



Thangam Debbonaire MP
Member of Parliament for Bristol West
House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA

George Ferguson
100 Temple Street
Bristol
BS1 6AG

Our Ref: ZA0679

30 March 2016

Dear George,

I have been contacted by a number of constituents who are concerned about the difficulties the Bristol North Baths development is facing.

I understand you plan to agree on Tuesday 5 April to spend a further £1.5 million on completing the Bristol North Baths project. Although I do not oppose further investment into the scheme, I feel strongly that residents should be properly informed about the current situation, and given details of your planned bailout of the scheme, so that they can make their views known.

It is, of course, vital that large spending decisions such as these happen in an accountable and transparent manner. And it is important that the community-focused elements of the original plans for the Bristol North Baths are preserved.

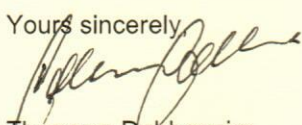
So, first, can you offer assurances that the planned library and health care centre – part of the original plans for the building – will still be provided under the council's delivery of the development? I am aware that the Bishopston Medical Practice withdrew from the development in December because the facilities did not match their needs. With the council running the project, would it be able to accommodate Bishopston Medical Centre? It is ridiculous that GPs are currently working out of Portakabins on Nevil Road and, given that the scheme was originally planned with the Bishopston Medical Centre in mind, it would be a shame to miss this opportunity to rehouse them.

Secondly, the revised competition date for this development is 'within the year'. Do you still expect the building to reopen by then? As well as residents needing to use the services promised by the development, the current frontage gives the appearance of a derelict building which clearly has a negative impact on the area. Moreover, Bishopston desperately needs more homes, and the sooner they can be occupied the better.

Thirdly, nearly £1.5 million is owed to contractors hired by Chatsworth Homes. As you know, a number of small businesses depend on payment for work already completed on site but may not be reimbursed, now that Chatsworth Homes have gone into administration. Given that the council will not be able to pay these debts, I would be grateful to hear of any plans to ensure these Bristol businesses don't find themselves out of pocket due to mismanagement.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,


Thangam Debbonaire
Member of Parliament for Bristol West