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THE DORRIDGE & DISTRICT RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION Newsletter

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Please email documents for the Newsletter to: dorrideresidents@gmail.com • www.ddraonline.com

Update on the proposed temporary closure of Gate Lane to traffic.

On 31st May Councillor Ken Hawkins – Cabinet Minister for Environment & Infrastructure – announced that after consultation with residents the temporary closure of Gate Lane will now not go ahead and Gate Lane will remain open to all vehicles.

New 20mph speed limit now in force on Widney Road by the shops... Take care, don't get caught out.

KDBH Neighbourhood Forum Update

We are delighted to confirm that the KDBH Neighbourhood Forum has been successful in its bid for community infrastructure funding (commonly known as NCIL) from Solihull Council. The award of £10,000 provided equally from Dorridge, Bentley Heath and Knowle Wards enables the Forum to continue its important work and press ahead with several community engagement projects including:

1. Resident consultation on prioritisation of Community Infrastructure Projects.
2. Extensive consultation and engagement with the Community following the publication of the Inspectors' recommendations on the Local Plan.
3. Updating the Neighbourhood Plan following approval of the Solihull Local Plan.
4. Substantially increasing Forum membership including younger members
5. Review and refresh of Community Actions set out in the Neighbourhood Plan.
6. Creation of a masterplan for the KDBH area (including highways, parking, cycle routes, pedestrian routes etc) in association with residents, residents' organisations and Solihull Council. Congratulations are also extended to the other successful NCIL bidders in our area:

Dorridge Cricket Club: Development of a second pitch at the main ground and accompanying new pavilion with changing facilities (£48,000)

Dorridge Scout Hut: Roof modification and replacement (£15,000)

Knowle & Dorridge Cricket Club: Clubhouse redevelopment project (£20,000)

Northern Gateway to Knowle: Landscape & public realm improvements (£9,960). Consultation document issued to its Forum members, made available to the general public via social media channels and highlighted on their website www.kdbh-np.org. Not yet a member, then join for free on the website.

Government's Levelling-Up and Regeneration Bill: Reforms to National Planning Policy

The Government is currently proposing changes to national planning policy which could have significant implications for the two large housing sites proposed in Knowle - at Hampton Road (198 houses) and at the 'Arden Triangle', between Station Road and Warwick Road (660 houses). The changes relate to housing development on protected green belt land and to housing densities. Although specifically relevant to the Knowle sites the outcome of the proposed changes may have far-reaching consequences for the entire KDBH area as they directly affect green belt land and are aimed at housing densities residents have previously expressed as too high for our area. These sites are still being assessed by Government Inspectors as part of the Solihull Local Plan Review and to date they have signalled that they consider these sites are suitable and appropriate for housing. That is despite residents not knowing what will happen to the proposed relocation of Arden Academy, provision of a new Primary School or the future of Knowle FC.

The changes in national planning policy are expected to be announced very shortly. If confirmed, they are likely to present a final opportunity for the KDBH Neighbourhood Forum to make further representations to the Inspectors before they issue their recommendations to the Council. We are aware that some bodies, such as the Council for the Preservation of Rural England (CPRE) and Berkswell residents' organisations, are lobbying for some housing sites in their area to be dropped.

The Forum will shortly be issuing more of the background to this together with a consultation document for residents to have a say on various options about how they should respond.

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DDRA Newsletter Deliveries

The DDRA Newsletter is delivered to every home in Dorridge and Bentley Heath by a faithful band of about forty volunteers, to whom we are very grateful. Without their help this valuable publication would not reach you. Most of us are not exactly in the first flush of youth (one deliverer gave up last year after many years' service at the age of 91!).

