

Let this mark a new era for Bristol



8 June 2020

Green Party Councillors in Bristol and the Green mayoral candidate join the voices calling for a new era to begin, now that Colston's statue, and the oppression it represents, no longer looks out over Bristol.

Edward Colston's company shipped 80,000 people from west Africa to the Caribbean and southern states. Nineteen thousand were thrown into the sea – much like his statue. By any measure Colston's crime against humanity has put the burden of history and trauma on those in the black community today through institutional and direct racism.

Councillor Cleo Lake, said,

"I have always advocated that the statue be put in a museum in an appropriate context. There have been many opportunities to do this that have been ignored. With the global movement of Black Lives Matter we could have hoped our request to have it removed would have been honoured. But in my experience of the last five years that question has always been avoided and sidelined by the administration which has resulted in this dramatic action."

"Whilst the way the statue was taken down could have been different, I fully support how the incident was policed under the watch of Supt. Andy Bennett.'

"The police facilitated a peaceful protest allowing people to come together and make their voices heard on a global stage about a global issue which is Black Lives Matter.

Green Party candidate for Mayor, Sandy Hore-Ruthven commented,

"I have seen the emotion pouring out of the black community yesterday as a symbol of the old Bristol was torn down. We must make sure that this leads to real change. All of this will be for nothing if our BAME communities continue to be disadvantaged by racism.

"If communities remain poor and unheard, if the jobs and houses are not there, if people are denied opportunities simply because of the colour of their skin then we will have failed. We must redouble our efforts and continue the hard work that is needed to change our society.

"It must force us all to listen harder and learn more deeply; reach out across our divided communities, act more boldly and help us to do what is right – even in the face of resistance. If we don't then history will judge us all as it has judged Colston".

ENDS

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