

bishopstonvoice

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Gloucester Rd bike lanes back on the agenda

POSSIBLE new bike lanes along Gloucester Road are to be considered again after being on hold for several years.

Plans to improve cycle routes were “set on one side” because of the desire to build a Bristol underground network.

Former mayor Marvin Rees floated the underground network idea in 2017 and it was eventually vetoed in 2023.

In the meantime, transport planners at Bristol City Council hesitated to put forward any schemes for bike lanes along Gloucester Road — one of the busiest cycling routes in the city — in case they ended up having to dig up the road again to build an underground tunnel.

However discussions between the council and the West of England Combined Authority are now about to take place over the future of Gloucester Road. An update was given to councillors on the transport policy committee on May 14 as part of discussion of wider investment in the roads around the indoor arena being built on the old Filton Airfield.

Adam Crowther, head of city transport, said: “The A38 has been set on one side because we’ve been talking about mass transit for a long time, Turn to Page 2



Cultural feast

Tasty Tibetan momos were just one of the treats on offer at the annual Culture Café at St John's CofE Primary. Forty-four stalls, each run by a school family, represented a different country or culture, offering homemade tasters from around the world.
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Housing hopes

Revised plans to turn an eyesore disused building at 349 Glos Rd into housing and a shop have been unveiled by developers.
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Choir petition

A petition has been launched against new licence fees that affect a Bring Your Own Baby choir in St Andrew's Park.
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Carnival blow

Organisers have cancelled the full-scale St Paul's Carnival for 2026 because of financial and safety concerns.
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Swift action

Swift boxes have been installed on a street in Bishopston to try to reverse the decline in migratory birds nesting.
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NEWS

M32 works planned

MOTORISTS and bus passengers have been told to expect six years of roadworks on the way in and out of Bristol as repairs are carried out to a flyover carrying the M32.

National Highways, which is responsible for the concrete Eastville viaduct, has pledged to keep two lanes open in both directions throughout the work, and says Muller Road and Stapleton Road, which cross underneath the motorway, will also stay open.

The work, which could cost up to £450 million, could be done quicker were the flyover to shut - but that would leave the busiest route into Bristol, which carries 85,000 vehicles a day, closed for three years.

The project will involve renewing the drainage, creating new noise barriers and replacing 130 bearings on top of the concrete columns or piers, extensive repairs to the concrete both on the top and bottom of the bridge deck, replacing

parapets, lighting, the central reservation and gantries.

The 1km flyover, which takes the motorway past Ikea and the Eastville Tesco store, will also be resurfaced and re-waterproofed, and possibly have its edge beams replaced.

After funding for the project was confirmed in March, design work is under way and due to finish next year, with a contractor to be appointed in 2028. Work will get under way in 2029 and is expected to take up to six years, which means finishing in 2035.

Project manager Will Miller said National Highways is committed "100%" to keeping the M32 open in both directions, as there is nowhere else that could cope with the amount of traffic that uses the motorway.

He said: "It's essential to keep Bristol city centre open for business."

The refurbishment should give the bridge another 40 to 50 years of use.

Glos Rd cycle lanes

From Page 1

along essentially that alignment. So there hasn't been a push to go and do lots of bus priority and active travel schemes, like we might do on a long corridor scheme.

"Because you don't want to do something that you then make completely different. I think we need to probably review that approach because we can't wait forever to improve the A38. We'll be discussing mass transit options with the combined authority and as part of that we do need to be looking at the short to medium term future of the A38."

The cost would range between £10 million and £30 million, depending on the length of the route. Initially a light-touch scheme would focus on the problem spots and pinch points along Gloucester Road, rather than building a segregated bike path along its whole length. The road is narrow in parts, so a segregated cycle lane "probably isn't feasible".

The works would probably be paid for from the giant Transport for City Regions pot of funding, which the Department for Transport gave to the West of England Combined Authority last year. Over the next five years, the West of England has £752 million to improve walking, cycling and public transport routes across the wider Bristol and Bath region.

Green Councillor Emma Edwards, who represents Bishopston and Ashley Down, said: "It's a massive cycling corridor and it's so piecemeal. There are some bits that are great, and some bits that are absolutely horrific. There are people who won't cycle down Gloucester Road because it doesn't feel safe enough."

By Alex Seabrook, Local Democracy Reporting Service

NEWS



Parents and babies gather in St Andrew's Park for Bring Your Own Baby choir sessions run by Julia Turner

Petition urges rethink on fees for 'lifeline' choir

by Ailsa Marshall

A BRISTOL choir for new parents has launched a petition after new council charges threatened the future of its outdoor singing sessions.

The BYOB (Bring Your Own Baby) Choir, which runs classes in four Bristol parks including St Andrew's Park, says it faces around £400 a year in fees under Bristol City Council's new licensing scheme.

Choir leader Julia Turner has launched a petition urging the council to reconsider the fee structure for postnatal wellbeing groups. At the time of writing, it had attracted more than 600 signatures.

Many of the mothers attending the choir said it had become an important source of support during maternity leave.

Hannah, who returned to the choir with thirteen-month-old Maggie after first going with her son Jude, described it as "a lifeline".

"It was one of the highlights of maternity leave with my son Jude, and I knew that I wanted to come back," she said.

"I actually went back to work after I'd had my son, but I kept Tuesdays off so I could keep coming. It's so good for my wellbeing.

I love being out in the park and being with other mums at a similar stage of life."

Emma, whose daughter Amelia is just nine weeks old, explained the choir gave her a "sense of solidarity which is so important, especially in these early days because the first few weeks are tough".

Several women said they had sung in choirs before becoming parents but now found evening rehearsals difficult. They described BYOB Choir as rare in creating a space centred on mothers as well as babies, where women could reconnect with hobbies and friendships during maternity leave.

Julia said the classes are designed to support women in the postnatal period, when many mothers are vulnerable to isolation and poor mental health. Come rain or shine - even in winter - the choir meets in Bristol's parks for 45 minutes of uplifting singing.

She described the new fees as "really insulting" and questioned why "dogs are being prioritised over vulnerable groups".

Despite the additional costs, she said she remained committed to keeping the choir running and would do whatever it took to continue the sessions, even if that

meant moving to private spaces or seeking community funding.

Anna, who attends with baby Serin, said losing the choir would be "such a shame".

"It's got a really strong social element and I've made some lovely friends through it too."

Others described the sessions as "really good for mental health" and "freeing and relaxing" - and the babies certainly seemed to enjoy it.

The council introduced the new licensing scheme last month. So far, 85 businesses have applied for licences. A 50 per cent discount is available to businesses with a turnover under £25,000 and using seven or fewer parks.

It has said it will review the scheme in time for renewal of the licences in 2027.

Labour's Councillor Tom Renhard told a meeting of the council's public health and communities policy committee last month that the choir provided clear social benefit

"This requires an urgent review, and the roll out should be paused until further work has been done to address the feedback given by residents and those running local community organisations and businesses," he said.



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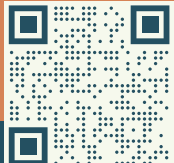
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NEWS



A mural of Owen Henry, one of the Seven Saints of St Paul's, is on display at 158 City Road



Carmen Beckford, another of the Seven Saints, is depicted at 38 St Nicholas Road. Carmen died in 2016

Bristol bids to become UK capital of civil rights

By Ailsa Marshall

FROM the Bristol Bus Boycott to the toppling of Edward Colston's statue, Bristol has long placed itself at the centre of Britain's activist history.

Now a new campaign hopes to formally recognise that identity, with organisers launching a summer-long programme of talks, murals and public events aimed at making Bristol the UK's first capital of civil rights.

The initiative, led by Bristol-based think-and-do tank CuriosityUnLtd, launched on the anniversary of the 1963 Bristol Bus Boycott - the landmark protest which challenged the Bristol Omnibus Company's refusal to employ Black and Asian bus crews.

For Julz Davis of CuriosityUnLtd, the campaign is less about creating a new identity for Bristol and more about recognising one that already exists.

"Bristol has never waited for permission to lead. This city has shown the country what change looks like. Activism has always been

the lifeblood of systemic change here."

Davis said Bristol's history of protest stretches across generations.

"From the 1831 riots for the right to vote, to St Paul's uprisings, to the Bristol Bus Boycott, to Kill the Bill, Banksy - the list really does go on," he said. "This city has that civil rights DNA in its spine."

Across BS7 and the neighbouring inner-city communities, that history is still visible today. In Stokes Croft, murals and graffiti-covered walls reflect decades of protest culture and creative resistance, while Gloucester Road's independent cafés and community spaces continue to display posters for local campaigns and grassroots events.

Davis pointed to figures such as community activist Carmen Beckford, whose portrait appears on a mural in St Paul's, as examples of the people who laid the foundations for Bristol's activist culture.

"We're standing on the shoulders of civil rights giants," he said.

The area has become closely tied to Bristol's activist identity in recent decades, including during the 2011 Stokes Croft anti-capitalist riots, sparked by the opening of a Tesco Express and wider tensions around gentrification and policing.

Throughout the summer, CuriosityUnLtd will host talks, exhibitions, screenings and public art projects exploring Bristol's relationship with activism and social change. This includes a collaborative mural project with artist Ella-Mia Grant at this year's Upfest.

Davis said the campaign is ultimately about future generations and creating a city where people feel empowered to challenge injustice.

