



MEADOWS NEWSLETTER

June 30, 2017

Welcome to the June newsletter.

Do we hear the summer sound of long grass swaying with a P&R scheme kicked gently into it? We are cautiously optimistic this month that the recent election has sent a message to the Council that issues such as the Meadows and park and ride reflected in the Bath vote. Clearest public statement of this was Cllr. Clarke on Radio Bristol, who amid the unsure 'errs' and the 'ums' did say that no decision would be taken on the 4th P&R until after the regional transport plan had been agreed. Having checked the West of England papers from their first meeting this week, this would appear to be Summer 2018.

As you can imagine as a campaign, we won't be taking a sabbatical but will keep on pointing out the loonacy of this proposal until we hear an official announcement that the Council intend to drop this plan. After which we will seek to put the Meadows beyond reach with the National Trust or Fields in Trust and will be making this clear to the council leadership. Having been going for almost two years, we are more than happy to keep campaigning for the next year, with all the associated coverage and PR that this entails. We have written an open letter to Tim Warren asking him to come clean with the Council's next steps. It is to be found here and in full below:

<http://bathamptonmeadowsalliance.org.uk/?p=2103>

We would also like to offer a huge thank you to everyone who helped make our art auction happen. Please see below for the more detailed write-up, but we have raised enough money to professionally defend a planning application. And in return, beautiful works of art, so kindly donated, have made their way into peoples' homes. It has been such fun to be part of such a positive event and our efforts were highlighted by Caroline Kay of the Bath Preservation Trust, who opened the evening for us and was at pains to point out how professionally she feels we run our campaign.

If anyone is available to help look after a stall at the Bathampton Primary school fair on the afternoon of 7th July, please let us know by replying to this email.

Dates for the diary:

This weekend, **Saturday 1st July**, is National Meadows Day. If you are out and about on the Meadows, please capture and share your photos.

If anyone is available to help look after a BMA stall at the Bathampton Primary school fair on the **afternoon of Saturday 7th July**, please let us know by replying to this email.

Tuesday 11th July: together with Save Bath Library and Bath Against Arts Cuts we are holding a public meeting in St Swithin's Church, 37 the Paragon, BA1 5LY at 18:30.



Holding our Council leaders to account

Come and be heard

Tuesday 11 July - 6:30pm - St Swithin's Church, The Paragon, Bath

A PUBLIC MEETING OPEN TO ALL

Cllr Tim Warren has agreed to attend

Presentations and Q&A with:

Save Bath Library, Meadows Alliance and Save the Arts

It's time for an era of new politics in Bath with open, honest engagement

To register to speak on a local issue please email: bathdeservesbetter1@gmail.com

www.bathdeservesbetter.org



@BathDeserves



Bath Deserves Better

Art Auction huge success

Louise to insert thank you text...

Open letter to Tim Warren, published in the Chronicle

Dear Mr Warren,

This Sunday, the 25th, it will be five months to the day since your cabinet formally decided that Bathampton Meadows will be the site of your new Park & Ride. The only decision still to take was: would it be Site B, which you said was your favoured site, or Site F?

You said there should be a decision in about four weeks. But five months on, there has still been no announcement. All we've heard is Highways England saying it can't support Site B because access from the Batheaston bypass would be too dangerous.

During those five months, however, the political landscape has changed, nationally and locally. Here in Bath we have a new MP, one who has very publicly opposed the Park & Ride.

Of course national policies and their own campaigns played a part in Wera Hobhouse's victory and Ben Howlett's defeat. But, as Alex Brown wrote so eloquently last week in the Bath Chronicle, there's also "no doubt the decisions the Tories made locally were a huge factor at polling stations" and that the fierce anger in the city about the Park & Ride plans, the library, the arts cuts, came "crashing down on Ben Howlett".

That's why Bath bucked the national trend, and there was a 17.5% swing from the Conservatives to the Liberal Democrats.

And, as Alex Brown also wrote, this public anger is not going to go away.

So please, we ask again, let's have a conversation about the way forward. Let's have a proper debate. Your party, the Conservatives, said in their manifesto in 2015, not that you would build an east of Bath Park & Ride, but that you would consult on one. You did that in autumn 2015, and 51% of people said they didn't want one; however, you have pressed ahead regardless.

More than £3mn of public money has now been spent on this project before a single brick or inch of tarmac has been laid. To be fair, a third of that was under the previous administration and includes the purchase in 2013 of Bathampton Farmhouse at a cost of £971,577, a decision that you personally supported. We've only just been given access to

these figures under a Freedom of Information request after months of asking. But this is an outrageous sum to have spent on a project that may or may not come to pass. And this January, at that same cabinet meeting, you asked for and were given another £500k.

Now is the time to explain clearly and honestly what this money has been spent on, and what the purpose of this Park & Ride will be.

Will it solve our traffic and pollution problems? No. You yourselves acknowledge this. You say it's for the future, to cope with the 23,000 new cars that by 2029 will be entering Bath. But even if this Park & Ride did work (which we dispute), what about the other 22,000 new cars? How will you stop them clogging our roads? You say this Park & Ride is part of a wider plan. But what is this plan? How will it work? How much will it cost, in addition to the £17.5mn you're planning to spend on this Park & Ride?

It is time to tell us, Mr Warren, and to be willing to publicly defend your choice. In two years' time, this council will also be facing re-election. Can you stop this wave of anger 'crashing down' on your head?

The Bathampton Meadows Alliance

No further action against Cllr Clarke over comments that Meadows weren't visible from the surrounding villages

It is perhaps unsurprising, but nevertheless infuriating, that the Council will not be taking any action against Cllr Clarke for his comments on Radio Bristol before the Mayoral and Newbridge by-election.

104 people joined us in our complaint that the statement was factually incorrect and broke purdah, but the legal officer has written to us saying that there is no merit in investigating the statement any further.

We are considering our next steps...

In the press

Cllr Clarke on Radio Bristol

<http://www.bathchronicle.co.uk/news/bath-news/bath-councillor-evades-question-bathampton-135941>

No further action against Cllr Clarke for Meadows views comments

<http://www.bathchronicle.co.uk/news/bath-news/no-investigation-after-complaint-over-100527>

Auction coverage

<http://www.bathchronicle.co.uk/news/art-exhibition-auction-raise-10000-116865>

Alex Brown opinion piece on the impact of local issues on the election

<http://www.bathchronicle.co.uk/news/bath-news/letter-wave-anger-over-bath-133243>