



THE Newsletter

DORRIDGE & DISTRICT RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

FOR THE RESIDENTS OF DORRIDGE, BENTLEY HEATH AND FOUR ASHES

• 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

This will be held at 7:30pm on Wednesday 19th March 2025
at Ye Olde Knowle Bowling Club, Grange Road, 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)

AGENDA

Apologies
Minutes of AGM 2024
Chair's report
2024 Accounts and Treasurer's report
Election of committee
Presentation from the KDBH Neighbourhood Forum

World Mental Health Day event at Widney News October 2024

Widney News, an independently owned family business since 2002, situated in the heart of the Bentley Heath Community supported World Mental Health Day on Thursday the 10th of October 2024 by hosting a mental health pop-in event at their premises in Slater Road.

Widney News, supported by Solihull Mayor, Councillor Shahin Ashraf MBE, Mondelez International, Walkers, Mind in Knowle, Lisa Flowers Floral Design and Pepe's Super Whip, were delighted to welcome everybody warmly to their event and they would like to thank all those who attended.

Passionate about providing outstanding customer service and being one of the largest home news delivery outlets in the West Midlands, Widney News also works hard to highlight mental health awareness. Proprietor, Simon Phillips says '1 in 4 of us in any given year will suffer with mental ill health, that's 25% of the population. Our aim is to help raise awareness of the issue and to help reduce the stigma and discrimination that still surround it.'

This event followed on from the success of last year's World Mental Health Day event, Time to Talk Day in February 2024 and World Chocolate Day and National Independent Retailer month back in July.

For more details please contact Widney News on 01564 772097 or email widney.news@yahoo.com.

Local bus timetables

Due to various problems, there have been a few more changes since the new timetables were introduced in January! They were amended again after the February half-term. Find the latest versions on our website - www.ddra.org.uk

Bentley Heath Community Centre AGM

We invite you to attend Bentley Heath Community Centre's Annual General Meeting (AGM).

This important event provides an opportunity for residents to come together, engage with the Centre's activities, and contribute to the future direction of our community hub. This is your chance to voice your opinions, ask questions, and vote on important decisions that affect the future of the Centre.

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Event Details:

Date: 17th March 2025 **Time:** 19:45 PM

Venue: Bentley Heath Community Centre

Please contact admin@bentleyheathhall.co.uk:

- if you are not able to attend, but still want to have your say
- if you think you can offer any form of support or particular expertise to assist the running and future development of the community centre
- or if you require further details or have any questions

We look forward to meeting with you at the AGM and hearing everyone's views.

BHCC Committee

www.bentleyheathhall.co.uk

The new KDBH Forum website is live!

We've refreshed and updated our website to make it easier for you to find all the information you need about Knowle, Dorridge & Bentley Heath, including:

- Our purpose and what we do for the community
- Major planning updates, including Hampton Road (KN1) and Arden Triangle (KN2)
- The latest planning applications and Forum responses
- Our Neighbourhood Plan and updates on Solihull Council's Local Plan
- How to apply for Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) funds
- Useful links to local resources and organisations
- The latest news and updates

The website address remains the same: www.kdbh-np.org.

We hope you find it useful and easy to navigate. Let us know what you think.

Could Sarah and Algernon Greville (and other benefactors) help you?

Knowle United Charity traces its origins back to the 17th Century and over the last 300 years, the Charity has been providing benefits to people in the Ecclesiastical Parishes of St. John the Baptist, Knowle; St. Philip's, Dorridge; St. Swithin's, Barston; and the Civil Parish of Balsall Common & Chadwick End.

A brief history

The Charity is made up of a number of small trusts and bequests set up by benevolent local donors over the last 300 years. Some names are easily recognised as part of Knowle today, such as the Hon Sarah and Algernon Greville (c1710), Richard Grimshaw (c1691) and others who are less familiar including Fulke, Lord Brooke (c1694) and Reverend William Wilson (c1832).

The sixteen small Trusts were amalgamated and later merged with Knowle Educational Charity to become Knowle United Charity, a Charitable Incorporated Organisation in 2016 (CIO No.1166099). Twelve Trustees administer the Charity with the Clerk who manages the day to day business.

The Trustees are able to consider applications for grants for the relief of need and for the promotion of educational purposes within the areas as specified in the Charity's Constitution.

Previous grants

In the past five years, grants totalling between £75,000 and £120,000 a year have been made by Knowle United Charity. These include grants to individuals in need, as well as to schools, playgroups, churches and contributions to support Youth Ministers, local sheltered accommodation and community schemes to benefit vulnerable groups. Significant grants totalling £120,000 were made to local schools over two years to support the needs of pupils during the COVID restrictions.