Speaking to the Voice, he reflected on his daughters and the kind of city he hopes they inherit - one that loves them as much as they love them.

"We're building on that DNA of the city," he said. "We want Bristol to become the UK's first capital for civil rights."

Developers refine plans for homes at eyesore site

PLANS to redevelop an eyesore building on Gloucester Road have been amended following feedback from residents.

Speare Developments says it has improved its proposals to convert the building into homes for young professionals.

The property at 349 Gloucester Road has been out of use for most of the last two decades. Wetherspoons finally won permission to turn it into a pub after several attempts but did not do so.

Speare announced its



349 Gloucester Road

scheme last year and has now revised the housing mix to include up to 16 new flats, 12 of which are designed as shared accommodation, alongside a small retail unit that could

accommodate an independent local shop.

It has reduced the height of the revitalised building and changed its overall appearance.

A spokesperson said:

"Following feedback from the community, we've made a number of changes to the proposals. We've reduced the building height, introduced a mix of self-contained and shared homes, and designed a smaller commercial space potentially suitable for an independent shop."

The project remains a zero-parking scheme, and a further transport and parking survey will be carried out to ensure the proposals align with Bristol's planning policy."

Speare Developments said it aims to deliver a high-quality development that is in keeping with the character of the area while bringing a long-vacant site back into positive use.

Speare Developments will now submit a planning application to Bristol City Council.

NEWS

'Difficult decision' to cancel St Paul's Carnival

ORGANISERS have announced that a full-scale St Paul's Carnival will not take place this year.

They said the "extremely difficult" decision to cancel the event planned for July 4 had been taken because it was not possible "to safely and sustainably deliver Carnival at the scale and size the public, participants and the wider community have come to expect".

St Pauls Carnival CIC said it would continue its programme of cultural and community events throughout this year while looking at ways to deliver a "community rooted" event next year and considering plans for Carnival's sixtieth anniversary in 2028.

It said it "remains committed to celebrating African Caribbean culture, creativity and community in Bristol.

"While 2026 will take a different shape, SPC believes this

transition provides an important opportunity to strengthen the organisation, deepen community involvement, and help ensure that Carnival can return in future years in a way that is safe, sustainable, and worthy of its legacy."

It has become increasingly difficult to stage the full carnival days including a procession. The last full-scale event was in 2023 and drew a crowd of 120,000. Scaled-back events were held in 2022, 2024 and 2025. Carnival did not take place in 2015, 2016, 2017, 2020 or 2021 either.

St Pauls Carnival CIC said: "It is clear that a full-scale Carnival, including the procession, cannot be delivered this year without exposing the organisation to an unacceptable level of operational and financial risk."

Its full statement said: "This has been an incredibly difficult decision and one that we know will be disappointing for the community and the wider public.

St Pauls Carnival is a unique and deeply valued celebration of African Caribbean culture, heritage and community, and we fully recognise the disappointment many people will feel.

"Over the past year, we have worked closely with the community, our partners and operational teams to explore how the full Carnival could return in a way that reflects both the cultural significance of the event and the operational realities involved in delivering a free-to-attend public street event which attracts 150,000 people.

"Despite considerable work to reduce costs and reshape the model, as a board we have ultimately reached the conclusion that delivering a full-scale Carnival in 2026 is not viable.

"Our responsibility must always be to protect the safety of the public, volunteers, artists, traders, staff and

everyone involved in bringing Carnival to life. Delivering an event which has grown to this scale in recent years requires substantial infrastructure, safety management, staffing and financial resources.

"Like many cultural and live events organisations across the UK, we face increasing financial pressure on infrastructure, staffing, safety, security, compliance and delivery costs.

"Despite extensive fundraising activity and ongoing partner support, the gap between available resources and the costs required to deliver Carnival safely and responsibly remained too significant for 2026.

"While a full-scale Carnival will not take place this summer, our work to celebrate, protect and invest in Carnival's cultural legacy absolutely continues.

"This is not the end of Carnival. It is a necessary reset to help ensure its long-term future."



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NEWS

Festival on Downs expands

ORGANISERS of a food festival on the Downs have been given permission to expand its capacity by 1,000 and put on a second weekend of concerts.

Feast On will now run for four days in July, followed by four evening concerts the next weekend.

The food festival launched in 2024. Last year local residents complained that the music was too loud, so now organisers have promised to limit noise levels and replace "excessively" large speakers with smaller ones.

Feast On hosts stalls run by some of Bristol's best restaurants and street food traders, such as Cor, Bianchi, the Bank Tavern, Sky Kong Kong and Danny's Burgers. A market also includes stalls from favourites including the Cheese Connection, Easton Chilli and Somerset Charcuterie. Cooking classes and wine tasting are planned, as well as axe throwing and live music.

This year the festival runs from July 23 to 26. Councillors at a licensing hearing at Bristol City Council voted to permit changes to the licence, increasing its maximum capacity from 4,999 people to 6,000, and permitting four extra nights of live music.

Feast Live from July 30 until August 2 features pop singer Becky Hill, a West End-style family show and a Hacienda Classical combining club culture with a 30-piece orchestra, DJs and singers. Thursday's act has not yet been announced.

Glass artists start new chapter



Celia and Jake at their studio on Chandos Road and their work at St Werburgh's Park Nursery

by Ailsa Marshall

AFTER three decades based on Chandos Road, Opus Glass Design has moved its studio to a home workspace in BS7, where glass artists Celia and Jake continue their long-running practice in Bishopston.

The pair, who run the business together, have been part of Bristol's artistic community for decades, producing stained and decorative glass for homes and public buildings across the city and beyond.

Their work blends traditional glass-making techniques with a contemporary approach, ranging from bespoke domestic commissions to large-scale installations in hospitals, schools, and libraries. They also carry out restoration and repair of historic stained glass.

Jake says the business began from a shared ambition. "We met as friends and we always knew we wanted our own business,"

he explains. "We wanted to specialise in contemporary art, and we sort of dreamt up this plan."

Their long association with Chandos Road began when they found a studio space there and quickly felt at home. "We found the place on Chandos Road and thought it'd be perfect," Jake recalls. "When we saw it, we fell in love with it - and then we were there for 30 years."

Over time, much of their work developed through local connections and word of mouth. Celia reflects that this became the foundation of their reputation: "People got to know us over the years, then it was mainly word of mouth."

Commissions have included work for St Werburgh's Park Nursery, Southmead Hospital, Hengrove, and libraries in Filton and Bradley Stoke, as well as larger hospital projects in Manchester. "We weren't too

proud to do anything - we'd take on anything," she adds.

For Celia, the appeal of stained glass lies in its relationship with light and colour. "People have a very basic response to colour and light and I think together it's the most amazing thing," she says. "It can tell stories, it can draw people in, it can inspire them."

She notes that its changing nature is central to its effect: "It changes through the day, it's never the same. It looks different in different light, it's something that's constantly changing." Celia also reflects on the personal aspect of the craft: "You can put your soul into people's houses." From their BS7 base, Celia and Jake continue their established practice in stained and decorative glass, working on commissions for both domestic and public settings, with a continued focus on Bristol and its surrounding communities.

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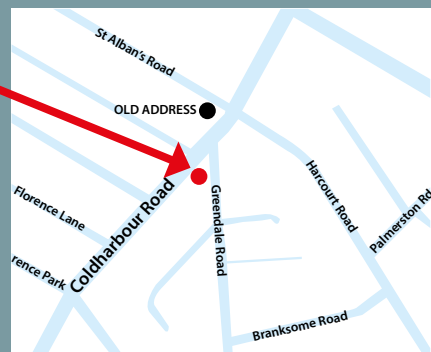
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NEWS

Former refugee becomes Lord Mayor

A FORMER refugee who fled war in Somalia has become the lord mayor of Bristol and will represent Bristol City Council for the next year. The lord mayor is largely a ceremonial role and acts as a figurehead for the city council as well as playing a key part in citizenship ceremonies.

Green Councillor Yassin Mohamud was sworn in as lord mayor for the new civic year during a full council meeting on May 12. The "first citizen" of Bristol stays in post for a year, and is chosen by other councillors. They chair full council meetings and attend events.

Speaking during the meeting, he said he wanted to use the platform to celebrate Bristol's diversity and celebrate the different cultures and faiths in the city. He added that serving as lord mayor was the "greatest privilege of my life".

Cllr Mohamud said: "It's a deep honour to stand before you today as the first lord mayor of Somali origin in Bristol. I look forward to serving all of Bristol over the next year."

The lord mayor was born in Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia, and grew up in the south of the country. He later worked in the government's plant protection department, before fleeing the war there and coming to Bristol with his family. They now live in St Jude's. He was first elected as a councillor



Councillor Yassin Mohamud, Lord Mayor

in 2021, representing the ward of Lawrence Hill, and was then re-elected in 2024.

He added: "Like so many people who arrive in a new country, the transition was not easy. But luckily for me, the city I arrived in was Bristol. Moving to a country is a great challenge: you must learn a new language and new customs, and work out unfamiliar systems. You must find schools for your children, a job, and most importantly, find community."

"Like many people in our city, my understanding of politics did not begin in a formal setting. It came from my lived experience of moving to Bristol. It came from seeing how decisions affect everyday life, the quality of housing, the safety of streets, the

opportunities available to young people, and whether communities feel seen and heard."

