.co.uk) to enable more individuals, local groups, employers and schools to get involved and be recognised as contributing to the campaign.

Clean Streets Campaign volunteers at a Clean Streets community clean up in Easton.

(Photograph supplied by Bristol Waste).



⁷ <http://bit.ly/2omsmHX>

1.5 Volunteer support for homeless people.

Why?

Bristol has a serious rough sleeping problem (6th highest in England), which has increased significantly since 2010: ⁸

- Average age of death for a street homeless person is 47 (men) and 43 (women). ⁹

Intervention: Volunteer support for recently homeless men and women (New project)

This project involves providing mentoring and support with 'Life Skills' to people who have experienced homelessness and who are now on a journey towards secure housing. Volunteers will support homeless people with developing their personal financial skills, work readiness skills, qualifications and ultimately securing employment.

⁸ MHCLG (Jan 2018) Rough Sleeping Statistics 2017

⁹ Thomas, Bethan (2012) Homelessness Kills. Crisis Report.



Sleeping out near Templemeads.
In aid of 1625 Independent people (a young people's homelessness charity). (Photograph by Dominic Murphy, Bristol City Council).

1.6 Improving mental health by reducing loneliness and isolation amongst all of our citizens.

Why?

- The campaign to end loneliness has identified 'volunteering' as an important factor in reducing loneliness. The World Health Organisation (WHO) framework for an Age Friendly City emphasises that the whole community benefits from the participation of older people in volunteer or paid work.¹⁰
- It is estimated that around 11,000 of Bristol's over 65's feel lonely;
- National research indicates that 17% of older people are in contact with friends or relatives less than once a week;
- Research by the Dame Kelly Holmes Trust found that 72% of young people reporting that they had recently felt lonely or isolated;
- Loneliness is gendered, with young women (75%) more likely to suffer than young men (69%).

Intervention: Age-Friendly Bristol (New project)

Bristol Ageing Better (BAB) is working to ensure Bristol can join the global network of age friendly cities set up by the World Health Organisation by looking at how Bristol can become a more Age-Friendly place. The Age Friendly Bristol programme is focused around nine visions, one of which looks at how older people can access the work and volunteering opportunities that they want while another highlights potential ways to ensure older people feel heard and have a say in the decision making that affects their lives.

BAB is asking organisations working in these areas to get involved with the 'Age Friendly Bristol' project to celebrate age friendly work that is already taking place in the city and increase the scope of its work.

As part of this we will work with BAB to create an Age Friendly City campaign on the Candobristol website which will promote opportunities for older people in the city to get involved in volunteering and social action in Bristol.



Bristol Ageing Better campaign promotion photograph.

(Photograph supplied by Bristol Ageing Better).

¹⁰ W.H.O. (2007) *Global Age Friendly Cities: a guide* (p.6)

1.7 Mental Health & Wellbeing.

We will be focussing on interventions that have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of Bristol's population as a whole, with a particular emphasis on mental health and those interventions that close the gap in life expectancy across the city.

Why?

In Bristol your life expectancy can vary by up to 12 years depending on where you live:

- 8.8% of Bristol patient population has depression diagnosis
- (8.3% nationally);
- 1 in 10 children will experience a mental health problem (9k in Bristol) and 1 in 5 young people in Bristol self-harm;
- Having a severe mental illness can lead to you dying up to 20 years early due to preventable physical health conditions;
- Bristol has a much higher suicide rate than the national average: 12.8 per 100k compared to national average of 10.1 per 100k.

Intervention: Volunteer support for 'Thrive Bristol'.

"Thrive" is an international 'movement' which aims to tackle the prevalence and impact of poor mental ill health. It has grown in recent years and now there are programmes in New York City, London and the West Midlands.

The aim of Thrive Bristol is to:

- Improve mental health and wellbeing across Bristol;
- Shift our focus from care to prevention, early intervention and resilience;
- Involve people across the city, especially community leaders, in co-producing plans;
- Create an action plan which is owned by agencies across the city – created by them, with a clear mechanism to deliver.

