
MAY 2015 THANK YOU

Apologies in advance to those that do not need to be included on this list. It is aimed at residents of Knowle and anyone else that would like to know what is happening in the area, or has an interest in some of the citywide issues reported. You are welcome to stay but please e-mail me if you want to be removed from the list. The E-Focus is an addition to, and not a replacement for, the quarterly paper Knowle focus.

Welcome to new Readers.

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On a night that was definitely not good for Lib Dems Chris was re elected in Knowle with an increased majority! The result was:-

Chris says “Thank you to all those people who voted for me as part of the team. We had a huge number of people tell us that they were voting locally for me because of our local work and communications. We have an excellent team and I am grateful to all those people who continue to help our community by involving themselves in local groups and helping the team by delivering Focus. Our job gets bigger next year as a number of roads of Filwood ward will be transferred into Knowle ward. There will be another local election with both Gary and I seeking to be re elected in May 2016. We would be very grateful for any additional offers of help for the election and throughout the year. “

Membership

Following the overall bad results for the party on election night there has been a public reaction with over 12,000 new members joining the party. Many are in Bristol. If you also want to join the fightback please follow the

link www.libdems.org.uk/joining or contact Chris or Gary.

The City Council

Gary has been re-elected unopposed as Lib Dem leader on the council and Chris has taken on lead responsibilities on Licensing and Public Safety and Protection.

Talbot Rd

Much to the annoyance of local residents the period of the work had to be extended. Although a lot of the through traffic has heeded the advance signage we asked for, some people have insisted on driving through the narrow streets and there have been blockages and some intolerant behaviour. This is one of those situations where there is no right solution. Blocking Leighton Rd on either side of Buller was suggested, but after some asking around locally it was decided to cone some areas instead so that there were places to pass. Not perfect, but at least it has not forced locals to have a long drive around. We have managed to get the police up at a few key times and we even had Chris directing traffic on the spot one evening!

Redcatch Park

Some outdoor gym equipment will be installed shortly and a further new bench installed beside the cinder path courtesy of the Friends of the park.

Wednesday 27th May 10am Community Planting Day! - we have 1000 plugs of wildflowers to create a new wildflower meadow at the bottom of the park. We need as many helpers as possible - suitable for all ages 1 - 100! We can make holes for you or bring your dibber or trowel if you can help with digging. Free drinks from Friends available from the pavilion.

This year's Community Fun Day is on Sunday 21 June 2015 1 - 5 pm. We know how many people enjoy the day and how it symbolises the community spirit of Knowle. Sue Davies has, as she has for the last few years, done the organisation and management with John Scott. John is stepping down and it's a big task for one. It is now running so well and has established vendors and performers it is a good time for a small team to easily take over and run it for the Friends of the Park. The job can be broken down into easy sections and Sue will still be on hand for some time to give advice and provide all the information, documents and contacts needed. Please contact Sue or have a chat on the day if you would like to contribute, or be involved in any way. If you can come on 21 June and help with setting up or stewarding you can see how/where you would like to be involved.

South Bristol Skyline Walk

This was launched with a led walk as part of Bristol Walk Fest week starting from Temple Meads with 70 people attending! Chris and Gary and Friends of the Park met them at Redcatch where they stopped for refreshments

and were entertained by the band Clowns on the Hill and Cathoola Hoopers. Chris and friends joined the walk through Perrett's Park, Northern Slopes, Novers Hill, Malago Greenway, and into Victoria Park where they left for home due to post-election exhaustion! The rest of the group continued to the end at Temple Meads, a 6 mile walk in all. An amazing walk of discovery with fantastic views and snippets of history, flora and fauna, and a great new tourist attraction for south Bristol. Details of the walk and a downloadable leaflet to accompany the walk can be found at www.northern-slopes-initiative.co.uk/skyline

Callington Road Nature Local Reserve

Chris attended their meeting earlier this year. There was a litter pick in March, a constitution is being completed and investigations being made into funding streams. Chris advised that once the constitution has been completed it must be submitted to BCC for their records. Family Nature Day is on Saturday 25 July.

A Tale of 2 Cities

As many of you know, Gary led the changes to Bristol waste collections and treatment from 2005/06, with a short break with Labour in charge (when they tried to progress plans to build an incinerator!) until 2012 when the Mayor took over. After that the Mayor appointed a Green Party councillor (firstly Cllr Hoyt and then, after his resignation, Cllr Radice) to assist with waste and other environmental services and policy. A recent enquiry day, called for by councillors from across the council, got the factual situation to show the scale of what has been going wrong. The first thing to make clear is that, if the council avoids waste being put out for collection, a huge amount of money is saved. Policies and communications need to be designed to reduce waste and where it cannot be reduced to recycle as much of it as possible. 10,000 tons of extra non-recycled waste costs us well over a £1Million every year and that can pay for a lot of services.