Following the Barton House evacuation in 2023, he worked with colleagues to push for changes that better support residents affected by unsafe housing conditions, and has supported efforts to reopen and protect community spaces in tower blocks.

The outgoing lord mayor was Conservative Cllr Henry Michallat, who will become the deputy lord mayor for this year. Colleagues praised his "wisdom above his years", while he said he had attended more than 420 events over the course of last year, and oversaw more than 1,200 people becoming British citizens.

Cllr Michallat said: "One of my highlights was championing my theme as lord mayor: supporting the arts, culture and history of the city. It was also an honour to represent Bristol on the world stage. In March I went to Guangzhou in China and met the mayor and various politicians and people within the local community, as we approach our 25th anniversary of our twinning relationship. In April I went to Bordeaux in France and met the deputy mayor at their City Hall, ahead of our 80th anniversary of our twinning."

By Alex Seabrook, Local Democracy Reporting Service

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■ ADVERTISING FEATURE

Celebrate Whiteladies Road Market's 20th anniversary

BEGINNING in June 2006, this volunteer-run market has grown into a stalwart of the community.

"It was created by local residents who cared deeply about the natural world and wanted to galvanise local action," says Angela, a founding volunteer who still helps run the market.

"We started a group called Sustainable Redland in March 2005 and after a year of getting the right permissions, the first market took place on 22nd June 2006."

Initially held monthly on a Friday, the market's popularity soon warranted a move to Saturdays and, since 2015, an increase in frequency to weekly. The number and range of stalls grew rapidly. Community groups such as Metford Road Orchard and Avon Wildlife Trust host occasional stalls, along with other community activities such as bike repairs.

Two decades on, the market is thriving. On a typical Saturday, the air fills with the smell of freshly baked bread and freshly brewed coffee, and neighbours stop to chat as they pick up their



weekly essentials. Passers-by pause to listen to the sounds of local musicians or choose a gift for a special someone. From the first traders setting up in the morning to the last stall being packed away, there's a friendly, steady buzz. Many stalls champion low-waste, locally sourced, and environmentally-friendly products, giving shoppers the chance to support greener choices whilst enjoying the lively atmosphere.

Market days offer an impressive range of local products, from Leigh Court Farm's fresh fruit and veg to ever popular 'Jacqui's Sweets', alongside local crafts and woodwork. 'Old Sodbury Lamb', serving farm produce and

luscious hot bacon rolls, have been a lynchpin since the beginning. Andy and Sarah who run the stall remember: "We sold out by coffee time on that first day in 2006 and had to pop back to the farm to fetch more. It's great here because you see the same faces, and you get to chat to people".

The queue for Farro Bakery stretches to the bus stop, Stream Farm and Gotherney Farm are regulars, as is Steve's Fab Green Coffee Van. As Leo from L'Affinage Fine Cheeses puts it: "This market has friendly and mutually supportive traders, as well as an incredibly loyal customer base."

The market is always open to potential new traders, space permitting, and encourages an offering of local, ethical, and environmentally-friendly products.

Charlie of 'Gert Lush' has been selling homemade granola at the market for just shy of a year, saying: "It's a lovely market. There are a lot of people nearby who are interested and like to pop in."

The market also prides itself on providing a first 'testing ground' for

start-ups, some then expanding to supply local shops or even set up in permanent premises.

Simon Bennett, who also sells his home-grown plants, became market manager in 2024.

"It's more than just a market. It's a community event, somewhere people can come to, sit down, enjoy each other's company. Being a Community Interest Company means we can keep fees for traders relatively low. Lots of behind-the-scenes work is done for free by residents, and a team of youngsters are employed to help with set up and take down. The traders feel well supported and welcome."

Whiteladies Road Market is every Saturday at 08:30 – 13:00, on the corner of Whiteladies Road and Apsley Road. Save the date for **Saturday June 27**, when a special celebration will be taking place.

Find out more about what's on at the market by following @whiteladies_market on Instagram, searching 'Whiteladies Road Market' on Facebook, or visiting the market's website at www.wrmcic.co.uk.



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SCHOOLS NEWS

BISHOP ROAD PRIMARY

This term, Bishop Road Primary School has been alive with visitors, trips and the sound of music reverberating across the playground. From author visits, Ancient Greek and Viking workshops, the Bishop Road World Cup to the school's first appearance in Schoolvision, the children have embraced the opportunity to take part in a plethora of wonderful and memorable experiences.

Schoolvision

Children across the school participated in our Schoolvision entry, singing and creating a video that highlights all the best of Bristol. Bishop Road school is the English entry for Schoolvision 2026 and will be up against videos from other schools across Europe. The children in Year 3 created and performed their own Sea Shanty song, with the whole school and iconic parts of Bristol being filmed via drone. The results of the competition will be announced in the coming weeks; we are keeping our fingers crossed until **then!**



The Under the Sea party for Reception children at Bishop Road

Bishop Road World Cup

The first ever Bishop Road World Cup was hosted at the school field earlier this term. Children in Year 3 and 4 represented 6 different countries in a bid to be crowned Bishop Road Champions. Supported by parents and staff, the event was a huge success, particularly for the children who

were representing England, who bucked a 60-year trend and emerged victorious. Wonderful team play, enthralling matches and heartening sportsmanship was displayed in abundance.

Enrichment at Bishop Road

Children across the school take part in a range of enriching

activities throughout the school year. This term, Year 3 were visited by a 'Viking' who taught the children about Norse Mythology, how and what the Vikings traded and some of their more infamous raids, while Year 4 were visited by a 'real' ancient Greek. Year 6 recently visited Lifeskills, an immersive interactive village where children explored a range of real-life scenarios designed to teach life-saving safety skills. As the Year 6s prepare to transition to Secondary School, the skills and knowledge they gained will be invaluable in supporting them being even more independent.

Bishop Road PTFA

Children from all year groups have now enjoyed their annual discos, including the Reception children who had a very special 'under the sea' themed party. The PTFA would also like to thank everyone who supported Inflatables Day on the school field.

Our next event is the summer fair on Saturday 13th June – June – a lovely afternoon for all the family, with games, treats and entertainment for all.

ST JOHN'S C OF E PRIMARY

NOW in its third year, St John's Culture Café has become one of the most eagerly anticipated events in the school calendar. This May it was bigger and better than ever, transforming the school hall, playground canopy and a classroom into a bustling global food market for the afternoon!

Forty-four stalls, each run by a school family, represented a different country or culture, offering homemade tasters from around the world. Around 600 pupils, parents and community members came along, buying tokens to sample dishes spanning continents: Cuban fried plantain, Peruvian alfajores, Ukrainian pirogi, Taiwanese bubble tea and a Gambian baobab, along with Welsh cakes, Irish soda bread and Scottish Dundee cake and shortbread. There was food from every corner of the globe and something for every taste bud.

Proceeds were split between a charity supporting international education, chosen by the Year 6 School Council, and new multilingual resources for the school library.

Headteacher Justin Hoye said: "This is such a great opportunity to bring our school community together and celebrate the amazing diversity we have in our school. The food is so varied and delicious. Huge thanks to all our contributing families and to Mrs Laura Swithinbank for her supreme organisation!"

One pupil running the Italian stall shared the feeling: "It's great for people to get together and spread the word about their culture. I really enjoyed making the food with my mum and running my stall, sharing pizza, pasta, fried dough with ham and mozzarella and a yummy Italian tart."

Every dish was homemade by the families themselves, making each one a genuine reflection of the culture behind it. With 44 countries represented and barely a taster left by the end of the afternoon, St John's Culture Café proved once again that food is one of the very best ways to bring our community's varied background together!



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SCHOOLS NEWS



They are the champions!

Fairfield High School's senior basketball team has been crowned Bristol Basketball Champions following an outstanding 56-22 victory in the final, marking their third consecutive title.

The team delivered a dominant performance to secure the title, capping off an exceptional season in which they maintained a perfect 100 per cent win record. Congratulations to Jai, Mo, Sammy, Stan, Ismail, Rudy, Zubair, Jack and Billy.

Graduation honour

STUDENTS from Montpelier High School emerged victorious from an academic programme run by the University of Reading.

Year 10 students from four schools participated in the Reading Scholars Project introducing them to university-style learning, independent research and critical thinking. The programme included campus visits, academic skills workshops, mentoring opportunities and subject-specific lectures, all aimed at broadening aspirations and building confidence.

As part of the programme, the MHS students produced academic research posters on topics of their choosing. These posters were presented and judged at the graduation event alongside work from more than 80 students. The results were outstanding, with MHS securing the first, second and third prizes – an achievement that reflects their commitment, curiosity and academic ambition.

Headteacher Vanetta Spence said "This remarkable success is a testament to the hard work, resilience and intellectual curiosity of our Year 10 students. Achievements like this show what young people can accomplish when they are challenged, supported and encouraged to aim high. We are immensely proud of them."



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NEWS

Flying high! Rapid response on Swift Street

THE residents of Egerton Road have been preparing their street for some very special visitors and it has involved some extreme DIY.

At this time of year our skies should be full of those glorious streamlined birds called swifts. But, over the last 30 years their numbers have dropped by around 90 per cent in the Bristol area so now, where there used to be ten swifts, only one is left.

Swifts only nest in buildings, usually in roofs. They prefer pre-Second World War buildings. Bishopston (and much of Bristol) is therefore perfect for them.

