

Stoke Bishop & Sea Mills Forum

The Covid-19 Lockdown has meant that the next Forum on Wednesday 10th June 2020 at 7-9pm at Sea Mills Methodist Church has been cancelled. This newsletter has been produced to keep you up to date. We plan to return to regular meetings as soon as possible

1. From Local MP Darren Jones

Thank you to everyone in Stoke Bishop and Sea Mills for the efforts you've made to protect our community and reduce the rate of infection. With the next stage of the pandemic response announced, my priority is keeping everyone in Bristol North West safe, secure and informed as our economy starts to open-up again.

Nationally, in my new capacity as the Chair of the House of Commons Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee, and as a lead Member of Parliament on the Bristol Economic Recovery Board, I'm investing lots of time into trying to secure the best support and guidance for businesses, workers and consumers. This is especially important as we transition from lock down measures, to the transition and towards repairing the economy. How we open childcare settings, schools and transport provision is clearly crucial to this.

Locally, I've been attending regular briefings with the NHS, the Avonmouth and Somerset Police, local resilience forum and the Mayor's office to understand what's being delivered locally, what gaps need to be highlighted to government ministers and to feedback your experiences about delivery. If you have any concerns about local support or responses to national guidance, or indeed national guidance itself, you can raise these with me in the normal way.

A lot of the best work being done to protect vulnerable people in our community has come from our friends, family and neighbours. Last week, I launched the [Coronavirus Community Heroes](#) awards so that we can recognise and thank the people working so hard to make life safer, easier and happier for people across North West Bristol. [Nominations are open](#), and only take a couple of minutes, so please consider nominating someone that has made a difference. You'll also find a petition on my website for a physical memorial to commemorate those we lost and to thank the frontline workers for the work they've done to get us through this pandemic.

Outside of the pandemic, I know that concerns about the proper use of Stoke Lodge for outside exercise during this lockdown have been raised. I've been speaking about this frequently with constituents, and I have sharing your concerns to the relevant groups, including the school and Bristol City Council. I hope that a reasonable compromise can be found that allows use of the grounds by residents in a responsible way. It's certainly my view that local green spaces should be made as available as possible for residents to use during this period of lockdown.

Whilst my usual events in Bristol have had to be cancelled you can still speak with me confidentially during my regular constituency surgery phone-ins and in public via my Facebook Live and Zoom sessions. You can find out when these are happening by looking at my Facebook page (fb.com/darrenjonesmp) or by signing up to my monthly e-mail newsletter on my website. If you do need my help or have a question, you can always get in touch on e-mail on darren.jones.mp@parliament.uk.

Thank you as always,
Darren Jones

2. Update from your local councillors

Our priority is ensuring that the needs of local residents in Stoke Bishop, Sea Mills and Sneyd Park are still met at this time of national concern.

If you need to contact us with a local issue, however big or small, please find our contact details below.

Cllr Peter Abraham
cllr.peter.abraham@bristol.gov.uk

Cllr John Goulandris
cllr.john.goulandris@bristol.gov.uk

We have lobbied for and are pleased to advise that the green bin and bulky waste services are now operational again, cemeteries have reopened (please check opening times) and we anticipate the re-opening of recycling centres shortly.

The majority of Council officers are working normally, mostly from home and traditional face to face meetings have been replaced by Zoom/Skype calls. Licensing and Planning Committee meetings are taking place by Zoom and the public are able to participate.

If you require any extra information regarding the Coronavirus outbreak, here are some useful links

Bristol City Council : freephone number is 0800 694 0184 for anyone to call if they need help during the Covid-19 lockdown (currently operating 8:30am-5:00pm Mon-Fri and 10:00am-2.00pm Sat-Sun). Volunteers can help with shopping, collecting prescriptions etc.

NHS: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

HM Government Coronavirus website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>

Guidance for employees, employers and businesses:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19>

Guidance on Education: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

Access to large areas of green space, where exercise can be taken whilst respecting social distancing rules, is vitally important. We have written to the Head Teacher of Cotham School to ask that the gates of Stoke Lodge playing fields are kept unlocked, to ensure that local people can get the vital fresh air and exercise which is needed. We are very disappointed that Cotham School has denied our request. We believe this is a missed opportunity by Cotham School to build much needed bridges with the local community. We will continue to lobby Cotham School on this issue.

We know that the next couple of months will be tough for our local communities, city and nation alike, but we WILL beat this. May we pay tribute to all key workers, our local shopkeepers and the large groups of volunteers helping to alleviate this crisis.

Please don't hesitate in getting in touch with us, no matter how big or small your issues or concerns are.

We hope you and your families stay safe and well.

Cllr Peter Abraham & Cllr John Goulandris
Bristol City Councillors
Stoke Bishop Ward

3. Bristol NW Climate Action Group – Mary Rivers

It has been nearly two months since the Group has been able to meet face to face. For many of us it has been an opportunity to explore our local neighbourhood. It has also made many of us wonder if going back to 'business as usual' is as desirable as it once appeared to be.

Here are a few ideas and actions you can take to help make some positive changes to the way we lead our lives, whilst also helping to restarting the local economy.

No return to congested streets and toxic air

Traffic volumes are at levels not seen since the 1950s. Our air is cleaner, with more people walking and cycling as part of their daily exercise routines. This has led to commentators in

some quarters suggesting that we might see a 'new normal' as we come out of lockdown, with benefits to our health, to communities and even wildlife.

Bristol City Council has recently announced measures to make some city centre roads safer as we come out of lockdown. But are there other things that could be done to encourage a healthy, less polluting return to the new 'normal'?

