

FOCUS



Produced, Delivered and Funded by Volunteers. Printed on recycled paper. **APRIL 2019**

A NEW SECONDARY SCHOOL FOR KNOWLE!

The return of secondary education to Knowle has moved a significant step closer with the passing of the land deal at Bristol Cabinet. This sees a significant part of the land occupied by The Park, on the old site of Merrywood School, being surrendered by The Park to be used for the new secondary school. This will be accessed from Teignmouth Rd and the £4.5M from government will be used by The Park to build brand new community facilities on part of the remaining land. Additional funds are being raised by the trustees.



Gary made a statement to Cabinet welcoming the progress, which is the result of a 20 year campaign, and help from many people and bodies. Since the Labour government and Labour council closed the school 20 years ago Knowle children have suffered, as they have to travel to other areas for secondary education. We have some of the best primary schools in Bristol, confirmed by education reports, showing Knowle children at the end of primary outscoring the Bristol attainment average by 61% to 54%, but those same children slipping back at secondary level. The two nearest primaries to the new school are Knowle Park, having the acting head confirmed in post and a very reassuring good inspection from OFSTED this month, and Ilminster Avenue, one of the most improved schools in the country. They should benefit greatly.

There are still some stages to go through, and we have sent our thanks for progressing this, with a request that we are kept fully informed, so we can help to prevent delays. A few weeks hold up at the wrong stage could cost a whole academic year's delay to the school opening. Therefore we were amazed and saddened to hear leading members of the Knowle Labour Party demanding a delay and expressing disquiet about the arrangements, saying they knew nothing about it, despite local publications. All they had to do, if they did not understand, was ask us, or their party colleagues who are running the council.

PAY-OFF SCANDAL



Gary has been working with representatives from the Green and Conservative parties to expose the shocking scandal of the hiring and £100,000 pay off to ex council Chief Executive Anna Klonowski. This moved on at recent Full Council Meeting when a report from independent auditors strongly criticised the actions taken by the mayor. It is extremely rare for auditors to report in this way and copies have gone to the Secretary of State. The payoff was the culmination of a series of disasters and cover ups, and despite a couple of Labour councillors admitting there were serious errors, the Labour party voted en mass to restrict the further reports needed. A combination of Lib Dem, Green and Tory Councillors won the vote, and the matter will go on to the Audit and HR committee and back to Full Council in a couple of months with, we hope, the rest of the saga out in the open. There were many calls for an apology or resignation from the mayor. Watch this space!!

BROADWALK DEVELOPMENT GETS ENTHUSIASTIC GREEN LIGHT FROM PLANNING COMMITTEE.

Normally controversial matters result in split votes at planning meetings that then get referred to a Planning Committee for a decision, instead of being decided by officers. But the outline planning application for the revamp of Broadwalk Shopping Centre, including the flats, was unanimously voted through by Councillors from all 4 parties with full support and no quibbles.



This is an outline proposal and has approved matters such as the number of flats and maximum height, but leaves a lot of the details which relate to quality to be decided later before any actual building can occur. There were objections from some residents, with some questions, and there were residents, shopkeepers, developers, and Councillors from Filwood and Hengrove as well as Knowle, and a 3,100 signature petition, in favour of backing the planning officer's approval. Gary concentrated in his statement (lobby) on developer obligations including money for a local parking scheme (if wanted), cycle facilities and money for our local park.

Negotiations on these spin-offs will continue this week and many items, like detailed design, need to be considered, and will be subject to a detailed further application before any building can actually begin. Officers though have seen the indicative plans and also seem enthusiastic. We would encourage all residents to send in ideas and suggestions that could contribute to us getting the best possible detailed design

Let us not pretend that all the problems for the shopping centre are now settled but it is now a centre that will survive, and is a viable financial unit. Those that contended that the number of the flats were not needed, or that the % of affordable homes should increase, had not read the council's viability analysis. Obviously, council officers try to maximise the % of affordable homes, but they agreed at 13% as the developers are squeezing down potential profit way below the norm.



More affordable homes may be added but will require a government subsidy. Gary and Chris will shortly be meeting the West of England mayor Tim Bowles to discuss.

Residents Parking.

With the passing of the outline planning application for Broadwalk Shopping Centre it is clear that the possible conditions for parking in local streets will be as anticipated. There will be strong measures to reduce individual car ownership within the new flats and there will be a financial levy on the development to provide funds to set up a parking scheme, to prevent overspill parking, if requested by surrounding residents. We have surveyed around 400 houses so far for their views and will continue to increase the area of coverage over the Summer months.

Knowle Forum Meeting is on **Friday 21st June at Redcatch Community Centre 7pm** for 7.30pm start. This is for all residents to have their say; find out what we are doing; what is happening in Knowle and for us to hear your concerns and suggestions. Your chance to affect what happens locally.

A Record of Hard Work

OUT AND ABOUT IN KNOWLE



Jubilee Pool

After attempts by the council to close our pool have been successfully fought off, it was pleasing to see Jubilee Pool given a local listing, which recognises the building's importance to the community. It will need continuing support but we know how much it is valued. In an hilarious leaflet being distributed around the city the mayor is claiming credit for saving our pool.

