

### Three wise owls?

After digging in with the tree planting day in Redcatch Park, Chris and Gary are pictured with the new artwork by Andy O'Neill.



Although the mayor has confiscated the money raised locally for parks improvements Redcatch continues to make progress thanks to the Friends of Redcatch Park. When a mature tree had to be felled due to disease the friends arranged for a carving to be made from the stump. Additionally a local family want to sponsor the woodcarver to create seating from some of the other logs and to sponsor a replacement tree in memory of a deceased relative. We await parks' management approval.

A final mural is to be added to the toilet block paid for by the Friends.

Redcatch is probably the best run park in the city, but the mayor's stated aim of having a zero budget for parks within 3 years is completely unachievable even here. Neither the mayor nor any of his cabinet have any experience of how parks work or what they need and it is showing. The old bowling green is being taken over by a group to create the Redcatch Community Garden. They have an expert gardener on board and will be involved in a combination of growing, educating and selling produce. They will also be opening up a new cafe for the public. There will be opportunities for the people to be involved in a variety of ways, volunteering in the garden and the cafe, as sponsors and members and details will be coming out over the coming months.

### UPDATE

It is good news that 1 Redcatch Road is at last being developed into 6 flats and an office, but there was concern expressed about the toilet hut occupying the entire width of the pavement. Chris referred this to Highways and they found an alternative site. Future crane work is also a concern as there will be a temporary closure of this section of Redcatch and Hengrove Road has been suggested as an alternative route. Again this has been referred to Highways to examine if Oakmeade Road would be safer and more direct.

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



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# ON KNOWLE FOCUS

www.knowlelibdems.com

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## THANK YOU

Voters in Knowle turned out in numbers well above the average, for the election for the metro mayor. Knowle voted for Stephen Williams (Lib Dem) with Labour second. The result for Bristol South as a whole, was Labour, followed by Lib Dem. The election was lost by both in South Glos with Lib Dems unexpectedly poor 3<sup>rd</sup> and Labour 4<sup>th</sup>.



**Chris Ben and Gary fighting to keep Jubilee Open**

The Conservative was elected, and when asked after the election by the BBC what his priorities were, it turned out to be road building in South Glos. So much for the opportunity for a step change in public transport and reducing city congestion and pollution.



**Fighting against funding cuts to Knowle Park School**

We welcome to Bristol South Ben Nutland who is standing for the Lib Dems in the general election on June 8th. He is pictured with Chris and Gary at Jubilee Pool, which is a crucial local fight against the Labour mayor, and also at our very successful Knowle Park School which along with all other Bristol schools, is threatened by central government funding cuts. Schools' funding cuts will be a key issue in this election, with all opposition parties proposing rescues. The difference between them is the credibility of their figures and where the money is to come from. Gary used the rare opportunity to propose a council motion to highlight the school funding crisis.

Policy website

- www.libdems.org.uk



## Broadwalk Shopping Centre

After a legal battle which held up investment Broadwalk Shopping Centre, along with two others in Liverpool, is under new ownership. The Centre is profitable, with long leases, and is ready for investment and enhancement rather than struggling. Nationally the retail sector is under pressure but Broadwalk is outperforming the general market. The present national management are not long term but they are very aware of the opportunities. Gary and Chris have had discussions with them and they are keen to exploit the development opportunities of the old library and garage site, revive the plans for residential flats at the very top of the car park and possibly convert some offices to residential use.



We are in principle very much behind this and they have promised to supply details as available. The new owners have expressed amazement at how attractive our area has become over recent years and that this enhances the investment opportunities and will lead to a greater variety of shops in the Centre.

### Libraries old and new

The mayor has announced that amongst his list of cuts he will slash the library budget. Large numbers of libraries are expected to close. Gary has made the case to the mayor that Knowle should be one to be saved. Knowle library services a very wide area, and is one of the busiest, but there is the reality of the serious financial position. 12 years ago a deal was done with Broadwalk Shopping Centre to swap the old library, which was too small and in poor shape, for 7 rent free years at the new Shopping Centre site. Officers at the time signed a 25 year lease up to 2030, so any closure of Knowle library would leave the council with 13 years at £46,000 a year for the building. Far better to use this strategic site to provide even more services to the public.

#### BITS AND PIECES AROUND KNOWLE

**New coffee shop application** - we understand a new planning application 17/02433/F for a coffee shop at 316 -318 Wells Rd has now been submitted by the Bournemouth Coffee Co

**Trees come and go** - Tim Moloney, manager of Broadwalk Centre agreed to Chris' suggestion and will now sponsor a replacement tree outside his office where one was lost in Broad Walk .

Sadly another tree is to be felled outside of Lloyds Bank, due to fungus disease, which will leave another hole in our high street canopy. Can we suggest anyone interested search online for "Sponsor a tree Bristol" where you can pay a fee of £295 online. You can also purchase a plaque £25 for your company or yourself or perhaps in memory of a loved one.

## A Record of Hard Work

Thank you to the over 5,500 people who have signed our petition and the many people and businesses who have helped us get to that number. As a result of exceeding 3,500 signatures there will be a debate in council on the evening of Tuesday 27th of June.



There will be a 5 minute speech from one of the campaigners and a 3 minute response from each of the political parties on the council . There should also be a vote from each Councillor on whether they support the petition.

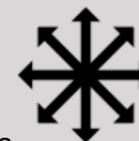
In addition any member of the public can come along at the beginning of the meeting to make a short verbal statement and can submit a written statement in advance. The public are also able to ask questions of the mayor in writing and ask a verbal supplementary question.

We would ask as many people as possible to exercise their democratic right and we can help with any procedural queries.

Meanwhile the operators are being clear that they can, as a result of increased business, continue to operate without subsidy, but the mayor refuses to give a clear commitment to the pool and more and more demands and complications are added. A marketing campaign has had to be halted and the mayor has, after stating the closure paperwork he approved was a mistake, he has now failed to disown the appalling equalities impact assessment, that was used to justify closure. A proper assessment has now been written.

It would clearly be sensible for the council to sign a deal before 27th June, but as chaos reigns nothing can be relied upon.

**Redcatch Park** Wins even more accolades! In South West In Bloom 'Pride in Parks' it again achieved the top award of 5 Stars.



### Council in Chaos

Bristol was used to bold and brash announcements from the previous mayor, many of which had little or no basis in reality. Many viewed the change a year ago as a move in the right direction. Unfortunately and amazingly things have got worse. Most departments are now in chaos, as there are a huge series of changes and managers are being asked to do several jobs, for which they have no experience. Training is cursory. Staff at most levels are suffering from low morale and union officials have never been busier as claims of bullying rocket. This is before a further 800 staff leave in the near future.

Very often money is wasted due to lack of experience and refusal to listen to advice.

As a longstanding senior Councillor who has worked with many of the managers Gary has been approached by senior staff to tell him they are leaving, or considering it, and some departments have already lost all the senior experienced staff.

Complaints to us as local Councillors have rocketed and it can now take a succession of letters and calls to deal with a simple problem that previously took little time.

**Bristol** topped the list in the best places to live in Britain - the UK's most desirable location in the Sunday Times Best Places to Live Guide. "a small city that feels like a big city", it was praised for being "handily placed for seaside and scenery" but "hardly cut off".