

henleaze & westbury voice

March, 2026 Issue 135

www.henleazeandwestburyvoice.co.uk

FREE EVERY MONTH IN HENLEAZE, WESTBURY-ON-TRYM & WESTBURY PARK

'Flats plan could kill off our Westbury village centre'

SCORES of residents are opposing plans to demolish three shops in Westbury on Trym and build 31 retirement flats.

More than 100 objections have been lodged with Bristol City Council to the scheme from Churchill Living for a three and a half storey development at Carlton Court.

The plans would involve the loss of three local independent shops in the 1970s centre: Kemps Jewellers, Number 7 Kitchen and Barberontrym as well as causing disruption to other businesses.

The Westbury on Trym Society, councillors, neighbours and other residents fear it could have a serious adverse effect on the village centre.

One resident said the village could become a 'ghost town'. Lib Dem Councillor Stephen Williams said: "The application is of major significance to Westbury on Trym as it affects the viability of the village centre as a shopping focal point, with consequences for other retail and hospitality businesses."

Many people noted that trade in the village had already seen



Churchill Living's plans for 31 retirement flats in Westbury

the negative impact of a decision a year ago by the Carlton Court owner to block off a number of parking spaces.

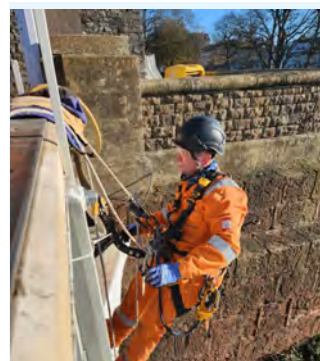
WoTSoc noted: "Over the course of time the centre of gravity of shopping in Westbury has shifted from the old High Street to the Canford Lane area. While there are some vacant shops on the edge of the village centre, none of the modern shop units in Carlton Court are vacant. These are the most easily accessible for older members of the community."

Before putting in its plans to the council, Churchill said its

scheme would meet a need by providing specialist homes on a brownfield site and would be a "significant improvement to the street scene" while retaining parking spaces for the Co-op.

But WoTSoc said: "We do not accept that the benefits set out in favour of elderly persons accommodation outweigh the harm that will be caused to the function of Westbury on Trym as a town centre. The Society cannot support any development at Carlton Court which results in the loss of retail space in the primary shopping area."

WoTSoc news: Page 5



£8m paint job

Specialist engineers are coming to the end of a two-year project to paint and protect the Clifton Suspension Bridge this month. It's cost about £8 million and used 1,500 gallons of paint.



Lots to celebrate

St Peter's Church in Henleaze, which is marking its centenary this year, is celebrating the success of its Later Life Hub.

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Complaints

Despite our best efforts, we sometimes get things wrong. We always try to resolve issues informally at first but we also have a formal complaints procedure. If you have a complaint about anything in the Henleaze & Westbury Voice, contact the publisher using the details below. We aspire to follow the Code of Conduct of the NUJ (National Union of Journalists), which holds journalists to a high standard of behaviour.

Further details of the complaints process can be found on the Voice website here, or can be obtained by contacting the Publisher.

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April deadline

Our April edition deadline is March 18th. To ensure your news or letter is included, please contact us by this date. Advertisers are also asked to contact us by the same date.

Your views

Letters for publication can be sent to the above email addresses or by post to Letters, Henleaze & Westbury Voice, 16 Ashmead Business Centre, Ashmead Road, Keynsham, BS31 1SX. The editor reserves the right to edit your letter.

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NEWS

MANOR Farm in Horfield lost a true friend and tireless campaigner with the death last month of Anna George, remembered by all who knew her as a lovely lady and a champion for the community she called home.

The following obituary was written by her brother, sister-in-law and friends at the Manor Farm Community Hub and is reproduced below with their permission.

Anna George (née Swoboda) was born on August 9, 1960, in Bexleyheath, Southeast London. She grew up near Gravesend, Kent, before attending the University of Sussex in Brighton. After her studies, she moved to Bristol, where she began her career as a translator. Following in the footsteps of both her parents, she had a remarkable gift for languages and worked as a skilled freelance interpreter, proficient in an impressive number of languages.

It was in Bristol that Anna met and married James ("Jim") George. Together, they welcomed two sons and made their home in the Manor Farm neighbourhood. Bristol remained Anna's home for the rest of her life, and there she put her heart and soul into her family, friendships, and the local community.

Anna was deeply devoted to improving the lives of those around her. She was a key contributor to establishing the St. Peter's Community Centre on the Manor Farm estate, working closely with stakeholders, Bristol City Council and the Manor Farm Community Hub (MFCH) CIC, where she served as a Director and Secretary.

Farewell to Anna, a true friend to the community



Anna on a big day for Manor Farm

In recognition of her tireless volunteer service, Anna was honoured by the Horfield and Lockleaze Community Awards in 2024 and 2026, and with her close friend Ann Bennett, was honoured by the Lord Mayor of Bristol for their work in the community. Often uncaptured and under the radar, she was always recognised by those nearest and dearest to her.

Like her mother, Anna had a profound love of volunteering and the outdoors. She found joy in exploring her neighbourhood and other areas of Bristol on foot and sharing that joy with others, as a regular of the Horfield and Manor Farm Strollers Walking Group, supporting Julian and others in the group. Her walks were as much about connection as they were about movement—bringing people together with kindness and encouragement.

She was also, until very recently, a youth leader helping her good friend Geoff with holding and caring for the Church Youth Centre.

Anna's greatest happiness came from time spent with her family and many dear friends. She loved walking, meals shared out, and travelling, faithfully documenting life's moments in the many photographs she delighted in sharing with her close family and friends at Christmas. Her circle of friends was wide and enduring, spanning from her school and university years, her professional translators group, her local neighbourhood and her volunteering in the community.

Over the past decades, Anna worked tirelessly and closely with many members of the MFCH CIC as a director, board member and secretary

involved in and helping out numerous community activities, in local school fayres and church activities.

Anna was preceded in death by her beloved parents, Rita and Victor Swoboda, and by her husband, Jim, whose memory she lovingly kept alive with a rose bush in her garden and surrounded indoor memories. She is survived by her sons, Harry and Michael, in Bristol, her brother, Matthew, and his wife, Beverly, of Windham, New Hampshire (USA) and her niece, Diane, of Seattle, Washington (USA).

Anna has left us far too soon and will be deeply missed by all who knew and loved her. She will be remembered for her cheerfulness, optimism, generosity of spirit, kindness and unwavering commitment to helping others.



Anna receives the Lord Mayor's Medal



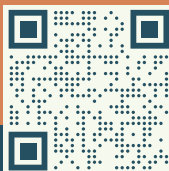
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NEWS

Visitor parking permits cap paused

PEOPLE power has halted council plans to tighten the rules on visitor parking permits.

Residents in Bishopston, Redland and Ashley Down were among many who protested Bristol City Council consulted the public on possible changes for people visiting resident parking zones.

People living within a zone, with a permit for their own vehicle, can book some free permits for visitors, and more if they pay, as well as one-off passes for unexpected guests. The plan would have halved the number of available visitor permits, and make people pay for all of them, too.

Residents can get between 100 and 140 permits a year, but this would have been reduced to 50 and 70, and ended all free permits. An update was given to the transport policy committee, on February 5, which was received with applause from the public gallery in City Hall.



Green Councillor Ed Plowden, the committee's chair, said: "Since being introduced to the city back in 2014, the residents' parking schemes have provided real benefits to the communities they serve. Not only do the schemes help residents to park near their homes, they also reduce traffic, improve road safety, and contribute to cleaner air for all.

"As part of the statutory consultation, along with local ward councillors, I have received significant feedback about the proposed changes to the scheme, with concerns raised about the implications of reducing the free allocation of visitor permits and the overall number of visitor

permits available.

"As a result, we will be pausing our proposed changes to visitor permits, so we can review the proposals. This will give us time to analyse the responses to the statutory consultation and plan any changes needed to respond to this feedback."

Resident parking zones were first rolled out over a decade ago, to tackle parking pressure and reduce traffic. In 2024 councillors approved increasing the cost of permits for residents and updating pay and display rates. More areas could soon be covered by parking zones as well.

Last year, the council consulted on increasing the cost of visitor permits and limiting the number, as well as other changes.