New York and the West Midlands have both identified strong roles for the citizen in contributing to Thrive.

Thrive is looking to make mental health part of our everyday conversation, with people feeling able to seek support at the earliest opportunity. To support this

people who live and work in Bristol will be trained in Mental Health First Aid.

The programme is also working to equip workplaces across Bristol with the awareness and tools to:

- address and prevent mental ill health caused or worsened by work;
- support individuals with a mental health condition to thrive at work;
- to be aware of how to get access to timely help to reduce sickness absence caused by mental ill health.

Through strong, multi-agency working across the city we are aiming to radically reduce the suicide rate (25% down by 2028) with the ambition of eliminating suicide by 2050.

Over the next two years we will work with the Thrive Bristol programme to identify opportunities for Bristol people to contribute to these aims and ensure that the Can Do Bristol platform is able to support this goal.

1.8 Feeding Bristol.

A healthy diet is an essential requirement for everyone and especially for our children. Bristol is located near some of the most productive farming land in the UK and many of our citizens produce food in gardens and on allotments across the city. The issue of food waste and the unequal access to a healthy diet is a priority for us to tackle and we can do this through community action.

Why?

Food poverty is growing problem, for some school age children the school lunch is their main source of nutrition, so during the 13 weeks a year that school is not on they can often go hungry:

- 37% of teachers said pupils are returning to school showing signs of malnutrition;¹¹
- 80% of teachers who reporting pupils with holiday hunger said it had increased over the past two years.

¹¹ NUT poll of members, reported in the Bristol Post on 18th April 2017

¹² <https://www.feedingbritain.org/>

Intervention: Holiday Hunger project.

"Feeding Bristol is looking to become a pilot for the Feeding Britain¹² initiative which has been launched in response to the main recommendations made by MPs and Peers on the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Hunger.

Last summer projects like 'Fit and Fed' and 'Make Lunch' worked on the streets or in community venues to provide lunch for children and young people. Excellent start as this was, many areas were only able to cover a few days in the holiday period and in some areas there was no provision.

During the next summer holidays, as a part of an activities programme that is targeting areas of need, we can build the coverage and impact of these projects, tapping into the enthusiasm of local people, businesses, community organisations and faith groups.

A co-ordinating group has been formed under the 'banner' of Feeding Bristol, and we will again be using the capability of the new Can do Bristol website to support these projects to find volunteers, receive donations and also to raise funds.

2. Scaling up

Citizen action in local communities is recognised as a really effective way to address many of our social issues, but how do you spread the benefits of a successful local project to other areas or across a whole city? The challenge of 'scaling' local projects to the city level requires both resources and co-ordination and our approach to this problem involves an appeal to the larger city institutions. The establishment of the City Office has now given us one of the tools we need to do this – namely citywide collaboration and co-ordination. So via the City Office we will:

- a. Embed support for social action into the aims and objectives for the new City Funds that are being developed by the City Office;
- b. Develop a city-wide Employer Sponsored Volunteering (EVS) programme. To support employers who have incorporated volunteering into their standard job contract;

- c. Support and develop student volunteering to address key city challenges through partnership with the National Citizen Service (NCS), the Student Capital project¹³ (UWE and University of Bristol) and volunteer programmes in our schools and colleges;

- d. Harness the capacity of Bristol's local community workers, who are employed by a wide range of organisations and whose knowledge and reach into communities is a very important 'asset' for the city. These paid workers and volunteers work for Voluntary and Community organisations as well as the public sector and will be an essential part of any community engagement approach aimed at spreading the benefits of social action across Bristol.