But, every roof repair and loft conversion risks swifts being blocked out of their former homes. Repeat this across Britain and the birds are in deep trouble.

Fortunately, there is a solution – provide nest boxes and they will come. So the residents of Egerton Road, with invaluable advice and guidance from Mark Glanville of the wonderful website www.bristolswifts.co.uk, decided to act. Host families bought, or made, boxes and even, when their own house proved unsuitable, gifted a box to a neighbour. Double boxes – even a few triples – were

preferred because, just like us, swifts prefer a choice. A doughty crew of carpenters and builders was assembled and fitted the boxes working atop the longest ladders the street could provide.

But a problem arose: swifts like to be up high – they want to be up near the roof – and some houses were too high for even these intrepid swift-box fitters to reach on a ladder.

Step up Justin Grew and Jon Gedman of Gristwood and Toms. This company, part of the landscaping and tree surgery Nurture group, very kindly provided a cherry-picker and these two enthusiastic operators, to allow the higher level boxes to be mounted safely.

"I just want the birds to be happy," said Justin, "and it was an exciting adventure which we were happy to be involved with."

It was especially exciting for Toby Partington who got to fit the highest boxes, after spending several hours perched on a ladder fitting (slightly) lower ones.

"I definitely prefer the cherry picker!" was his conclusion.

Your correspondent supervised from below with a "right a bit" and



Two double boxes just installed on the house on the right. Toby and Justin decide to check the swift's eye view, which you can see below

a "have you got the spirit level?" Then, as we were waving goodbye to Justin and Jon, right on cue two swifts appeared overhead to check out the results.

Thanks to all involved, and good luck to Berkeley Road who

are now making and fitting swift boxes to help grow our Bishopston colony.

• More about swifts can be found in this month's wildlife column on Page 29.

Dawn Lawrence



Justin, left, and Jon saved the day by providing a cherry picker for Egerton Road's swifts



From the top of the cherry picker on Egerton Road – the Cricket Ground lights can be seen in the background

PHARMACY COLUMN

If you think your child has Impetigo, check symptoms with a pharmacist



0117 9246579
18 Kellaway Avenue,
Westbury Park, BS6 7XR

It might start as a small sore, a patch of dry skin, or what looks like a minor graze around your child's nose or mouth.

But Impetigo can spread very quickly between young children — at home, in nurseries, schools, playgrounds, and sports clubs.

That's why the team at Kellaway Pharmacy is encouraging parents and carers to act early and get symptoms checked as soon as they notice them.

Early treatment can stop the infection from spreading to other children and family members.

What should you look out for?

Impetigo is a common bacterial skin infection that mainly affects young children.

Signs include:

- Red sores or small blisters
- Wet, crusty, or weeping patches

on the skin

- Honey-coloured or golden crusts
 - Itchy or sore skin
 - Patches that spread over several days
- It often appears around the nose, mouth, hands, or on skin that has been scratched or irritated.

Why acting quickly matters

Impetigo is highly contagious and spreads easily through:

- Touching infected skin
- Scratching sores
- Sharing towels, bedding, toys, or clothing
- Close contact at nursery or school

What starts as one small patch can quickly spread across a child's body — and then to siblings, classmates, and other family members.

The earlier the treatment

starts, the easier it is to control the infection and reduce the risk of it spreading further.

Skip the GP wait

Many parents still don't realise they can go straight to their local pharmacy for NHS treatment.

Through the NHS Pharmacy First service, the trained prescribing pharmacists at Kellaway Pharmacy can assess and treat impetigo, where appropriate, with free NHS prescription-strength medication without needing a GP appointment first.

Parents, grandparents or other carers often visit after pick-up or getting a call from the nursery or school because the service is fast, convenient, and easy to access.

The service offers:

- Fast access to NHS care
- Free walk-in consultations

- Expert advice close to home
- NHS treatment, where appropriate
- Referral to a GP if further care is needed

If it looks like Impetigo, don't wait

If your child develops suspicious sores, crusting, or spreading patches, it's best to visit the team at Kellaway Pharmacy as soon as possible, rather than waiting for symptoms to worsen.

Getting treatment early could help stop the infection from spreading through your household, nursery, or school

Kellaway Pharmacy is here to help families with fast, accessible NHS care through the Pharmacy First service. No appointment is needed - just walk in. Call 0117 924 6579 to find out more or speak to the pharmacy team.

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NEWS

Navigating grief

TWO free booklets have been developed in partnership with North Bristol NHS Trust, Gentle Dusk and Bristol Memorial Woodland Trust to support individuals and families navigating end-of-life decisions and bereavement.

Guide to End-of-Life Planning and When Someone Dies aim to empower people by providing information, support and advice when facing death - whether their own or that of someone close to them. This includes practical guidance about funerals, estate planning, and legal requirements as well as information and support on making end-of-life care decisions and navigating grief. Feedback so far from both professionals and bereaved families has been overwhelmingly positive.

The project was led by Mireille Herbert Hayden, a health psychologist who works closely with Bristol Memorial Woodland Trust, with input from the specialist palliative

care team at NBT and Gentle Dusk service users. Mireille also drew upon her own experience of a family member's cancer diagnosis.

The booklets are available to both the public and healthcare professionals and have been translated into five languages.

Mireille Herbert Hayden said: "These booklets have been created to gently guide people through conversations and decisions that can often feel overwhelming. By providing clear, thoughtful information, we hope to give individuals and families a sense of control and reassurance."

Professor Steve Hams, chief nursing officer for Bristol NHS Group, said: "End-of-life care is about more than clinical input; it's about dignity, connection, and ensuring that every individual and family has the space to plan, talk, and feel supported."

Find the booklets at <https://www.bristolmemorialwoodlandtrust.org>

NEWS

Film puts 'national emergency' in spotlight

IT'S an old joke, "Everybody complains about the weather, but nobody ever does anything about it."

But with extreme climate events, fires and floods around the globe, it isn't a joke any longer, and maybe it is possible to get something done. That was the aim of an event in London's Westminster Hall last November. An audience of more than a thousand politicians and leaders from business, culture, faith, sport, and the media was invited to be briefed by ten leading experts.

They were told, and shown, how bad climate change is already and how much worse it could be if action is not taken. There was also a message of hope: there is clear evidence that urgent action will strengthen our economy, resilience, and quality of life.

The next step is taking that message to the public. A nationwide grassroots movement is organising screenings of a condensed version, the People's Emergency Briefing: 50 hard-hitting minutes of facts and astounded discussion. To be shown in **Henleaze, Bradbury Hall, Waterford Road, BS9 4BT on 14 June, 19.30-21.30.**

The purpose of the film is to raise awareness, provoke discussion, and to increase



Where will the next storm strike?

pressure on Parliament to have the film shown on national television.

"Everybody needs to know what might happen, what certainly will happen if we don't act, and our leaders need to know that we want action," said the spokesperson of the Westbury Park Community Association, which

is organising the showing in Henleaze.

"Politicians assume that people don't care. We have to show that they do."

In light of the risks now clearly established by independent experts, the National Emergency Briefing calls for Government action to inform the public, prepare us and protect us.

It says:

- The Government must deliver a prime-time, multi-channel national emergency briefing, launching a major public plan to cut disinformation. Plain-speaking experts in the original Briefing showed how this can be done.
- The Government should launch a science-led national emergency response to climate and nature breakdown, showing the same leadership and determination as in WW2 and during the financial crisis. There must be emergency legislation driving rapid reduction in emissions and increased investment in adaptation. Such action will create jobs and improve lives.

International climate conferences failed to deliver the scale of global action needed. The UK can establish the credibility required to lead by example in driving the coordinated global action we need.

NEWS FROM SUSTAINABLE WESTBURY ON TRYM (SusWoT)

Keep it clean

Lots of people across the city get involved in litter picking. According to Bristol Waste, 520 people participated in this year's Great Bristol Spring Clean, collecting over 850 sacks of rubbish. SusWoT's group litter picks contributed over 100 bags alongside bulky items such as fly-tipped fridges, furniture and mattresses.

While these high-profile activities bring an immediate improvement, the long-term difference is made by individuals who make sure that the area stays clean. In Westbury-on-Trym we have around 50 volunteers who keep a nearby road or small patch of green space clean at a time to suit them. SusWoT provides all the equipment and support to make this as easy as possible.

We are rolling this approach out beyond Westbury with support from the Bristol Civic Society and the Quartet Community Foundation. Our Friday and Sunday group litter picks have been focussing on deep-cleaning Southmead for a few months now and we are actively recruiting volunteers to keep it clean. We already have 20

new recruits and are looking for another 30-40 people to help.

Himalayan Balsam

Himalayan Balsam is an invasive plant which spreads rapidly, smothers other plants and erodes the riverbanks. SusWoT and Trout in the Trym volunteers have been working to eradicate it from the Trym and Hazel Brook for several years. There is far less of it now than in previous years, but as each plant can produce 700 seeds, we need to ensure it doesn't take hold again.

To destroy Himalayan Balsam – you should pull it out carefully (including the roots), crush the stem and leave it out to dry. We are keen to recruit volunteers to monitor specific sections along the river, and we encourage people to let us know if they spot any Himalayan Balsam that they can't deal with themselves.

