

Travel Writing

Knowle, yes Knowle, not Knowle-West. Some people can make that mistake and it drives you crazy. For those who do not know the difference, Knowle is a quiet place where nothing much goes on, where as Knowle-West is a place where a lot of crime takes place and really it is the kind of place you would not like to live. Now that you, Mr Smith live in Knowle you are looked upon by some people as common. Really it's true, but Knowle is not all doom and gloom. I've lived there for almost four years, but there are very few hot spots to amuse yourself.

There is Broadwalk shopping centre, some big name stores, like 'Iceland', Somerfield and 'Bon Marché' all crammed into one small area. Oh, and don't forget to pop into Riva Bingo while you are there. Broadwalk is like an oven, it was built before air conditioning became compulsory and its not been installed since, so you'll often find a crowd standing in the frozen food section of Somerfield, who seem to employ some very strange people like the woman who flicks through every page, then give you a strange look before you can buy a magazine.

There is a large park - Redcatch Park, which has been successfully modernised, in the last few years. When I first moved to Knowle, Redcatch Park was falling apart. The play area had been destroyed and the basketball and tennis courts were in ruins. However, someone came along, rebuilt the park and over a period of a few months Redcatch Park was looking in very good shape. It only took a couple of months for someone else to come along and ransack the basketball courts. This time no one came along and helped and unfortunately the courts are still in a disgraceful condition today.

One of my fondest memories of the park is football. Whether it be playing with friends or watching matches over there. The pitches there are terrible, they are solid as a rock, I think if someone tried to drop a bomb on them it would bounce right off. One day however, the pitches were like a marsh, yet the matches weren't postponed, so my friend and I decided to go, and eventually we were soaked. Ten minutes later after jumping in deep puddles we were covered from head to toe in dirty rain water. So we stood, freezing cold, laughing at anyone who happened to fall over. To our surprise, the score reached four all. Then one of the teams was awarded a penalty. I apologise in advance if it was the home team. My friend, Will and I conveniently positioned ourselves behind the goal and began to jeer at the penalty taker. Not surprisingly he missed and he wasn't very happy.

Other attractions you can find in Knowle are 'Mr Crispins' fish and chip shop, a couple of banks, a pub, hairdressers, a vast number of estate agents and most recently 'Choices' video shop. There is one shop though that beats the rest, it is only around the corner from where I live and it is called 'Star Value'. It is run by a man named Sanjay. He sells everything from chocolate bars to paint and brushes. He even rents out videos for a reasonable price. To top it all he even opens for most of Christmas Day. How many shops do you know, that do that?

Luckily, Knowle is not in the middle of no-where and so you can escape the insanity of the place within a few minutes, and amuse yourself elsewhere. It is just a ten minutes bus ride away from the city centre and around a twenty-five minutes walk to the cinema and bowling alley. For all your shopping needs it is just a five minutes drive to Tesco, which is open 24 hours a day. Knowle is well positioned and if need be, you can escape from any angle.

Nearly all the houses in Knowle are terraced and were built in the Victorian period. Over the last few years new houses and apartments have been built around the area spoiling the old Victorian looks of the place. Many houses are ruined by the stupidity of some people, who decide it would be funny to graffiti over peoples walls, there are two people who's name has found on nearly every wall; Their names, 'Shar' and 'Lewis De Baron'. People like these spoil the good nature of the place and they cost other people, money by desecrating their cars or houses. However, do not feel intimidated by these people.

My house is on the corner of the road so to some, like the nosy neighbour it would be ideal. I however, am not a nosy neighbour but I do like to watch the passers by especially the teenage mums with their screaming children. One of the funniest things I have seen when looking out my window was when I saw a young man running up the road, very fast with something in his hand, obviously he had been shoplifting. Then, the funny sight met my eyes, I saw two fat security guards chasing after him gasping for breath as they tried to catch him, it was one of the funniest things I have ever seen.

Most of the people in Knowle are quite friendly, but a city, town or village always has to have a few grumpy people who don't like anyone. Knowle has plenty of room for people like these and they generally seem to pick on me. There is the woman who accused me of shop lifting because I picked up a CD to look at the tracks and then, there is a man who threw me out of his one pound shop because I asked how much something was. Never be put off by this small number of people.

Living in Knowle has had a great influence on me. I moved to Knowle from the countryside, and I really knew nothing about living in the city, I had done so before but only when I was younger. When I moved to Knowle I had no real confidence to go out on the streets alone, but after a month I was used to living in the city and I had the confidence to go out on the streets by myself. I think that moving to Knowle has helped me a lot, as many of my friends live in the city and I believe that if my parents had decided to stay in the countryside I would have no real social life because no one would have lived near me. I would really like to thank my parents for deciding to move back into Bristol.