I have just enough volunteers now, but if any of them move or decide to retire they will need replacing. If you would be willing to be a regular deliverer (it only takes about an hour three times a year), then please contact me. I will put you on my reserve list and be in touch as soon as a vacancy arises. David Aldis dcaldis14@gmail.com or 01564 773437

Street Watch

We are pleased to report that Street Watch (SW) has been fully revived again after reduced activity since Covid-19. This is timely with recent burglary and car theft in the village. We believe that SW provides a definite benefit but, on its own, is not a sufficient deterrent to the determined criminals we face. All of us can play a part by making Dorridge a place of higher risk and lower reward to criminals by doing some of the following things:

1. Walk our local streets as much as possible, acknowledging everyone. If anyone looks suspicious make a record of their descriptions in case a burglary is subsequently reported.
2. Similarly, note down details of vehicles/drivers which seem suspicious. Make them aware that they have been 'clocked'.
3. If an alarm sounds, if possible, quickly go to the property and observe from the road. Many will be false alarms!
4. If your security system has advised a definite entry to your house (cameras or multiple PIR triggers) let your Neighbourhood Watch WhatsApp Group know.
5. Encourage neighbours to join such Groups so they can respond in concert.
6. If you have not had recent security advice then seek it. If a thief will find it difficult to get into your rear garden and then difficult to get into your house and slow to find valuables with an alarm sounding all the while they may be put off and leave. The more thwarted attempts there are, the lower the rewards of coming to Dorridge will be.

Interested in joining? Then please contact: -
Dorridge.streetwatc@gmail.com

Website Manager needed

Are you IT literate and would you be willing to spend about 30 minutes per month managing the Residents Association website? This is not an onerous task as it involves removing out of date notices and posting new items submitted by the Residents Association. If you could help, please contact dorridgeresidents@gmail.com

Bentley Heath Primary School Summer Activities

Our PTA school Summer Fair will take place on Friday 30th June from 3.30 – 5.00pm. There will be lots of stalls and activities and all proceeds will be going to the PTA to support school facilities and activities.

We also have places in our Nursery for September 2023 for both 15 and 30 hours attendance. More details are available on the school website: bentley-heath.solihull.sch.uk or contact the school on 01564 772132 or office@bentleyheath.bdmat.org.uk for more details.

Friends of Bentley Heath Park

Spring 2021 saw the installation in Bentley Heath Park of a Breeden Gravel path, an exciting community-led project which linked existing paths and created a complete circuit. This has transformed how the park is used and it has been hugely successful. At this point the group, Friends of Bentley Heath Park, was officially created and got off to a good start, liaising with SMBC about potential future developments to the park to benefit all who use it. Bulbs were planted, wildflowers and grasses sown (unsuccessfully, as it turned out), a picnic table installed, and one member of the group committed to weekly litter-picking there. What Friends of Bentley Heath Park really needs now is a new enthusiastic leader, some fresh members and some younger blood – to share ideas, enthuse the community and liaise with SMBC about management and development. This is a brilliant opportunity for our community! This lovely green space is valued by all age groups and has a lot of potential. If you think you might like to be involved and have ideas about how you would like to see the park develop and be managed, do feel free to contact me, and we can arrange to have a chat. Catherine Aldis dcaldis14@gmail.com

Doodles Pre-School

...is based at the heart of the Dorridge community and has close links with all the local primary Nursery Schools.

Children can attend independently the term after their second birthday for two or three mornings per week which gives them the opportunity to gain confidence in a secure and nurturing environment, before they move on to big school.

We are Ofsted registered and have lots of fun activities including messy play, craft activities, role play, lego, play dough, dressing up and much more. We also have a lovely garden offering lots of outside play with bikes, scooters, cars, football, mud kitchen, gardening, slides and climbing activities. Recently we have planted beans and sunflowers and look forward to watching them grow! Children enjoy eating a snack every day with their friends. Please get in touch if you would like to know more at:

hello@doodlespreschool.co.uk or come along and visit us!

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Dorridge Day - Sunday the 10th of September

Please put this date in your diary because Dorridge Day will soon be upon us!

