

# bishopstonvoice

May, 2026 Issue 160

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## SIX of the best!

E-Act Montpelier High School students entertained packed houses with their production of **SIX: The Musical**.

More pictures: Page 6



### 'Pupils deserve clean air'

A mother wants to see air filters like this one installed in classrooms across the city - and she'd like Voice readers' help.

PAGE 3

### Surgery's boost

Montpelier Health Centre is to receive £200,000 to help it become one of England's first Neighbourhood Health Centres.

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### Glostors recalled

A significant chapter in the history of the Glorious Glostors, once based in Horfield, has been commemorated.

PAGES 10 & 11

## Court ruling on vans

PEOPLE living in vans on the Downs face being forcibly removed from May 7 following a court decision.

Bristol City Council was granted a 21-day possession order for roads including Parys Lane, Roman Road, Stoke Road, Westbury Park Road, Saville Road, Clay Pitt Road, Rockleaze, Downleaze, Wills Lane and Circular Road on April 16.

City councillor Stephen Williams said the Bristol County Court ruling gave van dwellers a final chance to leave of their own accord before facing eviction

"If they refuse to move on by this date, we will have to work with bailiffs to remove remaining vehicles street by street," he said

District Judge John Napier reserved judgement on the

council's application to extend an injunction granted last year to prevent van dwellers returning to live at the Downs.

The council's outreach team is working with the van dwellers to ensure their welfare.

The council says plans are progressing for more "meanwhile sites" with facilities where people can live in their vehicles.

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## NEWS

# Campaign success

MORE than 100 people attended The Memorial for a Prostate Cancer Awareness Evening hosted by Bristol Rovers Community Trust (BRCT) as part of The John Green Campaign.

The campaign is named in honour of lifelong Bristol Rovers supporter John Green, who was diagnosed with stage four prostate cancer in early 2024. Since his diagnosis, John has sought to raise the understanding of the risks and symptoms.

The Seat Unique Suite was packed with men from across Bristol to listen to a panel hosted by Geoff Twentyman, including expert urologist Professor Jonathan Aning, former Bristol Rovers player Lee Mansell and support worker and ambassador Lloyd George Russell.

The panel shared their expertise, experiences and answered, with everyone who attended receiving a free ticket for Rovers' home match against Accrington Stanley on March 28 - a fixture dedicated to The John Green Campaign.

North Bristol NHS Trust attended The Memorial Stadium ahead of kick-off, providing health checks and guidance to supporters.

Marc Lewis, from BRCT, said: "We'd like to thank everyone who attended this fantastic evening, including representatives from Macmillan Cancer Support, Rover Talk Club Captain Andy Dodd, Dai Jones from Prostate Cancer UK, and members of the public. Your willingness to share experiences and be part of the conversation made the evening such a success.

"We would also like to extend a special thanks to Professor Jonathan Aning and Dr Sam Patel from the Bristol NHS Group for their attendance - their commitment and dedication continue to strengthen our across organisational collaboration and positively impact lives across Bristol."

# Tributes to Stella

TRIBUTES have been paid to Dr Stella Clarke CBE, a leading member of the local community in Bristol and Bath who has died aged 94.

Her eldest son, Giles, said she had dedicated her life to improving the "lives of those less fortunate". He said she helped "lead the way for women" to feel they had a "right to be sitting in the decision-making rooms".

Stella Clarke made history by being appointed the first woman chair of the council of Bristol University.

She was awarded an Honorary Fellowship of the university - the highest honour it can give - in recognition of her "sustained and outstanding contribution to the life of the university over many years."

Stella Clarke was Vice Lord Lieutenant and Deputy Lieutenant of Bristol. She was also a magistrate and chair of the Bristol City Bench and the Juvenile Bench. From 1974-81



Stella Clarke

she was a BBC Governor.

She was involved with various housing projects including forming the Zenzele housing project in St Paul's in 1981.

Stella Clarke and her late husband husband, Charles, acquired the Theatre Royal, Bath in 1972 and extensively redecorated the building.

NEWS

# 'Let's bring clean air to classrooms'

A MOTHER is calling on people in north Bristol and beyond to back her campaign to improve air quality in schools.

Ruth Brooker, who lives in Bishopston, says the introduction of air filters in classrooms would reduce levels of illness among children and staff, bringing wider benefits for schools, families and society.

She has set up a not-for-profit company called Clean Air for Kids and is urging residents to write to their local MP and councillors to back the initiative.

Ruth became aware of the problems of indoor air after her younger son, Joshua, was going through cancer treatment.

"I wanted him to attend school safely but chicken pox, strep A, Covid-19 and flu were in high circulation. I consulted with experts and formed Clean Air for Kids after discovering how important it is for everyone, not just kids in school, to breathe



Ruth Brooker makes her case for clean air in classrooms to Bristol Central Green MP Carla Denyer

clean air," she said. "By simply adding an air filter to each classroom and regularly opening windows, we could significantly reduce the number of coughs, colds, and Covid-19 infections that our kids catch at school. It would also increase attendance and improve their concentration."

Ruth dealt with the problem on a personal level by building air filters for each of the classrooms her children were in at Sefton Park Infant and Junior Schools. These ensure that viruses and particulate matter from pollution are removed from the air.

But she believes investment in suitable equipment could benefit many schools and she has met her MP, the Greens'

Carla Denyer, to push for Bristol to become a leader in providing clean air in classrooms.

"It's now well understood that air pollution outside can cause problems – but indoor air can be five times as polluted, and this can cause immediate and future health problems," she says.

Ruth's initiative has been welcomed by councillors of all the main parties but there remains a stumbling block over how to finance it.

A similar scheme has recently started in London, where the mayor, Sadiq Khan, has already run a pilot to prove it works and is cost-effective.

Ruth's research shows that it could cost less than £150 million to install air filters in all schools in the UK, while savings of many

times that amount could be saved on supply teacher costs and heating bills. Improved attendance rates – currently a major concern for schools in the UK – would be another bonus.

"Installing air filtration is cost-effective. Schools could provide safer air per child per year for the price of a coffee & cake, at around £10 per pupil," Ruth told the Voice.

"We drink two litres of water and breathe in 11,000 litres of air every day. We all expect to drink clean water and eat healthy food, so why are we neglecting air quality?"

Visit [cleanairforkids.co.uk](http://cleanairforkids.co.uk) to learn more about action on air pollution and find letter templates in support of the campaign.



One of Ruth's air filters




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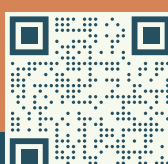
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## NEWS

# Work with us! Campaigners' message to new owners of St Christopher's site

THE former St Christopher's School site in Westbury Park has been sold.

The new owners are being urged to work with local people on a "sensitive and appropriate" redevelopment.

The five-acre site in Westbury Park, which was on the market for £10million, has been bought by London-based property group Square Bay. It will work with Acorn Property Group to develop a plan for its future.

Both firms say they are committed to continuing to work with Westbury Park Community Association (WPCA), St Christopher's Action Network (SCAN), and the wider community.

After the special needs school shut in 2020, the site on the edge of the Downs was sold to potential developers, who wanted to create a retirement village there. But their plans, which included high buildings, were unanimously rejected by Bristol City Council planners.

The site was declared as Asset of Community Value in 2024, which strengthens local involvement in future plans.

Details of what the new owners propose have not yet been made public but Square Bay has told SCAN that Grace House, the Grade II listed part of the old school will probably become residential, some of the large villas facing the Downs will be converted into flats and others refurbished as single homes, and the rest of the site will be two or three storey houses.

The plan is for Acorn Property Group to take over



Grace House, above, and the site entrance, top

the site if planning permission is granted. Acorn is also in the midst of acquiring the former Bristol Zoo Gardens site in Clifton.

Westbury Park Community Association said in an email to members: "We aim to ensure that [the developers'] programme of work is as good as it should be for this

important and very challenging development site with significant potential impacts both on immediate neighbours and all of our community."

SCAN, which has been campaigning for nearly five years, said it wanted the site to be developed in a sensitive and appropriate way: low rise, low density and low impact.

Spokesperson Robin Hambleton said: "We hope Acorn can hear us loud and clear! We want you to listen to the views from our community. Families living here want a scheme that is low rise, low density and low impact. Any new plans MUST protect road safety, especially for our local children walking to school, as well as preserve the unique character of our neighbourhood. We are all bruised by the disaster of the previous planning application so we hope the new developers recognise this is a sensitive site

that needs a lot of thought.

"Of course we want to see this site brought back to life - and to serve the community as it once did. We look forward to making sure this happens by working together with all the people who care about this special place.

"We do not want to be left with a scheme that only delivers profit for the developers rather than benefits to the community."

The St Christopher's site was granted Asset of Community Value (ACV) status in 2024.

Robin Hambleton added: "Crucially, now the site is protected as an ACV, any new development has to honour the legacy of more than 70 years of special education that the school gave our city and ensure the site delivers social value for the local community in the future."

SCAN has prepared a planning brief, asking the new owner to not overdevelop the site, protect the ecology of the land, safeguard road safety and traffic, offer development that blends in with the existing two-storey housing in this Conservation Area, and honour the legacy of the St Christopher's School special needs provision by enabling the site to deliver social value in the future.

A spokesperson for the developers said: "Square Bay's completion of the purchase of St Christopher's in Westbury Park marks the start of a new chapter for this historic site in Bristol. Working in partnership with Acorn Property Group, Square Bay is committed to continuing its engagement with the Westbury Park Community Association, St Christopher's Action Network, and the wider community as we consult on the site's future.

"In the meantime, we wanted to let our neighbours know that we are now making the site safe by improving the security measures.

"Details of the public consultation will be shared in due course. We look forward to meeting as many of our neighbours as possible in the coming months, to discuss our plans and hear the community's feedback."



SCAN members visiting the site before it was put back up for sale

NEWS

# Boost for surgery

MONTPELIER Health Centre has been chosen as one of the first new Neighbourhood Health Centres in England.

The centre will receive £200,000 from the Department of Health and Social Care for the initiative, enabling it to change the building's layout to make better use of space so services can work together better.

Neighbourhood Health Centres aim to bring GP services together with community, council and voluntary sector support in one place.

The Government plans a network of 250 centres across the country. Montpelier is on the first 27 to be announced, along with Charlotte Keel Medical Practice in Eastville.

David Jarrett, Chief Strategic Commissioning Officer at NHS Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire ICB, said: "We welcome this investment from the Department of Health and Social Care, which

represents an important step in strengthening neighbourhood health services. While this is a nationally led programme, we look forward to working with partners – including NHS Property Services, who will support the delivery of these works - to ensure these improvements support local priorities and help deliver more joined-up, accessible care for our communities."

Health Minister Stephen Kinnock said: "This government is transforming healthcare, so the NHS works around the lives of patients – not vice versa.

"We're rolling out neighbourhood health centres across the country by repurposing and improving local buildings, first targeting the communities that need them most. These one-stop-shops will help end the maze of referrals and repeated conversations, treating not just poor health but the causes of it too.

# Radio splash hit

A NEW short story by Bristol writer Emily Koch, inspired by her regular swims at Horfield Leisure Centre, will air on BBC Radio 4 this May.

Lane Seven will be broadcast in the station's Short Works slot on Friday, May 22. It follows swimmer Jack, who is unsettled when he spots his ex-girlfriend in the next lane at his local pool - despite her always claiming she was afraid of the water.

Koch, who lives in Bishopston and is currently finishing her fourth novel, said: "Twice a week I swim at Horfield Leisure Centre, and my writer's brain goes into overdrive. There are so many people to observe and imagine stories for. I've been wanting to write one of them for a long time."

This will be the first broadcast work for Emily, who is the award-winning author of three novels including Bristol-set *If I Die Before I Wake*.

She said: "I was commissioned by producers at BBC Radio 4 in Bristol, so this feels like a very Bristol story. We're currently casting the actor, and I can't wait to hear it brought to life."

Emily is the author of three novels—*If I Die Before I Wake*, *Keep Him Close* and *What July Knew*. Her work has been shortlisted for the Crime Writers' Association Steel Dagger, won a French crime fiction award, and selected as a Waterstones Thriller of the Month.



Emily Koch



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NEWS



**Divorced, beheaded,  
died, divorced,  
beheaded, survived!**

E-Act Montpelier High School brought pop concert sparkle and powerful storytelling to its production of *Six: The Musical*. Over four evenings, two alternating casts impressed audiences with

confident vocals and high energy choreography. The shows were directed by Simon Shorrock. Christine Keen was musical director and Hannah Nelmes from Rise Youth Dance was choreographer.



