

Thank you for attending last weeks residents meeting.

Today(Monday September 27th) BBC East Midlands Today ran a story that the problem of the unfinished roads and pavements has been solved and the builders have agreed to put up the money and get the work completed.

This information has come from William Davis the “lead builders” for the four who developed the site. I have asked William Davis for a date when the work will begin and a date when it is anticipated the work will be complete. As you will know the solicitors for the builders consortium told me last week that they believed the work would be completed in 5 months.

I very much want to “nail” all this down. I am particularly keen to make sure each builder fulfils their contracts with purchasers and completes the “street scenes” they, in effect, promised in their advertising literature. So I want all the trees planted, all the paving laid and so on and I don’t want this to delay the completion of the roads! After waiting so long it’s important in my view everyone now gets what they paid for as soon as possible.

Please feel free to email me with any question or queries on [anna.soubry.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:anna.soubry.mp@parliament.uk).

I am posting updates and letters on my web site [www.anna4broxtowe.com](http://www.anna4broxtowe.com)

I hope the following deals with some specific matters arising from last weeks meeting.

### ***The “public open space”***

This is part of the unmown “park “. Forgive the detail but there’s already some misinformation going around and I think it’s a good idea to set out the facts – as I have been told them at least!

Whenever a significant development is planned the planning authority insists that part of the project includes “community facilities”. In some cases this may be a leisure centre, community hall, playing fields, cycle ways – you get the idea. When your development was planned it was agreed that a large parcel of land would be laid aside for community facilities. One part of the land would be a “public open space” (POS) the remainder gave Notts County Council an option to build a school within a specified period of time.

The POS should have been transferred from the owners (Cofton who are now in administration) to Broxtowe Borough Council some years ago. It wasn’t as we all

know. Cofton also undertook to pay Broxtowe £55-60,000 to maintain it. As you may know that money was in a fund and since I wrote to them at the beginning of September, the administrators have agreed to release that money. Broxtowe had agreed to stump up the money and I haven't shied from criticising Broxtowe for that decision in the absence of making all efforts to get the money from the fund.

*This is the land which it is thought may be polluted in some way. I wrote to the Environment Agency on Friday and will post a copy of the letter on my web site. In brief I have asked the EA to make a full investigation. Given the land was part of an MoD site it's critical we establish exactly what is under the top soil and make sure the area is safe to humans and to dogs!*

In the circumstances I don't think it would be right to ask Broxtowe to go and cut the grass until we establish the POS is safe.

This leaves the remaining part of the "parcel" with the option of building a school. Notts County Council have had years to decide whether to build a school or not (I do hope this doesn't become some daft party political issue as it isn't!) and my understanding is the current administration is unlikely to take up the option.

I have asked if Notts County Council is able to bring forward that decision. In any event I am told the land is "owned" by Cofton and as the company is in administration, then the administrators will have to sell it. I am told the old planning permission to develop the site still exists but in any event there would have to be another planning application if any new owner chose to build houses on the site.

I think we shouldn't jump too far ahead and speculate but I have spoken to both County and Borough Councillors to provide as much information as they can.

### ***Council Tax rebate***

You are entitled to write for a review of your council tax banding. You should write to

Nottingham Valuation Office Agency (Council Tax)  
Ground Floor  
Ferrers House  
Castle Meadow Road  
Nottingham  
NG2 1A

We have rung and spoken to the office and they assure us they are the people to write to (whatever their out of date web site says!)

In your letter you should say you want a review of the banding and give a reason(s) why. You should in effect assert that your house has a lower value because of the state of the roads, pavements etc.

For example;

"My house was banded on the basis we would have adopted roads, made up

pavements and street lights. For the past \* years we have had none/some of these and therefore my house value is lower than first thought and the banding is accordingly wrong”.

It is difficult to get a council tax rebate because the bands are so broad, but please contact me if you need more advice or assistance.

### ***Complaint to Broxtowe Borough Council/Maladministration***

A number of residents have asked if they can complain about the way Broxtowe Borough Council have handled the matter, notably the failure to forge an agreement (a s.38 agreement) among the builders, Cofton and other parties about the spine roads at a time when separate agreements were being made with those builders on the land they were developing. If the s.38 agreement had been made then funds would have been immediately available in the event one of the parties to the s.38 went bust. The land was sold by the Ministry of Defence in 2003 – outline planning permission was granted in 2003/4 and the negotiations on the spine roads began then.

The full complaints procedure can be found on Broxtowe Borough Councils web site.

<http://www.broxtowe.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=539>

I believe the relevant “service “departments” are The Planning Department and the Legal Services Department. Send your initial complaint to both the Director of Planning and the Director of Legal Services.

The web site seems to provide all the information and the procedure appears pretty straightforward but again if I can assist please contact me.

I have been asked if residents can complain to the Local Government Ombudsman. You need to complain first to the Council and exhaust that procedure; if you are not satisfied with their final answer then you can complain to the Ombudsman and again I will advise you on the procedure.

### ***Residents Association***

Jon Henderson’s has agreed to get a residents association up and running. Understandably, he has asked me not to publish his email address but has said if you contact me he is more than happy for me to give you his email address. You may know Jon as that tall good looking man who was on the tele just a few weeks ago!

Many thanks to everyone for all your help and support.  
Special thanks to Jon and Nick King.

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