Support for students

Educational grants, currently averaging £400 a year, are offered to school leavers over 18 years whose home is within the Charity's specified areas, to assist them in further education. These grants are offered to students towards the cost of books, computer equipment, travel or the cost of accommodation during their studies at university or college. Applications may also be considered for special travel projects taken for a charitable purpose. Eligible students for the academic year 2024-5 can request an application form from our clerk and completed applications for consideration should be received the clerk by 30th October.

Local interests

The Charity owns the land on which Knowle Primary Academy Junior School is built and has for many years made grants to support the school. The Charity also owns 22 properties of various types and sizes in the village of Knowle and these are rented to people of limited means who have a close connection to Knowle at the time of their application. The Charity does not retain a waiting list and vacancies are advertised locally when any property becomes available.

If you would like to apply for assistance or you know of someone in particular need, please contact Simon Chaloner, Clerk to the Trustees for a relevant application form at: knowleunitedcharities@blueyonder.uk.

Bentley Heath Community Market

Looking for something local, fresh, and full of charm? Join us every Friday from 10am to 11:30am at Bentley Heath Community Centre for a warm and welcoming community market.

We sell freshly baked homemade food, homegrown produce, plants and flowers arrangements. We also have a selection of artisan gifts all created by our talented craft producers.

Call in and treat yourself to a hot drink and homemade cake or hot sausage roll.

For more information, call us on 07929 860368 or email us at: bhcountrymarket@gmail.com

Your community needs YOU!

The Dorridge & District Residents' Association (DDRA) has been giving local residents a voice since the 1960s. Today, as our community faces some of the most significant developments in its history, that voice is more important than ever.

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To ensure local views are heard and help to shape the future of our area, we're looking for new committee members. We meet every six weeks or so, providing a great opportunity to connect with others, discuss key local issues, and make a real difference.

We're also looking for a new secretary!

After many years of dedicated service, our secretary, Kevin Kane-Brooks, is stepping down as he moves to Olton. If you have secretarial skills and would like to volunteer, we'd love to hear from you!

Our committee, alongside our brilliant editor, Jess Bryan, publishes a newsletter three times a year, reaching over 4,000 homes. We also:

- Organise the Bentley Heath Christmas Lights Switch-On
- Host a stall at local events like Dorridge Day
- Support volunteer gardeners maintaining flower beds in Dorridge and Bentley Heath
- Work with Friends of Bentley Heath Park

This is all great work, but we need more people with fresh ideas and energy to do even more for our community. If you have thoughts on how to improve our local area and are willing to help to make them happen, we'd love to have you on board.

For more information or to get involved, please email our chair, Jeanine, at dorridgeresidents@gmail.com.

Rail Fare Increases and Ticket Changes from 2nd March 2025

Rail fares increased on 2nd March 2025, with several ticket changes affecting travel from Dorridge to London and Birmingham. Thanks to Fraser Carter for information around the following:

London Fares:

Peak return is now £148.40, off-peak return £63.60, and super off-peak return £40.00. The family ticket (return within one month) has been withdrawn. The Family Day Travelcard, which requires at least one adult and one child (up to a maximum of two adults and four children), is now £39 per adult and £1 per child. The Chiltern Duo Day Return is now £60.

Both the Family Day Travelcard and the Chiltern Duo tickets are no longer available for purchase on the day of travel. These must now be bought in advance of your planned travel date.

Full details of ticket time restrictions can be found on the Chiltern website or by asking a member of staff at the station.

Birmingham Fares:

A single ticket now costs £5.50, with a peak return at £9.50 and an off-peak return at £6.80. The Network One Day ticket is £11, while the Off-Peak Daytripper is £8.80. Season tickets have also increased, with a seven-day pass now £33.90 and a 28-day pass £114.

In addition, all one-year railcards (except for the Disabled Railcard) have risen to £35.

Local history spotlight

In Milton Close, Bentley Heath, standing on its edge in a circle of crazy paving, is a large millstone. This marks the site of the old Bentley Heath Mill, ensuring that a small slice of local history is not

forgotten. The mill was built in the late 1820s on raised heathland off Mill Lane (then called Bentley Heath Road). It was 3 storeys high with a cap, four sails and 2 pairs of stones for grinding. For 60 years it relied on wind power alone, but by 1888 a steam engine had been fitted for use on windless days.

In 1896 steam became the sole source of power and the sails were removed, and eventually the miller switched to oil. The mill reached the end of its working life in 1927 when the final miller in its history died, and all the machinery was removed. The remains of the mill and outbuildings were demolished in 1960 when the land was used for housing. For more details of the millers and their families, see Bentley Heath and Widney Manor by Edna G. Handley

ISBN 0 9519897 0 7.

B93 Drinks Festival 14th & 15th March 2025

Knowle British Legion, 1611 Warwick Rd, Knowle, B93 9LU

If you've been wondering about the Knowle and Dorridge round table's annual beer festival, wonder no more. We're back, but with an exciting new twist!

