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THE Newsletter

DORRIDGE & DISTRICT RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

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• Chair: JEANINE PLAIN-JONES • Editor: JESSICA BRYAN •

Please email documents for the Newsletter to: dorridgeresidents@gmail.com

>>>> **We are back online with a new website. Please visit ddra.org.uk for updates** <<<<

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

To be held at 7:30pm on Wed 13 March 2024 at ye Old Knowle Bowling Club, Grange Rd, Dorridge B93 8QA

(next to The Railway Inn, Dorridge. Approached from the main road through the entrance to Dorridge Village Hall but on the right before the hall car park.)

KDBH Bus Action Group

After the KDBH Bus Action Group reached out to TfWM about our local bus services, Ryan Charlton, the new Bus Service Specialist for Solihull & Coventry, contacted us. He met with our Bus Action Group in January. Ryan showed a deep understanding of local bus services and was responsive to our concerns.

We've been facing issues on the A3 route, especially along Purnells Way, Tilehouse Green Lane, and Longdon Road. The last timetable change forced residents to walk to Station Road for the Knowle bus. This was inconvenient as the bus used to return through these roads from Knowle, but only went towards Dorridge.

Ryan was already aware of this problem and is working to adjust this part of the route. He aims to implement these changes soon. He's also focusing on the better synchronization of bus and train schedules. Additionally, he plans to improve the bus service by distributing departure times more evenly over the hour. This will help avoid the current bunching of buses from Solihull to Knowle and Dorridge.

Another concern is the congestion at Solihull bus stops. Ryan is working on strategies to reduce the number of buses at each stop, easing the congestion.

On a positive note, Landflight buses now accept contactless payments with credit/debit cards. This makes travel more convenient for many passengers. They've also made real-time bus information available via these links:

A3 - <https://bustimes.org/services/a3-solihull-dorridge-via-knowle-bentley-heath#map>

A7 & A8 - <https://bustimes.org/services/a8-south-solihull-circular-anticlockwise#map>

Ryan is hoping to change things for the better quite quickly. He would be happy to come to a community meeting to discuss

issues with local people; the KDBH Bus Action Group hope to arrange this meeting later in the year.

National Planning Policy Framework and Local Plan Review

The long-awaited revision to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was finally published on 19th December 2023, a year after the initial consultation was announced. This sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

The KDBH Neighbourhood Forum had expectations for revisions in the assessment of Green Belt housing allocations by local councils. Unfortunately, the final version of the changes is less impactful than initially proposed. The Council is now evaluating how these changes might influence the Local Plan Review. This evaluation is especially relevant for the two green field sites in our area, KN1 Hampton Road and KN2 Arden Triangle, designated for housing.

Local Plan Review Update & Major Housing Projects

Local Plan Review Status

The Local Plan Review is currently paused. The Government Inspectors have stated that the updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) from December 2023 does not affect the Solihull Local Plan. The KDBH forum have asked the Council to decide how to proceed.

KN2 Site Developments

Despite the pause in the Local Plan Review, two significant planning applications for the KN2 site (Arden Triangle) have been submitted. The KDBH Forum stance remains firm: they will object to any applications until a comprehensive masterplan for

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the entire KN2 area is approved. Regrettably, such a master plan is not yet submitted, and they believe the KDBH Forum should be involved early in its development, not just at the community engagement stage.

Stripes Hill Proposals

There are two planning submissions for Stripes Hill. The first is for an Integrated Retirement Community with up to 170 units. The second, by Cerda Planning for the Kler Group, proposes up to 450 houses and a primary school. The KDBH Forum is still awaiting a proposal for the Taylor Wimpey part of the site, potentially for around 200 houses.

Arden Academy Concerns

Both applications for the KN2 site do not support the relocation of Arden Academy, a key aspect of the Solihull Local Plan. The proposed housing numbers exceed those recommended by Solihull Council, a point of major concern for the KDBH forum. The KDBH Forum has objected to the increased housing levels and the omission of a new Arden Academy, which has government funding support.

Dorridge Park Brook

A post concerning the brook in Dorridge Park and accompanying photograph in local media at the end of December 2023 gave rise to over 30 responses. It appeared that the water had been contaminated with sewage and that some dogs which had entered the polluted water had become ill. The post was forwarded to DDRA who took the matter up with Councillor Ian Courts. Severn Trent investigated and found no evidence of prolonged contamination. They checked the Beconsfield Close pumping station and the Grange Road combined sewer overflow and concluded that this was the result of a hydraulic event due to heavy rain. They will continue to investigate but believe that this is not a long-term pollution problem.

If residents have further concerns, we advise that they contact either the Council on 0121 704 8001 and make a note of the person they speak to or one of the local councillors: icourts@solihull.org.uk, amackiew@solihull.org.uk, or kmeeson@solihull.gov.org.uk.

