

# Land use management for sustainable European cities

epures



## Urban Renewal in Bristol (Great Britain): The Regeneration of Knowle West Area

LUMASEC (Land Use Management for Sustainable European Cities) is a European project which aims to identify the scope of strategic and operational action for European cities in land use planning. Each of the five partner-cities of the project has developed a local action plan (LAP) with decision-makers in order to build up a strategic approach to land use management.

This leaflet presents the local action plan produced by Bristol City Council (Great Britain). This plan deals with the regeneration of a deprived area of South Bristol: Knowle West. It has led to the ongoing preparation of a regeneration framework, based on strong community engagement. A common vision and a range of precise objectives have been developed and will be implemented in the years to come through inclusion in statutory planning documents and the application of formal policy to direct and control development proposals.

### ► The City of Bristol

Bristol is one of the eight core cities in England. It is the largest city in the South West region. The City Council's administrative area covers approximately 110km<sup>2</sup> with an estimated population of 421,300. Bristol's population is projected to grow by 26% between 2006 and 2026 to 519,800. Compared to the rest of the region, the population profile of Bristol is relatively young, with more children aged under 16 than people of pensionable age. At an estimated 49,700 (11.9%) Bristol has the largest black and minority ethnic population of all local authorities in the South West.



Knowle West

Bristol has two main universities – University of Bristol and University of the West of England with 52,400 students. 34.5% of working age people in Bristol are educated to degree level compared with the national average of 29%. However, there are some parts of Bristol which are in the most deprived 10% nationally for education, skills and training deprivation, with particular concentrations in South Bristol wards.

Bristol contains some areas of socioeconomic deprivation which are amongst some of the most deprived areas in the country yet are adjacent to some of the least deprived. Levels of educational attainment in Bristol's schools are generally lower than comparable cities but with continuing sustained improvement.



estimated that they now account for over 25% of all commuter journeys. The city's major mainline railway station is Temple Meads supported by several suburban railway stations. Inter-city coach services also serve Bristol which has an extensive bus network serving the city and its surrounding areas with ferry and taxi services providing additional connections. Bristol International Airport is located about 10 miles to the south of Bristol in North Somerset is the United Kingdom's ninth busiest airport and provides scheduled and chartered services to domestic

The city is set within a distinctive landscape defined by the river valleys and the flood plain of the Severn Estuary with areas of countryside surrounding the city. Bristol's rich heritage includes the city centre's medieval core and Georgian parts of the central area. The historic Floating Harbour and associated waterways is a unique feature, which has defined the development of the city centre and will continue to shape the city. There are high-density Victorian neighbourhoods adjacent to the city centre and a number of once outlying villages have been subsumed by the city and have their own identity and village-like character. Large, mostly low-density inter-war and post-war housing estates are also found in outer parts of the city such. The city has numerous parks and open spaces, ranging from large multi-functional areas to historic squares and local parks and playgrounds. Bristol has a diverse network of centres providing shopping, services and employment of varying sizes. These include the city centre, which provides regional-scale shopping facilities and many cultural, arts and leisure amenities.

The majority of employed people in Bristol (57%) travel to work by car. Traffic congestion and journey time unreliability make Bristol one of the most congested cities in Britain. However, 28.8% of households in Bristol have no access to a car, a figure similar to national levels but lower than the other core cities. There has been a significant increase in walking and cycling trips in Bristol in recent years and it is

and international destinations.

The affordability of home ownership has decreased in Bristol over the last ten years. In 2008 the average property price in the city was more than seven times that of annual gross average earnings. There is a net annual requirement for approximately 1,500 new affordable homes to be provided in Bristol over the next 12 years to address demand and affordability issues. Owner occupation in Bristol is lower than the South West and national averages whereas renting from the local authority and privately is higher. Local authority housing is mainly focused in inner city areas and on the outlying housing estates. Private renting is concentrated in the central and central west wards. The proportion of detached housing is much lower than the South West average. The proportion of terraced housing (found particularly in the inner suburbs) and flats or converted houses (found particularly in the city) is much higher than the South West average.

Bristol's economy has performed well in the last ten to fifteen years. In 2006 its Gross Value Added (GVA) per head was some 30% above the national average. The city has a varied economic base. The city centre is the largest employment area in the sub-region providing approximately 109,500 jobs (2007). It is the South West's office capital and a nationally important location for banking, insurance and professional services. Significant public sector em-

ployment is provided by employers such as the NHS, Bristol's university and government agencies. The city's industrial areas also contribute to Bristol's economic diversity. The two largest industrial locations are found in St Philips Marsh area to the east of the city centre and Avonmouth, where Bristol Port has also experienced recent significant growth. Bristol's unemployment rate of 5.3% in 2009 was lower than the national rate (6.2%). Nevertheless relatively high levels of economic exclusion persist, particularly in certain parts of South Bristol.

