

OPEN LETTER to Legal & General

27th March 2024

FAO: António Simões
Chief Executive Officer
Legal & General Group
One Coleman Street
London
EC2R 5AAP

Dear Mr Simões

Re: Path & Community Orchard closure at Bonnington Walk Legal & General Modular Homes Site, Bristol

I am Ian Pond and I am chairperson at Bristol Cycling Campaign, together with Suzanne Wilson, CEO Lockleaze Neighbourhood Trust and on behalf of the other undersigned organisations. We are writing to express our deep concerns about the protracted closure of a section of a key traffic-free path known as Concorde Way in Lockleaze, Bristol caused by one of your group companies - Legal & General Modular Homes as part of its Bonnington Walk residential development. We request that your organisation now take urgent action to re-open the path and the adjacent community orchard, as well as provide assurances about the long-term future of this section of the path.

The path was closed to facilitate your development works on 4th April 2021, at which time your organisation communicated that it would be a 6-month closure. Next week is the 3rd anniversary of the closure and we want to see a reopening now achieved quickly.

For every day of the closure, local residents have been prevented from enjoying the community orchard and traffic-free space. The many path users including walkers & cyclists in North Bristol, cycle commuters to/from Bristol city centre & its Northern Fringe campus & enterprise areas and pupils of schools in the locality have been required to follow the on-road diversion placing them at greater danger, compared to using the Concorde Way.

Not only will this year mark the 3rd anniversary of the closure, but is also a local election time in Bristol (2nd May) accordingly we are calling on Legal & General plc to urgently address the situation by taking the following actions:

ASAP:	To agree to dedicate the path through the land your organisation now owns as a public right of way (as this was never done historically by Bristol City Council prior to sale), using the fast-track dedication process
By 31 st May 2024:	To reopen the closed-off community orchard to give people safe access to this amenity via Constable Road entrance this summer.
By 21 st July 2024:	To reopen the Concorde Way for people to safely walk, wheel and cycle between Bonnington Walk and Constable Road - no later than at the end of the latest temporary traffic regulation order (TTRO – ref: TC23_225).

Taking action now to reopen the path & community orchard will remove the long running uncertainty that local residents & path users have had to put up with about the duration of the closure, as a result of the repeated delays on the housing development. Fixing the public right of way status will give us all long-term confidence about the future of the path.

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As the clock ticks down to the 3rd anniversary of the closure now is the time for Legal & General to do the right thing for local residents and the wider Bristol & South Gloucestershire communities & employers by reopening the community orchard, the Concorde Way path and guaranteeing the long-term future of these important amenities.

On behalf of the following organisations

Ian Pond
Chairperson
Bristol Cycling Campaign

Suzanne Wilson
Chief Executive Officer
Lockleaze Neighbourhood Trust

Professor Sir Steve West
Vice-Chancellor, President and Chief Executive Officer
University of the West of England (UWE Bristol)

Matthew Allan
Head of Infrastructure Abbey Wood
Defence, Equipment & Support, Ministry of Defence

Sarah Leeming
Director – England South
Sustrans

David Callaghan
Director
North Bristol SusCom

Alan Morris
Chair
Bristol Walking Alliance

Mark Ashdown
Chair
Bristol Tree Forum