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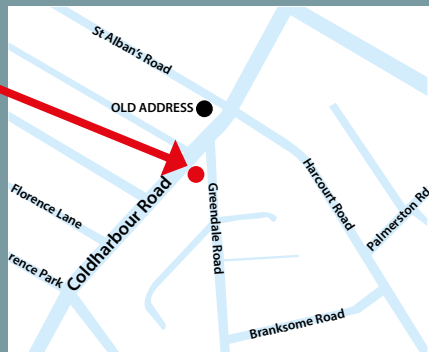


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## ■ ADVERTISING FEATURE

# Standstill agreement

As you may recall from our article of 16 October 2024, certain individuals, including spouses, civil partners, former spouses or civil partners, cohabiting partners, children, and other dependants who were financially supported by the deceased, may bring a claim under the Inheritance (Provision for Family and Dependants) Act 1975 ("the 1975 Act") where they have been excluded from the Will or where the provision made for them is not reasonable.

A claim under the 1975 Act must be brought within six months of the date on which the Grant of Probate is issued. This is a strict statutory time limit.

In many cases, parties will wish to seek further information and explore settlement before commencing proceedings. Litigation is usually treated as a last resort in order to minimise costs. The six-month limitation period, however, is often

too short to allow for meaningful negotiations and the exchange of relevant information.

In such circumstances, parties may enter into a standstill agreement. This is a contract by which the parties agree to suspend the running of the limitation period, giving them additional time to negotiate and gather information without the immediate pressure of issuing court proceedings.

A standard standstill agreement typically provides that the parties will not rely on any defence based on limitation, time bar, laches, delay, or similar arguments for a defined period. Time is effectively paused from the date of the agreement until one of the following occurs:

- The expiry of a notice period (for example, 28 days' written notice to terminate the standstill); or
- The issue of court proceedings; or
- A longstop date.

Standstill agreements can also be varied or extended, provided that all parties agree.

Standstill agreements offer several advantages. They encourage sensible pre-action dialogue, reduce the risk of rushed and expensive litigation, and allow parties to explore settlement in a less adversarial atmosphere. They are particularly useful in 1975 Act claims, which often involve emotional family issues and complex financial information that cannot be gathered quickly.

Nevertheless, there are risks. A standstill agreement is a private contract and does not bind the court. If the agreement is poorly drafted or one party later challenges it, the claimant may still face difficulties.

For this reason, it is essential to take legal advice when negotiating and drafting a standstill agreement.

Its terms must be carefully drafted to reflect the specific circumstances



and intentions of the parties. Importantly, the agreement must be entered into before the expiry of the six-month limitation period.

The Court of Appeal in *Cowan v Foreman* [2019] EWCA Civ 1336 confirmed that, even where a standstill agreement is in place, a claimant may still require the court's permission to bring a claim out of time.

In summary, a well-drafted standstill agreement remains a valuable tool in 1975 Act claims when used carefully. It can help parties avoid unnecessary litigation, but it should never be treated as a complete safety net.



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■ FROM BRISTOL NORTH WEST'S MP

# SEND school funding secured

BRISTOL North West has a rich heritage of schools that provide support for children with additional needs, including Henleaze being home to one of the first schools for blind children. (Please visit [darren-jones.co.uk/about-bnw](http://darren-jones.co.uk/about-bnw) for more on this history.)

Flash forward to now, and I'm delighted to share that we've secured government funding for a new state-of-the-art specialist school in Bristol North West that will help children across the constituency with a wide range of additional needs to thrive.

The new Trym Valley Academy will be built on Greystoke Avenue in Southmead on the former site of the Elmfield School for Deaf Children, which had already relocated its primary school to Horfield and currently has a new secondary school under construction, also in Southmead.

The purpose-built school will offer specialist education for 164 local pupils aged 4 to 19 years with a range of additional needs: Autism

Spectrum Disorder (ASD); Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs; Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD); and Cognition and Learning (C&L) needs.

The announcement is part of a landmark £3.7 billion investment by the Government to create 60,000 specialist places in mainstream schools and in new specialist facilities, like this one.

Alongside this investment, the government's 'Every child achieving and thriving' white paper, which was published recently, outlines proposed reforms to SEND provision so that children can get the right support earlier, closer to home – and, importantly, without a fight.

The reforms include introducing a legal duty for all schools, nurseries and colleges to create digital Individual Support Plans for any children with SEND and increasing specialist support within mainstream schools to make them truly inclusive.

For example, this government is investing £1.8 billion over three

years to create a bank of specialists in every local area, including SEND teachers and speech and language therapists, which schools can access on demand, regardless of whether a child has an education, health and care plan (EHCP). And the government is also investing more than £200 million into training to make sure that every teacher knows how to support children who have additional needs, not just specialist staff.

EHCPs will stay in place for children with more complex needs – no child will lose the support that they need.

All children in specialist schools and those aged eight years or older will keep their existing EHCPs until at least the age of 16. For children in a mainstream school who are seven years old or younger today, an assessment will be made in three years' time – following significant investment in making mainstream schools more inclusive, as detailed above – of whether their needs can be better met with an Individual



**Darren Jones**  
writes for  
the Voice

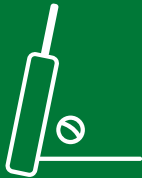
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You can have your say on the SEND reforms in the public consultation at [consult.education.gov.uk](http://consult.education.gov.uk) until May 18.

• As always, if you need my help or have a question, you can get in touch with me on email at [darren.jones.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:darren.jones.mp@parliament.uk), by calling my office on 0117 959 6545 or by writing to me at the House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

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## NEWS FEATURE

# Glosters' stand remembered, 75 years on

2026 marks the 75th anniversary of one of the most celebrated - and costly - battles in the history of the Gloucestershire Regiment.

The last stand of the Glosters at the Battle of the Imjin River during the Korean War in 1951 helped save the city of Seoul from invasion by a huge force of Chinese soldiers - but came at a cost of 59 men killed in action and 522 taken prisoner, with a further 34 dying in captivity before the end of the war in 1953.

The Glosters were an Army infantry regiment headquartered at Horfield Barracks in Bristol, and drew many of their recruits from the city and surrounding area.

Sent to Korea as part of the United Nations force defending South Korea from the North and its Chinese allies, the 1st Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment was part of the 29th Infantry Brigade, a force of around 4-5,000 guarding a ford over the Imjin River.

On the night of April 22, 1951, the 27,000-strong Chinese 63rd People's Volunteer Army launched an attack, with the aim of sweeping aside the defenders and reaching Seoul by May Day.

Over the following three days, the 750 men of the 1st Battalion fought a defensive battle across a series of positions overlooking the river, against more than 10,000 Chinese regular troops, becoming increasingly isolated and eventually surrounded on Hill 235, which would become known as Gloster Hill after the battle.

While other units of the 29th Infantry Brigade managed to withdraw, attempts to relieve the Glosters and help them break out failed due to the overwhelming numbers of Chinese troops.

Describing the last stand, the National Army Museum says: "Towards the end of the battle the Glosters were completely surrounded and running out of ammunition.

"Some men were reduced to fighting with bayonets and fists. Against overwhelming odds they held the line against the Chinese for four days.

"When they were finally given the order to break out only 40 men managed to reach safety. The Chinese captured or killed the rest.

"The Gloucestershire Regiment's actions in delaying



**Roll call of Gloucestershire Regiment survivors after the Battle of Imjin River** Picture: National Army Museum

the Chinese allowed the rest of the United Nations forces time to regroup and block the advance of the enemy towards the South Korean capital Seoul."

Chinese casualties during their frontal assaults on UN positions were estimated at 10,000-15,000, and the 63rd Army was withdrawn from the front line after the battle.

The 1st Battalion's actions earned the Gloucestershire Regiment the nickname the 'Glorious Glosters'.

Commanding officer Lieutenant-Colonel James P. Carne, who was among those captured, was awarded a Victoria Cross, along with Lieutenant Philip Curtis, who was killed in a lone counter-attack on enemy machine-guns. Other Glosters received decorations including the George Cross, Distinguished Service Order, Military Cross and Military Medal.

The Gloucestershire Regiment and 170 Battery of the 45th Field Regiment, Royal Artillery were both awarded a US Presidential Unit Citation, the highest American award for heroism and collective gallantry.

Their citation said: "Without thought of defeat or surrender, this heroic force demonstrated superb battlefield courage and discipline.

"Every yard of ground they surrendered was covered with enemy dead until the last gallant soldier...was overpowered by the final surge of the enemy masses."

The Gloucestershire Regiment became part of the Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment in 1994,



**Harold Griffiths took this picture of an abandoned gun emplacement on the battlefield during a visit after the end of the war**



**A US medical helicopter photographed by Harold Griffiths during his time in Korea. Note: photos have been colour-enhanced**

then part of The Rifles in 2007.

The battle was remembered by a series of special events at the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum in Gloucester Docks during April.

A weekend of talks took place on April 18-19 - more details can be found online at [soldiersofglos.com](http://soldiersofglos.com).

Chief executive Matthew Holden said: "Sadly, there are very few remaining survivors of the battle." None are believed to live in the Bristol or South Gloucestershire area.

• Do you have a relative who fought at Imjin? Email [news@bishopstonvoice.co.uk](mailto:news@bishopstonvoice.co.uk).

RETIRED surgeon Harold Griffiths treated Glosters taken prisoner at Imjin after their release at the end of the conflict.

Harold was an officer in the Royal Army Medical Corps, based at the British Commonwealth General Hospital in Kure in Japan from 1952 until the end of the conflict in 1953, after which he was sent to take charge of a casualty collection post in Korea itself, as a company commander for the 26th Field Ambulance.

Monmouthshire-born Harold was sent to Japan and Korea during his National Service after finishing his medical training in London.

The hospital in Japan received convoys of wounded twice a week from Korea. The wounded would be treated first at a US or Norwegian MASH (Mobile Army Surgical Hospital) in Korea before being transported to Seoul and shipped to Japan.

Harold remembers treating soldiers injured in battles during the later stages of the war, including from the Duke of Wellington's Regiment during

the Battle of the Hook in 1952.

He said: "The only time I got to see the Glosters was when there was a prisoner swap, and they came through and had to be examined before they could be given a clean bill of health to travel on the ship home.

"A lot had got parasitic infections in captivity, and several had got anaemia, dysentery and tapeworm, and were very thin.

"Lt Col Carne, the CO, was given a uniform but he was so thin it sort of hung off him - he was treated particularly badly in captivity.

"The thing that struck me was that most of these people were National Servicemen, all these soldiers who behaved as seasoned warriors.

"We felt very sorry for them - they were shipped into National Service and ended up with some very serious injuries. Most of them were very stoical."

After being posted to a base near Imjin after the war finished,

Harold was able to see the battlefield and took pictures of abandoned positions.

He said: "We were situated just north of where the Glosters made their last stand and within a mile of the Imjin river.

"You had to be careful where you walked - there was a certain amount of ordnance still lying in the grass."

After the conflict ended, medical staff were still kept busy treating soldiers for a variety of illnesses and injuries.

They included haemorrhagic fever, a severe and often fatal virus. Anyone suspected of having the disease was evacuated by US helicopters, which would later become familiar to millions of TV viewers through the American Korean War drama MASH, because they would not survive long enough to be taken to hospital by land and sea.

After the end of his service Harold returned to the UK and became an orthopaedic surgeon in London and Glasgow before

# Surgeon remembers POWs



Harold Griffiths

moving to Bristol, where he was based at Southmead and Frenchay hospitals until he retired.

He was on the Army's reserve list for two years and transferred to the Territorial Army, commanding the field hospital in Keynsham for several years.

## NEWS

### Festival's 10th birthday

ORGANISERS of Fishponds' Party in the Ponds festival are looking to celebrate its 10th anniversary in style this year.

The free all-day festival in Vassalls Park grew out of an event organised in Fishponds Park in 2016, as part of the citywide Make Sunday Special programme.

It returned as a standalone event the following year, switched to Saturday and was renamed Party in the Ponds.

Since then it has continued to grow in popularity and size, moving to Vassalls Park in 2022.

This year's festival will take place on June 13, and organisers have been auditioning bands, booking stalls and seeking sponsors as part of their preparations.

The volunteer-run event is free to enter but costs around £20,000 to stage, and in addition to extra sponsors, the organisers have also set up a donation page seeking around £1,200 in public donations

towards the costs.

Co-organiser Gareth Edwards said a sponsorship opportunity is still available for the event's second stage, known as the Grassroots stage.