Liz Viggars



**Climate chaos:
the risks we face
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A film that explains it**



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■ FROM BRISTOL CENTRAL'S MP

Greens make change happen

On May 7 the Green Party had its most successful local election results ever. Up and down the country hundreds of new Green councillors, and two new Green Mayors, are getting straight to work tackling issues affecting their local communities – and I couldn't be more proud.

In Bristol we know how much difference having a Green in the council chamber – or even better in administration – can make. In 2025 our Green-led council oversaw the building of a record number of affordable homes with many more in the works. That same year Bristol was recognised as the best city in England on climate action. And, in January, the Local Government Association praised the “progress, leadership and direction” at the council, noting that our collaborative committee system “is in robust health” and “showing signs of maturity” just two years after it was introduced.

The progress on affordable homes has been amazing to see but I can't help thinking about

all the people in our community who continue to struggle with unaffordable private rents.

On 1st May the Government's new Renters' Rights Act came into force. Although this is a step in the right direction, without any serious action to address the unaffordability of rents it's just not enough.

Yes, it put an end to no-fault evictions, but when the landlord can still hike the rent until people can no longer afford to stay, isn't that just no-fault eviction by another name? I know there are thousands of private renters across the city still at the whim of landlords charging extortionate rent for poor quality housing.

I was out on Whiteladies Road recently talking about this very issue – hearing how much people spend on rent, and the things they have to forgo in order to do so. On average, renters in Bristol spend 57% of their incomes on rent, the highest figure in the country outside London. Even with prices this high, I am still regularly hearing cases of tenants

living in terrible conditions. Recently, I have been helping some constituents whose private landlord has left them living for over a month in a house where waste from the toilet, sink and shower is flooding into their conservatory. This is unacceptable.

The local election results show that after two years in government the Labour Party has not delivered on the promises they made. People up and down the country feel that the things that matter to them the most, like housing and energy bills, are being ignored.

Green representatives do things differently. Straight after the local elections I teamed up with the Green Party's two new Mayors, who represent Lewisham and Hackney, putting pressure on the government on these issues. We wrote to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to demand the government start doing something that would actually benefit the thousands of people renting privately in our areas:



Carla Denyer
writes for
the Voice

introduce rent controls.

• If you live in Bristol Central and need help with a local issue, email me at 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

■ FROM BRISTOL NORTH WEST'S MP

An increasingly dangerous world

On ANZAC Day, April 25, a service in Westminster Abbey commemorated the allied forces who died in the Gallipoli landings of Ottoman Turkey in the First World War, including 29,000 British and Irish soldiers and 11,000 Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZACs).

This act of remembrance is especially poignant today, as we find ourselves once again living in an increasingly dangerous world.

To counter this threat, the long-standing defence and security ties between the UK and our allies are being strengthened as we work together on a trilateral security partnership between Australia, the UK and the US – known as the 'AUKUS' defence partnership.

During a ministerial visit to Australia in April, I was invited to tour a classified facility where Brits will help to build a new generation of nuclear-powered submarines. These will be the largest, quietest and most

advanced attack submarines ever operated by the British Royal Navy and the Royal Australian Navy – helping to keep both of our nations safe for decades to come. In return, the Australians are investing over £2 billion here in the UK.

It's the first priority of this government to defend the British people and our interests, so it is important that we are strengthening our submarine fleet. But diplomacy will always be our strongest weapon.

The current conflict in the Middle East is not our war, but our armed forces have taken the necessary defensive actions to protect the around 300,000 British civilians in the Gulf region and to protect our allies.

The Iranian regime's response to the joint US and Israeli airstrikes had become a threat to our partners, to our interests, and to our allies. What we had seen was a sustained, reckless campaign of strikes from the Iranian regime

– with ballistic missiles targeting Gulf allies who were not involved in the original strikes.

That's why this government not only stepped up our defensive capability across the region but also gave the US permission to use bases where we have long-standing arrangements with them, for the specific defensive purpose of destroying the missiles that were targeting Gulf allies and posing a risk to British nationals in the region.

Many of you will also be concerned about how the closure of the Strait of Hormuz might impact the cost of living. That's why I announced in the House of Commons that I'm chairing a new contingency planning ministerial group. This will focus on preparing for and mitigating, where possible, any impact on our economy and domestic security caused by the conflict.

And finally, in other news, the actor and broadcaster Sir Tony Robinson will be joining me for



Darren Jones
writes for
the Voice

an event in Filton at 2pm on June 6 to discuss philanthropy, charity and the importance of giving back. To book, head to darren-jones.co.uk/events.

• As always, if you need my help or have a question, you can get in touch with me at 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.

NEWS

Nature festival

THE Hub and Gainsborough Square in Lockleaze will play host on Saturday June 6 to the Lockleaze Climate & Nature Festival.

From 1.30-5pm, the area will come alive for an afternoon of fun and celebration featuring reggae DJ K Anthony, Unfold Community Arts, Lockleaze Youth Climate Group, Ceilidh dancing, community picnic and stalls including Horfield Greenery, Avon Wildlife Trust, Coo Geller, Street Goat, and much more.

Children's activities, including a fancy dress competition and a flower power bee parade, will keep the little ones entertained.

Save the date - and if you could contribute an hour to making it happen, please contact reallywild@lockleazent.co.uk

FRIENDS OF ST ANDREWS PARK

Frogs and bugs get 5-star new homes

FROGS, toads and newts - as well as bees, butterflies and beetles - are now enjoying luxury accommodation in St Andrews Park, thanks to local children and families.

The newly renovated wildlife pond in St Andrews Park has a brand new neighbour: a large bug hotel built from recycled pallets and house bricks.

More than 50 young children, teens and adults came together to stuff old plastic plant pots with reclaimed sheep's wool, bundles of sticks, pine cones and broken terracotta pot crocks, creating a perfect mix of tiny habitats for insects and spiders.

"We've had reports that the first



solitary bees have already moved in, which shows how desirable it is!" says the new Chair of Friends of St Andrews Park (FOSAP), Trucie Mitchell, who organised the building session.

"Without the kind people who came along and gave up their Sunday to help run the event, we couldn't have done it."

To find out about other events in the park and how to help with its upkeep, visit FOSAP.org.

Everyone is welcome to come along to the monthly Park Chats to make suggestions, ask questions or find out more about the park. Park Chat runs on the first Sunday of the month at 10am by the Afista coffee van.

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■ HORFIELD ORGANIC COMMUNITY ORCHARD

Lush life in a summer orchard

THE Horfield Organic Community Orchard (HOCO) calendar is shaped by three special public events. June is the month of midsummer, when days are longest and the sun is at its peak. Our summer open day feels like a calm oasis during this high energy season. The orchard is full of life - abuzz with insects and the eager creatures that feed on them. Millions of leaves are turning sunshine into sugars and cooling the air as they breathe. Networks of mycelium snap, crackle and pop below ground. There is something soothing about sitting under the shade of a tree, or laying on the grass and tuning into communities of life on the ground.

All are welcome to slow down, explore the life, and enjoy the lush beauty of our Summer Orchard Open Day on Sunday 14 June. We are delighted to be part of the Bristol Festival of Nature community-led programme. Drop in for some Art in the Orchard - please bring your own art making materials. Be inspired by our Bee Active, Bee Fruitful! community pollinator project plantings, and find out more about the Ecology of Fruit Trees. Sign up in advance for the popular Summer Fruit Tree Care taster session (see the website for details). Refresh yourself with homemade cake and fruity cordials. Plants



and produce for sale – please bring cash!

Summer Orchard Open Day – Sunday 14 June, 2pm - 5pm

To find the orchard (nearest postcode BS7 8JP) - Walk down the lane beside 22 Kings Drive (between Bishop Road & Kellaway Avenue), turn left and it's the first gate on the right.

OR Take the lane beside 134 Longmead Avenue (BS7 8QQ) until you come to the last gate on the left.

More information: <https://community-orchard.org.uk/>

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

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NEWS

LitFest profits support reading across city

THE proceeds from the successful Clifton LitFest are making a meaningful impact on literacy initiatives across Bristol in the National Year of Reading.

The annual book festival is held in November and is run by volunteers from The Friends of Clifton Centre and Library (FoCCaL). It celebrates literature while reinvesting its profits into projects that inspire a lifelong love of reading.

This year, FoCCaL has donated £5,000 to Bristol Libraries. The funding has enabled the launch of a Book Bingo initiative, a reading challenge for adults running alongside the popular Summer Reading Challenge for children. Designed to encourage participants to explore a range of books, the programme promotes reading for pleasure and helps foster a deeper enthusiasm for literature across all ages.

Participants can win a £100 book token prize. Readers sign



Leon from the Library Service with FoCCaL committee members

up online or at their local library, then work through a bingo card featuring broad reading categories—allowing flexibility to choose any book that fits, from romance to non-fiction. Participants can track their progress at home or have their card stamped at a library, before returning completed cards by December 31 2026.

FoCCaL has also given £500 each to Hotwells Primary School

and Christ Church CofE Primary School to support the purchase of books and end-of-term show expenses, while up to £1,000 has been allocated to enhance the children's area at Clifton Library.

A £500 donation will support a prison library book club, promoting wellbeing and rehabilitation through reading. A further £2,500 will help create the inaugural Children's LitFest,

with a vibrant programme of literary events for younger audiences, which will take place on July 13-14 across venues in Clifton.