The other proposals — to make business electric car permits chargeable and to remove the free half hour on pay and display machines — are still being considered.

Questions from the Lib Dems revealed that 3,000 people a year bought additional permits beyond the new proposed limit. This means that eight per cent of all households within resident parking zones would be affected by any cap.

Lib Dem Cllr Nicholas Coombes said: "I'm glad that the council has listened to the feedback, and has decided to pause the implementation of this unfair restriction. Many anxious residents have contacted me to explain that they use visitor permits for a variety of reasons, including letting grandparents support childcare, and they are worried that they will exceed the proposed cap.

"I will continue to push for the reversal of this policy so that residents can continue to welcome visitors without worrying about an artificially low limit."

By Alex Seabrook, Local Democracy Reporting Service

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NEWS

WESTBURY ON TRYM SOCIETY

In the November 2025 issue of the Voice, we highlighted the threat to shops in Carlton Court, Westbury on Trym from proposals by Churchill Living, about which they ran a perfunctory public consultation exercise in early October.

In early January, a planning application for this development was registered by Bristol City Council. In response, the Society hosted a public meeting in Westbury village hall at the end of January to consider the proposals, which significantly involve demolishing three occupied retail units in the heart of Westbury's shopping area.

The plans involve the demolition of units occupied by Kemps Jewellers, Number 7 Kitchen and Barberontrym, the 3 bedroom flat above, together with the loss of storage space occupied by the Co-op and changes to Amplifon's premises in order to build 31 retirement apartments. Kemps Jewellers is still a family run business that has been selling jewellery since 1881. The buildings to be removed are part of the primary shopping area in Westbury, where despite the prevailing conditions, vacant units are quickly re-occupied when vacancies occur. Suitable premises for relocation are simply not realistic, so around 12 jobs would be lost.

Aside from this fundamental planning issue, in order to accommodate the amount of retirement accommodation required, we consider the design has massive shortcomings.



JANUARY 2025



JANUARY 2026

• On a more positive note, at the end of January, our team of volunteers working in the Canford Park sunken garden, re-planted one of the large beds that had become out of control and had been dug out by Parks department staff earlier in the month. The Parks department supplied us with over 100 plants, which were planted out in a morning. The photos show what a difference our volunteers have made between this time last year and today. Next in our plans is to replant one of the former rose beds.

The scale of the building from Canford Court would be totally overbearing when standing in Carlton Court. In an area where parking is already at a premium, partly because of the inconsiderate closure of most of the car park last year, only 10 spaces are proposed for the residents and their visitors.

The Society will be making a detailed response to the planning application opposing the plans and urges residents of Westbury to look at the plans for themselves and help us prevent this damaging planning application submission moving forward.

• On Thursday March 26, one of our local councillors, Stephen Williams, will give a talk on Genealogy and the work he has done on researching his family tree. As usual, this will take place in Westbury library, starting at 8pm and with doors open from 7.45. The talk is free for members of the Society and £2 for non-members, and you can join the Society at the meeting! Please let us know that you will be coming by ringing Malcolm Neave on 01179502825 or emailing him at westburyontrysociety@gmail.com
Andy Renshaw, Chair, Westbury on Trym Society



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COMMUNITY NEWS

ST PETER'S CHURCH

IN February and March, St Peter's Church in Henleaze continues its year-long celebration of its Centenary by inviting local people to put a Post-It note on a timeline display in the church marking their contact or involvement with the church over the last 100 years.

Stretching down one side of the church,



People are invited to contribute to the timeline

the timeline has a space for each of the last 100 years, the challenge being to see whether every single year can attract some connection with the current community.

Baptisms, confirmations, marriages, dances, youth groups, Guides and Scouts... anything you, your family or friends enjoyed at St Peter's can all be recorded. St Peter's invites local residents to pop into the church any time and make their mark – as they are doing in the accompanying pictures.

The Later Life Hub launched in August 2024 is going from strength to strength. St Peter's Hall and Church provide space for around 36 activities catering for local Seniors each month. The Hub is being developed by local charities (Age UK Bristol, Bristol Dementia Action Alliance, Alive Activities and BRACE), commercial companies (Harold Stephens Financial Planning and Home Instead) and St Peter's Church, working in partnership with each other.

Thanks to the award of a grant from Harold Stephens Financial Planning, the latest fruit of this partnership is the creation of a programme of Live Music Mornings to take place at the FAB Café run by Age UK Bristol at St Peter's from 10.30am -12.30pm on the first Wednesday of the month from March to July. First up, on March 4, will be the FAB Twins and their stunning renditions of Beatles songs along with all the hits from the 50s, 60s and 70s. Dancing will be encouraged so do come along! Entrance to these Live Music Mornings is free. Donations to a good cause on each occasion will be welcomed.

COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH (CSW)

THIS is a national initiative where, in partnership with the police, members of communities use detection devices to monitor local vehicle speeds.

How does it work?

- A group of local residents volunteer to monitor traffic speeds
- Vehicles travelling at excess speed will be recorded and reported to the Police
- Police issue a letter to the registered keeper with the aim of educating drivers, asking them to slow down.
- Repeat offenders may be contacted by the Police.

The **Westbury on Trym and Stoke Bishop** schemes are currently looking for volunteers to join them.

Volunteers receive training, and the Neighbourhood Policing Team staff will support them.

The aim of the scheme is to:

- reduce death and injury on the roads
- improve the quality of life for local communities
- reduce the speed of vehicles to the speed limit
- increase public awareness of inappropriate speed

If you would like to become part of CSW, or to find out more, please email: sbwcsnbr11@gmail.com

FRIENDS OF REDLAND LIBRARY

The Friends of Redland Library is a voluntary group set up to support Redland Library. We organise talks and panel events.

On Tuesday March 10, author Thomas Messel is giving a talk on "Elizabeth Linley: The Nightingale of Bath". Elizabeth Linley was one of Britain's most celebrated singers of the eighteenth century. The talk explores her artistic achievement, her constrained domestic life, and her complex relationship with the playwright Richard Brinsley Sheridan. On Thursday 26th March, there will be an illustrated talk "Getting to Know Your Place". Meet Pete Insole, who created the Know Your Place website in 2011. Both events start at 7pm and admission is £3 (pay at the door – cash only). For details visit our website: <https://FriendsOfRedlandLibrary.org.uk>

HORFIELD ORGANIC COMMUNITY ORCHARD

A BIG Huzza! to all the Wassailers who joined us in January. The fruit trees at Horfield Organic Community Orchard (HOCO) are stirring into life – buds beginning to swell before breaking into spring blossom.

We are warming up to a new year of orchard care activities. Dormant season pruning keeps us busy from mid-February to mid-April. Dodging heavy rain has been a challenge this winter! The wet weather has given us plenty of time to check, sharpen, and oil our tools – and plan new pruning workshops.

Pruning fruit trees is an art, a skill, and a life-long learning and practice. It's never too late to learn! I have been working with the 100 trees at HOCO for 18 years. They have been my teachers. Pruning is a process for renewal created by the relationship between two living beings. Time is the third

ingredient. Observing a tree, its environment, and knowing the age, variety, and fruiting habits, informs the chosen actions. Trees respond to winter pruning by growing new shoots, leading to another phase of pruning in the late summer months.

HOCO provides hands-on learning and seasonal training opportunities in the orchard – everything from taster sessions at events, to courses for gardeners and community growers.

Dormant season pruning courses:

- Beginners – Saturday 7 March
 - Improvers – Sunday 8 March
- To complement these popular and highly praised courses, we are delighted to announce a series of new workshops. Ideal for those with some previous training and experience, who are keen to sharpen their pruning skills.

Dormant season pruning workshops:

- Pears – Sunday 1 March
- Apples – Saturday 14 March
- Apples – Sunday 22 March



Pruning the medlar at HOCO

Places are limited and must be booked in advance.