Dorridge Station Long Stay Car Park

The payment machine in the car park behind Sainsbury's Petrol Station became operational in December 2023. It is situated in the centre of the car park and accepts coins and cards. Payment can also be made using the paybyphone app. Parking is free for 2 hours, but you must obtain a ticket from the machine or register your vehicle's presence on the app. Charges apply from Monday to Saturday.

Defibrillators, Bleed Kits & Training

In 2013, DDRA acquired four defibrillator cabinets and defibrillators for the community. Quick access to a defibrillator

greatly improves survival in cardiac arrest cases. The defibrillators are checked regularly by our local first responder team, FastAid, led by Terry Flower, so that they are always "rescue-ready".

Bleed Kits are now being introduced into the defibrillator cabinets. These are supplied by the WMAS and are designed to help staunch the flow of blood following a stabbing or other traumatic event, as this really helps limit the severe blood loss that can happen quite quickly. We have all read and heard of the terrible injuries inflicted by knives; this is a practical response which could save lives. If you go onto our website www.ddra.org.uk there is a video explaining the kits and how they are used in the Defibrillators, Bleed Kits & Training section.

If someone collapses, call 999 immediately. The cabinets containing defibrillators and bleed kits are registered with the West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS). You'll be informed if a defibrillator or bleed kit is nearby, based on the situation. You'll receive the cabinet's key code and guidance on using the equipment.

DDRA and FastAid are holding another Heartstart training session on Friday 19th April, 7-9pm at Dorridge Village Hall. If you would like to come to this event, please email Jane Holt via our email dorridgeresidents@gmail.com with the subject "Heartstart Training".

!WANTED! - Treasurer

Dorridge Village Hall Association is a friendly group of volunteers that administers the Village Hall for the benefit of the local community.

We are in need of a treasurer who has some knowledge of bookkeeping, accounts or finance management to look after the finances of this charitable association.

We are also looking for more volunteers, so if you have some time to spare and feel you could help with bookings, finance, maintenance or just general support, please get in touch.

Sadly, without volunteers Dorridge Village Hall will not be able to continue to function.

Please contact B Massey on 07780 994202. Thank you.

**Knowle Male Voice Choir -
 From Strength to Strength**

Knowle Male Voice Choir started out 25 years ago. We continue to develop and grow and now number 39 members., 14 who have joined in the last 2 years, 4 of whom joined this January.

We are based at Dorridge Methodist Church and we rehearse every Wednesday at 7.30pm.

So why the increase in numbers?

KMVC want to grow so we continue to provide a community group well into the future. It is also true that the bigger the number in the choir the richer the sound. Individuals who join comment on the positive benefits. It is very uplifting to sing, it's good for

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your general health and you learn new skills. The camaraderie and fun you have are a real bonus. It is good for the community to have groups of people getting together whether it be choirs, Lions, Round Table, Ladies Circle, U3A or sports clubs. The more active these groups the healthier the community is.

The other benefit for the community is the charitable aim of these groups. KMVC has raised thousands of pounds over the years for local charities and we will continue to do this. The money is raised by holding community concerts, usually with other like-minded choirs and musicians.

For more information, you can find us at <https://www.knowlemalevoicechoir.org.uk/> or follow us on <https://www.facebook.com/knowlemalevoicechoir>. Our next concert is on Saturday 16th March – tickets available here at www.ticketsource.co.uk/knowle-male-voice-choir where we will have 3 local choirs performing. A fantastic event to come along to.

Knowle and Dorridge Lions Charity Easter Egg Raffle 2024

March 12-18th 2024 will once again see our members engaged in raising funds for local charities. As in 2023 (and many previous years) Rigby's The Black Boy pub on the Warwick Road will be supporting us by playing wonderful hosts for our K&D Lions Easter Egg Raffle. The prize will be an enormous hamper overflowing with Easter eggs - large and small! Lions will be available to sell tickets at the Black Boy from Wednesday to Friday evenings, and during lunchtimes on Saturday and Sunday.

The Black Boy customers always very generously support our raffle by buying many books of tickets. Last year between us and our partners, we raised over £1000 for charity including for Age UK (Solihull).

Knowle Fun Run

We are in top gear as we prepare for our 39th annual Knowle Fun Run on Sunday 19th May. This great community event attracts up to 2,000 runners as well as many enthusiastic young people for our four kids runs.

Arden Academy's Sports field will be the start of our 5K and 10K routes which again will take our runners up the drag of Longdon Road. Whilst some runners will be aiming for a PB, many others will be jogging and walking to raise money for their charity.

That is the great thing about the Knowle Fun Run - it is a community event. It is no mistake that 'FUN' is in our title. If you are unable to run this year, we would welcome your help to marshal our event. Our phone number is 0345 833 5894.

You can help us surpass last year's total by buying our raffle tickets when you visit the Black Boy during the two-week run up to Easter. The grand draw will take place on the evening of Maundy Thursday and we will be sure to get your prize to you in time for Easter Day.