Chair of LitFest Paula O'Rourke said: "Clifton LitFest is about more than celebrating books, it's about giving back to the community. We are thrilled that the funds raised by our festival are helping libraries and schools inspire a love of reading across Bristol. The Book Bingo challenge is a wonderful example of how these donations make a real difference."

Leon from the Library Service added: "The Book Bingo challenge will engage people throughout the summer, encouraging them to discover new books and enjoy the many benefits of reading."

Clifton LitFest attracts leading authors and enthusiastic audiences each year. The 2026 festival is scheduled to take place from November 13-15.

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■ FRIENDS OF REDLAND LIBRARY

BRISTOL author Harriet Baker will be in conversation with Stephen James in Redland Library on Thursday June 11.

Harriet Baker is a writer and critic. She has written about books and art for the London Review of Books, Paris Review, New Statesman, Times, Financial Times and TLS, among others. She has appeared on BBC Radio 3's Free Thinking, Radio 4's Woman's Hour and Today.

Her first book, *Rural Hours: The Country Lives of Virginia Woolf, Sylvia Townsend Warner and Rosamond Lehmann*, was published in 2024. It was awarded the Biographers' Club Tony Lothian Prize and the Sunday Times Charlotte Aitken Young Writer of the Year Award.

Dr Stephen James is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of English of the University of Bristol.

Signed copies of Harriet's book will be on sale.

The event starts at 7pm and doors open at 6.45pm. Admission is £3 (pay at the door - cash only).

For more information on this and other events organised by the Friends of Redland Library, please visit <https://FriendsOfRedlandLibrary.org.uk>

If you would like to volunteer with the Friends of Redland Library, please email FriendsOfRedlandLibrary@gmail.com



Harriet Baker

■ FRIENDS OF BISHOPSTON LIBRARY

JOIN us to celebrate from 11am-3pm on Wednesday 24 June for National Writing Day.

The main event is taking place upstairs at Bishopston Library with talks in the meeting room downstairs.

There will be a poetry corner, a family history and historical fiction focus, a life stories and stories that heal corner and starter exercises to help you plan, write, publish and market your book.

At 11.15 am, author Lucienne Boyce will run a talk about research for historical fiction and hold a short writing workshop upstairs after her talk: *Another Time and Place: Researching and Writing Historical Fiction*. Please book your seat via Eventbrite – limited number.

Poet and author Melanie Leeder, who also writes historical fiction, will be on hand in the poetry corner to help ignite your creative process.

Family historian Alison Boulton can give a steer about which resources can help you go beyond surface level research.

Crime author A.A. Abbott will

be on hand to explore ways to build suspense because real life is often stranger than any fiction.

Author and therapist Debs Penrice can help those thinking about how their life stories could inspire others, reflecting on a healing or transformational journey.

Tim Martin will be ready to support you on thinking about marketing to reach readers while you write or once your story is ready, and there will be resources available to help you plan your book or writing idea.

Look out for the full programme on Eventbrite <https://www.eventbrite.ca/o/friends-of-bishopston-library-15995170881> or sign up for our Friends of Bishopston Library email newsletter.

If you'd like to join the team of volunteers – or suggest an event that you'd like to attend – or introduce us to speakers who would like to give a talk – please contact us on the Friends email address: friends.of.bishopston.library@gmail.com

More info at <https://bishopstonlibrary.org.uk>

■ BOOK REVIEW

The Wax Child

By Olga Ravn

DURING the years 1617 to 1625 a witch was burned every five days in Denmark.

The Wax Child is a novel based on an series of Danish witch trials that took place during this period. Our narrator is an child shaped in beeswax.

The wax doll was borne by its creator, Christenze Krukow, a Danish noblewoman, for forty weeks under her right arm as if was a proper child. The wax child sees everything in the past, present and future. It sees the Viking ships that journeyed far across the sea to lay claim to territory, it sees the ships of the Danish East India Company filled with slaves in the darkness of their holds and observes the rising of realms, the founding of states, the creation of steam

locomotives and the splitting of the atom.

The narrative is interspersed with spells taken from so called black books, dating from 1400 to 1900. The novel beautifully evokes the friendship and sisterhood of women, struggling to survive in an misogynistic world. They bond over the plucking of geese, the picking of hops, the daubing of walls and the nursing and rearing of children.

Christenze and her friends Maren, Dorte, Apelone, Mette, Elle, Else, Bodil & Sidsel meet up on the twelfth of December 1620, to laugh, dance and to weave magical spells. Their evening of revelry is rudely interrupted by a local fisherman Peder Fisker, who accuses them

of witchcraft and reports them to the local magistrate who is determined to silence them once and for all.

This is an evocative and beautifully written novel illustrating the power and brutality of men who resorted to hearsay and torture whenever their lives were threatened by strong and independent woman. The language is physical and visceral, allowing the reader to smell and taste the blood and guts of these violent and turbulent times.

Visit your local library where you can enjoy this engaging novel which was longlisted for the International Booker Prize. *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

NEWS FROM THE METRO MAYOR

New powers to make big decisions

THE WEST of England has secured new powers to make more decisions locally.

The landmark English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act is great news for our transport, strategic planning, economic development, and health services – just like the overnight visitor levy (or 'tourism tax') powers, which are similarly set to come our way.

Important decisions in these areas will be made for people who live and work here, by people who also live and work here.

We want the West to be somewhere everyone can grow and thrive. Our Child Poverty Action Plan is focused on reducing the cost of living for families, supporting children, connecting our young people and families to opportunity and services, and pioneering new approaches for children and families.

In May, I announced that Kids Go Free will return on our buses until 2029 for every summer, Christmas, and Easter school holiday. Journeys from low-income areas doubled year-on-year thanks to the offer. That is alongside our regional fare freeze, which will keep children's regular bus fares fixed at £1 until 2029.

Last month we launched our Child Poverty Partnership Board. Across our region 67,500 children are growing up in poverty - enough

to fill Ashton Gate, the Memorial Stadium, Twerton Park and the Bath Rec at the same time, and more.

These numbers will fall dramatically with the abolition of the two-child benefit cap, making families in our region £23 million better off.

We also have big ambitions to get our region moving. I visited the new Charfield station, which is under construction, in May; it will be so exciting to see passenger trains return to this part of South Gloucestershire for the first time in 60 years when it opens next spring. Bristol Brabazon is also taking shape and is set to open this autumn.

The contract for building new stations in Portishead and Pill was also signed recently - a historic moment for the whole of the West of England. Through this new £200 million train line, the West of England and North Somerset can connect more people to work, nature, and leisure.

It seems particularly fitting this should happen at the same time as North Somerset Council have voted to join the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority.

We already work closely together on so many projects, so this feels like a natural next step.



Metro Mayor Helen Godwin
writes for the Voice

With our region's geography soon to match the reality of life here, which doesn't stop at council boundaries, we are in a great position to secure even more funding and deliver more change that people can see and feel.

I'm thrilled to announce that Councillor Tony Dyer, the leader of Bristol City Council, is my new deputy mayor for the next 12 months - the first appointment of a Green Party politician as deputy mayor of any combined authority.

I'm very grateful for the support and dedication of Cllr Kevin Guy over the past year, and will continue to work with all our council leaders across our region as we start this new chapter, with the role rotating each year.

MESSAGE FROM POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

Putting the right help in the right place

AT some point in our lives, most of us will either experience mental ill health ourselves or support someone close to us who does.

The mental health charity Mind estimates that one in four people will experience a mental health problem in any given year, making it clear how important it is that the right help is available when people reach crisis point.

The police are not always the right agency to respond to every incident: most of the time health professionals are far better placed to help. Recognising that - and building services around it - is essential to protecting people at their most vulnerable.

There are times when an emergency service response is necessary. That is why I am a co-commissioner, alongside the NHS and the fire service, of the Integrated Access Partnership (IAP). This model brings together mental health services, ambulance services and

out-of-hours primary care to ensure that when emergency services are contacted, people receive the most appropriate and timely response to their mental health needs.

The IAP is delivered through a multidisciplinary team within Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership, working alongside South Western Ambulance Service and BrisDoc.

In practice, this includes:

*The Mental Health Specialist Desk, where mental health nurses review and triage 999 calls involving mental health needs, supporting decisions about the most appropriate response.

*Mental Health Response Vehicles, providing blue light responses directly to people in mental health crisis, led by specialist clinicians.

*The Emergency Services Professionals Line, giving police, fire and ambulance staff immediate access to expert clinical advice while responding to incidents.

A particularly important development has been the deployment of the Mental Health Response Vehicles. More people who trigger emergency call outs are now being supported and treated at the scene, rather than taken to hospital. This reduces distress for individuals and relieves pressure elsewhere in the system.

The Mental Health Specialist Desk has also been crucial in reducing unnecessary police attendance at mental health-related incidents. This has been strengthened by a dedicated police link officer role, based within the South Western Ambulance call centre.

Officers in this role work alongside clinicians on a 24/7 rota, supporting the triage of calls. Where the link officer is in place, police deployments to mental health incidents have reduced by 20 to 30%.

The IAP has calculated that for every £1 invested in this role, £3 is saved – a clear example of how doing

the right thing for people also delivers better value for public money.

This approach means that, where appropriate, police officers and ambulances can be stood down and replaced by specialist support better suited to the situation. We avoid unnecessary trips to emergency departments, deploy clinicians directly to people in crisis, and free up emergency services to respond where there is an immediate risk of harm.