The city has a fine built environment heritage including 33 conservation areas, 73 historic parks and gardens and over 4,000 listed buildings. Bristol has more green spaces than any other British city and a wealth of urban wildlife. It has over 80 designated wildlife. In 2008 Bristol was chosen as the only city in the UK to be short-listed for the European Green Capital Award. Bristol collects around 180,000 tonnes of municipal waste each year. Between 2006 and 2009 the amount of household rubbish recycled has increased from 18.5% to 37%.

Bristol is situated at the heart of the West of England sub-region and has close links with its neighbouring unitary authorities: Bath and North East Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Councils. One of the key inter-relationships is the strong transport and economic linkages between Bristol and South Gloucestershire.



© Bristol City Council,  
*Aerial view of the Knowle West Area, in South Bristol*

## ▶ Knowle West

The study area, Knowle West, is in South Bristol, an area of comparative deprivation and in need of regeneration. South Bristol combines a concentration of social needs with substantial opportunities for development and renewal. Parts of the area experience concentrations of deprivation in terms of income, employment, health, education, housing, environment and crime. There are substantial opportunities for development in parts of the area and the area has good links to the city centre and improved transport links are planned.

Proposed revitalisation of South Bristol will help address imbalances in employment opportunities and travel to work patterns across the city which have arisen following extensive development on the north fringe of the Bristol urban area. The new sources of employment are planned for South Bristol will increase the number of job opportunities, especially high value added jobs, available to residents in the south of the city. Parts of South Bristol are characterised by large areas of homes of a single tenure type. The new homes to be developed in the area will include a variety of types and tenures, which will contribute to the development of balanced and sustainable communities. The area has a scarcity of shopping centres, and new provision is required.

Approximately 15,000 people currently live in Knowle West, which was mostly built between the 1920s and 1950s. For many Knowle West is a great place to live and there is a strong sense of community. However it has its share of problems, due to concentrations of deprivation and poverty, mixed with its physical distance from employment, services and facilities in the rest of the city. Filwood Broadway, its main shopping centre has declined and much of the built environment is in need of regeneration.

The Knowle West Regeneration Area is the subject of a major study which will lead to:

- The preparation of a Regeneration Framework for future development investment;
- An outline planning application for the Filwood Broadway area;
- And a Supplementary Planning Document for the area (part of the statutory land use development plan for Bristol – the Bristol Development Framework), which will guide the preparation of applications for development in the future.

The Knowle West area has long been identified as suffering a complex range of problems where concentrations of deprivation and poverty have been compounded by the area's physical isolation from employment, services and facilities in the rest of the City. This is particularly evident as the communities of Knowle West and Hartcliffe were adversely affected by the closure of the former Wills Tobacco factory (now Imperial Park) that employed 5000 people, mainly from the local area.

Socio economic data such as the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and various area specific studies indicate a stable, but inward-looking, population coping with high levels of deprivation, especially in relation to income, employment, skills and crime. The Filwood ward has 6 out of 8 Super Output Areas (SOA's) ranked in the most deprived 10% nationally and 4 in the most deprived 3% nationally (IMD2007). 70% of households are dependent on welfare benefits contributing to a low base for the local economy.

The majority of housing in Knowle West consists of 3 bedroom semi-detached houses, generally in good condition, set within generous plots with large back gardens. Tenure across the estate has been significantly affected by 'Right to Buy' with 46% of properties now privately owned (although in some cases then rented out, often to people who are benefit dependent). Bristol City Council has significant land holdings within the estate, and recently English



An example of abandoned housing in Knowle West

Partnerships have acquired key strategic sites in the area.

Knowle West is characterised by very low housing densities (30 dph on average). With such densities it has proved difficult to keep shops, bus stops, nurseries, schools etc within reasonable walking distances of residents. The uniformity of density also tends to create a monotonous, unrelieved character, with poor legibility. Much of the area's physical environment is dilapidated and lacks diversity and vibrancy. This is particularly evident in the main shopping centre, Filwood Broadway, which has significantly declined.