More information: <https://community-orchard.org.uk/>
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Words by Shannon Smith aka The Apple Tree Lady
Photograph by Jamie Carstairs



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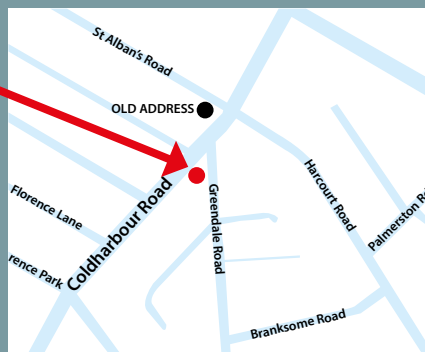
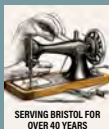
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■ FROM BRISTOL NORTH WEST'S MP

Community-owned clean energy

I AM always proud of my home area. But seeing a community-owned wind turbine in Bristol North West highlighted as one of the pioneering projects that have helped to inspire this government's new Local Power Plan has left me grinning from ear to ear!

Published on February 10 by the government and Great British Energy (the new publicly owned energy company launched by the government), the Local Power Plan will help support community-owned clean energy generation projects across the country.

Imagine community-owned solar panels on our village halls, community centres and social clubs, with profits flowing back into our communities rather than lining the pockets of big energy companies.

Backed by funding of up to £1 billion, this is the biggest public investment in community energy in history, putting wealth and power into the hands of communities – and it's long overdue in this country!

Community-owned energy is the norm in other countries. In Germany, for example, about 40% of installed renewable energy generation capacity is citizen-owned. But, despite its huge potential, for too long community energy in this country has been held back by a lack of funding, central government support, and by planning regulations.

Indeed, the now celebrated wind turbine in Lawrence Weston, here in Bristol North West, only came to fruition because of the grit and determination of the residents behind Ambition Community Energy (ACE) – an off-shoot of the resident-driven organisation Ambition Lawrence Weston (ALW) – and led by the efforts of ALW's development manager, Mark Pepper. They not only had to secure funding but also negotiate some tricky planning regulations, and I was happy to lend my support to help unblock these problems on a number of occasions.

This government has worked at pace to reform the planning system

and remove unnecessary red tape that is stopping this country from building. In December, the government's landmark Planning and Infrastructure Bill received Royal Assent, which means it has become law. This new law will support clean power projects to be prioritised for grid connections to bolster Britain's energy security and empower community-owned wind turbines, solar panels and other forms of low-carbon power to get up and running – without the headaches that ACE had to battle.

I hope that, after reading this, you'll be inspired to develop a new community-owned clean energy project. And if you do pursue this, I'd love to hear about it!

You can find out more about the Local Power Plan and find out how to apply at gbe.gov.uk/local-power-plan

Finally, there should still be time to book a ticket for my next town hall event – an open Q&A event – which will be held 2-3.30pm on Saturday February 28 in the



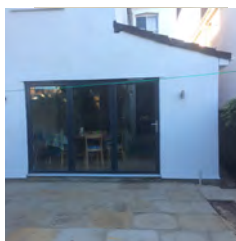
Darren Jones
writes for
the Voice

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



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■ NEWS

Henry aims to prove a point with Backyard Ultra

BEING diagnosed with a progressive condition might make many of us feel that we could no longer live life to the full and that options were limited. However, that has never been the attitude of Henry Biggin.

Told at 18 that he has FSH (facioscapulohumeral) muscular dystrophy (MD), a muscle-wasting condition that affects his shoulders, calves and lower back, Henry, now 29, is determined that this will not dictate his life.

With his twin brother, Edward, brothers Oliver, 30, and William, 24, and their cousin Rupert Lowther, 29, Henry grew up in a sporty, outdoorsy family in north Bristol. Their competitive streak has led the five to establish a running events organisation, PWR Endure, to motivate others who share their passion for running, discipline and self-improvement.

Their Backyard Ultra aims to raise funds and awareness of Muscular Dystrophy and to inspire those living with the condition. The event at Tockington Manor School, on May 23 and 24, uses a globally recognised format. Participants must complete a 4.167-mile loop every hour, on the hour, for up to 30 hours (125 miles in total for those who last the distance). The last runner standing wins, but



Henry, Edward, Rupert, Williams and Oliver

if more than one runner reaches 30 hours, a final head-to-head loop decides who receives the £500 prize.

Henry had just finished college and was preparing to join the Navy when his twin noticed that something didn't look right with his shoulder blade. After months of tests, his diagnosis was confirmed.

Recalling that time, Henry explained: "I had a late diagnosis; the symptoms hadn't been severe so it wasn't picked up until later. I was lucky really, to have had my childhood

without this being an issue. It definitely made me look at things differently in terms of my body and future - but things happen for a reason. This ultra event has been built around pushing personal limits and building a supportive community, something that's become really important to me over the last few years."

Training for the event will soon start in earnest. Despite experiencing fatigue in his shoulders, lower back and calves, Henry has continued weight training and kickboxing, as well as running.

"Building up muscle gives them longevity," he explains. "Staying fit both mentally and physically gives me strength and resilience to not let this condition define me."

"The event will actually start a day early so that the children at the school can take part too, on their last day before half term."

PWR Endure began as an endurance event for a few family and friends but has escalated into a full running-event organisation.

The family hope that 200 people will take part in their Backyard Ultra.

For more information on the event, including tickets to take part, sponsorship and donating to MDUK, see: www.pwrendure.com

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NEWS



Singing, dancing and playing in an orchestra at a world-class venue, the refurbished Bristol Beacon, was a huge opportunity for Trinity Academy students

Trinity students shine bright at Beacon

TRINITY Academy students entertained an audience of more than 1000 at the Bristol Beacon with a spectacle of music and dance performances.

More than 450 students aged 11 to 18 took part in the "Trinity Loves" concert, including everyone in Years 7 and 8.

The event included orchestras, choirs, dance pieces, rock bands, steel pans and vocal solos. It culminated in two massive numbers involving over 350 students on stage: an arrangement of Teardrop by Bristol band Massive Attack, and a reworking of Handel's

Hallelujah Chorus. Another highlight was a dance piece entitled Murmuration.

Trinity is a music and performing arts specialist school. Singing is a particular strength, and all Year 7 and 8 students sing in a choir once a week.

The school's head of music

and performing arts, Naomi Charatan, said: "It was an absolute privilege for our students to perform in such a world class space. The students rose to the occasion and the experience will have developed them as performers, musicians and dancers. We are so proud."

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LETTER

COLLECTIVE ACTION ON SMART PHONES – CLASP

A Bristol support group for parents and grandparents

IT is becoming ever more widely recognised that smart phone use in children and teenagers can have severely addictive and health-damaging effects, leading to social isolation and withdrawal, and compromising human relationships, not least with parents concerned for their children's well-being who are trying to control phone use. Parents often feel hopeless about trying to tackle these problems on their own but together they can give each other the support and confirmation they need to find the solutions that improve their children's lives.

CLASP wishes to support all who are struggling with these and related issues. It subscribes to no fixed agenda, programme or judgements about the way forward but seeks to be an open forum offering actual (not on-line) face-to-face meetings for groups of parents and grandparents to discuss the problems and share possible strategies, information, remedies and alternatives to addictive phone usage.

This is the launch of a new initiative. If you would like to help us start a CLASP group here in Bristol, please write to the address or the email below and we will be in touch to arrange a time and place to meet.

Matthew Barton,
19 Birchall Road, Bristol BS6
7TW
bartonmj@phonecoop.coop

NEWS

Poetry success

A Year 10 student at Fairfield High School (FHS) has published a poetry collection.

The seven-poem book was inspired by work completed last year while working with Project Zazi, a scheme that supports young black people and ethnically diverse young people.

Aleem said:
"People of colour are often told to be quiet but poetry gives me an opportunity to speak out."

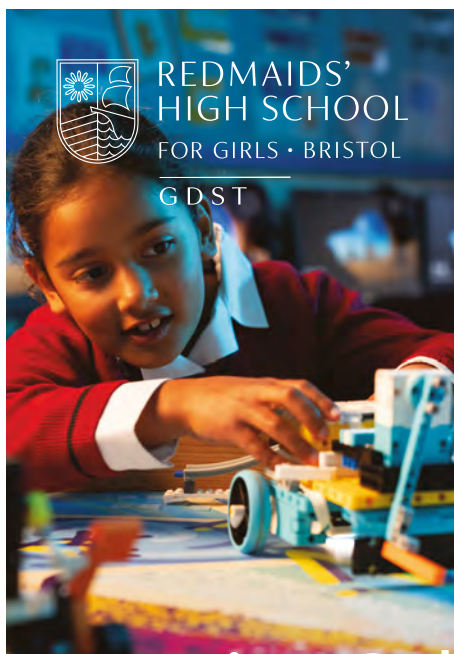
Each poem in Standards, Shadows and Strengths is carefully structured, consisting of five verses and 20 lines. Copies of the book are being sold for £5.

