

Mayor of Kingston, Councillor Angela Brown-Burke has announced the temporary closure of the Kingston Craft Market later this month, to facilitate repairs.

The Mayor told a meeting of the Kingston and St. Andrew Corporation (KSAC) on September 11, that the Council will be partnering with the Urban Development Corporation (UDC) and the Craft Market Association to repair the roof and bathroom of the market.

“We have been in discussions to ensure a smooth transition and the UDC will be the project manager,” Mayor Brown-Burke said.

A spokesperson of the UDC said the repairs will last approximately two months during which the vendors will have to be temporarily removed from the facility.

The Mayor also reported that work has started to clean up the Pearnel Charles Arcade that was destroyed by fire on August 24.

She noted that the fire cost an estimated \$17 million in damage, and that 68 stalls were destroyed which affected the lives of 43 vendors. The arcade was insured.

“We have not been able to determine the cause of the fire, because the scene was contaminated by individuals who insisted on going in before they were given permission to do so,” the Mayor explained.

She pointed out that representatives of the KSAC have been meeting with the affected vendors, in a bid to outline the KSAC's responsibilities and obligations.

“Unfortunately, the Kingston and St. Andrew Corporation is not in a position to deal with reimbursement for goods lost,” the Mayor stated.

Mayor Brown Burke is encouraging the vendors to insure their goods. "Please bear in mind that the KSAC cannot insure goods that are not our own, so the owners of those goods have to insure them," she said.

She explained that in the past, the KSAC had insurance for the vendors, but it was abandoned because individuals did not pay into the scheme.

"The vendors will have to find a way to come together to take out the kind of group insurance that will assist them in recovering even a portion of their goods when they are lost in this way," the Mayor said.

She also noted that the KSAC is looking at the factors that put the market at risk for fires, in a bid to reduce the occurrence.