Few shops remain trading, the cinema and garage sites are derelict, a former school site (in poor condition) is used as a community centre, the library is underused, and the former swimming pool site is now cleared. A citywide retail study by consultants DTZ in 2007 identified the Filwood Broadway centre as 'poorly performing' and unable to retain its current status without considerable regeneration. Much of the existing open space on the estate is either poorly located to effectively serve the needs of the community, inadequately connected to enable its fullest use, or has value that relates to other aspects of environmental policy e.g. nature conservation, prominent green hillsides etc. The surrounding road network, comprising of Hartcliffe Way, Hengrove Way and the Hartcliffe Roundabout, have large swathes of associated under-utilised open land; presumably designed as a buffer to distance them from residential areas. These spaces tend to be particularly under-utilised and suffer from a lack of natural surveillance, which has made them vulnerable to vandalism and dumping. They cannot be considered successful and attractive outdoor areas. Other features of the estate include poor public transport connections and generally poor connectivity/permeability.



Saint-Étienne and the other central locations to reinforce, as pointed out in the Master Plan (© Epures, Syndicat mixte du SCOT Sud-Loire)

## The Local Action Plan: Preparing the Knowle West Regeneration Framework

Consultants have been retained to work with the local Community and Project Board to prepare the Knowle West Regeneration Framework. This is due for completion during the early part of 2010. Work is in progress with the community in preparing the Regeneration framework. A Vision and Objectives have been developed by the local community as a part of the KWRF community engagement/consultation process and subsequently been endorsed by the Project Board (see below).

In preparing the Regeneration Framework the Council is expecting to see future development provision for :

- New housing supporting new shops and community facilities;
- New employment opportunities;
- New education and skills facilities;
- Better public transport;
- Improved open green spaces and play spaces.

Working with the community, is leading to the identification of sites for future intensification of activity and development, greater density housing, new open spaces and new retail opportunities, contributing to the regeneration of the Knowle West area, and the regeneration of South Bristol as a whole. New development in this area will help to meet the objectives of the Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy – which seeks to enable the delivery of 10,000 new homes in South Bristol between 2006 and 2026.

The proposals for sites and future uses will emerge from, and be considered with the community as part of the ongoing engagement before being formally identified in site allocations documents and considered as outline planning applications.

In working together, the community have held and been involved in a wide range of workshops and vision sessions, have identified their preferences for the future of the area and local residents have been on study tours of other regeneration initiatives across the country to identify examples of good/bad practice that they can learn from for Knowle West.

## VISION AND OBJECTIVES OF THE KNOWLE WEST REGENERATION FRAMEWORK DEVELOPED BY THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

### VISION:

“A community full of confidence and pride, skilled and healthy, living in a thriving Bristol neighbourhood that is green and well connected and low in living costs.”

### OBJECTIVES:

- Raise income through employment;
- Improve health and wellbeing;
- Widen local choice of housing size and tenure;
- Refurbish existing housing stock;
- Improve and develop primary school provision;
- Reinforce a close-knit neighbourhood;
- Access safe, ecologically rich, open space;
- Pride of place;
- Build a future-proof community;
- Improve access to low-cost transport;
- Public & community initiatives in advance of private investment;
- Improve arts and culture;
- Develop play and youth facilities by planning with young people.

# KEY CONSULTATION EVENTS

for the Knowle West Regeneration Framework and Outline Planning Application for Filwood Broadway Corridor