Cashan Campbell, vice principal and Aleem's English teacher, said: "As a passionate Black educator, I am incredibly proud to see Aleem's talent being produced in a way which will challenge, cultivate and connect with others."



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


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■ NEWS FROM THE METRO MAYOR

A transport network you can trust

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We all know that the West is best - but too often, our transport hasn't kept up.

As the country's fastest-growing region, we've been stuck in the slow lane for too long.

It's time to tackle congestion, potholes, and unreliable journeys, and build a transport network people can trust.

This isn't just about getting from A to B - it's about quality of life. It's about giving people their time back: to be home sooner, get out into nature more, or visit the many attractions that make our part of the world so special.

Transport is a big part of our Growth Strategy because it affects everyday life.

If we want more people across the West to be able to find work, access training, and take up new opportunities, we need a network that helps them get where they need to go.

Better transport also helps businesses grow and create more jobs locally.

That's why we've set out a clear vision for a better-connected West of England, focused on five priorities:

- Better buses: reliable, affordable services with one ticket and one timetable.
- More trains: new stations, more frequent services, and low-emission trains.

- Mass transit: a high-capacity system linking key places across our region.

- Active travel: safer walking and cycling routes, with e-bikes and e-scooters for short trips.

- Improved streets: smoother roads and pavements, more electric vehicle chargers, and better Park & Ride and travel hubs.

Wherever you're travelling, we need to invest so you can rely on how you get there. And we need a system that makes it easier to switch between different types of transport, with simple tap-on, tap-off travel so you never pay more than you should.

We've already secured record transport investment from government. With over 250 new green buses due by the end of 2026 and more stations being built, we can look ahead with genuine optimism.

One of the biggest opportunities ahead is mass transit. Right now, the West of England is the biggest city-region in the country without it. High-frequency services along dedicated routes would be a real game-changer, whether that's a tram, light rail, guided bus, or something else. It won't happen overnight, but council leaders and I are determined to do the work needed to start building within four or five years.

Alongside this, there is another important moment for our region: the consultation on North Somerset joining the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority is now open.



Metro Mayor Helen Godwin
writes for the Voice

This is about bringing more communities into the decisions and funding that can improve everyday life.

If North Somerset joins, it could unlock an additional £15 million in the short term, with the potential for more investment in future, helping us deliver better transport, housing, and opportunities across a wider area.

I'd really encourage residents, community groups and businesses to take part. This is your chance to have a say on the future of our region.

Find out more on our website, westofengland-ca.gov.uk, or through paper forms at local libraries, community centres, and GP surgeries.



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NEWS

Joining a winning team ...

BRISTOL Rovers Community Trust (BRCT) has announced a partnership with creative company and education provider BoomSatsuma.

BRCT will work closely with BoomSatsuma's sports media production students, giving the 16-18-year-olds opportunities to build live broadcast and matchday content into their portfolios.

The collaboration will help strengthen BRCT's own media output and enable the trust to produce more creative and engaging storytelling across its programmes and teams.

The partnership has begun, with BoomSatsuma students having covered Bristol Rovers BTEC fixtures against Swindon and Exeter, as well as the BTEC women's derby match against Bristol City Robins Foundation.

Marc Lewis, head of marketing and media at BRCT, said: "This is a really proud moment - a lot of work has gone on behind the scenes to bring the partnership to life."

Adam Tutton, CEO at BRCT, added: "It's fantastic to be working alongside our long-time friends at BoomSatsuma to give their students the opportunity to develop their media portfolios within the world of sport, while also helping to raise the profile of our BTEC Education Programme."

Community heroes in the spotlight

A CEREMONY was held to honour 43 individuals and groups – those "amazing people" who have made Horfield and Lockleaze "wonderful places to live, work and play."

This year's Horfield and Lockleaze Community Awards focused on celebrating the unsung heroes who live or volunteer in the community. The event was planned by a small team of local residents, but was supported by Ebenezer Church, Lockleaze Neighbourhood Trust and Lockleaze Sports Centre to cover the cost of food and venue.

The winners included individuals who support children's wellbeing and physical activity, provide food support to the community, improve nature projects and green spaces, give their time to local schools, or promote sports and creative opportunities. Local groups such as the Friends of Horfield Common, the Grove Team at Orchard School and the 209th Lockleaze Scout Group were also collectively recognised.

Recipients of awards spanned the age spectrum. Nine-year-old **Jack Shaw** Jack reads to the elderly, supports a young boy from Ukraine, and has collected essential donations such as rice, toiletries, and socks to support those in need; he recently raised £1,700 for the Julian Trust homeless shelter by climbing Pen Y Fan.

Zach Holmes is a remarkable 16-year-old volunteer who helps distribute food to around 50 families at The Vench in Lockleaze, ensuring that food doesn't go to waste.



Dennis and Alison Kinnersley with their certificates Photo: Tim Brooks

Additionally, Zach volunteers at The Vench Corner Café at the weekend. During the summer holidays, he even cooked over 100 burgers at a football tournament to feed hungry players and their families.

Two award winners were also celebrated for their 50-year dedication to the community and local church. Since the 1970s, **Dennis and Alison Kinnersley** have tirelessly supported Horfield United Reformed Church, through various roles, from elder and secretary to caretaker - ensuring the church and hall are welcoming and well-maintained, as well as actively contributing to local events and theatre productions.

Organiser, Rachel Varley, thanking all those who nominated and who made the evening such a success, added: "We wanted to showcase those who so generously go above and beyond, acting with kindness and generosity to create a positive impact here in Horfield and Lockleaze."

"In a time where our news feeds are full of the sorrows in our world, moments like the one described above remind us of the things to be hopeful about - the wonderful people being generous in our community!"

More photos of the event, taken by Tim Brooks, can be found at www.lockleazeandhorfield.co.uk/community-awards

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■ ADVERTISING FEATURE

Children Law update

Katie Andrews, Solicitor at AMD Solicitors considers the Government's recent proposals to further protect children from abusive parents.

Under the Children Act 1989, the Courts are required to place an emphasis on the 'presumption of parental involvement'. This presumption requires that the Court will assume that a parent's involvement within a child's life will always further the child's welfare, unless proven otherwise.

Due to this, the Courts have always placed a heavy weight on children needing a relationship and contact with both of their parents.

Towards the end of 2025, the Government unveiled plans to repeal the 'presumption of parental involvement'. This presumption led to concerns that always prioritising contact was leaving room for child abuse to continue in some cases.

In the recent review, it was found that in some cases, contact was being ordered even where there had been domestic abuse. Justice Minister, Baroness Levitt KC said in her findings "Being a parent is a privilege not a right: the only right which matters is a child's right to safety and this government is determined to ensure that that is at the heart of every decision made about each and every child."

Whilst there are already circumstances where the Court can consider it inappropriate for the child to have a relationship with a parent, this is a high bar and most commonly, the Court will want to see a relationship with both parents when applying the welfare checklist.

Moving forward, the Government are making it clear that the wellbeing and safety of children should be at the forefront of decision making for the Courts. More

time will need to be spent considering if contact really is safe for the child and the Court should not order direct unsupervised contact if there are concerns about the child's safety with that parent.

Where the Court considers a parent to be a threat to the child's safety, they can restrict that parent's involvement within the child's life. They can make Orders for written communication only, supervised contact through a contact centre or in some circumstances, no contact at all.

Whilst the Government have not clarified when this change is likely to come in to place, this is likely to be a welcome change for parents who have concerns about their child's safety through contact with their other parent.

Once implemented, this change will not affect the need for the Court to consider the circumstances of the child's life under the wel-



fare checklist such as their emotional needs, wishes and feelings, characteristics etc, all of which will need to be considered alongside the safety of the child.

If you would like to discuss matters regarding your children, one of our dedicated team would be well placed to assist you. Please contact us to discuss your matter further.



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FROM YOUR COUNCILLORS

Southmead: Kaz Self and Kye Dudd (Labour)

Plans for a 24/7 closure of Park Street to general traffic scrapped

At a Transport Committee meeting on February 5, councillors rejected a Green Party proposal for a 24/7 closure of Park Street to general traffic by 5 to 4. The three Labour votes on the committee were key to that decision, with Councillor Kaz Self being one of those who voted against. The proposal on the table would have meant a substantial number of additional vehicles being redirected past the Children's Hospital and the BRI, something we weren't prepared to accept.