New Bentley Heath Community Centre Committee Members needed

In 2014, the Bentley Heath Community Centre was at risk of closing. It was deteriorating, interest was waning, and we lost committee members who had been looking after the hall - often for many years. With the help of a grant from Veolia, some £40,000 has been spent since then in bringing the hall to its present standard. The present committee has overseen a complete modernisation of the premises and ensured it is very well patronised and financially secure. It is fully used on weekdays by local groups and classes and is usually fully booked at weekends for parties and similar events.

We feel that the hall is needed as a local resource and are keen to maintain the standards reached and it would be a shame to see it fail through lack of support - **WE NEED HELP!**

Unfortunately, the present committee members are not getting any younger and 2014 is in danger of repeating itself if younger blood does not come forward to take over. We are looking for new committee members to help by initially shadowing the existing members. (Lettings, Facilities, Treasurer and Secretary) with the purpose of ultimately taking over in due course.

There are 4 meetings a year including the AGM, plus checking the hall is clean and tidy at weekends - about 5 times a year.

WE ARE WAITING TO HEAR FROM YOU.

If interested please contact the Secretary Roger Wilks at wilks67@blueyonder.co.uk

Retired or semi-retired?

Still wanting to learn and be active, in a friendly and sociable setting?

Like a good number of other recent retirees in the area have done, why not go along to a 'taster session' or two at South Solihull U3A. They are a very friendly group of retired/ semi-retired people aiming to really enjoy their 3rd age years, learn new skills and make new friends along the way. They must be doing something of great interest to 'young 3rd agers' as they have had over 25 new members in the last year.

Their core meetings are at 1.45pm (for a 2.00 pm start) on the second Monday of each month at Bentley Heath Community Centre. Usually there is an invited speaker and past talks have been on a wide range of topics. As important as the talk is the opportunity to meet and chat with other members over tea/coffee and biscuits. Other occasions such as Christmas, the Coronation and national celebrations provide a reason for an afternoon party instead!

However, the great strength of South Solihull U3A is the wide range of other activities that happen throughout each and every month. There are activity groups varying from the physical to the cerebral, from practical to scientific and the linguistic to artistic. Something for each and every one.



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The existing groups are:

- Walking
- Gardening
- Keep Fit
- Racketball
- Philosophy groups
- a Repair Shed
- Science
- Local History Groups
- French Conversation
- Intermediate German
- Theatre and Music
- Art Appreciation
- Play Reading
- Book Clubs
- Family History
- Current Affairs Discussion Group
- and the very popular International Dining Club.

A recent start-up group has been the Information Technology Group whose aim is to help members to learn and develop their smartphone, tablet and computer skills.

Indeed, other new groups can start as easily as two members wanting to pursue a new study area and others then joining in - the essence of a thriving, dynamic and member-orientated organisation.

If you think this may interest you and you believe your 3rd age should be fun, busy, sociable and give you new opportunities to learn, then have a look at their website www.ssu3a.org or get in touch with Richard Walton, the Membership Secretary at membershipssu3a@yahoo.com.

There are new potential friends out there waiting to hear from you so pop along to one of their upcoming meetings on 11th March or 8th April; you'll be made very welcome!

Stay Active and Independent at Forever Active

Forever Active is a physio-led class designed for older adults – a space where they focus on building strength and improving balance. In this class, it's all about practical fitness that enhances your everyday life.

The classes focus on strength training exercises, emphasising muscle growth and bone density. The goal? To make you feel stronger and more resilient, ready to tackle whatever comes your way. Balance is key, and that's where tailored exercises come in to improve coordination and stability, reducing the risk of falls and boosting your confidence in movement.

Richard Waterworth is a physiotherapist with over 10 years' experience rehabilitating older adults. He recently left the NHS to start these classes with the aim of offering fun, interactive but, most importantly, an effective way to regain or maintain independence. It's all about being able to continue to do the things we enjoy.


The classes have a really supportive atmosphere where everyone's progress is valued. Richard says "I understand that everyone has different levels of ability. Whether you use a frame, stick or nothing at all, everyone's welcome." He's made a pledge that all classes will always be in-person, never online. You can't beat working together in a class, meeting new people and the atmosphere it creates that can't be replicated online - it's human connection.

The classes run twice a week at St. Philip's Church, Manor Rd, Dorridge. Mondays 10-11 am and Wednesday 11:30am-12:30pm. Come and join in, first class is free!

Join the Residents Association Committee today!

Do you care about your area and are there things happening that could affect it? Our aim is to enhance local life in various practical ways in the Bentley Heath, Dorridge and Four Ashes area. We meet as a committee every 6 weeks or so to discuss local issues. We publish a newsletter that is delivered to over 4,000 homes in this area three times a year. We also have stalls at local events such as Dorridge Day so that people can meet us, ask questions and hear more about what we do. We are always looking for new ideas and we would welcome new members onto the committee. If you're interested, please come along to a meeting with no obligation.

For more information about joining the DDRA committee, please email us at dorridgeresidents@gmail.com or contact Jeanine at jplainjones@gmail.com for more details.



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