Gareth said: "Every year the costs for the event rise as we are required to provide more and more facilities, safety measures and security as the event grows.

"We are always struggling to achieve funds, particularly in these difficult economic times.

"What we don't want to do is turn it into a paying event. It's a community event and we need the community involved - if everyone in our Facebook group could give 50p, that would be enough to meet the target."

A link to the Gofundme donations page can be found on the event's website, [partyintheponds.co.uk](http://partyintheponds.co.uk).

Anyone interested in becoming a sponsor or volunteer should email [partyintheponds@gmail.com](mailto:partyintheponds@gmail.com).

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## NEWS

# Restaurant in a tent plan for eyesore site

A SITE in the heart of Clifton Village that's been derelict for more than 15 years could soon be opened up for public use.

Speare Developments, which has bought the former WH Smith site, has applied to Bristol City Council to open a pop-up restaurant.

The developers are seeking consent for the "meanwhile use" for the land while they develop their long-term plans for it.

They say the restaurant will be inside a stretched tent marquee, no more than one storey high. It will occasionally be used for workshops, demos or as a community space.

A kitchen in a shipping container will be linked to the restaurant area, which will have seating for up to 150 people. A cellar with a bar attached will be in another shipping container.

There will also be space on the site for trestle tables and gazebos to form a shopping market. When the market is not operating the gazebos and tables will be stored in containers.

The restaurant and the market will be managed by the same tenant, who has not yet been officially named, although Councillors Paula O'Rourke and Jerome Thomas say that Speare Developments are working with renowned chef Josh Eggleton.

The councillors are keen on the proposal, which they say will enhance the appearance of the area and support surrounding businesses. They say planning conditions and licensing restrictions could be used to mitigate any problems.

However, some people living nearby have submitted objections to the plan to the



### How the pop-up restaurant in Clifton could look

council. They are particularly concerned about recorded music and suggest that the restaurant should be restricted to daytime use.

One said: "As it stands, this plan for an open-air restaurant and bar will be hugely disruptive to residents living in the surrounding area in terms of noise pollution from ambient music, drinkers and diners eating outside until 10pm in a residential neighbourhood which is quiet after 6pm.

"It will also increase the parking problem we already face as Clifton residents as 150 diners try and find somewhere to leave their car."

WH Smith closed in 2010 and the site has remained unused other than for a temporary ice rink in 2014. The eyesore site is now covered in weeds, shrubs and bushes and is surrounded by hoardings.

The application can be viewed on the council planning portal with the reference 26/10409/F

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## NEWS

# 'Welcoming, inclusive school' praised

STOKE Bishop Church of England Primary is celebrating a highly positive report from Ofsted.

The school was one of the first to be inspected under the watchdog's new, tougher framework, which rates schools in a number of categories rather than giving an overall judgement.

Stoke Bishop was rated strong for early years provision, attendance and behaviour and personal development and wellbeing. Achievement, teaching and curriculum, inclusion and leadership and governance were all judged to meet the expected level, while safeguarding also met expectations.

"Pupils enjoy coming to this this welcoming and inclusive school," the Ofsted report said. "Parents are overwhelmingly positive.

"Leaders and staff know pupils for the individuals they

are. They take time to forge caring relationships with them."

The inspectors highlighted children's "exemplary" behaviour and attitudes to learning.

"Pupils are extremely polite and well mannered, showing high levels of empathy towards others."

The report noted that the school's personal development programme was "extensive and extremely well constructed" and that children were given a wide range of additional opportunities.

"These experiences develop pupils' artistic, sporting and musical talents and broaden their knowledge of the world around them.

"The school's excellent pastoral offer supports pupils with their mental health and wellbeing. This ensures that pupils feel welcome, valued and included in school life."

The curriculum was

described as ambitious and well designed. Results were found to be consistently above the national average.

"Inclusion lies at the heart of the school's work. Leaders and staff share a clear commitment to removing any challenges that the most vulnerable pupils face," the report said.

The school, which has 395 pupils on its roll, has had leadership changes in recent years, with current headteacher Darren Hunt taking up his role in September 2025.

Ofsted said: "Governors and trustees have led the school through this period of change well.

"Governors have a clear and ambitious vision for the school. They hold leaders to account for their actions.

"Staff are proud to work at the school. They value the way in which everyone works as part of a close-knit team."

## Yassin to be Lord Mayor

COUNCILLOR Yassin Mohamud will become Lord Mayor of Bristol this month.

Yassin, who was elected as a Green councillor for Lawrence Hill in 2021, will be the first person from Somalia to hold the ceremonial role, which rotates between Bristol's four largest political groups on the council. He will be taking over from Conservative Cllr Henry Michallat, who will step into the role of Deputy Lord Mayor.

Cllr Mohamud said, "I came to the UK from Somalia over 20 years ago and built my life here in Bristol with my family. Like many people in our city, my understanding of politics did not begin in a formal setting; it came from lived experience. It came from seeing how decisions affect everyday life: the quality of housing, the safety of our streets, the opportunities available to young people, and whether communities feel seen and heard."

## FROM BRISTOL CENTRAL'S MP

# I'll keep speaking up for climate action

LAST month, I spoke in a parliamentary debate on the urgent need to tackle the climate crisis. It feels both ludicrous and frustrating that this is an intervention that still needs to be made in 2026, as experts continually warn we are approaching the "point of no return" on climate catastrophe.

Perhaps some politicians still struggle to understand how the climate impacts the political landscape. Far from being a "single issue" problem, confined to the remit of a few specialist MPs, climate cuts across virtually every area of government. As a result, politicians who attempt to sideline the climate emergency do so at their own peril.

Take national security. A recent national security assessment warned that "every critical ecosystem is on a pathway to collapse", posing a threat to UK security and prosperity. The first job of any government is to keep its citizens safe. So why does the government continually fail to take sufficient action?

The same can be said of the economy. If we fail to tackle the climate emergency, we'll cost the

UK much more in the long-run than if we invest properly now. The Climate Change Committee, the government's own specialist advisers, recently crunched the numbers and found that, for every pound spent on reaching our climate targets, we'd see two to four pounds in benefits.

Climate decision-making is also felt across all areas of our daily lives. Last year, Chancellor Rachel Reeves scrapped the Energy Company Obligation in her autumn budget. This policy offered free upgrades like insulation to people who couldn't afford to properly heat or power their homes. People in "fuel poverty", who make up 30,000 of Bristol's households, weren't the only ones that were affected by this decision. An estimated 12,100 people working in industries like insulation also lost their jobs.

On the flipside, taking stronger action on climate would have far-reaching benefits. Warm homes and better public transport are good for our health and wellbeing, as well as for our NHS.

The government's climate record faces a major test as it decides

whether to approve development of the controversial Rosebank oilfield. Despite announcing a welcome ban on new oil and gas extraction in the North Sea, Energy Secretary Ed Miliband is yet to make a decision on the new drilling site off the coast of Shetland. Burning fossil fuels there would release more than the combined annual emissions of all 28 low-income countries globally, with no evidence that it would bring energy costs down at home.

Of course, the picture is not exclusively bleak. Last year, Bristol was recognised as the best city in England on climate action, thanks to projects like Bristol City Leap's award-winning low carbon heat network, work to make council housing warmer and more energy efficient, and support for community-based environmental initiatives. But we still need more investment from central government, which largely refuses to recognise the scale of the crisis we are facing, and, consequently, the scale of the benefits we could reap if we took action now.

Climate impacts every sphere of our lives, and every sphere of our



**Carla Denyer writes for the Voice**

politics. Frustrating as it may be, I will keep speaking up to show that this is a reality that none of us can afford to ignore.

• If you live in Bristol Central and need help with a local issue, email me at [bristolcentraloffice@parliament.uk](mailto:bristolcentraloffice@parliament.uk) or write to Carla Denyer MP, House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA. For national issues email me using [carla.denyer.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:carla.denyer.mp@parliament.uk)

## PHARMACY COLUMN

# Sinusitis pain and discomfort this spring and summer? We can help



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WHEN people think of sinus problems, winter colds usually come to mind. But for many people, sinusitis actually becomes more common during the warmer months. Spring and summer bring blooming plants, rising pollen counts, and environmental changes that can trigger sinus issues, making these seasons especially uncomfortable.

Sinusitis happens when the lining of the sinuses becomes inflamed or swollen. This can block normal drainage, leading to a build-up of mucus and increased pressure.

Common symptoms include:

- Facial pain or pressure
- Nasal congestion
- Thick nasal discharge
- Headaches
- Reduced sense of smell

### • Fatigue

While infections can cause sinusitis, allergies are often the main trigger during spring and summer.

Warmer weather usually means more time spent outdoors. Spring and early summer bring high levels of pollen from trees, grasses, and weeds. When inhaled, pollen can irritate the nasal passages and trigger allergic reactions. This can block the sinus openings, leading to sinusitis.

Allergic rhinitis, commonly known as hay fever, often overlaps with sinusitis. Sneezing, itching, and congestion can worsen sinus pressure and make it easier for mucus to become trapped.

Ironically, escaping the heat indoors is not always the answer.

Air conditioning systems can circulate dust, mould, and other irritants if they are not properly maintained, which may also contribute to sinus problems.

### How to Manage and Prevent Sinusitis

#### 1. Reduce allergen exposure

- Keep windows closed on high pollen days
- Shower after being outdoors
- Use air purifiers indoors

#### 2. Rinse your sinuses

- Saline nasal rinses can help flush out pollen and reduce irritation.

#### 3. Stay hydrated

- Drinking plenty of water helps thin mucus, making it easier for your sinuses to drain.

### Effective NHS treatment is available

If your symptoms last more than 10 days, become severe, or include a high fever or swelling around the eyes, you may be dealing with a bacterial infection that requires appropriate prescription-only treatment. Options such as steroid nasal sprays or antibiotics may be available following a consultation under the NHS Pharmacy First service at Kellaway Pharmacy.

Sinusitis in spring and summer is often overlooked, but it can significantly affect your quality of life.

For adults and children 12 and over, Kellaway Pharmacy can help manage symptoms and enjoy the warmer months without constant discomfort.

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## NEWS

# Your chance to have a say on future of bus services

PEOPLE in Bishopston are being invited to shape the future of bus services as part of the West of England's Mayoral Combined Authority's new Bus Plan.

The consultation, which runs until May 10, is a chance for everyone in the region to help shape improvements.

People are asked to share what is most important to them when it comes to buses whether that is frequency, making it easier to use multiple routes in one journey, or going green.

This follows the Transport Vision published last month by the Mayor, Helen Godwin, and council leaders, which set out shared ambitions for reliable, affordable bus services.

Ms Godwin said: "We want to help more people across our region to get home sooner, get out into nature more, and explore the best the West has to offer, rather than being stuck

waiting for a bus or in traffic.

"Residents, businesses, bus users, and people who don't get the bus too, can have their say about what matters most, to help shape improvements for our buses, as we build a transport network that people can trust.

"We have secured a record-breaking investment in transport in the West from the government, and are planning to invest £150 million into bus improvements. With your feedback we can make sure that we get the most out of our huge investment into regional transport and deliver the bus network we all deserve."

Councillor Tony Dyer, Leader of Bristol City Council, said:

"Good public transport affects everyone in Bristol, not just people who use buses. We want everyone to have their say and help shape improvements to bus services across the city and the

wider West of England.

"We know how important transport investment is. Through the Transport Vision, and funding from WECA and the government, we will keep working together to make travel in the West of England quicker, more reliable and more sustainable."

To take part, visit [haveyoursaywest.co.uk/betterbuses](http://haveyoursaywest.co.uk/betterbuses).

For those who are not online, paper copies are available at Bristol bus stations. You can also contact your local library to see if they have any in stock.

National research by the Urban Transport Group recently found that bus passenger numbers in the West of England grew by the second fastest rate in the country between 2024 and 2025 - with a 6 per cent rise, compared to the English average increase of 1 per cent.

## In pursuit of climate justice

AUTHOR and campaigner Jonathon Porritt is coming to Bristol this month to share stories from the UK's young climate campaigners

Porritt's recent book *Love, Anger & Betrayal* explores the courage, conviction and controversy surrounding green activists. It tells the story of 26 young Just Stop Oil protesters and their urgent call for change.

During the free event at the Trinity Centre in Trinity Road on Tuesday May 5 at 7pm, the environmentalist will invite his audience to reflect on what drives a generation to risk arrest in pursuit of climate justice.

The event will include a talk, Q&A, and book signing. Jonathon Porritt said: "These are young people facing a world in crisis — and refusing to look away. Their story deserves to be heard."