¹³ <http://bit.ly/2EdVHgR>



3. Social Action made easy

The council along with Ablaze, Quartet and Voscur has been working with Made Open to develop a user-friendly 'platform' dedicated to Bristol that is:

- Making it easier to find out about opportunities for social action and volunteering in Bristol;
- Making it easier for organisations to recruit volunteers;
- Empowering the volunteer to make an offer that suits them;
- Encouraging individuals and groups to continue to be active in their communities;
- Creating the conditions for individuals, groups, organisations and employers to work together and have a collective impact on identified (citywide) issues.

The platform will support social action in the city through the following functions:

- Visible volunteering opportunities for the maximum number of people by providing a platform that links existing sites and enables organisations, groups and individuals to post opportunities and collaborate on new projects.

Status: being tested – view at www.candobristol.madeopen.co.uk;

- 'Community Exchange' which is based on a 'traditional' Time Bank and can be enhanced to reward people for the time and resources they commit to their communities and the city at large.

Status: live and being tested;

- Virtual Volunteer/Skills Bank which allows people to offer their skills when and where it's convenient to them.

Status: to be commissioned;

- Platform for Campaigns to allow the Mayor, the Youth Mayors and citywide initiatives to mount campaigns around issues of importance to the people of Bristol.

Status: to be commissioned.

Staff from Premier Inn, Finzels Reach after a tidy-up at St. Michael's on the Mount primary school. (Photograph by Dominic Murphy, Bristol City Council).



4. What will success look like?

Our Cities of Service experience has demonstrated the importance of being able to show impact in everything we do. This is important as we must not waste the time and enthusiasm of our precious volunteers on initiatives that don't make a difference.

We will measure our progress against the following key performance indicators (KPI's):

4.1 Children achieving the national standard for reading by age 11:

- By 2025 90% of Bristol children will be reaching the national standard for reading at age 11;
- Reduction in the average attainment gap for reading at Key Stage 2.

4.2 Closing employment opportunity gap for our children in Bristol's growth sectors:

- Increase the number of school children in Bristol with access to regular opportunities to learn coding both in school and out of school;
- By 2020 100% of schools in disadvantaged areas (IMD lowest 10%) have a Code Club.

4.3 Every young person in the city has their aspirations raised through access to meaningful work experience:

- Reduction in the employment gap between young people from disadvantaged areas and the city average;
- We will use the results of the Labour Force Survey to measure our impact on young people not in Employment Education or Training (NEET).

4.4 Bristol's streets will be measurably cleaner by 2020. We will continue to measure the contribution from Bristol citizens to this aim by reporting on:

- number of volunteers;
- volunteer hours;
- percentage of people who feel that street litter is a problem in their neighbourhood.

4.5 Volunteer support for Bristol's homeless:

- Bristol's street homeless count in the lowest quartile nationally by 2020;
- 10 employers participating by May 2020;
- 20 mentors providing assistance to former street homeless people.

¹⁴ As reported in the Quality of Life Survey

4.6 Age Friendly Bristol As this is a new project, we are still developing our impact targets, but they will involve measuring:

- Number of older people who report that they have the amount and type of social contact they want to reduce isolation and loneliness;
- Number of older people who say that they can influence decisions that affect their local area and how services are designed and delivered;
- Number of older people who are able to contribute to their community through such mechanisms as volunteering, belonging to a forum, steering group or other activity.

4.7 Improving Health and Wellbeing

Thrive Bristol. This is also a new project for which we are developing our impact targets, however these are the data sets we will use to measure success:

- Number of people who have accessed Mental Health First Aid (by 2028, we aim for 20% Bristolians to have been trained);
- % of people with mental ill health in work;
- % of people affected by mental ill health who experience stigma and discrimination. (Currently 9/10 report stigma and discrimination);
- % of people taking their lives through suicide.

4.8 Feeding Bristol

The aim of Feeding Bristol is to reduce the number of children and young people requiring this sort of intervention, so we will be developing metrics to reflect that objective in due course.



Tidy BS5 community clean up. Picture of a group of BS5 residents with Marvin Rees.

Photograph by 'Up Our Street'. Permission to use by Trustee Dominic Murphy.