'What Is Dorridge Day?' - Initially it was known as the Dorridge Day Fete when it first started in 1974. It was organised by the Dorridge Day Village Hall Committee with proceeds of the Fete going to the Village Hall Building Fund and Scout and Guides. In 1980 Gordon Harvey was asked to take on the position of Chairman to represent Knowle and Dorridge Round Table and this is how it has continued to this day, albeit with someone new from Round Table taking the project management lead each year. In this way Dorridge Day has gone from strength to strength and is a hugely positive day for the local community.

This year's event will be held at Dorridge Park starting at 11:30 and will continue until 17:00. The first band is on stage at 11:30 and the second at 14:00 - there will be several dance groups between these music sets. There will be lots of family activities including inflatables and climbing with plenty of street food and two bars. The classic car parade from Knowle to the park will start at 11:45 and at 16:15 there will be a tug of war and to wrap up the afternoon at 16:45 there will be a much enjoyed water pistol fight!

The committee is very grateful to its sponsors DM & Co. Homes and Mustin Pearce Financial Management Ltd.

Fancy a walk with Knowle Ramblers?

Knowle Ramblers have approximately 75 members with the majority living in Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath. Each month we arrange two longer walks, normally between 7 and 9 miles, and within an hour's travelling time; and two short walks 4 to 6 miles, locally or within half an hour's travelling time. Many of the short walks finish somewhere specific for refreshment and food afterwards. On most of the long walks, walkers bring a packed lunch. Typically we have 10 to 20 members coming together to walk. In addition, every other month, a local amble of less than 3 miles, is arranged. Generally, for the long walks we meet in Bentley Heath to arrange car sharing, but for the short walks, car sharing is inappropriate.

In recent weeks we have enjoyed walks from the Tom O 'the Wood in Rowington, on Cannock Chase, from Chadwick End, and to Edgbaston. By the time this article is printed we will also have had our mid-summer walk and supper at Knowle, and a Friday evening walk from Dorridge.

We would be delighted to see you on one of our walks in July. Our plans include long walks (7 to 9 miles) on Sat 8 July and Sun 23 July, with a short walk at Hampton Lucy on Wednesday 5 July and another short walk (about 4.5) on Friday evening 14 July. Longer term we are planning our weekend away to Selworthy in Somerset (by Exmoor) in April 2024. For further details of all our walks look at our website: <https://knowleramblers.tripod> or contact Robert Beckham on 0121 249 3352 Knowle Ramblers Chairman



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Muscular Dystrophy UK (MD UK)

Could you help this organisation by becoming a volunteer? This dreadful hereditary disease progressively weakens and wastes muscles, eventually leading to difficulties swallowing and breathing, leading to an agonising death. MD UK seeks to find treatments and ultimately a cure through supporting research. If you would like to learn more, please contact: hazelhopkins@blueyonder.co.

Raise your Voice: Join the Dorridge People's Show Choir

We have come to Dorridge!

The new Dorridge People's Show Choir is a passionate group of music enthusiasts who meet every Monday, 7.15pm at Ye Olde Knowle Bowling Club in Dorridge.

As well as being an artistic platform for music lovers we also seek to foster a nurturing and supportive environment for others in the local community. You don't need to read music, however this choir provides an excellent opportunity to explore your musical talents, forge new friendships and give back to the community, all by singing well-known show tunes. All members of the choir live locally and enjoy the camaraderie of professionally guided rehearsals, online learning resources and performance opportunities.

We are linked with eleven other Show Choirs in the Midlands which come together as one large choir for performances.

Our choir is welcoming new members with a passion for singing, so come and join us and make a difference, one note at a time. You can find out more about us on

<https://thepeoplesorchestra.com>.

Bamboo - Friend or Foe?

Are you thinking of planting bamboo in your garden? Perhaps you already have some. Before you go ahead and plant a clump, or a hedge, make sure you understand the nature of this plant. A bamboo hedge can provide privacy and is an effective screen from unsightly fences, but care must be exercised if the screen is not to become a nuisance and even a danger to property - belonging to you or your neighbours!

The well over 1000 different species can be divided into two types - clumping or running. Both have large rhizome (root) systems. The running variety sends out long rhizomes which can spread several meters underground, under walls, fences, paths and patios.