## NEWS FROM THE METRO MAYOR

# A year of progress

A YEAR on from being elected as your Mayor, I've been reflecting on what we've achieved together and what comes next for the West of England.

From day one, I said I wanted to do things differently. That has meant focusing on the things that matter most to people, while also laying the foundations for the future.

We've made a strong start: you will have noticed the West Country's voice growing louder during the last 12 months, as we continue catching up with other places and securing more investment for the country's fastest-growing regional economy.

We've secured a record-breaking £752 million to improve transport, including better buses, more reliable journeys and exciting mass transit plans for the future.

That's on top of investment which will soon see 250 new electric buses serve routes across the West, helping make more journeys cleaner and more comfortable.

We've continued to invest in rail too, with work on new and improved stations, including Bristol Brabazon and Charfield.

The Bristol & Portishead Line has received the green light, with work well underway, and half-hourly services are being protected.

The launch of our Kids Go Free scheme has helped families right across the West, with more than 910,000 free journeys taken last summer

alone, with the offer returning over the Christmas and Easter holidays.

It's been especially positive to see the difference it's making in communities where it matters most. The latest data shows that, in areas where families have some of the lowest incomes in the country, children's bus travel has doubled.

Alongside this, we've frozen the £1 child bus fare cap until 2029 and extended free bus travel for care leavers, helping young people and families with the cost of getting around.

While transport is at the heart of much that we do regionally, it's only part of the picture.

In September, we launched an ambitious Growth Strategy, with plans to create 70,000 new jobs over the next decade, backed by a new Business Board to help attract investment and support local businesses.

Our creative industries will benefit from £25m of new funding to help support jobs, skills, and opportunities in one of our fastest-growing sectors. We've also made progress towards North Somerset joining the combined authority, with the majority of responses in a recent consultation showing that people and businesses support the move.

For communities, we've secured £45m to unlock new affordable homes, set out plans for a new regional hub bringing together charities to provide food and essential items to people who need it



**Metro Mayor Helen Godwin**

writes for the Voice

most, and continued investment in our parks, high streets, walking, cycling and green spaces. We're also supporting nature and tree planting through the Western Forest, helping to make our region greener for the future.

We are also supporting the development of Brabazon and the West Innovation Arc, with the potential for the area around the upcoming Aviva Arena to become one of the UK's most significant new towns.

We've made real progress in our first year.

I'm determined to keep building on this momentum, working together to make the West of England the best place to live, work, study, and raise a family.



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## NEWS

# What a story! Southmead pupils go to Windsor Castle and meet the Queen

ON a day they will always remember, 45 pupils from E-ACT Badock's Wood Academy in Southmead attended an awards ceremony and reception at Windsor Castle after taking part in BBC 500 Words, the UK's biggest children's story-writing competition for 5-11 year olds.

While not finalists themselves, Badock's Wood children wrote stories for the competition and applied to attend the finalist ceremony as guests. They were invited to attend and had an amazing day, confidently meeting Her Majesty and seeing the splendour of Windsor Castle.

Pupils attended the star-studded grand final, which was once again hosted by Her Majesty Queen Camilla and presented by Alex Jones and Roman Kemp from The One Show. Each winner's story was read aloud by celebrity readers Bradley and Barney Walsh, Big Zuu, Joanna Page, Paterson Joseph, Sara Cox and Jodie Whittaker.

The 500 Words competition, founded in 2011, aims to encourage a love of writing and reading while improving literacy in children. Children are encouraged to write a story they would love to read themselves.

Clio Brown, E-ACT's national director of early years and early reading, said: "It was an absolute privilege to take 45 children from Badock's Wood E-ACT Academy to Windsor Castle alongside headteacher, Gemma Hewson. Being welcomed to such a stunning and historic setting and hosted by The Queen made the day feel incredibly special for the children.

"Hearing the finalists' stories brought to life by celebrities such as Jodie Whittaker, Joanna Page and Bradley Walsh was inspiring and it truly celebrated the power of reading and writing. Events like this help our children see themselves as authors and storytellers, showing them that their voices and imaginations matter. The day was filled with unforgettable moments, from afternoon tea with The Queen to meeting Paddington, the Gladiators Steel and Diamond,



**A red letter day for the children who entered the 500 Words competition. Staff and pupils from Badock's Wood school visited Windsor Castle, top, where they met Queen Camilla, right. You might have seen them in the televised final on BBC's The One Show. Some of them also went on Radio Bristol, left, to talk about the experience**



and the singer from The Greatest Showman.

"Most importantly, it was a day that celebrated creativity, confidence and the joy of storytelling. We came away feeling incredibly proud of our

children and already excited about next year's competition."

Bilal, Head Pupil at Badock's Wood, added: "The visit to Windsor Castle was an incredible trip. It was an honour to be invited by Her Majesty and listen

to some incredible stories read by some famous faces.

"The event brought powerful stories to life through storytelling and out-of-this-world illustrations. We can't wait to enter next year!"

## LETTER

### Saving lives in north Bristol

DEFIBS4BRISTOL, a strictly not-for-profit organisation has added another public access defibrillator at the Eastfield Inn, Henleaze Road. So far, we have installed 58 in Bristol including a number of local ones :

Southmead Fire station  
The Beehive  
The Gloucester Old Spot  
The RAFA club  
The White Lion (Westbury Village)  
The Methodist church hall (Westbury Hill)  
The Black Swan, Stoke Lane  
The Treble Chance (Greystoke Ave)  
Bristol Discount carpets (Charlton Road)  
The Bradgate doctor's surgery (on the Old Crow roundabout)  
Southmead Health centre (Ullswater Road)  
L'Affinage Du Fromage (North View)  
Bristol Chiropractic (Kellaway Ave)  
The Cambridge Arms (Coldharbour

Road)  
The Shakespeare (Redland)  
The Black Swan (Stoke Lane)  
The Crafty Cow (Wessex Ave)  
The Lazy Dog (Ashley Down Road)  
The Prince of Wales ( bottom of Gloucester Road)  
We have also installed in Cotham :  
Haig Harrison on Cotham Hill  
previously there wasn't one in this really busy area)  
St Matthew's Church (Cotham)  
Kingsdown Vaults  
The office, Kings House, High Kingsdown

We also have installations in Clifton on the Royal Oak and The East Village cafe' (Boyces Ave).

We are still working hard to get an installation on Redland station which has complicated technical and property ownership issues. This has been ongoing for two years. We have already raised some funds towards this now held in awaiting resolution.

We are hoping to install another

near the junction of Linden Road and Coldharbour Road. This one and the Eastfield Inn will have been as a result of a generous local donor who doesn't wish to be named.

Many of the above have been installed after numerous Justgiving pages and hundreds of hours of leafleting. Some as the result of donations (e.g. Walkers & Talkers). Some were self-funded after we spoke to the sites.

We teach CPR / defib to groups as requested and ongoingly monitor the monthly checking of our 58 installations and half a dozen others where the novelty has worn off for the guardians and the mundane but important checking has become too much of a chore.

Any donations go towards on costs replenishment (pads and batteries which have a shelf life which we also monitor) and purchases of new AEDs.

We are strictly not-for-profit and don't claim any expenses so,

any donations are used for the purposes above.

Eighty per cent of cardiac arrests happen at home so locally accessible defibrillators are of the utmost importance. For every minute without help life expectancy drops by 10%.

As a former community first responder of nine years I attended cardiac arrests and understand the importance of timely intervention. Not enough people understand CPR and people are frightened of AEDS (automatic external defibrillators). You cannot make a mistake with these machines as they will only allow/ give a shock, if appropriate. Training sessions build confidence and speed timely intervention.

As a former Royal Marines' Reservist of 41 years, retiring in 2012 when I was 60, I understand the importance of persistence and flexibility to achieve the aim.

**Simon Brookes**  
Defibs4Bristol.com



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NEWS

# War veteran Stan in the picture

STAN Lucas, a 99-year-old war veteran and resident of Druid Stoke Bupa Care Home, has been photographed by portrait photographer Robin Savage.

Robin has spent over a decade capturing portraits of Second World War veterans, a collection which he has titled 'In Their Glorious Company.' He is dedicated to ensuring their stories are preserved for future generations. On this occasion, it was Stan, a resident at Druid Stoke care home, who spent time in front of his camera.

Celebrating his 100th birthday later this year, Stan has been at the home for more than two years. During the Second World War, he served as a military policeman in Egypt and Palestine. His responsibilities included maintaining order among troops, guiding convoys through busy and often hazardous roads, and guarding vital supply lines.

Stan's service is a reminder that victory was achieved not just through combat, but also through the dedication of those who upheld order and kept operations moving.

Commenting on being chosen, Stan

said: "I am a lucky man to have had my portrait taken. There are dozens out there exactly like me. I'm not a miracle man, but I've been looked after and I've looked after others. May God bless them all."

Photographer Robin Savage added: "It has been, and continues to be, the deepest privilege of my life to photograph such extraordinary people. We will never see the likes of our Second World War veterans again, so recording their histories, stories, and dignity in this way is so important to me; but I'm keenly aware that we owe them all a debt of gratitude that can never be repaid. It was a huge honour to photograph Stan, my thanks go to him, his family and all at Druid Stoke."

Keyly Scott, home manager at Druid Stoke, commented: "We are so pleased to have been able to accommodate this special visit. Stan is a truly remarkable gentleman, and the work Robin has done to commemorate heroes of the Second World War is nothing short of extraordinary. It means a great deal to us to see Stan honoured in this way."



Robin Savage's portrait of Stan Lucas, 99

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

# A taste of delights to come

### HORFIELD ORGANIC COMMUNITY ORCHARD

AT this time of year, we're talking about hands-on workshops rather than sampling fresh fruit. Plum petals have fallen, pears are nearly bloomed out, and the apples are being pollinated as I write. All being well, early season fruit will be ready to eat from midsummer. Fruit for our popular Apple Day Tasting Table will be harvested from September. Between now and then we'll be doing our best to ensure a bountiful and delicious harvest. Mulching, pruning, fruit thinning, watering make a difference. We also keep an eye on diseases and insects that affect tree health, and may choose nature-friendly interventions to prevent loss of fruit.

To follow up the successful Dormant Season Pruning taster workshops which took place in March, Horfield Organic Community Orchard (HOCO) is offering further seasonal sessions during May and June. Led by the Apple Tree Lady, these hands-on workshops focus on actions to boost biodiversity, bring life to the soil, and focus on the pruning of stone fruits, e.g. plums and greengages.

Summer season Fruit tree care workshops

- Sunday 17 May, 2.30pm to 4.30pm
- Sunday 31 May, 2pm to 4.30pm



Picking an Opal plum at the orchard

Places are limited, and must be booked and paid for in advance.

See the website for information and booking links: <https://community-orchard.org.uk/>

Look out for more taster sessions, and other orchard activities, at our Summer Orchard Open Day on Sunday 14 June, 2pm to 5pm. We're delighted to be one of the community-led events programmed as part this year's Bristol Festival of Nature.

Words by Shannon Smith aka The Apple Tree Lady  
Photo by Jamie Carstairs

### THE ARDAGH COMMUNITY TRUST

The Ardagh is bursting with colour, wildlife and hidden corners — and we want YOUR photos to help celebrate it!

We're creating our very own Ardagh Calendar 2027, packed with stunning landscape views of our beautiful site... and our photo competition is now open.

You can submit up to five landscape images taken anywhere within The Ardagh.

No members of the public in shots please — but staff and volunteers are fine with permission.

A panel will judge entries after the closing date, and the winning photo will feature on the calendar cover and earn the photographer £150.

<https://form.jotform.com/260972660915060>

### SEA MILLS FLOWER AND CRAFT SHOW

The show takes place at St Edyth's Church, Avonleaze, Sea Mills, on Saturday May 9. Entries must be in by 4 pm on Wednesday May 6. For a copy of our schedule email [seamillsflowershow@gmail.com](mailto:seamillsflowershow@gmail.com) or download one from [bit.ly/SMFCSSchedule](http://bit.ly/SMFCSSchedule). Looking forward to friends from Bishopston being represented in the classes.

## MESSAGE FROM POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

# Antisocial behaviour: don't suffer in silence

ANTISOCIAL behaviour is one of the issues people speak to me about most often.

Whether it's persistent noise, groups causing concern in town centres, or behaviour that makes people feel intimidated, it can have a profound and lasting effect.

