**Knowle West Health Park Company**

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*Tackling health inequalities in South Bristol*

**Knowle West Health Park Company Board of Directors response to the Knowle West Health Park open consultation October 2021**

The Health Park was designed in partnership with Avon PCT, Bristol City Council and local stakeholders. Following community consultation it was agreed to set up a Healthy Living Centre to bring together partners and community to tackle health inequalities. Single Regeneration Budget funding was awarded to develop the site infrastructure along with leisure and sports facilities. The site was seen as a way of supporting local people in improving their health and quality of life. It was recognised that the health, wellbeing and development of individuals is bound up with their physical and social environment. This is still true in 2021 and during the Covid-19 pandemic the site has realised this with increased usage by local residents and those further afield. The site is well used by all ages for a variety of activities that promote physical and mental being and aid social connection.

The KWHPC have been running for nearly 20 years and in that time the green space has offered a valuable extension to the activities requested by the local community. These include regular outdoor exercise sessions and weekly walking for health groups alongside other events supported and led by the local community. The site has lacked real investment for many years but this does not stop its usage and we have been grateful to have another community based Charity, Re:Work maintain the space. Making the space welcoming and user friendly.

The Health Park green space is a unique green space in this community; the site is very accessible and the paths were designed to allow walking and running in a safe manner. At the top of the slopes the views allow local residents to feel connected to the wider city.

As a place based charity we have spoken to our users and it is our decision to oppose any housing development on site. The green space is essential for the health and wellbeing of all users; residents, tenants and those living in the wider areas of South Bristol. Housing on this site will make the site smaller, decrease the health and wellbeing benefits for the local community and increased traffic will lead to air pollution that will further increase the levels of poor, long term health conditions experienced by the local community. The Knowle West neighbourhood is listed as one of the most deprived in Bristol **(1)** (JSNA Health and Wellbeing Profile 2020/21, Bristol), with the Ward of Filwood being in the most deprived 1% of England (Bristol, Key Facts 2021).

**(2)** The Filwood statistical ward profile 2021 shows that only 69% of the local population are satisfied with the quality of parks and green spaces compared to the City total of 79%. The loss of this resource, alongside other developments in Filwood, will lead to increasing dissatisfaction.

As a VCSE organisation we have supported the City in their response to the Covid-19 pandemic and we have, and continue, to contribute to the aims of the One City Plan. Whilst we appreciate that BCC need to increase their housing stock we believe that to use the Health Park land to meet this desire will not benefit the local community and will significantly compound the existing poor health inequalities experienced by the community, **(3)** [Bristol Key Facts 2021](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/20182/32947/Bristol+Key+Facts+2021).

We will support investment to improve the space to ensure it is safe, user friendly and accessible for all.

References

1. JSNA Health and Wellbeing Profile 2020/21, Bristol [https://www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/20182/3849453/JSNA+2019+-+Deprivation+%28Updated+November+2019%29.pdf/9ef854b0-b6dc-3fd7-d112-f7aa067cbf0c page 1](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/20182/3849453/JSNA+2019+-+Deprivation+%28Updated+November+2019%29.pdf/9ef854b0-b6dc-3fd7-d112-f7aa067cbf0c%20page%201)
2. [Filwood statistical ward profile 2021 (bristol.gov.uk)](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/20182/436737/Filwood.pdf/d2f649ea-424e-4f36-a739-f93c79d6c40a)
3. https://www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/20182/32947/Bristol+Key+Facts+2021