One way of preventing the spread is to plant the bamboo in a container or within a special membrane, but, unfortunately, this is not always done. If the bamboo spreads to neighbouring property it can cause disputes with neighbours, who may be reluctant to admit the scale of the problem and resent the cost implication of limiting growth or removal. Legal action is extremely costly: most people would want to avoid this anyway.



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Removal involves digging out the plants, rhizomes and roots attached to them, then treating the area with a strong herbicide. Even then, some roots might survive and regenerate, so vigilance will be necessary for several years. You have been warned! Think very carefully about the consequences of cultivating bamboo in your garden!

Say No To Plastic Grass

Taken from the Royal Horticultural Society's May Journal: In addition to the problems of plastic grass the EU are considering banning the use of tyre crumb on indoor and outdoor plastic grass areas due to cancer concerns and this month's RHS Journal has suggested a ban on plastic grass with support from Monty Don.

Real Grass Is Always Better - Here's Why:

1. Fake lawns can contaminate underlying soil and surrounding watercourses with micro-plastic fragments of nylon, polyethylene and polypropylene. The first plastic lawns were introduced to the market in 1965 as Chemgrass - a much more honest name.
2. Real grass stores carbon. An artificial lawn leads to its release from the soil dug up and replaced with scalping such as asphalt chipping, crushed asphalt, rock or other sub-bases.
3. Lawn, soil and greenery cool a garden's surface and surroundings through evaporation and transpiration. Artificial grass provides none of these benefits and can become extremely hot underfoot in summer.
4. Artificial grass provides no habitat for wildlife. Even closely mown grass lawns provide space for birds to dig and worms to live, while longer grass provides nectar for pollinators and places to breed, feed and lay.
5. Plastic lawns require replacing after a certain amount of wear and are hard to recycle. Many end up in landfill.
6. No daisy chain was ever made while lying on a patch of fake grass.

For more information see details of the campaign "Say no to plastic grass and plants" visit ["sgd.org.uk"](http://sgd.org.uk)

Barclays Bank Closed

It is a reflection on our times and the move to online banking that we see the closing of Barclays, our last Bank in this area, on 16th June. The nearest branch is in Solihull, 19-21 Mill Lane. B91 3AR

Have your say on the development of Solihull Town Centre.

A six week public consultation is underway until Monday 24th July. This consultation aims to 'help shape the future look, feel and layout' of Solihull town centre. SMBC, working with the design and engineering consultations Arcadis, are seeking to produce design principles for future developments and provide continuity across public spaces, streets and green spaces within the town centre.

Phase one concept design focuses on Solihull High Street, New Road and the access to Malvern Park via Park Road.

A short consultation document has been prepared which provides an overview of the Draft Public realm Strategy and show what the initial concept design might look like using 3D. To see the consultation material and have your say

visit: www.solihull.gov.uk/publicrealmstrategy

You can meet the project team, find out more and share your views by coming along to one of the town centre engagement events;

Wednesday 21st June 11am to 3pm High Street outside the Metro Bank

Saturday 1st July 11am to 3pm outside the Metro Bank.

The Arts Society Solihull


As a registered charity we exist to promote an interest in the arts though a range of lectures, tours and events.

This year we have learned about modern dance, the Rijksmuseum and the harp's history. Visits have taken place to the Glass Museum, Stourbridge, Bletchley Park, Laskett Gardens and a July guided walk of Cirencester is planned. We arrange holidays - a three day September visit to Cardiff is proposed. The year ends with a popular Christmas lunch at Copt Heath Golf Club.

The Arts Society Solihull might be for you. The current membership fee of £55 includes ten lectures a year which take place at 11.00 am in the Core Theatre usually on the first Wednesday of the month. You may join at any time of the year and bring a guest along for a donation - suggestion £6.

Our Heritage Volunteers have completed work at Knowle Parish Church and Packwood House. We also provide financial support to schools and youth organisations.

For more information visit: www.theartsocietysolihull.org.uk



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