

Council

19th July 2021

Public Questions (2 total)

1.	Question from Louisa Meehan to Councillor Max Wilkinson, Cabinet Member Climate Emergency
	<p>Why are the bike stands still not reinstalled outside the Regent Arcade, Regent Street entrance, in Ormond Place. I had an enlightening conversation with one of the Optician at Harper & Cooper: the unintended consequence of the stands' removal means people are inclined to attach their bikes to the lamppost outside their premises, which results in blocking the use of the ramp for wheelchair access. The coffee shop opposite has a not very inviting sign which reads, 'no bicycles', so it's a fair guess bike parking has been a problem for them too. What happened to the old bike stands? Why can't they be put back, or am I to assume more Council money has been chucked on a skip?</p> <p>In previous correspondence with the Council I have been told that this is to support economic recovery, this area has been licensed to some of the café premises for a temporary period in order to support them with an outdoor area as we try to ease out of lockdown from the pandemic..."</p> <p>Harpreet Kular, Bsc(Hons), McOptom Optometrist Prof Cert CX, Harper & Cooper Opticians: <i>"The area has been licensed to accommodate café premises. 'The Find' was the local café that had use of the plaza area and has not used the area since 12th April 2021 when restrictions were lifted and indoor seating was permitted...."</i></p> <p>The Council's previous response that there are other bike parking facilities elsewhere is not a valid argument. They are usually full and are elsewhere.</p> <p>* <u>'The Value of Cycling' Fiona Rajé and Andrew Saffrey Department of Transport, University of Birmingham</u> states <i>"Catering for cycling is steadily rising on the agenda of business leaders and city mayors. Per square metre, cycle parking delivers 5 times higher retail spend than the same area of car parking, investment is effective in increasing usage cycling has a lower capital cost than other forms of infrastructure"</i>.</p> <p>There is a simple, elegant solution available that supports everyone's needs and inconveniences no one, would support the Council's green credentials and underscores its recognition of the rights of those with disabilities with no detrimental impact. And this is not a demand to create a new facility, but a very reasonable request to reinstate, backed up by all the evidence given above. Therefore please will you agree to the reasonable and logical refitting of the cycle stands, to the benefit of all. An action that simultaneously removes an amenity and also creates a barrier to access, particularly for those with disabilities, to a much needed service cannot be in anyone's interest. Cycling has many benefits, and accessibility is a right.</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>I thank Ms Meehan for her question and can assure her that cycling is very much a priority for the Council. We are currently speaking to various organisations on how we can improve capacity for the future which reflects our ambitions as set out in our strategy Connecting Cheltenham https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/info/61/climate_and_sustainability/1649/connecti</p>

	<p>ng_cheltenham.</p> <p>We recognise the County Council's role as the transport authority and hope to work with them on realising our ambitions.</p> <p>To address the point about this specific cycle parking location, we are exploring how we can provide more cycle parking and storage space in the town centre, including in secure indoor locations. We will take into account the area referred to in the question when we look at new cycle parking locations.</p> <p>We must do this while balancing other priorities, and this includes supporting businesses responding to the challenges brought by the pandemic. Hospitality is one of the key parts of our economy that has been hit the hardest and we have been working hard to support the sector.</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>Question from Sam Thomas to the Cabinet Member Culture, Wellbeing and Business, Councillor Victoria Atherstone</p>
	<p>a) Cheltenham has a number of distinguished women who have made a major contribution to both town and country, including Josephine Butler and Dorothea Beale. What are the steps the Council recommends to get a statue raised to celebrate a notable Cheltenham woman?</p> <p>b) Given Cheltenham has multiple statues honouring men's contributions to the town and country, why are there no statues in the town honouring the contribution of a woman?</p>
	<p>I agree there are numerous examples of distinguished women who have made a significant contribution to the town. I cannot however give reason as to why historic decisions were taken in respect of statues of men.</p> <p>The council has an advisory group The Public Art Panel that has been considering the issue and investigating a future commission that celebrates women. To help mark International Women's Day, Cheltenham's Public Art Panel worked with No Child Left Behind on a schools-based project that asked children to share some writing or artwork about women they find inspiring. This work will be displayed virtually (coming soon) and will form the basis of a report to the Public Art Panel that will help inform the vision for a future art installation that will celebrate women in Cheltenham.</p> <p>Children and young people were asked to create some art or writing about either or both of the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Which woman or women inspires you? 2) How do you see women represented around you e.g. in the media or art? How would you like to see them represented? <p>https://nclbcheltenham.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/IWD21.pdf</p> <p>Public art is funded through developer contributions and fundraising. At this time, there is insufficient funds to deliver a project, however we will be using the report as outlined above to inform next steps on an appropriate commission.</p> <p>In addition, the council is currently working with key stakeholders on a culture strategy, this will be inclusive in its cultural vision and will support issues of equity as well as equality</p>