Antisocial behaviour doesn't just cause inconvenience - it can erode people's confidence in their neighbourhoods and undermine their sense of safety. That is why tackling antisocial behaviour is one of my priorities, and it is a priority shared across our public services.

I work consistently with the constabulary to deliver against the national neighbourhood policing guarantee. As a result, Avon & Somerset police have launched their new Five-Year ASB Plan, a strategy that focuses on prevention, early intervention and the right action

against the small number of people whose behaviour repeatedly harms others.

The plan strengthens partnership working, improves how vulnerable victims are identified, and places greater emphasis on understanding community concerns.

Good intelligence sits at the heart of this: reports from you as residents, insights from neighbourhood officers who know their areas well, and the information shared by partner organisations all help build a clear picture of where problems are happening and what targeted action is needed.

As an example, we have seen the value of this approach in Weston-super-Mare. Persistent antisocial behaviour in the town centre had left too many people feeling unsafe.

By bringing together council teams, voluntary organisations,

specialist support services and neighbourhood officers, we have been able to make a tangible difference.

A visible presence, targeted support for vulnerable individuals, and practical tools such as CCTV, street wardens and problem solving patrols have helped reduce the most harmful behaviour and reassure the local community.

It shows what is possible when everyone plays their part and when we listen directly to the people affected.

For anyone experiencing antisocial behaviour, knowing where to turn is vital.

Reporting it really does help. Even small or repeated incidents add to the intelligence picture and lead to better responses.

If you prefer to stay anonymous, you can contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

If issues persist and you feel not



With Police and Crime Commissioner Clare Moody

enough has been done, you can request an antisocial behaviour case review through your local council.

This brings agencies together to look again at what more can be done to resolve the problem.

Victim support must always remain at the centre of our response.

I fund the Avon and Somerset Victim Service partnership, which provides free, confidential help to anyone affected by crime or antisocial behaviour, regardless of whether they have reported.

You can contact ASVS on 0300 303 1972 or go to [victimsupport.org.uk/avon-somerset](http://victimsupport.org.uk/avon-somerset) to find out more.

## NEWS

# Museum and library given funding boost

BRISTOL Museum and Art Gallery and Henleaze Library are set to benefit from new investment to fund repairs and refurbishment.

Over £3.5 million of funding from the Museum Estate and Development Fund has been awarded to carry out vital repairs to Bristol Museum and Art Gallery. The investment will fund urgent roof and exterior works, helping to safeguard the building and its nationally important collections and ensuring the museum can continue to welcome visitors for generations to come.

Henleaze Library has also been awarded almost £280,000 through the Libraries Improvement Fund. The funding will be used to create a small rear extension to house an accessible toilet and storage space and a front extension to replace the current conservatory, extending it to create new meeting space.

The funding forms part of the

government's Arts Everywhere Fund, a major national programme designed to support cultural infrastructure and protect valued venues.

Councillor Stephen Williams, chair of the public health and communities policy committee, and ward councillor for Westbury-on-Trym and Henleaze, said: "Henleaze Library is one of our most popular branches.

"This new funding is very welcome and will have a significant impact on the library as a community space.

"It will ensure the space can continue to be somewhere that people of all ages and backgrounds can come together, learn new skills, meet and enjoy time in shared public spaces.

"The investment will help us achieve our ambition to ensure our community spaces are fit for purpose, accessible and deliver the maximum possible benefit for their local neighbourhoods."

## BOOK REVIEW

### My Year in Paris With Gertrude Stein: A Fiction by Deborah Levy

IN November 2024 a woman walks through the hundred and ten acres of Père Lachaise Cemetery looking for the grave of Gertrude Stein. She is in Paris to write an essay on the writer, art collector, legend, godmother of literary modernism, gourmand and self-proclaimed genius.

In Paris she has made two friends, Eva, into whose eyes no one can look without saying Awww, and Fanny, who has three lovers that month but finds time to manage the funds of many wealthy clients and to introduce her friends to Raclette.

Whether fictional character or biographer, anyone writing about Gertrude Stein seems likely to lose it. What is it? Deborah Levy's unnamed narrator (a fictional Levy herself? Well, maybe, but remember that Stein wrote 'You are of course never yourself.') asks throughout the book.

What is it? It is daring, courage. It is all that Gertrude Stein lived through – colonialism, fascism, communism, alienation, cubism, modernism and more isms besides. It is being nameless, undermined and smiling through that. It is conformity. It is the character's essay on Stein and it is the name of Eva's cat, which leads to no little confusion for all except Eva who merely longs to find it.

This is a story about how we respond now when, 'bombs are falling through the twenty-first century upon the living and the soon-to-be-dead,' as we scroll, scroll, scroll through war, and about examining the life and work of a woman who lived through two world wars. It is about how art is put together, how we put together ourselves, how a story about language torn apart can be together.

The book has a simple beauty: it is easy to read despite its complexity, despite featuring a cat called it and despite focussing on a writer who thought no conversation worth having if it were understandable. The characters live in each other's present. They know nothing of their new friends' histories or their lives elsewhere, a state which allows the narrator to look at the present as if rootless, to travel back to a Paris in which writers and artists created something out of step with their time and to compose a stunning response to both.

Elizabeth Moss, Heron Books, Clifton

## BOOK REVIEW

# Trailblazer: Lily Parr, the Unstoppable Star of Women's Football

By Elizabeth Dale

I EXPERIENCE pride and joy whenever I watch my granddaughters Brooke and Cianna play for their local football teams.

This children's picture book tells about the time when the men who run football in our country banned girls and women from playing football for fifty years. Lily Parr was born in 1905 in St Helens in Lancashire. As a girl she showed little interest in the traditional female pursuits of sewing and cookery but she loved playing football with her brothers. When she was 14 she started playing for a women's team called St Helen's Ladies. Lily was spotted by the manager of Dick Kerr Ladies who offered her a job at Dick Kerr & Co, a local munitions factory. She was an instant success, scoring 43 goals in her debut season. Dick Kerr Ladies soon became one of the

best teams in England, beating men and women's teams home and abroad.

On Boxing Day 1920, some 53,000 people watched them beat St. Helen's 4-0 at Goodison Park in Liverpool with another 14,000 stuck outside, clamouring to get in, setting an attendance record that would not be surpassed for 92 years.

A year later, the men in the Football Association ruled that women were barred from every football ground affiliated to the FA. They stated that football was a most unsuitable game for a woman's physical frame, seriously impairing their future duties as mothers.

The real reason was that the FA was expanding the men's game by practically doubling the amount of teams and they were worried that the popularity of the women's game would affect

the attendances of the expanded men's league.

Undeterred by the ban, Dick Kerr Ladies played on village greens and open spaces and in 1922 travelled to the USA where they played nine matches against men's teams.

Lily lived to see the FA finally lift the ban in 1971 leading the way to the successful England Women's Team of today, becoming European Champions in 2022 & 2025.

This is an inspiring and beautifully illustrated picture book, providing essential reading for any girl who loves playing football.

Drop in to your local library at 100 Gloucester Road and read about one of the most famous female football players of all time.

Review by Bob Deacon, from Bishopston Library



## Bishopston Library opening hours

Monday 1pm-7pm

Tuesday closed

Wednesday 11am-5pm

Thursday 11am-5pm

Friday 11am-5pm

Saturday 11am-5pm

Sunday closed

## FROM YOUR COUNCILLORS

### Bishopston & Ashley Down: Emma Edwards and James Crawford (Green Party)

#### EV charging

We have had some feedback on the new lamppost chargers being quite expensive to use, and James is looking into this as part of the Environment and Sustainability committee. Residents might also be interested in signing up for the expression of interest for a trial of electric vehicle gullies. These allow residents without a driveway to safely charge their cars from a home charger, by having the cable hidden in the gully instead of trailing on the pavement. You will have to pay for the works yourself, but it could be a cost effective way to charge your car for many. You can find the sign up form at [www.bristolcityleap.co.uk](http://www.bristolcityleap.co.uk)

#### Petition for more lighting on Concorde Way

We have hit an exciting milestone of 250 signatures on our petition! We'd like to thank you all for your support. 250 signatures gives us the opportunity to debate the petition at an area committee, but we are discussing whether to submit it there, or to wait for more signatures and submit it to a policy committee instead. In the meantime, please keep sharing the petition, which you can find here: [www.change.org/p/improve-street-lighting-on-concorde-way](http://www.change.org/p/improve-street-lighting-on-concorde-way)

[org/p/improve-street-lighting-on-concorde-way](http://www.change.org/p/improve-street-lighting-on-concorde-way)

#### 20 mph consultation

Bristol City Council has launched a consultation on making around 100 of Bristol's most dangerous roads 20mph. These roads represent just 8% of Bristol's road network, but account for 30% of serious and fatal collisions. 20mph are well known in reducing serious collisions. For example, in Wales, the reduction on street-lit road in Wales has been one of the most successful road safety measures in UK history. In the first 18 months after the new speed limits came in, there was a 25% reduction in casualties on the roads compared to the previous 18 months.

This is almost as big an impact as when seat belts were made compulsory in front seats in 1983, which faced opposition at the time but is now widely accepted.

Kellaway Avenue and Muller Road are the two roads in our ward that are being consulted, we are supportive of the reduction but we encourage residents to make their views known on the consultation page here: [www.bristol.gov.uk/ask/find-consultation-engagement](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/ask/find-consultation-engagement)

#### Eco Week

Emma attended Eco Week at Brunel Field's School and had a really great time speaking to the children. This annual event aims to involve the children in sustainability and environmental issues, Emma ran some sessions on transport and clean air, which the children thoroughly enjoyed. The school have already won awards for their environmental work and it's very clear to see why.

#### Area Committee update

James chairs the area committee that includes our ward (area committee 2). The deadline for for CIL submissions for the area committee passed in late March, and it was really great to see some really high quality applications from residents. There is a clear focus on transport interventions, and we are arranging a meeting with officers to discuss further. Unfortunately, funding remains a challenge to come by, but we hope that over the next year we will be able to work with officers to unlock funding.

#### Contact us

[Cllr.james.crawford@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.james.crawford@bristol.gov.uk)  
[Cllr.Emma.edwards@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Emma.edwards@bristol.gov.uk)

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[www.nuthatchtrees.co.uk](http://www.nuthatchtrees.co.uk)

## NEWS

### IT project costs rise again

COSTS have risen yet again by £2 million for a botched IT project but council staff have promised this is the last time. Just a few months ago its budget was increased by £1.25 million, but that appears to have been insufficient to finish the project.

The new system is supposed to provide Bristol City Council's housing department with a much clearer view over issues, such as where repairs are needed in council flats, collecting rents and gas boilers. But the project is years late and well over budget.

The extra £2 million was approved by councillors on the housing policy committee on April 10. They were warned that if they did not approve this funding, the whole project would face further delays and the council would end up spending even more money on its roll-out.

Charles Brooks, a project director, said: "There will be no more requests for funding. We will not be coming back for any funding. You can quote me on that."

The project was first approved by the former cabinet in February 2023, with a budget of £7.5 million. Then last

December, council bosses took an urgent decision to increase the budget by £1.25 million. This was taken behind closed doors, as the extra money was needed urgently.

The money is needed because council staff lack the skills to finish rolling out the project. This includes "loading data" into the new IT system, which the council is paying consultants to do.

Problems with the new system include forcing tenants to have two separate email addresses, if they want to bid on a new home. This will be addressed in an upcoming software upgrade, and should no longer be an issue. Other problems include council staff not knowing how many repairs are needed in council houses and flats, due to unreliable data.

Green Councillor Jerome Thomas said: "I don't think the governance or project management has been of an acceptable standard. Certainly, there hasn't been the transparency and clarity coming through to this committee that one would hope."

*By Alex Seabrook, Local Democracy Reporting Service*

## FROM YOUR COUNCILLORS

### Redland: Martin Fodor and Fi Hance (Green Party)

#### St Christopher's site plans under scrutiny

News of proposals for the long-delayed use of the site are emerging. We're coordinating with neighbouring councillors to seek more details and understand the impacts.

The former school site in Westbury Park has a rear gate that can open into The Glen in Redland ward. We've been in touch with residents of the adjacent streets and we share their concerns about any development proposal that creates new traffic and road safety issues into The Glen and Belvedere Road.

At the time of writing we have been discussing plans to visit the site with community representatives and also hear from the developers so we can discuss these concerns.

#### New strategy for water and nature in the city

We're delighted that the council's Environment and Sustainability Committee has agreed a new strategy to protect and enhance water features and nature in the city - known as blue-green infrastructure.