This year, we're mixing things up. Friday night kicks off with a dedicated cocktail bar, a fantastic selection of gins and prosecco, and, of course, 20 great beers, all with the support of Knowle & Dorridge Ladies Circle.

On Saturday, we'll be showing the 6 Nations, keeping the drinks flowing, and hosting a charity casino in the evening with some brilliant prizes up for grabs.

Join us for a weekend of great drinks, great company, and great entertainment!

Get your tickets here:

<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/knowleanddorridgeroundtable/>

Your local yarn wranglers

The Yarn Wranglers are a social wool crafting group who meet up weekly on Tuesday between 8.00 and 9.30 pm at Dorridge Village Hall.

It's only £5.00 per session to cover hall costs with free tuition and hot drinks included.

Come along and learn a new skill or share your skills with people who love to work with wool be it knitting, crocheting or other wool based crafts.

Contact Sarah Blewer at Sarah.Crafts.Creations@outlook.com for further details.

New Australian inspired brunch and coffee shop opening March 2025

Brondi, a new independent coffee shop, is set to open in Dorridge this March. Drawing inspiration from years spent in Sydney and Melbourne, it will offer an all-day Australian-style brunch menu alongside pastries, sweet treats, and a selection of speciality coffees, teas, and hot chocolates.

The idea has been a decade in the making for its owners, who hope to bring a taste of Australia's brunch and coffee culture to the local community.



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Hunt the Chocolate Eggs: Knowle and Dorridge Trails

Join in the fun this Easter and see if you can find all 20 chocolate-themed eggs hidden around Knowle and Dorridge. During the Easter holidays, the hunt can be tackled in either direction, and you can start and finish wherever you like. Look out for egg posters in windows, gardens, on street furniture or trees. Each one has the name of a chocolate written on it. Can you find them all? Get the routes here:

<https://www.knowleanddorridgelions.com/easter-egg-hunt>

Safety is important as the hunt takes place along public pavements and pathways. There are no safety marshals or additional warning signs for drivers so please follow the Highway Code and take care when crossing roads. The routes are not marked with arrows so you will need to plan your own circuit. Young children should be supervised at all times.

To enter the prize draw, email your answers to kanddlions@gmail.com by 10th April. Be sure to include your name, telephone number and whether you followed the Knowle or Dorridge route.

Happy hunting!

Knowle Library 2025 Reading Group

Love books? Join our new reading group at Knowle Library, meeting on the first Thursday of each month from 2:00 to 3:30 pm. A relaxed and friendly space to share thoughts, discover new reads, and connect with fellow book lovers. Everyone is welcome!

Knowle Fun Run: Sunday, 18th May, 2025

The event offers two distances: a 10k run consisting of two laps and a 5k run of one lap. Runners must select their chosen distance at the time of entry. To enter, go to: <https://www.knowleanddorridgelions.com/knowle-fun-run-2025>

The 10k race starts at 12.00pm, with the 5k race beginning at 12.05pm. If you prefer to run alongside someone entering the 5k, you may start in the second wave with them.

Timing chips, which carry personal details and are non-transferable, are attached to the back of your race number. Numbers must be secured to the front of your T-shirt. Your time will be recorded as you pass over the start and finish mats, with additional timing mats placed after one lap.

For 5k runners, times will only be recorded if you cross both the start and finish mats. 10k runners must complete two laps and cross three timing mats to be officially classified as a finisher. Results will be electronically recorded and merged for both races.

Please bring a bag for your belongings, as they remain your responsibility during the event. All finishers will receive a certificate of achievement.

Trophies will be awarded for:

- First male and female in both the 10k and 5k races
- First junior boy and girl in both the 10k and 5k races
- Winning 10k and 5k teams (teams of four)
- Best fancy dress

Good luck to all participants!

Knowle's Party in the Park is back for 2025

Visit Knowle is delighted to say that Solihull Summer Fest is bringing the much-loved Party in the Park back to Knowle for another year. After being dormant for over a decade, it came back with a bang in 2024 and will be held in Knowle Park on Saturday June 28th 2025, once again as a collaboration between Solihull Summer Fest and Visit Knowle.

Get ready for an electrifying experience at 2025's Party in the Park! Prepare for a day filled with legendary tunes and exhilarating performances that promise to make this event truly unforgettable. Our full line up is coming soon!

Find out more and get early bird tickets here:

<https://www.knowlepartyinthepark.co.uk/>

Knowle & Dorridge Lions need your help!

We need your help! Our club has raised over £1M for local community causes since 1976, but we need more support to continue. If you can spare some time to assist with our fundraising activities, please contact our Membership Secretary, Ken Salway, at 07860 839750 or kensalway@chamberton.co.uk. Visit our website at knowleanddorridgelions.com for more information.



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