

# FOCUS



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## OUR NEW SECONDARY SCHOOL

Early indications from the exhibition of plans for the new school and community facilities are of a very enthusiastic public response. There are bound to be some queries over roads and

traffic and any comments will feed into the detailed plan. However, with the local demand being so high, and this school being for older children, there will be an expectation that few parents will be dropping off children by car, and there will be tight controls.



Mary Page, our candidate for city mayor, on recent visit to The Park with Chris and Gary

There are many planning and construction stages to go through and the target date for completion and school opening is 2023. We are trying to work out short cuts on this, as the big increase in demand for places will hit in 2022, but this will be very tricky.

Meanwhile after trying unsuccessfully to hold up the vital council cabinet decision to progress the scheme, leading members of Knowle Labour

Party have tried to undermine The Park management with negativity. Having been handed an old school building in awful condition some years ago, the trustees have produced miracles (that the council would never have achieved) and are now engaged on this brilliant scheme to enhance our area. We will be supporting them and the scheme, as should others.

We have reports of good progress on fundraising, to bridge the gap for the construction of the separate building for community facilities, and confidence is rapidly building that this can be done quickly without the need for this to be done more slowly in phases.

## PARISH COUNCIL

Having had several hundred responses to our ward survey, which we should complete by Autumn, there seems to be quite a positive response to the idea of setting up a Knowle Parish Council. Parish councils are normal in country areas but some do exist in cities. We would have to hope that, if people give a clear preference for this, the mayor ( if the job still exists) does not try to block it. Parish councils are run by unpaid locally elected Councillors and get money from planning levies and a small supplementary rate of a few pounds a month. They have a say in planning and can make all the difference to local facilities if these are neglected by the city council.

## BROADWALK DEVELOPMENT

The work is underway to refine and improve the scheme which won unanimous approval at the outline planning stage.

The developers, as many others have done, report delays caused by Council Byways failing to deal efficiently and answer questions. This means that the specific planning obligations for residents parking protection and other issues have not yet been resolved.

Changes to the design are being worked on and these must be within the boundaries put down in the outline permission. A detailed travel plan is being prepared.

Meanwhile the developers are having discussions with housing associations with a view to parcelling up parts of the scheme for a greater % of affordable housing. Shared equity would work well but we wait to see the proposals. At the other end of the scale a specialist investment company is interested in high quality retirement flats. The nice views and good local facilities are key to their requirements. A detailed planning application is expected later this year.



## OUR NEW (NON) MAYOR

Feedback from our surveys, and the council's own quality of life survey, confirm that the post of Bristol Mayor is not popular with the majority. Put quite simply Liberal Democrats will be trying, in the election next year, to get people to cast their vote to get rid of the job. Many others in the other parties agree with us, but neither the Greens or the Tories could organise themselves to agree to a joint non-party candidate. So if you want to get rid of the post it will be the Lib Dem candidate. Of course Labour, although the majority of their supporters would do away with the job, will campaign for Marvin to be re-elected.



The anti-mayor candidate is Mary Page who has been visiting The Park with us to have discussions about the much needed secondary school.

Mary said "Three of the key things I want to support are clean air (200-300 Bristolians die every year because of air pollution), a reliable public service transport system through franchising, and returning democracy and local decision making in Bristol. I will share out the power and work with our neighbouring councils on strategic decisions. I will not have a great long list of detailed promises as I will NOT be controlling everything."

Recent elections have shown a surge of support for the Lib Dems in many local elections and the European elections. We do not have Bristol local elections until next year but already there is a small chink of light, as the Lib Dems have replaced the Tories and are in charge of one of our partner councils - Bath and North East Somerset. They are looking again at some of the strategic plans which would be so damaging for South East Bristol.

## NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING GROUP

If there is no local parish council these can fill part of the gap, and in neighbouring Hengrove the local plan, drawn up (after 2 ½ years intensive work), has been instrumental in the council planning committee demanding better from a scheme sponsored by the council itself.

The part of Knowle ward covered by the Knowle West Regeneration Area already has an established residents' group. This was unfortunately ignored by the two people trying to set up another Knowle planning group. Boundaries for these groups cannot overlap, as has been made very clear by the governing network. There was also a lack of clarity as to what role the group sought to fill, which could be setting up a positive plan as was done in Hengrove and elsewhere, or could be just a discussion group to comment on applications as they come in. That, of course, can be done already by any resident on any planning application.

## LIBRARIES



Thanks to the deal; done some years back, Knowle library is very unlikely to be threatened when the mayor gets his axe out again (high usage, modern fit out, no long term rent liability). Chris and Gary have been at events leading up to the formation of the local friends group, but whilst the encouragement of more suitable groups and activities locally is useful, it is vital that there is a commitment to the citywide Libraries Forum. This is the campaigning group committed to preserving a strong network of libraries across the city. Gary was happy to help with its formation and it aims to learn from the great work done by the parks forum.

## REDCATCH COMMUNITY GARDEN....

The Garden goes from strength to strength. It is well worth while dropping by to sample the home-grown organic veg and the catering and buy the plants, but also it is now having a series of events which are bringing in big numbers. Many local people enjoyed speciality sausages and local cider on 21st June and the Spanish Night with top class paella on 19th July will no doubt be well supported. An Open Day on 4th August will be a shop window for their work, and prospective volunteers can drop in any Friday to find out more.

Further lottery funding will give an additional boost from now on as it rewards their growing sales. The garden are also working closely with the Friends of the Park on plans such as tree planting.

The events have children's craft stalls, music and other entertainment and a further shipping container with great catering facilities is coming in shortly and will be used to support family events in the park with good low cost food.

Find them on facebook The enthusiasm is infectious..

# A Record of Hard Work

## PLANNING MONEY SPENDING

Chris and Gary made a strong case for the new Wells Rd pedestrian crossing and, despite it being the most expensive of the schemes put forward for the multi-ward committee, it has been approved and should be signed off formally later this year.

The money for improvements at the community centre in the square is on the maybe list but unfortunately the two parks applications for Redcatch and the Northern Slopes could not be funded.

## PARKS INVESTMENT

Parks officers have failed to deliver the new Paignton Park on time and this is very annoying given that we had to work so hard over a long period to get and keep the funds from the land sale at Salcombe. Some of the funds were put into a reserve pot, but as another land sale at Totterdown is likely to happen shortly, with the proceeds topping up the funds, we are pressing council senior management not only to get on with Paignton Park but also to agree to the use of the reserve pot for unfunded local parks schemes. We have had cooperation from the previous Lib Dem Councillors and present Labour Councillors for Windmill Hill ward

## AIRPORT RD /WOOTON PARK CYCLE WAY

A few years back a badly thought through and designed scheme was withdrawn after well founded protests.

This time there was more time taken and, despite the restricted space, our input has ensured that the design, where possible, separates bikes from pedestrians and reduces the risk of conflict with cars emerging from driveways on Airport Rd. What is very concerning is that an earlier stage on Callington Rd has been badly bodged, resulting in flooding that never happened before. Furious complaints from residents and Councillors from Knowle and Brislington have so far failed to get rectification but we will keep pushing.

The **Knowle Community Forum Meeting** took place 21 June . Two representatives from The Park attended to speak on the new school and community hub and answer questions. Eight items were discussed ranging from traffic issues - Wells Road crossing and one-way scheme to Jubilee Baths and other local issues - Broadwalk Development; Parish Council; Paignton Park and flooding. These meetings are your chance to voice concerns or find out more. The next meeting will be in October at The Park Daventry Road - date to be confirmed 7pm for 7.30pm start. Your chance to affect what happens locally.

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

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