This recognises the need to manage water resources, improve nature based ways of managing storm water drainage, support urban forestry, and create networks for nature to move and recover across the city. The goals are going to be monitored and reported alongside the new ecological emergency action plan also recently put in place.

#### Speed limits consultation

Bristol City Council is proposing to introduce safer 20mph speed limits on around 100 of Bristol's most dangerous roads, to support safer walking, cycling, driving, and motorcycling around the city.

These roads make up roughly 8% of Bristol's road network, but account for around 30% of serious injuries and fatalities in the city. More than half of Bristol residents say their local roads aren't safe for children to walk, and three-quarters say they're not safe for children to cycle. 20mph speed limits are a proven way to help make our roads safer for everyone, without any big impacts on journey times, which are mainly influenced by traffic and junctions.

Lower speeds also encourage smoother driving, improving air quality and reducing fuel costs by up to 7%. A more consistent limit along Kellaway Avenue is one of the proposed changes.

#### Community Weeding initiatives grow

Thanks to residents who've let us know they're now opting out of glyphosate spraying and have a group working together to weed their streets.

You can check the process on the council website [on the road maintenance page] - see: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/residents/streets-travel/road-maintenance/community-weeding-scheme>

Once you've agreed a majority of the street want to work together you can complete the details to

get registered and send the opt out letter to streetscene [and let us know].

As we previously reported the commitment by the council to halve use of Glyphosate by 2030 is making progress. The most recent report in autumn showed it's already down 42% since 2020 thanks to various measures to eliminate or minimise use.

Other alternative ways to manage weeds in pavements are being pursued as well, plus increased manual weeding and more targeted spraying. The initiatives agreed include working with Probation so community payback workers help when they carry out various street scene tasks.

#### Lamp post chargers

New charging facilities are now in use in several lampposts in our ward, mostly around the terraced streets near Bishop Road. These are sites mainly close to homes without driveways that offer also an adequate power supply for overnight charging and are by the road side [not the property wall].

We're pleased these installations are now available with Instructions on how to use it and the tariff are clearly displayed on the Fuuse app with simple instructions on the post next to the charge point. As well as keeping a close look at how the use of spaces next to charger columns is managed we're discussing the tariff for over night charging to see if a more competitive rate can be set.

There's also now a new pilot scheme we've asked for in

response to residents' requests. This allows a household to request and pay for a pavement gully to be installed so that a power cable might be used from the house itself. This trial now starting and an application process is available. It would not guarantee access to a parking space all the time, but use should be occasional. If you have any queries do get in touch as always.

#### Inflation-linked new parking permit charges

In line with inflation revised charges for parking permits have been published. These will apply in the parts of our ward where parking bays and permits have been provided. The cost of funding and managing the parking management schemes where they exist and enforcing the scheme itself is covered by the costs of the first permit. Any surplus from additional income is channelled into sustainable transport projects which has funded additional bus services in the past.

Details are here:

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/files/documents/10719-rps-permit-charges-notice-of-variation-2026-inflationalignment-all-areas/file>

#### Contact us

Fi: [Cllr.fi.hance@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.fi.hance@bristol.gov.uk)

Martin: [Cllr.martin.fodor@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.martin.fodor@bristol.gov.uk)

Fi: 0117 3534720. Martin: 0788 4736101

Facebook.com/cllrmartin.fodor or cllrfi.hance

## NEWS

# Cladding removal on high-rise blocks completed

EFFORTS to improve the safety of homes in Bristol's council owned high-rise buildings has taken a major step forward with the completion of works to end the use of waking watches.

Through a combination of the removal of cladding systems, and the installation of new sprinklers and alarms the final few waking watch teams were removed from the last three high rise buildings to require them.

Councillor Barry Parsons, chair of the homes and housing delivery policy committee, said: "The safety of our residents is our number one priority, and we are taking action across all estates to improve safety and ensure people feel secure in their homes. We have made significant investment in fire

safety measures to both communal areas and individual homes, enabling us to bring an end to waking watches. I am therefore pleased to see waking watches now concluded across the city - this is a major milestone in delivering on our commitment to resident safety.

"Waking watches were always intended to be a temporary but vital safety measure, and we recognise their presence could at times feel unsettling for residents. That is why we have worked at pace to reduce the risks posed by fires in high rise homes. Standing down the final waking watch teams means all council high rise homes have now moved away from this approach."

At the height of the programme, waking watches were in place in 38 council owned

high rise buildings across the city, following updated fire safety guidance and inspections of external wall systems. As permanent safety improvements were completed, waking watches were progressively removed building by building, with the final three standing down their teams after works were signed off. These were in Southbow House, Whitmead House and Winterstoke House.

The council will continue to monitor fire safety measures closely and work with the fire service to ensure buildings are managed in line with the latest guidance.

A wider programme of investment to improve fire safety in council homes, procedures is continuing to ensure that residents can feel safe in their homes.

## WHAT'S ON IN OUR AREA

■ **LA SCALA DELI** - The Italian Hub of Henleaze  
Join us for one of our signature Wine Tastings led by our in-house sommelier:

**May 14th & 22nd** - Emilia Romagna

**May 21st & 23rd** - Dry Whites & Big Bubbles

**June 11th & 19th** - Emilia Romagna

**June 12th & 18th** - Dry Whites & Big Bubbles

**SPECIAL EVENTS** - Wine & Dine Dinner Party Tasting Menu - 5 courses, 6 paired wines:

**May 16th** - Calabria

**June 27th** - Calabria

Tickets at [www.lascaladeli.com/tickets](http://www.lascaladeli.com/tickets) and in-store - more dates online

**May 18th**

■ **HENLEAZE SENIOR FILM CLUB** 2pm. Please note this is a week earlier due to the Bank Holiday. **WONDER (PG)** Based on the beloved best-selling novel, Wonder follows the inspiring story of the Pullman family, whose youngest child, Auggie, is a boy born with facial differences. When Auggie enters mainstream school for the first time, his extraordinary journey unites his family, his school, and his community, and proves that you can't blend in when you were born to stand out. Starring Julia Roberts, Owen Wilson and Jacob Tremblay. Carers welcome, easy access. St. Peter's Church Hall, The Drive, Henleaze BS9 4LD. For more information, please call 0117 435 0063

**9th May & 13th June**

■ **BLAISE COMMUNITY GARDEN** behind Blaise Museum, BS10 7QS. Open Monday, Wednesday and Saturday 10-2. Interesting walled kitchen garden, free entry, new volunteers needed & welcomed. Plants always available. Cash & cards accepted. Events: Spring Market & Café on 9th May 9.45-3pm and further Café on 13th June 9.45-2pm

**2nd May**

■ **BRISTOL ARROW BOWLING CLUB OPEN DAY** Saturday, 10am to 4pm At: Bristol Arrow Bowling Club, 80 Redland Road, Bristol, BS6 6AG (Adjacent Bannatynes Health Club). Put on your flat-soled shoes, then drop in to meet us and try lawn bowls for free. Whatever your age, bowls is brilliant for concentration, mobility, strength, flexibility and balance. Expect lots of gentle, meditative exercise in good company, plenty of craic and some healthy competition too. For more information: Kathryn Nicholls (Club Secretary); mob. 07811 097199; email: [bristol.arrow.sec@gmail.com](mailto:bristol.arrow.sec@gmail.com)

## REGULAR EVENTS

**Various days**

■ **PILATES** classes, Northcote Scout Hall, BS9 3TY. Mondays 9.30am (Improvers), 10.30am (Mixed Ability inc. Beginners); Tuesdays 9.30am (Improvers), 10.30am (Gentle); Thursdays 9.30am (Improvers), 10.45am (Mixed Ability - inc Beginners). Small, friendly classes. Please register interest before attending. Full details at [www.mindbodypilates.org](http://www.mindbodypilates.org). Contact; Leanne 07817189474 or [leanne@mindbodypilates.org](mailto:leanne@mindbodypilates.org)

■ **ITALIAN CLASSES** Learn Italian in friendly, small-group classes in Bishopston and Henleaze. Daytime and evening options for beginners to advanced, taught by an experienced teacher. We hold sociable aperitivo events too. Trial lesson £14. <https://ruthspencelanguages.co.uk/> Email: [ruthspence@live.co.uk](mailto:ruthspence@live.co.uk)

■ **GENTLE PILATES** Small and friendly group classes with a mindful approach. Beginners welcome. Tuesdays 7.15-8.15pm and Thursdays 11.30-12.30am at Bristol Yoga Space, Princes' Place, BS7 8NP. For further information visit [pilates.ittahowie.co.uk](http://pilates.ittahowie.co.uk) or email [Itta@mail@ittahowie.co.uk](mailto:Itta@mail@ittahowie.co.uk)

■ **BRISTOL HOME LIBRARY SERVICE.** A free home delivery service for Bristolians provided by local volunteers. For anyone affected by age, disability or caring responsibilities. 07714898558

**Monday**

■ **SHARED READING AT ST PAUL'S LIBRARY.** Meet and connect with others Mondays 2pm - 3.30pm. St Paul's Learning Centre, 94 Grosvenor Road, Bristol BS2 8XJ. Email: [support@thereader.org.uk](mailto:support@thereader.org.uk)

■ **REDLAND WIND BAND** has vacancies for some woodwind, brass and percussion players. This friendly group meets 7.30-9.30pm at Redland Church Hall, Redland Green. Contact via email on [redlandwindband@gmail.com](mailto:redlandwindband@gmail.com)

### INSTRUMENT AMNESTY:

If you have an unused keyboard, guitar, violin or ukulele gathering dust Folkstars would love to hear from you! We will come and collect from you. Any condition, we will fix and use to give more kids in Bristol the chance to play an instrument. Smaller sizes a bonus but all sizes useful. Please email [info@folkstars.co.uk](mailto:info@folkstars.co.uk) to arrange a collection. Folkstars is a non-profit setup to give more children in Bristol the chance to learn an instrument. We provide affordable instrumental tuition during school time that's free for pupil premium, inclusive and fun. If you would like your school to be considered please email [info@folkstars.co.uk](mailto:info@folkstars.co.uk)

■ **DICKENS SOCIETY.** 7pm, at Leonard Hall, Henleaze URC, Waterford Rd, Bristol BS9 4BT. Talks, costumed readings, book club and social events. See [www.dickens-society.org.uk](http://www.dickens-society.org.uk) or phone Roma on 0117 9279875.

■ **PLAY BOWLS** at Canford Park in a friendly, social atmosphere. Qualified coaches and equipment provided. Contact: Les on 07305695579

■ **BRISTOL COMMUNITY GAMELAN**

play the music of Java at Cotham School from 6.30-8.30. We play by numbers - only 1-6, without the 4! So no auditions, no need to read music. If you fancy a different musical experience, contact us via email on [keithripley27@gmail.com](mailto:keithripley27@gmail.com)

**Tuesday**

■ **WESTBURY PARK WOMEN'S INSTITUTE** meets on the first Tuesday of every month in the Girl Guide Hut on Westmorland Road from 7.00 - 9.30pm. We are an active and friendly group with a varied programme plus extra sessions for craft, coffee, book clubs, walks etc. Visitors are always welcome and for more information do call Sue on 07813795936 or email [westburyparkwi@gmail.com](mailto:westburyparkwi@gmail.com)

■ **HORFIELD STROLLERS** take a leisurely 2 to 3 mile walk in Bristol or nearby on Tuesday's at 10.00am. Details of the next walk can be obtained by ringing the walk leader, Julienne, on 07999 865393.

■ **THE ARTS SOCIETY BRISTOL** welcomes new members. Our lectures, given by specialists in their own field, take place on the second Tuesday of the month from September to May at 7.30pm at Redmaids' High BS9 3AW and by internet. For more information visit our website [www.theartssociety-bristol.org.uk](http://www.theartssociety-bristol.org.uk)

■ **GENTLE PILATES** Small and friendly group class with a mindful approach. Beginners welcome. Tuesdays 7.15-8.15pm at Bristol Yoga Space, Princes' Place, BS7 8NP. For further information email [Itta@mail@ittahowie.co.uk](mailto:Itta@mail@ittahowie.co.uk)

■ **BRISTOL HARMONY WEST GALLERY CHOIR** and band sing and play lively church and village music from the 18th century. St Edyth's Church Hall, St Edyth's Road, Sea Mills, 7.30 pm on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday each month. All voices (SATB), string, wind and reed instruments welcome. No auditions but ability to read music helpful. [www.bristolharmony.wordpress.com](http://www.bristolharmony.wordpress.com) or call Fritjof 0117 924 3440. Contact before attending.