Police will always attend when there is a real and immediate threat to life. But protecting people also means getting them the right support, at the right time.



With Police and Crime Commissioner Clare Moody

FROM YOUR COUNCILLORS

Redland: Martin Fodor and Fi Hance (Green Party)

Friary Lane

Martin and Fi have been alerted to the lack of clear road markings at the Friary Lane exit of St Bonaventures school. Fi went along to take a look and it's clear that the situation is rather confusing, which is potentially dangerous for the large number of children using the area. We've got in touch with the Councils Highways department to ask for additional signage in the hope that this will help clarify the situation and keep children and adults alike safe.

Debt advice

North Bristol Advice Centre have been in touch to let us know that they have availability for debt advice appointments. Times are hard for many people so if you have financial worries, please do get in touch with them on Tel: 0117 951 5751 or team@northbristoladvice.org.uk and they can offer help and support.

Glyphosate-free streets

We share the concerns of many residents in Redland about the use of glyphosates on our streets and the potential dangers that they pose to the environment. As you may remember Martin pressed for an opt out scheme which is now in operation. Several streets in Redland have now asked that pesticides are no longer used and have pledged instead to keep their neighbourhood weed free themselves. If you would like to join them, go to the Bristol City Council website and search for "glyphosate". This will take you to the community weeding scheme web page telling you all you need to know. We know that that organising this can often help bring residents together so do please let us know how you get on!

Clear Air

We've often been contacted by people worried about air quality in the city. On April 20, Bristol

City Council launched its Clean Air Strategy and Action Plan Engagement Survey to help us to find out peoples' views, where in Bristol concerns are highest, and what needs to be considered before looking to make changes that will reduce a wider range of causes of air pollution. This information will inform the strategy's objectives and scope and help develop effective and inclusive actions. If this is something that you have a view on, please go onto the Council website and click on "all consultations and engagements"

St Christopher's site plans emerging

News of proposals for the long-delayed use of the site are being developed. We're talking to the developers and our neighbouring councillors to seek more details and understand the impacts.

Fi has been to visit the site to get a feel for what is being proposed. We've also been in touch with residents of the adjacent streets to hear concerns about any development proposal that might create new traffic and road safety issues into The Glen and Belvedere Road. We hope that the new site owners are receptive to local feedback and create a development that will benefit the local area.

Vacant commercial property grant

Bristol City Council has launched a scheme to help reduce the number of empty commercial properties in the city centre and on high streets including the Gloucester Road. Grants of between £2,500 and £10,000 to help you start trading from an empty property. To be considered for this grant funding, you need to be the leader of a small business, charity, CIC, arts or cultural group or operating as a sole trader. If you are interested, visit UK Shared Prosperity Fund: prospectus - gov.uk. Get in touch if you think we may be able to help.

Contact us

Fi: Cllr.fi.hance@bristol.gov.uk 0117 3534720

Martin: Cllr.martin.fodor@bristol.gov.uk 0788 4736101

Facebook.com/cllrmartin.fodor or /cllrfi.hance

NEWS

Making community even closer-knit!

A NEW initiative recently set up by the Lockleaze Neighbourhood Trust (LNT) sees residents coming together with their own ideas and skills to share, learn and meet new neighbours.

The Friendly Thursday sessions are being held every week from 1-3pm at the Hub in Gainsborough Square. They are resident-led groups with locals planning, setting up and delivering the activities themselves.

The first session, held on April 30, was deemed a great success, with Maria Perrett of the LNT thanking all those involved and explaining: "This group will meet every week to help you connect, learn and achieve. On the first day, 13 local residents attended and by the end of the session two had learned how to crochet, two had learned how to set up and use the sewing machines and everyone completed something! We had crochet keyrings, aprons, shopping bags and even a decorative panel to repair a favourite bag. Two residents have taught others how to make clothes, so it's very inter-generational too."

The group decided to create affordable gifts from pre-loved items to sell at the upcoming Lockleaze Climate and Nature Festival. The funds raised will help the group to purchase any new equipment or tools.

"We also have sociable games

and you are welcome to pop along for a cuppa and chat and practise and share your language skills too," added Maria, declaring, "It is peer support and learning at its best."

Those who have attended sessions have shared their experiences: "I met new people and we made keyrings together – it was relaxing." "Today I learnt how to crochet and I am so happy." "I enjoyed meeting new people and sharing the space to create." For Maria, the best quote was: "I'm so glad I pushed myself today, I get anxiety but I really enjoyed myself and met so many new people."

Residents' Ideas is part of the Lockleaze Together project, which aims to support residents to action their ideas that reflect community priorities, increase opportunities for connection and support new ideas including up-skilling and sustainable peer learning. The project can provide free venue space for a set time, equipment and resources if applicable, and staff time where needed.

If you have a skill to share, would like to learn something new or want the opportunity to meet neighbours come along, every Thursday 1-3pm. All are welcome. Free to attend. No booking required. The venue is accessible and accompanied children are welcome. If you have an idea to action get in touch: maria@lockleazent.co.uk

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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:

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:

June 27th - Calabria

Tickets at www.lascaladeli.com/tickets and in-store - more dates online

June 13th & July 18th

■ **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: Café on 13th June 9.45-2pm, Henbury Flower Show 18th July 1-4.30pm and further Café on 25th July 9.45-2pm

June 17th

■ **BRISTOL OPERA CLUB** invites you to a screening of Die Tote Stadt. The fabulous Jonas Kaufmann stars as a young widower trying to cope with the loss of his wife in the prodigious Erich Korngold's melodic and hauntingly beautiful opera. All are warmly welcomed in The Apostle Room, Clifton Cathedral, Worcester Road Entrance, 6.30 for 7.00. Entrance £8.00 (cash only please). Dedicated parking, Bar. Details: borkmail100@gmail.com 01275 848526

June 20th

■ **BRISTOL BACH CHOIR**, All Saints Clifton, BS8 3ED, 7.30pm. A fascinating programme of secular music by Whitacre, Lauridsen. Tickets: from £15, students £1. www.bristolbach.org.uk 0117 214 0721

July 10th

■ **WESTBURY SINGERS PRESENTS** 'Sun, Sun, Sun' our Summer 2026 Concert. 7.30pm (doors 7.00pm). Westbury on Trym Village Hall, Eastfield Road, Bristol, BS9 4AG. Join us for a feast of sunney songs on a summer's evening in our lovely village hall. Adults £10 under 19s free. Tickets (incl. refreshments) are available from choir members: via www.westburysingers.org or on the door by card, Apple Pay, G Pay, Cash or Cheque. Enquiries: wotsingers@gmail.com. Contact Pete on 07885822121 for more details.

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. Contact: Leanne 07817189474 or leanne@mindbodypilates.org

■ **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 or email Itta at mail@ittahowie.co.uk

■ **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

■ **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

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 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

■ **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

■ **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 or phone Roma on 0117 9279875.

■ **WESTBURY ON TRYM WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION** meets on the third Monday of the month in the Westbury Village Hall, Eastfield Road, BS94AG, from 2.00 - 4.00 pm. We have interesting speakers, and extra activities of crafts, lunch club, skittles, book club, coffee mornings and pub evenings. Our lively, friendly and inclusive group welcomes visitors at

any meeting. For more information call Sascha on 07961619806 or Liz on 07587170766.

■ **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

Tuesday

■ **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.theartsociety-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 at 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 or call Fritjof 0117 924 3440. Contact before attending.

■ **GLOUCESTER ROAD WI** We meet the 3rd Tuesday evening of every month at St Bonaventure's Parish Hall off Friary Road from 8-10pm. We are an active, social group with talks, craft, physical activities and outings. For more information visit <https://gloucesterroadwi.org> or email info@gloucesterroadwi.org Visitors welcome (at a cost of £7.50).

■ **POETRY UNLIMITED** - poetry circle meet on the First Tuesday of every month 11am - 12 midday.

WHAT'S ON IN OUR AREA

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 Web: 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 bedside of people nearing the end of life. To join/support us in this work, contact Valerie on bristol@companionvoices.org. Visit www.facebook.com/CompanionVoicesBristol and www.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.bristolacappella.co.uk/ Contact: membership@bristolacappella.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 - or contact us on 01761 472468 or via e-mail at 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

■ **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

■ 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

■ **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.

■ **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 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 rags 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

Thursday

■ HIGHBURY BADMINTON CLUB:

Pete Stables 0117 950 1524 or 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

■ 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/ for more details. Or email 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 Itta@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

■ 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

■ 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.

■ 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. 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

■ 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. Contact the secretary at 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

■ 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 contact secretary at 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

WHAT'S ON IN OUR AREA

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

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 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

NEWS

Currying favour

WE all love a good curry, and those of us living in or near North Bristol, are spoilt for choice for award-winning fare, following a clutch of recent awards for our local curry houses.

At a ceremony last month at the Crowne Plaza in Reading, Oceanic Awards announced the winners of the 1st Southern Curry Awards 2026.

Adding further certificates to their collection, Indian Kitchen, Salkaara, Naan & Co, and Urban Tandoor all received a multitude of awards in recognition of their outstanding food and service, with Salkaara being granted the title of Overall Winner in the Best Curry Experience of the Year category.

