



# Quay Notes

September 2014

Newsletter for residents of Merchants Landing

[www.mlra.co.uk](http://www.mlra.co.uk)

## Local Housing Market 'seems to be cooling down'



*Part of the billboards surrounding the Wapping Wharf Development (Editor's Question: Is not the Harbour already pretty lively?)*

After a somewhat hectic period in the Bristol housing market, some expert commentators are suggesting that there seems to be a 'cooling down'. The activity in the last 12 months or so has certainly been remarkable – numbers of house sales have been up by nearly 40% compared with 2012; prices in the South West rose by about 6% last year, and more than 10% since 2010. Housing building starts locally and nationally have increased by over 20% year-on-year, though admittedly that's from a very low base. Nearly half the flats in Merrick Court have changed hands in the last couple of years, and the Wapping Wharf developers have sold over half their Phase 1 flats off-plan in the last few months. But one local estate agent has told *Quay Notes* that the slow-down now taking place in London is starting to ripple out to Bristol – “*the increase in supply, the tailing-off in pent-up buyer demand, tighter mortgages and fears of interest rate increases will all be having an impact.*”

That will be welcome news to young people wanting to get onto the 'housing ladder' as house prices have again risen to more than 5 times average earnings. Rental rates have also significantly risen, and the private rental sector in Bristol is now larger than the social sector. The shortage of affordable housing continues to grow, with the City Council estimating that the need is for 1500 new affordable homes per year, whilst only 100 is likely to be built in 2014-15. Locally there is a shortage of larger properties, and John Ashford has written on behalf of Redcliffe Futures Group to the Council, objecting that the Wapping Wharf development has nothing bigger than 2-bed flats. (See the MLRA website for more information on that objection.)

## News from Your Residents Association

*Joi Demery, Chair of Merchants Landing Residents Association reports:*

**Wine Tasting** - a few residents are off to Avery's for wine tasting event on Wednesday 10 September, 7.00pm - wines of the Loire and Languedoc. If you wish to join them, you can check availability and book online at Avery's website: <http://www.averys.com> - tickets are £25.00 each

**Open Garden:** Unfortunately due to various reasons we were unable to hold the open gardens in July and have decided to wait until next summer to reschedule - we are very sorry for any inconvenience caused. We are also suggesting that we hold a 'best front garden' competition at the same time - so we are giving you plenty of warning to get planting!

**Bob's Quiz** - our annual famous quiz will take place on Friday November 28th, 7.30 on the John Sebastian. Further details to follow but start revising!

**Burns Night** - We are considering holding another Burn's night January 2015, as we have had lots of requests to do so. Please could anyone who would be interested in being involved in organising it contact me, Joi Demery.

### Finally

**AGM** - MLRA AGM will be held on Friday 3 October, 7.30 on the John Sebastian. Please do come along and hear about what we've been up to this year and plans for future events, new ideas also very welcome. We also have vacancies for committee members - please feel free to contact any of the committee members for more information. (See overleaf for the contact details of committee members).

The Merchants Landing Residents Association Committee:

Anthony Rackham	5 Merchants Quay	9297562	Joi Demery	9 Merchants Quay	9213412
Geri Bowie	7 Merrick Court	9294689	<b>VACANCY</b>	<b>VOLUNTEERS SEE JOI</b>	<b>VACANCY</b>
Tony Little	13 Challoner Court	9227336	Sandy Conway	1 Draycott Place	9293454
Shirley Stark	8 Wapping Road	9293953	Jan Walsh	8 Bathurst Parade	9268714

## METROBUS PROJECT NEWS

The latest information from Bristol City Council is that detailed design work starts this month and will continue to December, and over the same period there will be utility and ground investigations, and other surveys. The main construction period will be from January 2015 through to April 2016, when it is expected the scheme will open. All those dates are subject to confirmation by the contractor when appointed.

*The above information was posted a couple of weeks ago on the mlra website by our webmaster David Demery, and also circulated by email to interested residents. If you would like to add your name to his circulation list, please get in touch with David via our website: [www.mlra.org.uk](http://www.mlra.org.uk)*

*David's source was the Cabot eNews, circulated by the Liberal Democrat City Councillors for Cabot ward, Alex Woodman and Dr Mark Wright. If you want to receive that directly, get in touch with them via the Bristol City Council website.*

## Amenities Company News

*Roy Demery, Chair of Merchants Landing Amenities Board reports:*

The communal garden has been enhanced this summer, and the connecting footpaths resurfaced.

The AGM of the Amenities Company will take place on Friday 17th October on the John Sebastian. All shareholders invited.

### PLEA ABOUT DUSTBINS. *Cynthia Palmer has written:*

Could you please add a note in the next issue about NOT leaving dustbins in the common areas after collection day. Some are left for weeks at a time. It would also be helpful if everyone put their house number and, eg MQ, CC, TM etc, so that abandoned bins can be returned to the correct address. We have also been warned by Neighbourhood Watch that they can be used to assist intruders scale garden walls.



*Continuing our series on local place names:*

### BYZANTINE COURT

The name derives from the Byzantine Architectural Revival movement that emerged in Western Europe in the 1840s, picking up themes from the architecture of the medieval Roman Empire centred on the city of Constantinople, formerly Byzantium, now Istanbul. The style was most commonly used in religious and public buildings and perhaps the finest example nationally is London's Roman Catholic Westminster Cathedral, completed in 1903. In Bristol the style was deployed on industrial and warehouse buildings, and a Moorish element introduced. The grandest examples of the style in Bristol are The Granary on Welsh Back, The Colston Hall, The Arnolfini, and Gardiner's on Broad Plain. The latter was designed by the same architect, William Gingell (1819-1899), as also designed our own fine example on Bathurst Parade, built in 1874. It was originally the façade to Robinson's Oil Seed Manufactory, and the building behind the façade was subsequently Warriner's Warehouse and was then demolished in 1981. The development that replaced it comprised squash courts, 4 duplex apartments above, and two flats at the north end. The squash courts were obviously not a commercial success and they were later replaced with the current four duplex apartments. The façade is listed as being of architectural and historic interest.

Contact details for the Directors of Merchants Landing (Amenities) Ltd are:

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or, if that's not possible, through the letterbox.