■ **POETRY UNLIMITED** - poetry circle meet on the First Tuesday of every month 11am - 12 midday. Basement Room, Café Kino, 108 Stokes Croft, Bristol, BS1 3RU. £2.50 - £3.00 donation towards the cost of the room. Bring a couple of poems to share, other poets or your own. Contact Dee: [wetwo@gentlyblown.co.uk](mailto:wetwo@gentlyblown.co.uk) Web: [www.poetryunlimitedbristol.weebly.com](http://www.poetryunlimitedbristol.weebly.com)

■ **COMPANION VOICES BRISTOL** We are a 'threshold choir' looking for new people to join us. We meet in Easton on the 3rd Tuesday of the month from 7 to 9 pm to learn songs by ear and build skills in sensitivity/compassion/loving presence to sing at the bedsides of people nearing the end of life. To join/support us in this work, contact Valerie on [bristol@companionvoices.org](mailto:bristol@companionvoices.org). Visit [www.facebook.com/CompanionVoicesBristol](http://www.facebook.com/CompanionVoicesBristol) and [www.companionvoicesbristol.org.uk](http://www.companionvoicesbristol.org.uk)

## WHAT'S ON IN OUR AREA

companionvoices.org

■ **BRISTOL A CAPPELLA:** Tuesdays 7.30pm, Victoria Methodist Church. Bristol A Cappella is an award-winning mixed barbershop chorus of around 30 members who love to sing close harmony a cappella. Our songs are mainly from pop music, with a bit of rock and some musicals. [www.bristolcappella.co.uk/](http://www.bristolcappella.co.uk/) Contact: [membership@bristolcappella.co.uk](mailto:membership@bristolcappella.co.uk)

■ **BRISTOL GOOD AFTERNOON CHOIR** rehearses at Westbury-on-Trym Methodist Church (BS9 3AA) 2-4pm (term time only). We are a fun and friendly, non-audition, community choir for both male and female voices - one of 32 Good Afternoon Choirs who 'sing in the afternoon' around the South West and further afield. New members are always welcome and, whether you come alone or with a friend, we will be very pleased to meet you! For further details please visit our website - [www.goodafternoonchoir.org](http://www.goodafternoonchoir.org) - or contact us on 01761 472468 or via e-mail at [gac@grenvillemusic.co.uk](mailto:gac@grenvillemusic.co.uk)

### Tuesday and Saturday

■ **BRISTOL HF RAMBLING CLUB** We are a friendly sociable club with a variety of walks. We have 2 Tuesday walks of either 8-9 miles or 5-6 miles. On Saturdays we have varying length walks including a hill walk eg Brecon Beacons once a month. If you would like more information please visit our website.

### Wednesday

■ **OPEN DEVELOPMENT CIRCLE** For those interested in developing their spiritual awareness and mediumistic ability. 7.15 for 7.30 start at Westbury Park Spiritualist Church, Cairns Road BS6 7TH. Just turn up or visit [www.westburyparksc.org](http://www.westburyparksc.org)

■ **PULSE: MUSIC & MOVEMENT CLUB FOR ADULTS** Join Bristol Beacon's friendly community club for adults who wish to improve their health and wellbeing. Together we will make music through our instruments and voices, move our bodies, relax, listen, breathe and connect. Weekly sessions on Wednesdays in term-time 11am - 3pm. Beacon Music Centre, Stanton Rd, Bristol BS10 5SJ. First session free, then £3 per session. Find out more and sign up: [bristolbeacon.org/whats-on/pulse](http://bristolbeacon.org/whats-on/pulse)

■ **HEALING SESSIONS** Spiritual Healing is available from 2pm to 3.30pm by the accredited healing team at Westbury Park Spiritualist Church, Cairns Road BS6 7TH. Just turn up or visit [www.westburyparksc.org](http://www.westburyparksc.org)

■ **GOLDEN HILL WI** Meets the first Wednesday of every month. 1-3pm. Golden Hill Sports Ground, Wimbledon Rd, BS6 7YA. A vibrant, lively new afternoon WI in BS6. Contact Pam Scull

at [goldenhillwi@gmail.com](mailto:goldenhillwi@gmail.com).

■ **BRISTOL VOICES COMMUNITY CHOIR** welcomes new members at any time. We meet at 7.30pm in St Werburghs Primary School during term time. See [www.bristolvoices.org.uk](http://www.bristolvoices.org.uk) for details.

### WELCOME WEDNESDAY

Friendly and free coffee afternoon on the last Wednesday of the month, 2-3.30pm at The Beehive Pub, Wellington Hill West, BS9 4QY. Meet new people, have fun, and find out what's happening in your local area. Call 0117 435 0063 for more information.

■ **CLIFTON CRAFTERS** We all have craft items we started and are now lurking in a drawer unloved - dig them out and come and share a morning of knitting, crochet, tapestry, rag r gs or whatever you would love to resurrect or mend! Every Wednesday in October at Clifton Library 10.30-12.30pm.

■ **BRISTOL SCRABBLE CLUB** meets every Wednesday evening at 7pm until 10pm at Filton Community Centre, Elm Park, Filton BS34 7PS. New members welcome- first visit free so come along and give us a try. For further information contact Tania by email at [tania lake@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:tania lake@yahoo.co.uk)

### Thursday

■ **HIGHBURY BADMINTON CLUB:** Pete Stables 0117 950 1524 or [www.pete4458.wixsite.com/highburybadminton](http://www.pete4458.wixsite.com/highburybadminton) Thurs 7:30pm mid September to End April, Westbury-on-Trym Village Hall

■ **THE STEPFORD SINGERS WOMEN'S COMMUNITY CHOIR** meets at Horfield Baptist Church, Bishopston on Thursday afternoons, 1pm to 3pm. No auditions and no need to read music! Come for a free taster session with our friendly, supportive group and learn to sing in harmony. For info, contact Fran [franbolton66@gmail.com](mailto:franbolton66@gmail.com)

■ **MINDFULNESS YOGA.** Thursdays 5.30 - 6.30pm. Deepen your yoga practice & awareness, through a meditative & loving-kindness approach. Classes adaptable for beginners and intermediates. By donation. See [www.bristol-buddhist-centre.org/yoga/](http://www.bristol-buddhist-centre.org/yoga/) for more details. Or email [info@bristol-buddhist-centre.org](mailto:info@bristol-buddhist-centre.org)

■ **GENTLE PILATES** Small and friendly group class with a mindful approach. Beginners welcome. Thursdays 11.30-12.30am at Bristol Yoga Space, Princes' Place, BS7 8NP. For further information email [ltta@mail@ittahowie.co.uk](mailto:ltta@mail@ittahowie.co.uk)

■ **THE READER** : We meet to share experiences using stories and poems that we read aloud; no pressure to read or talk. 11.30am to 1.00pm at Bishopston Library. Dee Derbyshire 07980364909 & Juliet Harvey

■ **SWIFTS INCLUSIVE SPORTS**

swimming sessions are for adults 18+ with any disability (hoist available) on Wednesday evenings from 7-8pm. £5 per session at Henbury Leisure Centre. Contact Karen Lloyd at 07734 335 878.

### FRIENDS TOGETHER

■ **DEMENTIA FRIENDLY CAFÉ A** Dementia accessible café for all on the first Thursday of every month, 10am-12pm; The Randall Room at All Saints Church, Pembroke Rd, Clifton. Support, guidance, information and friendship with complimentary tea, coffee and homemade cake. No need to book - just come along and be a part of our community! For more information contact All Saints Parish Office: 0117 974 1355

### ENJOY SCOTTISH DANCING ]

Looking for a new hobby? Join us for fun, fitness and friendship (singles welcome). First evening free! Thursdays: New/Inexperienced dancers 7-8.30pm (£4). Intermediate/Advanced dancers 7.30-10pm (£6). St Monica Trust, Oatley House Main Hall, BS9 3TN. [www.rscdsbristol.info](http://www.rscdsbristol.info). Contact Ruth 01179683057.

■ **BRISTOL BACH CHOIR** are now recruiting new members. We are a friendly auditioned choir of between 30 and 40 singers. All voice parts are welcome. We rehearse on a Thursday evening at Bristol Grammar School from 7.30pm to 9.30pm. If interested please contact Julie at [membership@bristolbach.org.uk](mailto:membership@bristolbach.org.uk)

■ **HENBURY SINGERS WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS** Do you have a yearning to join a choir? Whether you are new to choirs, or returning after a short or long break, a warm welcome awaits you at Henbury Singers. We meet each Thursday 7.30 - 9.15 at Stoke Bishop Primary School, Cedar Park BS9 1BW during school term times. We perform a wide range of sacred and secular music under our conductor Barbara Rusbridge. No auditions. See our website [www.henburysingers.org](http://www.henburysingers.org). Contact the secretary at [secretary@henburysingers.org](mailto:secretary@henburysingers.org)

■ **HENLEAZE LADIES' CHOIR** Join us as we fill St Peter's Church Hall in Henleaze with a diverse selection of music. We are a friendly choir and meet on Thursday afternoons in term time from 1.45 to 3.45. There are no auditions, and the ability to read music is not necessary. Contact Jeanette on 9685409 or Jane on 07752 332278

■ **HEALING FOR WELLBEING** - New time, 5pm to 6.15 pm. Drop in sessions with trained practitioners. Redland Meeting House, 126 Hampton Road, BS6 6JE. All welcome

- donation basis. For information, visit <http://www.facebook.com/BristolHealingGroup> or <https://www.thehealingtrust.org.uk/healing/healing-centre> or phone Selina 0117 9466434.

■ **BISHOPSTON COMMUNITY CHOIR** Meet on Thursday evenings, 7.30pm to 9.00pm at Horfield Baptist Church, 160a Gloucester Road, Bishopston BS7 8NT. Everyone welcome, no audition necessary. Contact us on [bishoproadchoir@gmail.com](mailto:bishoproadchoir@gmail.com)

■ **LOCAL CHOIR ACTIVELY RECRUITING NEW MEMBERS.** We meet at Stoke Bishop CE Primary School, BS9 1BW on Thursday, 7.45 - 9.15pm. We are a well-established mixed choir performing both sacred and secular music. See website [www.henburysingers.org](http://www.henburysingers.org) contact secretary at [secretary@henburysingers.org](mailto:secretary@henburysingers.org).

### Friday

■ **BRISTOL SPANISH CIRCLE** Come and meet a group of friendly people and enjoy talks in Spanish, musical events and social evenings. We meet every month from September to June, usually on the last Friday of the month, at St Peter's Church Hall in Henleaze. For more info, see <https://www.spanishcirclebristol.com/>

■ **COFFEES AND CRAFT** at Horfield Baptist Church, This community event is open to all who enjoy making and doing activities with their hands. Please bring your craft to work on and expect to have a relaxing and social time. When: Fridays in January 9th, 23rd and 30th, February 13th and 27th. Times 10.30 to 12.15. For further information please contact the church office [office@horfieldbaptist.net](mailto:office@horfieldbaptist.net)

■ **HENLEAZE BOWLING CLUB.** Come along at 5.45pm on Fridays to see if bowling could be the sport for you. Coaching available. Experienced bowlers welcome. Grange Court Road, by Newman Hall. This is a friendly Club with good bowling facilities and social events throughout the year. Phone, Tom Logan, on 0117 962 1669 or email [hbcsec@henleazebowlingclub.org.uk](mailto:hbcsec@henleazebowlingclub.org.uk) for further details.

■ **FOLK NIGHT** every third Wednesday of the month at the Victoria inn, Chock lane, Westbury on Trym. 7.30-10.30pm. All musicians and singers welcome or just pop in. Call 0117 959 0834

### Saturday

■ **SEA MILLS REPAIR CAFE** offers sewing, woodwork, general, electrical and cycle repairs at the Methodist Church, Sea Mills Square, from 10am-12pm, every second Saturday of the month (except August). This is a voluntary service run by experienced repairers. Donations welcome. FFI see Facebook @seamillsrepaircafe

## NATURE WATCH with Dawn Lawrence

# Marvel at the annual miracle of migration

THIS month spring is at the height of its powers and all our summer migrants have returned. The dawn chorus is playing fortissimo even here in the city with enthusiastic blackcaps and chiffchaffs joining our resident birds such as the sweetly tuneful blackbirds and the cooing wooing wood pigeons. But I will also be listening out for house martins. There is still (I hope) a sizeable colony just off Redland Road but the small colony on Berkeley Road has been empty for the past two summers – a loss which is hard to bear and we still hope for their return.