The proposal to put bus gates at the top and bottom of Park Street first came to committee last year. We abstained at that time on the basis that the scheme included some good improvements to travel infrastructure and public realm in the Queens Road area, but we weren't convinced by a permanent Park Street closure. The WECA mayor Helen Godwin put in a common-sense suggestion to have peak time only bus gates, to reduce bus journey times when congestion is at its worst, but the Green-led administration rejected it. WECA would have funded the compromise proposal; by turning it down the Green-led administration turned this money down and suggested CAZ (Clean Air Zone) money could fund it instead. We think CAZ money is better spent on more



buses, highways maintenance (including white line and zebra repainting) and better lighting.

Breakfast club coming to Badock's Wood School

Badock's Wood E-ACT Academy in Southmead is part of the next phase of the national free school breakfast club programme, which will see 15 more schools across West offering free breakfasts from April, bringing the total to 24. The scheme, backed by an £80 million investment from government, is designed to help families, reduce child hunger, and ensure

children start the school day ready to learn. Recent expansions mean half a million more children will benefit nationwide, with schools receiving simplified funding to provide high-quality breakfast provision.

Elmfield Secondary School for Deaf Children

Work to relocate Elmfield Secondary School for Deaf Children to a new, purpose-designed facility in Southmead has begun. The project will provide dedicated classrooms, breakout spaces and specialist facilities tailored to meet the needs of diverse deaf students. Part of Badock's Wood E-ACT Academy will be refurbished to enable Elmfield Secondary to move location.

Bristol City Council Budget

Thanks to a generous boost from the Labour Government to Bristol City Council's core spending power, savage cuts to public services like we had under Tory austerity have been avoided.

Bristol Labour submitted constructive amendments to the Green Party budget, we will report back on this next month.

Kye & Kaz

cllr.kye.dudd@bristol.gov.uk 07795 509 531

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NEWS



Support for charities

HENLEAZE Christmas Festival has made the biggest ever donations to its sponsored charities after a highly successful event.

The three charities will each receive £1000. They are everyFAMILY, Vision Care for Homeless People and The Family Centre (Deaf Children).

"We are delighted to once again provide some much-needed support to local charities," said Festival co-ordinator Jane Emery.

She added: "A fine evening helped boost attendance and there was a wonderful response to the prize draw."

The Festival are also donating £400 each to the Air Cadets, who provide support on the night and Trinity-Henleaze URC, whose premises are a focal point for the evening's entertainment.

The committee will shortly be deciding on this year's charities to be supported. Plans are already under way for the next festival on Wednesday December 2. Anyone offering to help please contact Jane Emery at: janeemery1951@gmail.com
L-R: Sam Chinnick, of everyFAMILY; Louise Mantin, from Henleaze Christmas Festival committee; and Kerri Matthews of everyFAMILY.



THE Filtones Choir handed over £832 to the charity InHOPE after its two annual concerts. The money was presented to David Pritchard, from the charity last month..

The choir's members have chosen BRACE (Research into Alzheimer's and all forms of dementia) as their charity for 2026.

The choir is always looking for new members so if you would like to try us out, please drop in to see us at the Community Rooms of St Teresa's church, Filton, every Wednesday from 1.45 to 3.45 pm.

Further info at www.thefilttones.co.uk or ring Dot on 07870 984760.

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44 *Fill them*
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BOOK REVIEW

The Passenger

by Cormac McCarthy

WE start in Chicago, in the last year of the life of Alicia Western, a maths prodigy who suffers from mental health issues. The opening chapter is italicised, signposting to the reader, that what follows is one of many hallucinations, which haunt Alicia, whenever she skips her medication.

Each hallucination finds Alicia in dialogue with The Kid, a creature with a hairless skull, seal's flippers and oarlike shoes, accompanied by a group of demons, who she describes as

penny dreadful entertainers. These hallucinatory chapters are interspersed with chapters depicting the life of Bobby, Alicia's brother who works as a salvage diver. We meet Bobby as he and his salvage team locate an aeroplane on the seabed in the Gulf of Mexico. They find seven bodies within the wreckage yet eight passengers are listed on the manifest. Bobby hires a boat to investigate the neighbouring beaches in search of the missing passenger.

The narrative shifts back

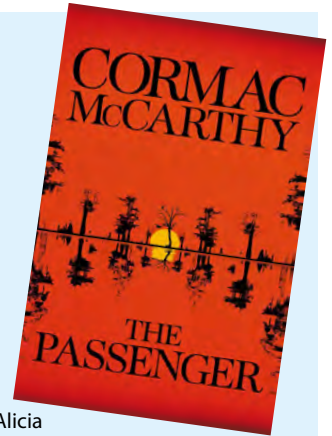
and forth in time including the childhood of Alicia and Bobby, whose father was a nuclear physicist who helped split the atom, leading to the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We follow Bobby from growing up in Tennessee to present day life in New Orleans where he goes to his bank, seeking to withdraw 200 dollars. He discovers that the IRS have blocked his account and have confiscated the contents of his safe deposit box. He is being investigated for tax fraud and finds work in a dive shop in Tucson where he is paid off the books.

We delve into a wide range of subjects including the development of the Atom bomb, the assassination of President Kennedy, the Vietnam War and a discussion on Quantum Mechanics but the emotional heart of the novel is the relationship between Bobby and

Alicia and the all-consuming grief Bobby suffers at the loss of his beloved sister.

This is an complex, strange and melancholic novel, full of captivating dialogue and intriguing characters, providing an enjoyable and challenging read. For this book and many more, please come and visit your local library. You will receive a warm welcome and enjoy access to the internet and wi-fi printing with your library card.

Review by Bob Deacon, from Bishopston Library



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NEWS

A PLANNED £15m scheme to ban through traffic from Park Street has been blocked.

The proposal from the Green-led administration at Bristol City Council was defeated at the transport policy committee last month.

Three Labour councillors, one Conservative and a Liberal Democrat outvoted the four Green councillors.

The opponents were concerned about an increase in pollution if drivers had to use the alternative route past the Bristol Royal Infirmary and the Children's Hospital.

But their decision means thousands of bus passengers will continue to endure delays.

The meeting heard that about 35 buses travel along Park Street every hour in either direction. There are often queues along the entire street as buses and cars attempt to get into the city centre, holding up passengers for at least 10 minutes and impacting the reliability of the bus network city-wide.

A recent council traffic count on Park Street found that between 7am and 7pm, about 7,000 cars, 20,000 pedestrians and cyclists, and at least 30,000 bus passengers used the route.

Councillor Tom Renhard, leader of the Labour group, said: "The impact on air quality outside the hospitals is not something that I feel is a fair sacrifice in order to progress this scheme. It will go up by the amount it will reduce in the Colston Avenue area. It's unfortunate that when WECA [the West of England Combined Authority] offered a compromise, it wasn't taken.

"While you are going to get some modal shift, some people do need to use their cars to get about the city. That could be for a range of reasons, in my case caring responsibilities. I'm fully committed to looking at what we can do to get air pollution down. I'm not going to sign off on measures that are going to make air pollution worse outside our city's hospitals."

Council staff said the increase of air pollution along Park Row, Perry Road, Upper Maudlin Street and Marlborough Street — the road from the Bearpit to the Triangle that passes the hospital— would be negligible. Levels of nitrogen dioxide have been falling since the Clean Air Zone was

Vote scuppers traffic-ban scheme for Park Street



How Park St traffic ban could have looked

brought in and would remain below legal limits if the plan went ahead.

Meanwhile levels of nitrogen dioxide would fall on probably the most polluted part of Bristol, around Colston Avenue, Lewins Mead and Rupert Street — the busy roads in between the Centre and the Bearpit. At the last annual count, pollution here is above the legal limit of 40 micrograms per cubic metre of air.

The Park Street ban would divert a lot of traffic from using this route, with pollution soon falling below legal limits.

Councillors were told that changes would be made to the Park Row alternative route, including to traffic light signals and removing islands, to cut down on congestion. But they remained unconvinced, and Labour suggested that the Clean Air Zone funding be used instead to pay for more subsidised bus routes. This cash has previously paid for new routes and existing routes to run more frequently.