Last up-dated on 30 October 2009 by UI/AK



Visioning

Options Options Options Options

Public Consultation

Preferred Option

Completion



Event	Date	Participants	Content	Output
<b>1</b>	08 /09	KW FUTURES GROUP 100 People	<b>FUTURES CONFERENCE</b> Vision & Objective/ KWest Team.	Stakeholder conference by invitation only. Developing proposed vision and objectives by KWRPG. The purpose and role of the Knowle West Team. Start on conditions for change.
<b>2</b>	19 /09	GENERAL PUBLIC	<b>FUTURES EXHIBITION</b> Vision & Objectives/ Good Ideas.	Testing support for Vision and Objectives as put forward by KW Futures Conference. Summary Report available. Good practice exemplars. Interactive Exhibition - "Traffic Lights" - "Video booth"
<b>3</b>	29 /09	KNOWLE WEST TEAM 40 People	<b>WORKSHOP A</b> Option Ideas	Facilitated Workshop based on KW Futures Exhibition. KW Team role. Signing up to Final Vision and Objectives. Good practice exemplars. Neighbourhood Game 1.
<b>4</b>	20/11	KNOWLE WEST TEAM 40 People	<b>Study Trip</b> Projects that work	Guided tour to selected good practice exemplar. Upper Merfeld.
<b>5<sub>1</sub></b>	20/10	KNOWLE WEST TEAM 40 People	<b>WORKSHOP B&amp;C</b>	Facilitated Workshop. Maximum 5 options from a combinations of area-wide and more local proposals.
<b>5<sub>2</sub></b>	03/11	KNOWLE WEST TEAM 40 People	<b>WORKSHOP D</b> Preferred Option	Recommendation on selection of options and appraisals.
<b>6</b>	14/11	GENERAL PUBLIC	<b>KNOWLE WEST CONVERSATIONS</b> Preferences & Priorities	4-day event in venues across KW. 3. No. option combinations of area-wide and area-specific proposals. Interactive Exhibition - "A, B, C, OR D" - "Traffic Lights"
<b>7</b>	24 /11	KNOWLE WEST TEAM 40 People	<b>WORKSHOP D</b> Preferred Option	Facilitated Workshop. Presentation of outcomes of Events & and issues for consideration.
<b>8</b>	25 /01	KW FUTURES GROUP + 100+ People	<b>PROJECT LAUNCH</b> Kick start the process	Exhibition of final project. Focussed events for the Knowle West Team, Futures Group, and General Public.



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# INITIAL OBJECTIVES FOR THE KNOWLE WEST REGENERATION FRAMEWORK

1. To produce a regeneration framework for Knowle West acting as a catalyst and guidance for the development of a more mixed and balanced community, with a significant long-lasting improvement in the socio economic profile of the area over a 20 year period;
2. To capture the aspirations of the residential and business communities in the area;
3. Create opportunities to deliver a greater choice of housing in terms of the number and type of units built, tenure (private, shared-ownership, rented), affordability, and quality;
4. Provide greater opportunities for locally accessible jobs;
5. Ensure the community is well served in terms of retail provision, education, health, community and leisure facilities, and open space/parks;
6. Improve access to and from Knowle West, and connections within the estate, in terms of public transport, walking and cycling, and road provision;
7. Ensure all other infrastructure requirements for future development are met to include energy supply, water, telecommunications etc.;
8. Deliver high quality urban and landscape design for all new buildings and public realm through specified national standards and a Design Code for the estate covering all types of development (large sites and infill schemes);
9. Deliver high quality environmental standards (at least Code Level 4) and apply best practice principles of sustainable development;
10. Identify supporting socio-economic activity necessary to create a successful future neighbourhood;
11. Develop an implementation strategy and financial model that will include advice on the phasing of development and infrastructure, formal developer/partner involvement, and ensure the project is self-financing in the long term. This work should establish the long term delivery mechanisms, consultation strategies and branding that can be continued beyond this commission.

## ▶ Results and Lessons Learned

The 'project' has had a number of key learning points to date. These can be summarised as:

- Clarity re initial brief for consultants;
- Clarity re anticipated products and outcomes;
- Governance – terms of reference and responsibilities;
- Community engagement – who, how to best engage, frequency and ownership

- Timeframe for delivery;
- Relationship with other statutory and non statutory products.

A more formal lessons learned is anticipated as part of the formal review of the project at the next 'gateway' stage following the completion of the draft Regeneration Framework document.

## FURTHER INFORMATION...

### ✓ Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy:

<http://www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/content/Environment-Planning/Planning/planning-policy-documents/bristol-development-framework/core-strategy.en>

### ✓ Bristol City Council Planning Policy:

<http://www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/environment-and-planning/planning/planning-policy/>

### ✓ Baseline data for the Knowle West Regeneration Area:

<http://www.bristol.gov.uk/redirect/?oid=FileStorageItem-id-30894025>  
<http://www.bristol.gov.uk/redirect/?oid=FileStorageItem-id-30879080>

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**LUMASEC** is a European network dealing with strategic land use management as one of the most important topics to address, to ensure competitiveness, attractiveness and sustainability of our European city-regions. It focuses on both the strategic level (planning methods, observation tools...) and the operational level (action plans, case-studies), and aims at producing methods and practical recommendations.

The LUMASEC partners are: Epures (public city-planning agency, Saint-Étienne, France), Certu (France), the cities of Bytom (Poland), Baia Mare (Romania), Kavala (Greece), Bristol (Great Britain) and the Universities of Karlsruhe (Germany) and Ljubljana (Slovenia). The University of Karlsruhe is the lead-partner of LUMASEC.  
More information on <http://urbact.eu/lumasec>

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