

People Against Bureaucracy Group



Members' News Sheet

Dear Members and Supporters,

April 2024

LOCAL ELECTIONS – THURSDAY MAY 2ND 2024.

It is good news to know that PAB Councillor Stanley Smith who lives in New Barn Lane will be seeking re-election to Cheltenham Borough Council on May 2nd.

Please give him your support.

IDSALL DRIVE CAR PARK.

It never ceases to amaze me how 'out-of-touch' a local council can be when it comes down to evaluating the usefulness of a small asset like the Idsall Drive car park.

My point was borne out by the fact that hundreds of people called on the Borough Council to take the council-owned car park off the market.

The Borough council says the 10 space car park is underused, which is a feeble excuse when you see the large car parks in Portland street and St. George's Road hardly half full on several days of a normal week.

A Petition urging the Borough Council 'not to sell the car park' attracted more than one thousand signatures. However, in spite of the petition and the valiant effort of the PAB councillors, twenty six members voted to sell the car park and the decision to go ahead with the sale was upheld.

Yet again, we see another good reason to 'keep party politics' out of local government.

M5 JUNCTION 10 IMPROVEMENTS SCHEME.

The proposed Improvements Scheme reached a further major milestone in January when the Planning Inspectorate approved the application on behalf of the Secretary of State.

We understand the proposals will bring significant improvements directly to Junction 10, together with a new link road linking Junction 10 to west Cheltenham and widening of the A4019 Tewkesbury Road.

We are also aware of a proposal to construct a new housing and employment site close to Junction 10.

Good news indeed.

BIG WHEEL – IMPERIAL GARDENS.

The return of the popular Cheltenham Observation Wheel in Imperial Gardens in March proved to be a very popular decision. It lit up the Gardens and proved to be a useful part of the Light Up Cheltenham scheme.

The panoramic views over the Regency rooftops of Cheltenham must have been a sight worth seeing.

THE COTSWOLDS.

Most people, including visitors from overseas, would agree that the Cotswold area is one of the most most attractive places to visit in the U.K..

Therefore, it is good news to learn that the electricity pylons and 7km of overhead cables are soon to be removed from the Cotswold hills, which will transform the beautiful Cotswold hills National Landscape.

Apparently, 16 electricity pylons will be permanently removed together with 7 kilometers of overhead electricity lines across the Cotswold Plateau.

PEDESTRIAN/CYCLEWAY FROM CHELTENHAM RACECOURSE TO BISHOP'S CLEEVE.

Some local residents say that this facility was promised nearly fifty years ago. If that is true, then it will be more than welcome.

We know that the County Council is planning to remove more than 200 metres of hedgerow to make way for the cycleway, which also includes the widening of the A435 Evesham Road. To mitigate this loss, we understand that Gloucestershire County Council will replant triple rows of 1m tall mixed native trees as hedging together with an avenue of tall trees at intervals of 25 metres between Bishop'Cleeve and the Swindon Lane roundabout. It sounds like an interesting project.

UP HATHERLEY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING.

Plans are being made for an 'open evening' linked to the Annual Parish meeting on Friday 25th April in the Village Hall. The landscaping at the rear of the hall is now completed.

NORTH PLACE CAR PARK.

Proposals to build 153 homes on the car park site has met with a lot of criticism.

The much-respected Cheltenham Civic Society called the planning proposal, which includes a four-storey apartment block as 'terrible'.

The latest information is that the development plans will incorporate 'pocket parks' which will improve the lifestyle and well-being of those who will live there.

PRESTBURY HIGH STREET WALL.

In Prestbury High Street the roots of a large Holm Oak tree have, over many years, caused a Cotswold stone wall to bow towards the pavement.

This is considered to be a danger to the public.

Discussions between Cheltenham Borough Council and PAB Councillors are still ongoing concerning the wall and the future of the tree.

We will keep you informed.

CHELTENHAM GOLD CUP WEEK.

Once again thousands of racegoers flocked to Prestbury Park to celebrate 100 years of racing. As usual, the main race in the Cheltenham Festival was the Gold Cup.

Unfortunately, an event like this brings many problems, but this year we were made aware that the Racecourse management had put in extra measures to 'protect' our streets from the hordes of walking racegoers and we were keen to see how the four days had passed.

We noticed that there seemed to be plenty of 'racecourse staff' during the busy times and our 'lookouts' reported that some areas were quieter than normal.

On the west side - Tommy Taylor Lane/Swindon Lane did seem busy, but no reports of bad behavior was reported, which was good news when one thinks back on what happened a couple of years ago.

The presence of portable toilets around the area seemed to make a big difference - people were noted queuing rather than looking for alternatives.

Good news indeed and thanks must go to our members and friends who have kept in contact with the Racecourse management in recent years in order to give useful feedback, which it seems to have been acted upon.

JOTTINGS.

M&S Store in Kingsditch Retail Park due to close on March 31st.

Picasso paintings on display at Wilson gallery until September 1st.

Plans for two blocks of flats in Lower High Street have been rejected by Planning.

VISIT THE PAB WEB SITE: www.pab.org.uk

PAB ALWAYS WORKING FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE COMMUNITY

Published by Les Godwin, 10 Long Mynd Avenue, Up Hatherley, Cheltenham.