Labour said this money could also be spent on repainting road markings, unblocking drains and installing better lighting on pavements. They suggested expanding a financial assistance scheme helping drivers upgrade to cleaner vehicles, and questioned the loss of parking income if some spaces were removed from Park Street.

The Park Street plan was first suggested by the former Labour mayor of Bristol, Marvin Rees, but the idea was later canned. Then the Greens revived the scheme, splitting public opinion. Some local businesses feared a loss of trade while walking campaigners said footfall would probably increase.

But the Labour mayor of the West of England, Helen Godwin, refused to fund the plan. Instead she offered a trial of a through-traffic ban just at peak hours. Because this would only cut traffic and pollution by about a third, the Greens rejected the trial and tried to pay for the scheme a different way.

Around £8 million would come from the Clean Air Zone income, and £5.3 million from a government air quality grant. However they needed the approval of the transport policy committee. Conservatives and Liberal Democrats previously opposed the plan, so the decision rested on the three Labour councillors, who last year abstained from a decision on Park Street.

Green Cllr Rob Bryher said: "Labour seem desperate to block a fully funded, deliverable scheme that will clean up air, give buses priority, reduce traffic congestion overall, create a better environment for shopping and dwelling, and reinvent the public realm up to the Triangle. We want to make the air safe to breathe for thousands of Bristol residents and visitors.

"It's clear that Labour will only support schemes like this when they get to deliver them, not when the Greens — following on from Labour and Marvin's good work setting up the Clean Air Zone — are delivering them. We thought there was a progressive consensus around clean air and bus priority.

"Labour have sadly broken that consensus by not seizing this opportunity to make our air clean enough to be legally compliant.

By Alex Seabrook, Local Democracy Reporting Service



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NEWS FROM SusWoT

Hazel Brook silt pollution

In January, the Environment Agency (EA) met with Trout in the Trym regarding silt pollution in Hazel Brook, originating from building sites near the A4018. Ed Lockington, (the EA's Wessex Regional Manager), confirmed that the EA is treating the issue seriously and formally investigating.

The silt is smothering the streambed and will reduce biodiversity. This means fewer aquatic plants, bugs and fish, and therefore also fewer kingfishers, herons, egrets and wagtails. The silt will wash downstream and is likely to affect the ponds in Blaise Castle Estate too. Annoying given the work by volunteers from Friends of Blaise and Trout in the Trym to empty the silt traps and improve the ponds.

The EA has increased site visits and now requires developers to conduct regular monitoring at various locations. They are currently assessing further actions. We will continue to monitor the situation closely and encourage strong action.

Great British Spring Clean

This year's Great British Spring Clean runs from 13-29 March. While SusWoT supports this national campaign, we like to keep Westbury litter-free all year round. Get in touch if you'd like to help.

Making Retrofit the New Normal

Walking through Westbury, there is clear



Silt from one of the outfalls coming under the A4018 into Hazel Brook

evidence that more people are taking action to reduce their home energy use and cut their reliance on fossil fuels. From solar panels and heat pumps to draught-proofing and insulation, these changes are increasingly common. It's been encouraging to hear how our Warmer Westbury Homes fairs, library talks, and open homes days helped households overcome barriers to getting started. We will be featuring completed projects in this column. Every home is different and there is no one-size-fits-all solution; even neighbouring semi-detached houses can have different priorities depending on the work carried out since they were built. Sharing these stories

can help others find the right approach for them. You can see a range of existing local case studies in the 'I Did It!' section of our website suswot.org.uk.

We are now developing Retrofit Neighbours, a local support network of residents interested in home energy projects. We'll connect people who are considering a new project with those who have carried out similar work and can share their experiences. We aim to match people based on their specific priorities—whether that's detailed technical performance data and design, or more practical considerations such as noise levels, aesthetics and value for money. We're also keen to encourage those who have recently moved to Westbury to consider retrofit as part of any renovations they are planning.

There are three ways you can get involved:

1. Share your story: we can feature your project as a case study to inspire others.
2. Volunteer as a Retrofit Neighbour: you can share your experiences directly with a neighbour.
3. Seek advice for your project: SusWoT can help match you with someone who has been through the process.

Get in touch via our website or email suswot2050@gmail.com.

Peter Coleman-Smith
Liz Viggers

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■ PHARMACY COLUMN

Make sure you drink enough water – it's so important for your health

IT'S now more than two years since Kellaway Pharmacy has been able to prescribe antibiotics to treat **impetigo, infected sore throats, urinary tract infections, infected insect bites, sinusitis and ear infections for children and adults.**

We remain pleased that our prescribing continues to demonstrate and align with good antimicrobial stewardship best-use practices. Remember, for all these conditions, including Shingles, you can just walk in for a free diagnostic consultation with our pharmacist and then receive appropriate NHS-funded treatments including antibiotics.

Kellaway Pharmacy **Weight-loss support clinics** continue to be very popular. Our holistic approach means we are not just focusing on how to lose weight but also on why you may struggle to eat healthily and, most importantly, how to maintain healthy weight loss.

A top tip we share is: Are you drinking enough water? When dehydrated, many people will snack. We do not drink enough water with our meals or during the day, and we even break the golden rule: Hydrate Well after Exercise. The NHS recommends drinking six to eight glasses of water or fluids daily. This includes lower-fat milk and sugar-free drinks, like tea and coffee. While we can

guide and provide effective weight-loss therapies, including the novel injectable therapies Wegovy and Mounjaro, we are determined to help inform better lifestyle choices. Do contact us; we can help.

Those eligible for the **COVID-19 Spring Booster** jabs can book on the **NHS website (use postcode BS6 7XR)** or just walk in here at Kellaway Pharmacy. As with previous programmes, we are geared to deliver another excellent, well-run programme.

The NHS remains the embodiment of public service, rightly so, and we are grateful to the many individuals, not just clinicians, who help deliver all the care and supporting



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

functions.

The Kellaway Pharmacy Team continues to do our best to deliver NHS care for our community.

Call on 01179246579 or do just come in. We never take for granted the privilege and responsibility of being the most accessible part of the NHS.

KIDS FEELING UNWELL?

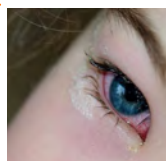
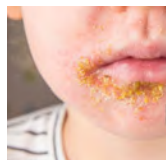
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(1 YEAR & ABOVE)
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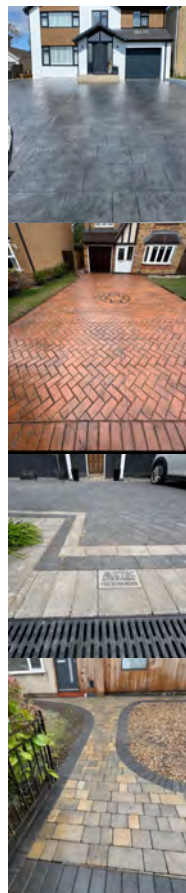
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WHAT'S ON

MARCH EVENTS

■ LA SCALA DELI HENLEAZE

Join us at the Italian Hub of Henleaze for our new series of wine tastings for 2026! Led by our in-house sommelier, includes 5 wines accompanied by a small aperitivo board - small plates available

MARCH

6th & 12th - Liguria & Valle D'Aosta
7th & 13th - Spanish Tasting - La Scala Exclusive
14th - Wine & Dine Dinner Party
- 5 regional courses paired to 6 wines - Rome

APRIL

2nd & 9th - Liguria & Valle D'Aosta
10th & 23rd - Spanish Tasting
4th - Wine & Dine Dinner Party
- Rome

MAY

14th & 22nd - Monthly Wine Tour- Emilia Romagna
21st & 23rd - Dry Whites & Big Bubbles
16th - Wine & Dine Dinner Party
- 5 Regional courses paired to 6 wines - Calabria

JUNE

11th & 19th - Monthly Wine Tour- Emilia Romagna
12th & 18th - Dry Whites & Big Bubbles
27th - Wine & Dine Dinner Party
- 5 regional courses paired to 6 wines - Calabria

March 23rd

■ HENLEAZE SENIOR FILM CLUB

The Critic (15) 2pm - When the most feared and vicious theatre critic in town Jimmy Erskine finds himself suddenly in the crosshairs of the Daily Chronicle's new owner, he strikes a sinister Faustian pact with struggling actress Nina Land who is desperate to win his favour. Starring Ian McKellen, Mark Strong and Gemma Arterton. Carers welcome, easy access. St. Peter's Church Hall, The Drive, Henleaze BS9 4LD. For more information, please call 0117 435 0063

March 1st

■ **TAIZÉ - FOR THE SEASON OF LENT.** In the chapel at St Monica's, Cote Lane, W-on-T, BS9 3UN. Sunday March 1st at 5 p.m. Musicians will

lead us in beautiful chants from the Taizé tradition, speaking to our hearts. With readings and silence. For more info call Roger 0117 462 1117.