In further success for the industry, Cotham Hill-based Achari Indian Kitchen has been named in the top 100

Asian Restaurants for 2026 at an official event at the House of Lords. The ceremony, part of the Asian Curry Awards, was held in the members' dining room at the Palace of Westminster, and brought together industry leaders, restaurateurs, chefs and politicians.

Highlighting success at awards such as these also serves to support a sector already at a crossroads. Finding skilled chefs under new immigration policies and the ongoing challenges faced by many restaurant owners make such support all the more needed.

So, if you're looking for a curry that has been officially recognised as one of the best in the business, you couldn't do better than visit one of our local eateries and see what they have to offer.

Send details of your events and activities:

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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!

6				4				
								5
5			2					9
7		9	4					2
	8				1			4
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For younger readers

Cricket Word Search

e	b	f	i	e	l	d	i	n	g	f	c
s	l	o	c	a	t	c	h	a	b	p	o
l	b	s	u	b	a	t	s	m	a	n	i
i	w	p	b	n	c	f	o	u	t	r	n
p	i	i	c	a	d	u	c	k	t	u	n
n	c	n	e	z	t	a	w	c	i	n	i
a	k	w	l	o	v	e	r	s	n	s	n
p	e	h	e	b	a	l	l	y	g	z	g
p	t	i	v	z	c	s	t	u	m	p	s
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- appeal
- batting
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- slip
- eleven
- fielding
- cricket
- innings
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■ VINEYARD NEWS with INGRID BATES

Exciting times at vineyard No2

AS some of you may know, we now have two growing sites; our original vineyard in Wrington which we have rented for around seventeen years, and a new site near Bath Soft Cheese in Kelston on the other side of Bristol.

The two vineyards are very different in appearance and are at very different stages of development. At the Wrington site, the vines are much more established with a mixture of 17 and 4-year old vines that crop really well. Whereas our new site is being planted as we speak! For the last few weeks we've been hand-planting small numbers of Regent and Seyval vines (the same as our Wrington site) to form the basis of what will eventually be a larger vineyard.

The process of hand planting is really enjoyable because the field has the most incredible views across the River Avon towards Saltford and Keynsham. We can even watch the Avon Valley steam train as it puffs its

way across the valley below! It feels like a very special place and is exciting to imagine how the vineyard will evolve over the coming years.

At our Wrington site, we ran our first vineyard tour of 2026 this month which was a great success. Thank you to everyone who came along. Details of upcoming summer tours at our Wrington vineyard can be found on our website. Once the new vines at Kelston become more established, we're hoping to open up opportunities for visitors there as well.

E: hello@dunleavyvineyards.co.uk

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Some of the new vines at the Kelston vineyard

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NATURE WATCH with Dawn Lawrence

How you can get a piece of swifts action

YOU may have noticed, earlier in this edition, a news item on swift box installations at Egerton Road in Bishopston. Swifts are very well-known, indeed they are exceptionally beloved – but they are in trouble. Nationally their numbers have dropped by around 68 per cent in 30 years (down by 90 per cent in the Bristol region) putting them on the Red List meaning they are of the highest conservation concern.

The good news is that we can help. It is not often that nest box schemes are a vital missing part of a bird's conservation needs but swifts are highly unusual in depending entirely upon us for their nest holes. Despite the widely acknowledged losses in insect populations, providing nest boxes is proven to increase the numbers of swifts. They are colonial birds, needing to nest in company with other swifts, and this means that the more boxes you put up the happier they are. Indeed, at the Swift House colony in Stoke Bishop, Mark Glanville has put up



A swift at the Swift House colony in Stoke Bishop Photo by Jane Glanville

25 boxes on his semi-detached house and last year 19 of them were occupied, resulting in 36 fledglings. This extraordinary success means that the Swift House colony has been the largest in Bristol for several years. You can follow the progress of these birds by going to www.bristolswifts.co.uk and also learn more about how you can help.

Swifts remain faithful to their nest site for their whole lives, unless it is blocked or removed (which can

lead to tragedy as the pair search desperately for their old hole and sometimes die in the attempt). The young birds return to their birthplace each year, getting to know the neighbourhood – whilst flying continually without landing for their first two years of life (really!) Then, at three years of age and old enough to breed, they seek a nest site in the vicinity.

Swifts are supremely adaptable: if the weather is poor in Britain, our

swifts have been known to fly as far as Finland, feed up on insects there for a few days, then return to their patient chicks, quietly sitting out the hungry interval. Their excitement at the parents' return can well be imagined – indeed at the Bristol Swifts website it can often be watched as most of the Swift House boxes have got webcams and the videos are regularly posted.

From now into August we can listen for the screaming cries of the swifts above us, we can admire their dashing silhouettes cutting ornate figures across the Bristol rooftops. What more can you ask than this wonderful entertainment? So why not get together with your neighbours and make a plan? You can go to the Bristol Swifts website and learn how to spot the best locations for swift boxes in your street and how to build the best types to fit your spaces – or where to buy them. And let's Save the Swifts together!

© Dawn Lawrence

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NEWS
Rebound with Rovers

AN initiative this month will put the spotlight on women's mental health and improving mental wellbeing through football.

Rebound with Rovers is a free mental health football programme delivered by the Bristol Rovers Community Trust (BRCT). It supports adults (18+) experiencing depression, anxiety, or other mental health challenges. The programme provides a safe, welcoming environment for physical activity and social connection.

Held at Lockleaze Sports Centre, sessions consist of a fun, hour-long football activity, followed by a confidential 'check-in' where participants can share any concerns or discuss their progress with a fully qualified football coach and trained mental health first aider.

Run with backing from NHS North Bristol, Bristol Girls Can, Her Game Too, and the Gas Girls, the programme launches on June 3.

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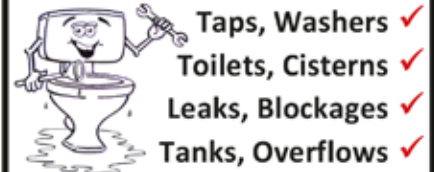
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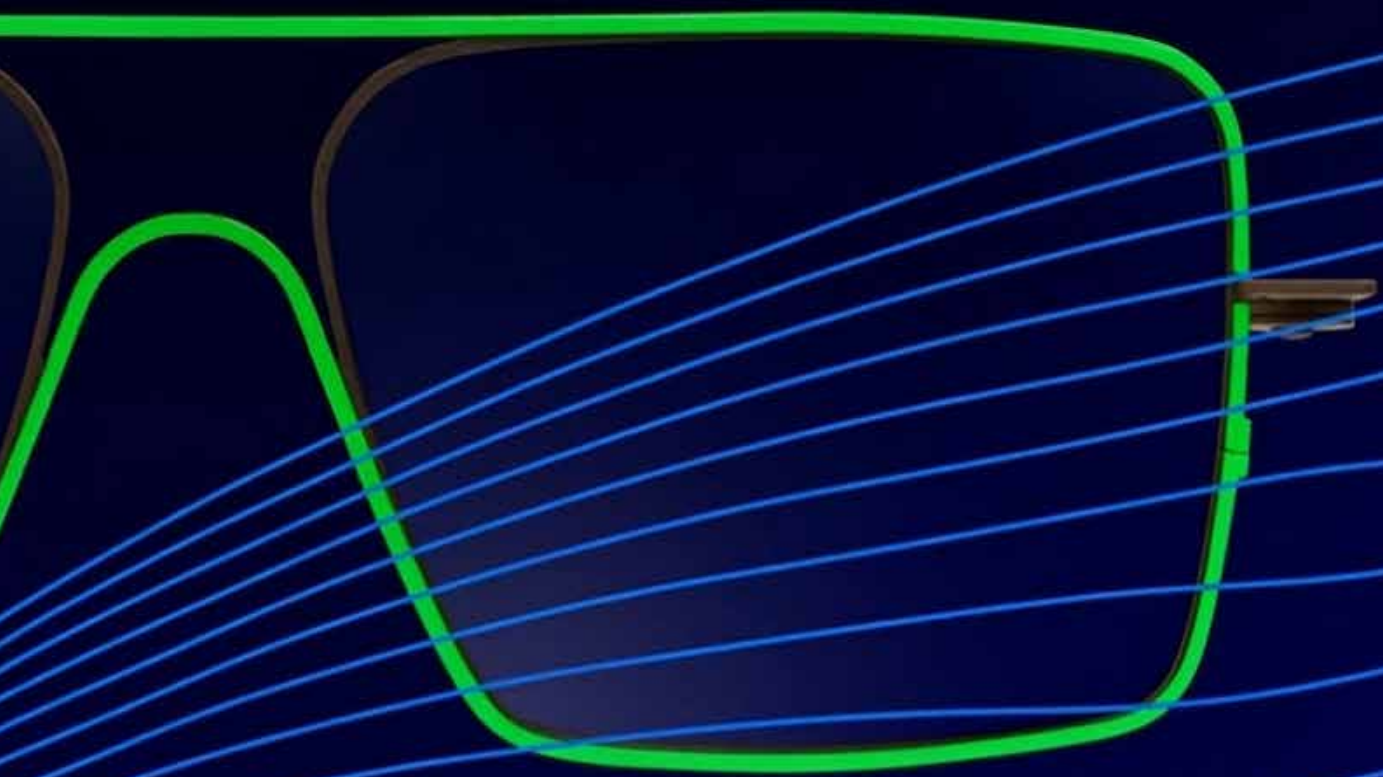
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