What might we do differently? Will you change your travel and leisure habits? For example you could:

- **Work from home**
More employers are making this possible. It saves money and time on the commute and can improve our work life balance.
- **Stop through traffic on residential streets**
This makes streets safer and cleaner for young families to walk, cycle and even play in
- **Use the car less**
We have discovered that are our local shops are within walking distance, so let's commit to using less polluting forms of travel and support local businesses.
- **Drive a little slower**
With so many novice cyclists on our roads, we all need drive slowly and carefully so we don't put them off for life! To report speeding vehicles and dangerous driving: www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/speedingconcern

Join the debate. Email: BNWclimateaction@outlook.com

4. Sea Mills Community Initiatives

If people in Bristol need help getting food or doing other essential tasks, or are feeling isolated, the council have set up a hotline on 0800 694 0184 to offer help. The council are also working with local organisations and volunteers to co-ordinate support for people across the city. For people who live in Sea Mills and Coombe Dingle Sea Mills Community Initiative (SMCI), who run the cafe on the square and community garden, are working with the council to co-ordinate help for local people. This includes help with practical tasks such as shopping, picking up prescriptions and dog walking.

We have begun to receive requests for help, but would like a decent body of volunteers to ensure we are in a position to respond if further needs are identified. We don't know yet whether we will receive many requests for help or just a few but we want to be ready to respond to anyone who needs help.

If you'd like to volunteer to help with practical things like picking up prescriptions or calling someone who would value someone to talk to you can sign up via the Can Do Bristol website (<https://candobristol.co.uk>). If you sign up to volunteer and indicate that you live locally, the council will then undertake a DBS check and pass your details on to us so that SMCI can call on your help. We'd love you to be one of them!

Sea Mills 100

Sea Mills 100 have been using the lockdown period to improve the online side of the project at www.seamills100.co.uk The webpages now include a large amount of Sea Mills and Coombe Dingle war stories which were posted for the 70th Anniversary of VE Day. Also included is a self guided walk around the suburb which can either be done following temporary boards around the estate or virtually on the website. We are currently seeking submissions of written content and photographs for the website and looking for help in transcribing documents. See the website or contact us for details info@seamills100.co.uk You can also follow us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/SeaMillsCentenary> or Twitter <https://twitter.com/seamills100>

Sea Mills and Coombe Dingle Community Plan

The Community Plan report has now been published and is available to download at www.seamillsandcoombedingle.com. Printed copies will be available when venues are open to distribute them. We are currently looking for feedback on the plan, for volunteers to help with putting it into action and to take part in the new Sea Mills and Coombe Dingle Together organisation. Contact us via the website for details. You can also follow us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/SeaMillsandCoombeDingleTogether> and Twitter https://twitter.com/smcdt_bs9

New School in Hallen Drive

The planning application for demolition of the existing building and the construction of a new SEMH school in Hallen Drive is available to view and comment on at the Bristol City Council planning Portal <https://planningonline.bristol.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=Q5YHZ8DNGHJ00&activeTab=summary>

5. We Love Stoke Lodge – Helen Powell:

Locked down, locked out, but looking forward!

The ongoing lockdown is a vivid reminder of how vital our local green space is to us all. Cotham School's decision to exclude the community from using Stoke Lodge - potentially for months - has been extremely upsetting for many local people.

Alongside our Councillors and our MP, we have pressed hard for a change in approach from Cotham School and from the Council. Unfortunately the Council has 'decided not to take a decision to enforce the lease', and is choosing to view this as an 'operational issue' for the school, even though this conflicts with its own legal advice.

Huge thanks to everyone who has written letters and supported our efforts to get the school to simply comply with its lease and unlock the gates, and to ask BCC to defend the public interest and public health. We won't give up!

The most recent news is that Cotham has applied to erect a 4-12m post supporting a long-range 'pan and tilt' surveillance camera on site, very close to the listed building. Apart from the issue of siting a pole 'typically used in prisons and detention centres' right next to a listed building, there are significant privacy concerns attached to this proposal. More details about this application (20/01826/F) are on welovestokelodge.co.uk.

In the background, legal things are happening (slowly!) and in the autumn we should see the two TVG applications moving forward together towards the appointment of an Inspector and, ultimately, the restoration of full public access to this historic parkland.

6. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and S106 bids:

It is regretted that there will be no CIL and S106 awards this year. Councillor Asher Craig, Deputy Mayor – Communities (Public Health, Public Transport, Libraries and Parks) has made the decision to suspend the Area Committee CIL allocation process for 2020. This is because of both staff resources which are being diverted to dealing with Covid-19 and the fact that CIL receipts are likely to be considerably reduced this year because of the impact of the pandemic.

The Council is still exploring how we could take forward tree planting decisions using the specific S106 funds which can only be allocated to tree planting. More information about this process should be available a little later at the end of May.

Decisions to award funds last year will not be affected.

CONTACT DETAILS:

Stoke Bishop and Sea Mills Ward Forum stokebishopforum@aol.com

Police: PC Stephen Harding stephen.harding@avonandsomerset.police.uk

PCSO Kelly Foyle kellya.foyle@avonandsomerset.police.uk

Respect the Downs www.RespectTheDowns.co.uk RespectTheDowns@gmail.com

Local Councillors: Councillor Peter Abraham Cllr.peter.abraham@bristol.gov.uk

Councillor John Goulandris Cllr.john.goulandris@bristol.gov.uk

We Love Stoke Lodge welovestokelodge@gmail.com <https://welovestokelodge.co.uk/>

Community Infrastructure Levy: www.bristol.gov.uk/people-communities/funding-local-projects

Tree Update and Community Speed watch: Stephanie French stephanie@srfrench.co.uk

Run by local residents, this forum covers the Stoke Bishop Ward which includes Sea Mills, south of Sylvan Way.

If you wish to amend or delete your details please email us at stokebishopforum@aol.com