As a regular swimmer there Chris has frequently requested a refurb of the facilities and is pleased to say these are currently underway, so do visit soon.

Urban Escape at the Roundhouse -Springfield allotments and Youth Club and Youth Moves Music Studio at The Park Centre. Following a recent visit Chris is keen to let young people under the age of 20 know the different great opportunities and activities available in Knowle. For info 0117 9039796 info@youthmoves.org.uk or see their Facebook or Twitter pages.

Northern Slopes Spring Special thanks to the Green Gym Team for installing a pipe to stop flooding and for cutting back path edges and reporting vandalised trees. People can now cross the stream and use the paths safely. Enquiries@northern-slopes-initiative.co.uk
www.northern-slopes-initiative.co.uk

St Barbabas Church Petition Due to access problems Chris has forwarded a petition from church members asking for double yellow lines outside the church entrance. Particular problems are with funeral and wedding cars being blocked.

Libraries

After the last mayor gave up on mass library closures the present one tried again. He suffered an embarrassing defeat, when Labour rebels joined other parties, in voting for a Liberal Democrat motion to find a more positive path of using volunteers to help the professional staff to keep more libraries open.

In an amazing piece of cheek he is claiming credit for saving the libraries, and there is now another rather unfocused "consultation", which is getting supporters to come up with ideas for their local libraries. A Friends of group for Knowle library is being set up, and Gary was involved in the setting up of a forum of these groups around the city.

Crediton Cres/Silverton Court

Gary was approached by residents in part of Crediton Cres regarding the large trees growing at the back of their houses in the small Silverton Court sheltered scheme. A local survey found considerable disquiet about trees which overshadow houses and block light to flats. After initially claiming there was no problem and everybody was happy, housing officers were forced to act when confronted by the survey. A tree officer visited with Chris and Gary and agreed to maintenance work in May. We will re-consult residents after that.

Redcatch Park

Redcatch has again been judged as a top notch 5 Star park by Bristol in Bloom South West. That is 4 Years in a row. Thanks to the Friends of the Park and the Redcatch Community Garden Project. Get involved - see their Facebook pages for details.

Cycle Lane

Readers may remember a scheme for a cycle lane along Airport Rd was so badly designed it was abandoned. It is back, and this time much improved, with some good features. It goes across to Callington Rd and the part below the nature reserve added. Sadly officers forgot about drainage, and the footpath/cycle route turned into a lake. We have advised them of a solution and with Lib Dem Brislington Councillor Jos Clark we are pressing for action.

CITY WIDE

Funding Community Projects

CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) is a tax on all development, and the government insist that while 85% can be used by Bristol City Council (and since the Arena cancellation they have a large pot of uncommitted funds) 15% should be available for the local area of the development. The present Mayor, having abolished all other local funds, has now set up a terrible bureaucratic process that involves 6 wards "sharing" funds. This means that most of the funds from the Broadwalk development could get spirited away. In the meantime several bids for the funds are being submitted from Knowle, but the chances of more than 1 getting approval are slim. The crossing for Wells Rd has some officer backing and may link to a further request by residents for a one way on Woodbridge Rd. Decisions in November.

Hydrogen Powered Cars

These have all the non-polluting advantages of electric vehicles but can be filled up just like a petrol or diesel car and go 300 miles plus between refills.

As well as being easier to use, hydrogen power is the only non-polluting realistic choice for larger vehicles. Several fleets of buses already use this in the UK and the government want to bring in hydrogen trains for branch lines. The problem in Bristol is that the initial fuelling station, set up by the Lib Dems when they were in charge, was removed by the last mayor and so far the existing mayor has shown no enthusiasm. A company that manufactures and services a fleet in S. Wales visited City Hall and want to set up facilities in Bristol. We will be lobbying for the initiative to be supported.

PROUD TO BE BRISTOLIAN! Bristol named "Best place to live in Britain" 2017 - recognised internationally as "The UK's no1 digital productivity powerhouse" and crowned "The World's Smart City" 2018 - named as the second safest city in the UK after Edinburgh 2018. - named "The Happiest City in Britain" 2019 - named "The Kindest City in the UK" 2019

BUSES

Partly due to the introduction of the metrobus route from Hengrove, Bedminster and through to the city centre, 'First' are changing South Bristol bus routes yet again. The 36 route is now 96 and is being cut in frequency to an hourly service, and the route split in Brislington Our half is renumbered. The 50 and 50A are renumbered 91 and have some timetable changes but there is a little good news as we have finally persuaded 'First' to reinstate the 'later' and 'Saturday' service of the 92 (formerly 2A and 51). There are also concerns about some of the contracted supported services. We have been lobbying 'First' in particular about hospital and school services and we wait to see if they have listened.

CONTACT YOUR COUNCILLORS - We are available every day not just at elections

Chris Davies
Tel: 0117 3773528
43 Norton Road
Knowle
Bristol
BS4 2EZ



Christopher.davies@bristol.gov.uk

Gary Hopkins
Tel: 07977 512159
4 Preston Walk
Knowle Park
Bristol
BS4 2TP



Gary.hopkins@bristol.gov.uk