

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release – 16th February 2026



Bristol Parks Forum renews its call for a new, central, Big Park for Bristol

Bristol Parks Forum is renewing its call for a Big Park; a new, large, multifunctional park; to be created in central Bristol as part of the new developments that are being planned for the area known as Bristol Temple Quarter in St Philips Marsh.

Currently, the Bristol Temple Quarter partnership is undertaking an engagement exercise for the public to offer their views on their draft SPD (Supplementary Planning Document) for the St Philips area bounded by the Feeder Canal and River Avon. <https://www.bristoltemplequarter.com/st-philips-marsh-spd/>

Bristol Parks Forum (BPF) is responding to the survey to make it clear that the parks and green spaces suggested in all of the proposals are far too small and simply inadequate for the thousands of residents who will live in apartments in the area.

There is obviously a need for more housing in Bristol and building on brownfield sites is the right place to build rather than building over green space, but not to the exclusion of providing public green space.

People need public, accessible green spaces to thrive as well as homes to live in. There are many published reports which evidence the importance of green spaces for wildlife to thrive, but also for humans to thrive and for all of our health and well being.

Bristol Parks Forum spokesperson explained:

"A bit of green space here and a few trees there are of course welcomed, and green corridors are important. However, what Bristol really must have alongside homes for thousands and thousands of people, is green space. Substantial green space. Somewhere to run around, to sit quietly, to embrace nature, to laugh and play. A multifunctional park. A good sized space. A Big Park. We need a new, central, Big Park. "

They continued:

"The proposals circulated last summer (2025) included an area that was described as a "large park" but it was smaller than the existing Sparke Evans park which is a small park on the south eastern edge of the area.

There are in excess of 7,000 dwellings planned so we can expect to see around 14,000 – 15,000 + new residents. The proposed green space is totally inadequate, especially as the homes will be high density, many of them high rise and little if any private garden space. A bit of grass and flowers here and there is no substitute for a park that can provide all the different functions needed by Bristol residents."

The central areas from St Phillips through to Temple Quarter and The Galleries are being redeveloped. This is the last area for available for new housing development in Bristol's centre. It is also the last opportunity for a good sized open space. This SPD therefore should include a large park, which it still does not.

Building so many flats at high density can only be tenable if you provide breathing space alongside. Small corner parks, little green spaces overshadowed by high rise blocks will not cut it. They will be inadequate and insufficient. Bristol has policies and strategies for sustainability which cover health and well being, nature recovery, climate resilience, quality of life and more. Providing a Big Park in this urban area would make a significant contribution to Bristol's One City Vision.

Bristol Parks Forum spokesperson explained: *"We believe it needs to be a large multifunctional park, capable of catering for a diversity of needs and activities for a diverse population of all ages. Only a big park can do this. A small space on one development might offer play space but not natural wild spaces, for example. A big park could offer both, and more. The current scenarios wrongly describe a tiny park in their drawings as "large" which is very misleading and in fact, would be smaller than the nearest park – Sparke Evans – which is also a small park"*.

There is little indication that when planning the green space provision the City Council's policies and plans for parks and nature have been taken on board. The Bristol Parks & Green Spaces Strategy 2024-2039 has clear commitments and actions for parks provision and other initiatives such as the Nature Recovery programme and Nature Together do not appear to have been properly considered.

The Parks & Green Strategy (PGSS) has provisions for Green Space, Children's Play and Young Peoples Space, Formal Green Space, Informal Green Space, and Natural Green Space which should be on average within a 10 minute walk from home. A Big Park in St Philips might manage to meet these but the very small park proposed will simply not provide that."

Bristol Parks Forum are flagging up that there is still time to have your say. The Forum is inviting everyone to join them in calling for Bristol to have a big new park alongside its big new developments. It should be at the heart of the design for this area.

The public can take part in the Council's survey - which can be found here -

<https://www.bristoltemplequarter.com/st-philips-marsh-spd/>

The full details of the proposed SPD are on this web page with the survey under tab 12. However, the survey seems only concerned with whether or not the draft SPD has met their described vision not whether they have it right.

To have your say you should respond quickly as it closes on 20th February 2026.

You can tell them Bristol needs a new Big Park in this development area and why this opportunity should not be missed.



These two illustrations from their information show a primary school roughly in the centre of the site with the so called "large" park next to it. This is clearly not a large park and cannot possibly accommodate all that it needs to for the sake of the 14,000 – 15,000 new residents.

-END-

Notes for editors:

Contact: To talk to a Bristol Parks Forum Committee member please call Frances on 01179621751

1. The Bristol Parks Forum is the only community voice dedicated to all publicly owned parks and green spaces in Bristol. We work with Bristol City Council to ensure our spaces are well looked after and to help local groups to enhance their green space.

Further information about the Forum can be found at <http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/>

2. Bristol Parks Forum has been calling for a new Big Park in central Bristol for a long time. The Forum proposed this for inclusion in both the Council's Parks and Green Spaces Strategy and also the Bristol Local Plan.

3. There are a large number of reports from scientific research, health research and public surveys supporting the importance of green spaces in urban areas for human and wildlife welfare. These are two of the many https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/sites/default/files/media/attachments/Space%20to%20thrive_2019-A%20rapid%20evidence%20review%2014102019-a11y.pdf

<https://www.cpre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Local-Green-Spaces-report.pdf>

4. A new Big Park would be in line with Bristol's One City Vision –

<https://www.bristolonecity.com/environment/>

This document states:

“By 2030 we will have delivered on the vital need to tackle climate change by becoming carbon neutral and our city will be more resilient to the challenges climate change will continue to bring. We will work with the city to champion climate action and make radical changes to how we live. This will result in a higher quality of life, and the promise of a more sustainable future. By 2050 our city will be litter-free with the nitrogen dioxide levels of rural England. As well as this, the tree canopy and wildlife will have doubled compared to 2018 and biodiversity will be at a level never before seen in the city. Sustainability will be designed into our city, from renewable energy in our homes to zero-waste economies on our high-streets.”