The house martin is a smaller, plumper relative of the swallow; dark above with an obvious white rump and all pale below, with forked tail lacking the flamboyant streamers of the swallow. House martins, like swallows, build nests of mud, collected and manipulated by beak alone, which they construct under the eaves of our houses and other buildings. Unlike the swallows, they are not shy of nesting in the middle of a city (swallows prefer rural areas, stables being a favourite option). Martins and swallows are not related to swifts – those all-black birds that shriek and arrow across our summer skies. More about swifts another day but please be aware of their need



A house martin in flight Photo by Mark Kilner

to access their nest holes in and around our roofs if you are having building work done.

It was a baby swallow ringed in its mud cup nest in Staffordshire in 1911 that solved the mystery of migration. Up until this ringing recovery the suggestion that our summer visitors overwinter in Africa was still too incredible for some to believe. Ringing – the placing of a light ring on a bird's leg with return details – had only begun to be organised in May 1909 but in 1912 the Staffordshire ring was returned from Natal

in South Africa over 6,000 miles away. Taken from a living bird that had become trapped in a farmhouse, it proved that the delicate swallow, a mere 20g spoonful, had made that astonishing journey. Imagine being the scientist to open that particular letter!

It is almost more surprising that over 100 years later we have still not discovered the parts of Africa where our house martins spend the winter although we know they are there somewhere. Now that they have returned we have the summer to enjoy their delicate chirruping song, often delivered from a perch such as a telephone wire, and their amiable chatter as they hunt for insects over our gardens. They need us more than ever and small artificial nest cups can be fixed under sheltering eaves to help them out. As with swift nest boxes, the more you can place together the better, because house martins are colonial nesters. By avoiding pesticides, providing long grass, fruit trees and native wildflowers you will encourage the insects that house martins need to raise, typically, two broods of around five chicks each. That's a lot of insects required!

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**PUZZLE PAGE**

**The FIEND**

Each row, column and square (9 spaces each) needs to be filled out with the numbers 1-9, without repeating any numbers within the row, column or square.

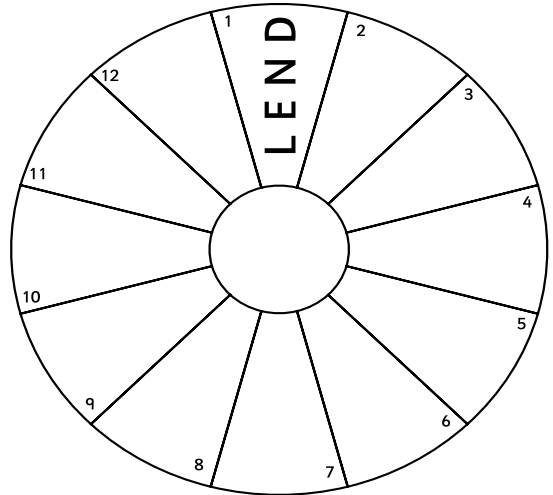
NOTE After feedback from readers, we have made The Fiend SLIGHTLY easier!

	5			4		3		
				2		6	1	
	2		6					9
			5		3	2		
				6	8	5	4	3
		7						
	9	2	1		6			5
4				7				6

**For younger readers**

**Change Twelve Letters**

Can you work your way around the circle, solving the clues and changing one letter each time until you come back to the beginning?



- 2. A curve; touch your toes
- 3. Look after a field or flower bed
- 4. Make better, make whole
- 5. Where your thoughts come from
- 6. Generous, good, affectionate
- 7. Tie up
- 8. A pop group, perhaps
- 9. Find it on the beach
- 10. At the end of your arm
- 11. Every magician has one
- 12. Not sea

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**Easier sudoku Solutions**

Rules the same as the Fiend, but only four numbers in each box, row and column

		4	
	4	1	
2			

**Txtpert**

V	G	O	D	T	O	H
E	I	N			S	
A	F	I	R	Y	I	I
D	A	I	R	A	I	S
E	T				A	
W	H	S	L	L	E	R
I	A				I	
L	E	Z	T	R	E	P

bind, bend, mend, mind, kind  
lend, bend, sand, hand, wand, land  
Change 12 letters solution:

**Txtpert**

Theme: Food

	1			2			3	
4								
5			6					
					7		8	
9								

Use the phone keypad to decode the clues.  
For example:  
2 could be A, B or C... and  
5678 could be  
LOST

1 q.o	2 abc	3 def
4 ghi	5 jkl	6 mno
7 pqrs	8 tuv	9 wxyz

Across

- 1 7738935 (7)
- 4 735474 (6)
- 5 32479 (5)
- 7 328 (3)
- 9 468 364 (3,3)

Down

- 1 743 (3)
- 2 82789 (5)
- 3 5463 (4)
- 4 723474 (6)
- 6 7463 (4)
- 7 344 (3)
- 8 832 (3)

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## ■ VINEYARD NEWS with INGRID BATES

# Vineyards bask in springtime glory

IT'S been a really special time in the vineyard over the last month. The buds have finally burst open on the vines, bringing excitement and anxiety in equal measure. With all the fresh green growth exposed, we've moved the sheep away to pastures new. The temptation to nibble the vines rather than the grass would simply be too much for them!

The sheep may have gone, but we'll be keeping a close eye on the threat of low temperatures and frost over the next few weeks. The main frost risk usually passes by the first week of May, but as ever with nature, there are no guarantees.

In our Wrington vineyard, we've finished pollarding the willow, and at our new Kelston site, we're getting ready to plant some new vines. Unlike everyone else, we'll be hoping for a decent amount of rain this summer to keep the young vines happy.

More than anything though, what

has stood this month, is the simple pleasure of seeing life return to the landscape. The fresh green growth in the hedgerows, the sound of birdsong, and the return of insects and wildlife is always so wonderful to see.

On the wine front, just a reminder that there may be a few tickets left for our wine and cheese evening at the Bristol Cheesemonger on Gloucester Road on May 21 - visit their website for details.

As always, you can book vineyard tours and buy wines directly through our website.

**E:** [hello@dunleavyvineyards.co.uk](mailto:hello@dunleavyvineyards.co.uk)

**W:** [www.dunleavyvineyards.co.uk](http://www.dunleavyvineyards.co.uk)

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The buds on the vines have burst open

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COMMUNITY NEWS

# Underneath the spreading chestnut tree

IN years to come, sadly, there will no longer be a great chestnut tree to stand proud overlooking Eastfield Road, as it has done for over a hundred years, keeping watch over children playing outside the old Westbury Board School opposite, witnessing the many changing fortunes of its partner the Village Hall and most recently, greeting the residents of Westbury on Trym and their friends at local events like the Village Show.

With great sadness the Village Hall Management Committee has had to arrange for it to be felled this year. The reason is that following an extensive survey by arboricultural experts at the committee's request, it has been found to be unsafe in high winds, due to being rotten internally. Not only this, but the roots are badly infected with honey-fungus which cannot be cured and which will produce further loosening at the base. It has been failing in 'tree health' for several years, with foliage being badly depleted as you may have noticed. After much discussion, a wide range of consultations regarding safety issues and removal costs, and with the agreement and permission of Bristol City Council, the committee



has come to the sad conclusion that the glory days of this landmark tree are over and it must be taken down.

We deeply regret having to make this decision, but it is in the best interests of safety for all users of the Hall and especially for pedestrians and car owners passing along this narrow stretch of Eastfield Road, who might be injured by a large falling branch, plus possible damage being caused to the Village Hall itself.

So if you would like to keep a happy memory

of this landmark tree for your families in the future, please come and take photographs or make sketches before April 13th, when work on it is scheduled to begin. The accompanying photograph of a large gathering beneath the tree was taken in 2009, showing many of the people associated with the revival of the Village Hall's own fortunes from 1972 onwards (when it came under the new management of an independent, locally elected management committee, responsible to the Charity Commission) - who were attending a celebration of the Hall's 140th Anniversary.

Designed and built at the instance of Henry St Vincent Ames of the original Cote House on the Downs, in 1869 it was opened as a Concert Hall and cultural centre for the people of Westbury on Trym, surrounded then by the fields, farms and large estates of this South Gloucestershire village. The tree has played a great part in the history of our Village Hall and we give thanks for its sheltering presence throughout more than two centuries.

**Hilary Long (Trustee)**  
on behalf of the Chairman and Trustees of  
Westbury Village Hall Management Committee

his' cli' henleaze & westburyvoice  
November, 2025 Issue 27  
November, 2025 Issue 27  
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Please provide your name, address and contact telephone number and which area you are interested in.

## Demand for school places drops

THE number of children seeking reception class places in Bristol's primary schools has fallen again.

The city council received 4,424 applications from families for September 2026, compared with 4,656 a year earlier.

Demand is down by more than 1,000 from ten years ago, meaning many schools have surplus places. Some are considering reducing the number of pupils they admit each year.

This year, 99 per cent of families have been offered one of their top three preferences and 91 per cent have been offered their first preference.

Councillor Christine Townsend, Chair of the Children and Young People Policy Committee, said: "I'm pleased that most families have been offered one of their preferred schools."

Parents had to accept or decline the offers by April 30.

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## LOCAL SERVICES

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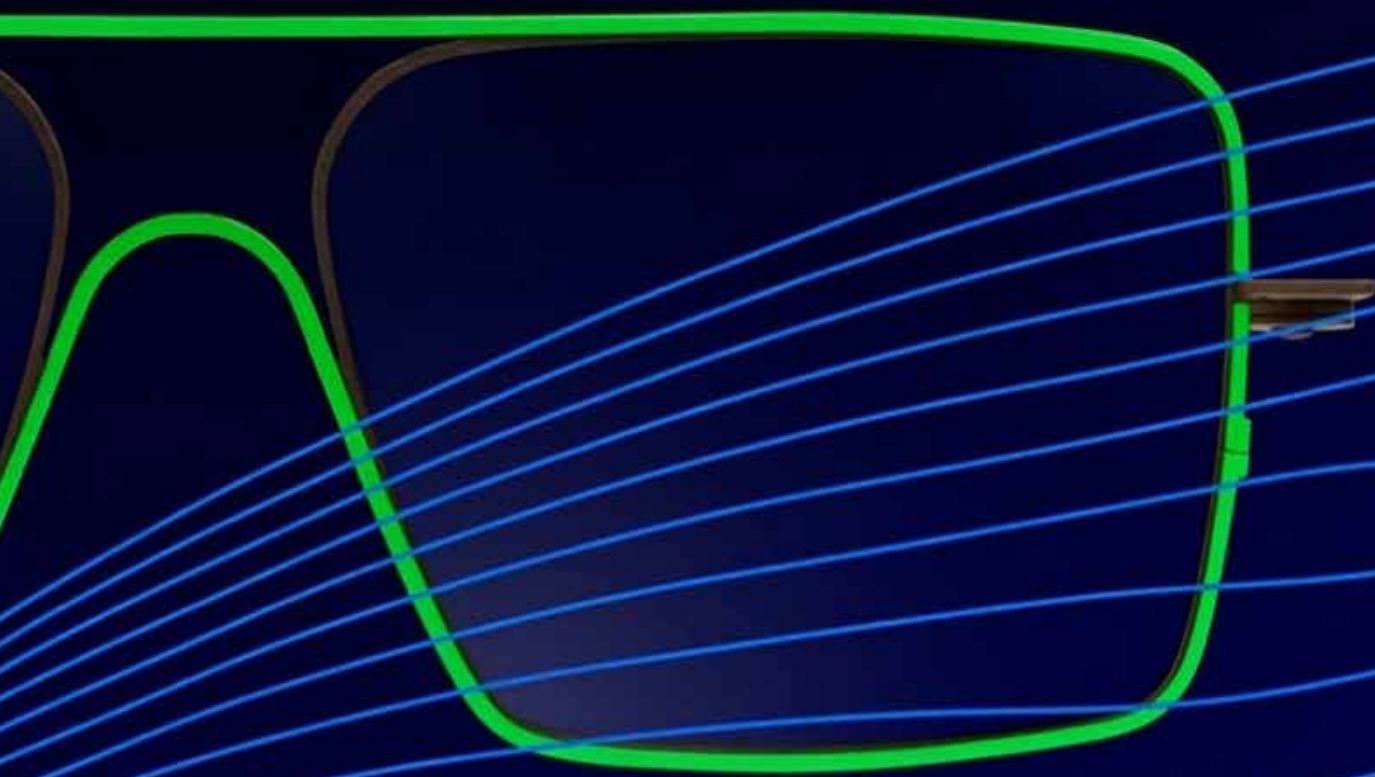
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