March 14th

■ HENLEAZE CHORAL SOCIETY WITH CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Trinity Henleaze URC 7.30pm,
Faure Requiem and Dubois
The Seven Last Words of Christ.
Tickets £20 including glass wine,
Students £10. www.henleazecs.org.uk

March 14th

■ BLAISE COMMUNITY GARDEN

behind Blaise Museum
BS10 7QS open Wednesday 10-12
and Saturday 10 to 2, interesting walled kitchen garden, free entry, new volunteers needed & welcomed, plants available.
Events : Café on the 14th March 9.45am-2pm, and further Cafe on 11th April

March 18th

■ BRISTOL OPERA CLUB -

Bristol Opera Club presents a talk on The Flying Dutchman. David Martin will seek to explain the background to and the revolutionary nature of this seminal opera using DVD excerpts. 6.30 for 7.00pm, All are warmly welcomed. The Apostle Room, Clifton Cathedral, Worcester Road Entrance. £8.00/£1.00 cash only please, Dedicated parking, Bar. Details: borkmail100@gmail.com 01275 848526

March 21st

■ **BRISTOL BACH CHOIR** with Bristol Ensemble Baroque at St George's Bristol. 7.30pm, Mass in B minor, J.S. Bach. Tickets: from £12. www.bristolbach.org.uk 0117 214 0721. The acoustics of St George's will be the ideal place in which to hear this work with its wide-ranging textures of arias, ensembles and choruses.

March 29th

■ **WESTBURY SINGERS** will be joining the choirs of Holy Trinity church, Westbury on Trym for a Passion Sunday service in the church at 6.30pm on Sunday 29th March. We will be singing 'The Saviour', a sacred cantata by William Lloyd-Webber

(1914 -1982), father of Andrew and Julian. It is a moving and dramatic work featuring choruses, solos, and well-known congregational hymns. All welcome. Admission is free with a retiring collection.

REGULAR EVENTS

Various days

■ **WESTBURY WILDLIFE PARK** The park's peaceful setting, with children's play area and cafe, is open for you to enjoy with your friends and family from Fridays to Sundays from 10am to 4pm. Refer to the website wwpf.uk for events, activities and volunteering opportunities.

■ WEST OF ENGLAND BRIDGE CLUB

meet at the RAFA Club, 38 Eastfield, Henleaze. Thursday afternoon is for improvers, and Monday and Friday afternoons, are for more capable players. These are EBU recognised sessions. You may come alone to any afternoon session or Wednesday evening when a partner will be found. The two evening sessions are Wednesdays and Fridays. For more information go to our website at www.woebidgeclub.co.uk or contact our Secretary Alan on 0117 4526947.

Monday

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

■ **TEATIME CHURCH** - Children and families are welcome to join us once a month at the back of Holy Trinity Church in Westbury-on-Trym for crafts, games, stories and songs, followed by supper for all the children. There is also a baby/toddler area and a monthly Lego challenge. This is a very informal service, where children/adults can learn a little about God and the church in a fun and friendly environment. All are very welcome! Please visit our website for further information and monthly dates <https://www.westbury-parish-church.org.uk/teatime-church/>

■ CANFORD BOWLING CLUB

season has started again, and new members of any age or experience would be very welcome. Free coaching is available. If interested please email canfordbowlingclub@gmail.com or ring 07504254499. Come and give it a go.

■ **BRISTOL HOME LIBRARY SERVICE** - We are a free service for any adult who lives in Bristol and who can't get to their library but still wants books or audio books. Volunteers call

monthly. Contact us if you would like to volunteer or know someone who needs us. BHLSVisits@royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk or 07714 898558

■ **WESTBURY SINGERS** - If you love singing and a varied repertoire, do try our friendly, non-auditioned, 4-part choir. We're especially keen to attract Tenors and Basses. We sing on Monday term-time evenings from 7:30pm - 9:30pm at Carey Hall, Westbury Baptist Church (far left entrance off the car park). Reading music is helpful but by no means essential. Simply come along one Monday evening (three free taster sessions available) and/or see www.westburysingers.org for more info and recordings, or email us on wotsingers@gmail.com.

■ ASSASSIN FITNESS CLASS

- Mondays 6:15pm, St Peter's Church Hall Henleaze. 45min Class £6. ASSASSIN is a Brand New Choreographed Combat style fitness class that allows you to let go of stress, whilst realising your inner SASS! It combines many elements of fitness including conditioning, cardio and plyometrics for a complete workout! Are you ready to become an Assassin? Aim, Shoot and Fire! Special September Offer - Your First Class is FREE!!! For more info and bookings please contact me: instructor. izzyy@gmail.com or on Instagram @assassin_izzyy

■ **DICKENS SOCIETY.** 7pm, at Leonard Hall, Henleaze URC, Waterford Rd, Bristol BS9 4BT. Talks, costumed readings, book club and social events. New members welcome. See www.dickens-society.org.uk or phone Roma on 0117 9279875 for further details.

■ WESTBURY ON TRYM WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

meets on the third Monday of the month in the Westbury Village Hall, Eastfield Road, BS9 4AG, from 2.00 - 4.00 pm. We have interesting speakers, and extra activities of crafts, lunch club, skittles and outings. Our lively, friendly and inclusive group welcomes visitors at any meeting. For more information call Sascha on 07961619806 or Traci on 07766073917

■ 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'

WHAT'S ON

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

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

■ **COMMUNITY SIGHT LOSS HUB**, First Tuesday of each month, 11am-1pm at Trinity Church, Henleaze. Join our coffee morning for blind and partially sighted people to socialise with others and receive advice and guidance from our experienced advisors. Tailored support also available by appointment by calling Sight Support West on 0117 322 4885.

■ **CARERS' SUPPORT GROUP** run by Bristol Dementia Action Alliance, held on the first Tuesday of each month, St Peter's Church, Henleaze, BS9 4LD, 2pm-4pm. A chance for carers to share stories and gain support from each other. For further information, contact Tony Hall, office@bdaa.org.uk

■ **WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP** meet on Tuesday mornings at Westbury-on-Trym Methodist Church, 10.30am-noon. An interesting programme of speakers; come along to make friends. For more details, ring Kate 07905 064720.

■ **SCOTTISH DANCING TO KEEP FIT AND HAVE FUN.** Bristol Westbury Scottish Country Dance Club. Beginners taster package, (phone Tina: 07568 537154): £20 for 4 wks starting Sept. For new-to-us dancers, first night free, then £6pw. (Email: maggiekirkup@gmail.com). All classes are at St.Peter's Church Hall, Henleaze, Tuesdays 7.30 - 9.30 pm. Details at www.westburyscottish.org.uk. SC dancing also possible with RSCDS Bristol: see Thursday columns.

■ **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.

■ **WESTBURY FOLK/COUNTRY DANCING** - come along to have some fun folk dancing on Tuesdays 1.30 - 3.30pm at Westbury College in College Road. All dances are called and refreshments are available. FFI contact Christine on 07775 628524 or codonnell100@btinternet.com.

■ **COMPANION VOICES BRISTOL** is recruiting new members. We meet in Easton on the 3rd Tuesday of the month from 7 to 9 pm to learn soothing and uplifting 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 or 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

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.

Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday

■ **FRIENDLY BRIDGE SW** is a Bridge Club operating on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings from 10am to 1pm at Stoke Bishop Village Hall. We also offer online bridge and face to face tuition. New faces are always welcome. Please email friendlybridgesw@gmail.com or call Gareth on 07921-788605 for further information.