The first graph shows that Gary managed to reduce total waste by over 45,000 tons per year. This was achieved by, amongst other measures, encouraging home composting of garden waste, stopping businesses slipping their commercial waste into the household waste stream (that we pay for) and getting changes in habits of buying and wasting food. Unfortunately, as you can see this massive improvement (one of the best in the country) went into sharp reverse when the Mayor/Green party councillor took over.

During that period the recycling rate went from 12% to fractionally short of 50% so that even less waste went off to landfill or for expensive treatment. Recycling separated at the kerbside is high quality and the council is able to recoup a sizeable amount of money by selling this. It is the residual waste that damages the environment and costs us all such a huge amount of money. Of course the number of households in Bristol is increasing but the real test is the

amount of unrecycled waste per household. During Gary's time in charge this dropped from nearly a ton per year per household to 1/5th of that. Unfortunately that figure has also started to rise again. Very costly for the environment and our wallets.

We were heading for ZERO landfill but that progress got stopped. In collaboration with the surrounding councils Gary had signed a contract some years back for most of our black bin waste to be treated by a company called New Earth solutions who have a plant at Avonmouth. This recovers recycle and compost and then uses advanced thermal treatment to recover energy from the remainder. An acceptable treatment plant, that would have taken the remainder of Bristol black bag waste, had been given planning permission at Avonmouth, but unfortunately due to unwanted intervention from Eric Pickles it was cancelled and an incinerator is likely to be built instead of this. Instead of either topping up the New Earth contract or finding an alternative the Mayor and his assistant did nothing for 2 years, and then decided to use a company called Boomeco who do a cursory treatment and then ship the waste to a Swedish incinerator! (Sweden made the mistake years ago of building many incinerators and now their recycling has improved there are many beasts to be fed.)

"Surely", I hear you say, "A Green Party councillor treating our environment so badly must be a one off." Sadly no. The only council the Green party ever controlled was Brighton, where a Green party administration was elected with a promise to produce a 70% recycling rate. What actually happened was a 16% drop in the recycling rate with Brighton ranked 302 out of 326 councils for recycling rate.

There is another similarity. Before the mayor, Bristol council used to freeze council tax, but the mayor now increases it by practically 2% every year and so throws away a government grant that rewards councils that freeze tax. Brighton's Green party administration proposed a 4.75% increase, which would have needed a referendum costing £300,000, before backing down when central government threatened to take over.

So the record over the last 2 years is an increase in council tax to pay for the extra waste and more damage to our environment.

YOU COULD NOT MAKE IT UP!

Mayor to attend NP Meeting in Knowle

Tuesday 16th June 6 - 8 pm at Knowle Park Centre, The Square. Mayor Ferguson has been invited to attend at 6.30pm - so come along and ask him questions.

Planning Applications

15/00646/F Somerdale Ave Proposed 2 storey building adjoining property - 2 self-contained flats.

15/02342/H Stockwood Cres 2 storey rear extension.

15/02108/H Wells Road erection of amateur radio mast and antenna in garden

Snippets

1 Redcatch Road Chris has been pressing planning enforcement to board up this unsightly building site. In an unusual move due to Chris' persistence following more fly tipping and damage to the fencing, planning have ordered hoarding for the site. The bill for this will be sent to the owner of the site.

Old Library Site Chris has been in touch with the manager of the Broadwalk Shopping Centre who has been very helpful in getting the grass cut and clearing up the litter which had accumulated. At Chris' suggestion he is also investigating the replacement of the fencing to improve the appearance of the site.

The Knowle Pub Glad to report that Residents continue to support the pub, which is now under new management. We wish them success and encourage people to stop by and keep this valuable asset in the community.

Neighbourhood Wellbeing Funding Applications approved by panel.

Arnos Vale Trust

St Martin's Guides & Brownies

Knowle East Youth Project

Knowle Women's Institute

Knowle Church of the Nazarene

Friends of Redcatch Park

St Martin's Community Hall

Redcatch Community Association

Knowle Senior Moments

St Martin's Scouts

Knowle Library

Knowle Townswomen's Guild

St Martin's Youth Crew

Dates for your Diary

Wildflower planting Wed 27 May

NP Meeting Tues 16 June

Community Fun Day Sunday 21 June

Family Nature Day at Callington Road Nature Reserve on Sat 25 July

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Forward to Friend

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