Wednesday

■ **HENLEAZE CHORAL SOCIETY** meets at Henleaze Bowling Club, Grange Court Road, Wednesdays 7.30 to 9pm. A small, unauditioned choir singing varied music. New members welcome. For info, contact

Kathy, 0117 949362 <http://www.henleazechoralsociety.org.uk/>

■ A CLASS FOR EVERYBODY!

KEEP FIT, St Peter's Church, Henleaze, Wednesdays, 10-11am, £8. Improve your health and wellbeing with this low-impact exercise class. With music from the 60s to today's pop to enjoy a supple strength workout. Call Louisa: 07725 091429. Email Louisa: chairaerobicslouisa@gmail.com

■ 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.

■ A GENTLE WAY TO KEEP FIT & HAVE FUN! CHAIR AEROBICS,

St Peter's Church, Henleaze, Wednesdays, 11.15am-12.15pm, £8. Maintain and progress your strength, stability and balance at our seated and gentle standing exercise class. Songs from every era to enjoy and complement a workout for mind and body wellness. Call Louisa: 07725 091429. Email Louisa: chairaerobicslouisa@gmail.com

■ **HENLEAZE CHESS** From 2.45pm - 4.30pm on selected Wednesdays in Coffee #1 on Henleaze Rd for informal chess with your coffee and cake. Typically twice per month. All ages and abilities welcome. No membership or fee. Please join us if you spot us or contact us at markRth-waites@gmail.com for expected forthcoming dates.

■ GRIEF & BEREAVEMENT

SUPPORT GROUP: Meets on the third Wednesday of the month from 2.00pm - 4.00pm. in The Goronwy Room, St. Peter's Church, The Drive, Henleaze. BS9 4LD

■ **GOLDEN HILL WI** Meets the first Wednesday of every month. 1-3pm. Golden Hill Sports Ground, Wimbledon Road, BS6 7YA. A vibrant, lively, afternoon WI in BS6. We have a varied programme to

offer members. Visitors and new members will be given a warm welcome. For more information contact Pam Scull at goldenhill-wi@gmail.com.

■ TEA AND TOTS - GROUP

FOR UNDER 5s. Wednesdays during term time, 10-11:30am, Newman Hall building, W-o-T, BS9 4DR. Free onsite parking. Toys for all ages, sensory play, and craft. £2 suggested donation includes refreshments. Email toddlergroup.sacredheart@cliftondiocese.com Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61579193183721>

■ HENLEAZE BOWLING CLUB

Wednesday morning whist drives, 10.00 for 10.30, all welcome. £2.00 including tea and coffee. Located in Grange Court Road next to Newman Hall. Please see our website for information and all social events. <https://henleazebowlingclub.org.uk/social-events/>

■ **COME AND ENJOY** free tea and cake in a friendly atmosphere at Holy Trinity Church, Church Rd, Westbury-on-Trym every Wednesday 10.30-12. Call 0117 9508644 (mornings) for more information

■ HENLEAZE BOWLING CLUB.

Wednesdays from 10.00 - and Thursday's from 13.30 Short Mat bowls in the clubhouse all welcome. Other social events during the winter can be found on our website <https://henleazebowlingclub.org.uk/social-events/>. Phone, Tom Logan, on 0117 962 1669 or email hbcsec@henleazebowlingclub.org.uk for further details.

■ 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 tanialake@yahoo.co.uk

■ **HEALING** 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

■ 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

WHAT'S ON

turn up or visit www.westburyparksc.org

■ **SWIFTS INCLUSIVE SPORTS** swimming sessions are for adults 18+ with any type of disability (hoist available) 7-8pm. £5 per session at Henbury Leisure Centre. Contact Karen Lloyd at 07734 335 878.

Thursday

■ **TODDLERS TOGETHER** is a parent and toddler group for the community. It takes place every Thursday during term time from 10-11.15am at Westbury-on-Trym Methodist Church Hall, BS9 3AA. There are toddler toys, a baby area, a weekly craft activity, singing, drinks and biscuits and a final prayer to end the session. We ask for a £2 voluntary donation per family on the door. You can just turn up - no need to pre-book. To find out more about this group, visit <https://www.westbury-parish-church.org.uk/toddler-group/>

■ **EMMANUEL WESTBURY TODDLER GROUP.** A play group for children aged 0-4, their Parents & Grandparents. Every Thursday in term time, 10:15-11:45. Northcote Scout Hall, Great Broomfield, BS9 3TY. £3 per family, payable on door. Includes homemade cakes, hot & cold drinks and all activities. Come along or look us up at <https://emmanuelbristol.org.uk/events/emmanuel-westbury-toddlers/> or enquire by email to avbradley@outlook.com

■ **TRINITY HENLEAZE GUILD** meet fortnightly on Thursdays at 2pm in the Leonard Hall Trinity Henleaze URC Waterford Road. We have an interesting and varied programme of speakers and new members and visitors will have a warm welcome. For more information contact Jenny on 01179620108

■ **LEARN TO MEDITATE.** Four weekly sessions starting September 11th. Thursdays 4-5 p.m. at The Well Centre for Spirituality, 38 Church Road, W-on-T, BS9 3EQ. Learn to change yourself and so change the world - opening our hearts to the inner source of our being. For more info or to register shelagh.layet@gmail.com or 07983 594182.

■ **FRIENDLY CLUB** meets every Thursday from 2 - 4pm in the Methodist Church Hall, W-O-T. We are a lively group of older people who meet to chat, play Scrabble

or cards. Trips out and entertainments are arranged, plus we have tea and biscuits. Do come and make some new friends.

■ **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

■ **ARCHITECTURE & BUILDINGS GROUP U3A** meets at Henleaze United Reformed Church Meeting Room, Waterford Road, 2-4pm on the fourth Thursday of the month except July, August & December. We are a small shared interest group. No previous knowledge required. Contact Rod for further information. Email: rodathay@gmail.com or call 07792 200949.

■ **HENLEAZE BOWLING CLUB** Thursday afternoon short mat bowls, 13.30, all welcome £3.00, tea and coffee provided. Located in Grange Court Road next to Newman Hall. Please see our website for information and all social events. <https://henleazebowling-club.org.uk/social-events/>

■ **WEST BRISTOL ORCHESTRA** is a small, friendly amateur group that enjoys music-making without public performances. It meets on Thursday nights in term time at St. Peter's Church, Henleaze at 7.15-9.15pm. We would especially welcome more string players. Please visit our website for further details at maths.bris.ac.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

■ **SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING** Join us for fun, fitness and friendship (singles welcome). First evening free! RSCDS Bristol. 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 0117 968 3057. SC Dancing is also possible on Tuesdays with (Bristol) Westbury SCDC: see Tuesday columns.

■ **HEALING FOR WELLBEING - NEW TIME 5.00 PM TO 6.15 PM** Feel more relaxed, peaceful, calmer. Drop in sessions (no need to book) with trained practitioners. Venue: Redland Meeting House, 126 Hampton Road, BS6 6JE. All welcome - donation basis. For more information, visit <http://www.facebook.com/Bristol-HealingGroup> or <https://www.thehealingtrust.org.uk/healing/healing-centre> or phone Selina 0117 9466434.

■ **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

■ **SINGING TO REMEMBER** We meet on 1st, 3rd and 5th Thursday from 2 - 3.45 pm in The Bradbury Hall, Waterford Road, Henleaze. It is a friendly, supportive group for people with dementia and their carers. Anyone interested can phone me 0117 9426095 to book a place or discuss.

■ **HENLEAZE FLOWER CLUB** Visitors are very welcome at any meeting £8. No need to book just come to The Bradbury Hall BS9 4BT on the second or fourth Thursday in the month, except August and December. Demonstrations on the second Thursday start at 2pm. Practice class on the fourth Thursday starts at 1.30pm. Contact Jenny York 07880 700 270

■ **HIGHBURY BADMINTON CLUB:** Pete Stables 0117 950

1524 or www.pete4458.wixsite.com/highburybadminton Thurs 7:45pm mid September to End April, Westbury-on-Trym Village Hall

■ **HENLEAZE FLOWER CLUB** welcomes new members. Annual membership £52. Demonstration meetings on 2nd Thursday of the month, 2pm, Bradbury Hall Waterford Rd. Henleaze. Plus optional Practice Classes on 4th Thursday. We meet every month except December and August. Please contact Jenny York, Club Chair yorkjenny2@yahoo or phone/text 07880 700270

■ **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 and listen. Call 0117 959 0834

■ **HENLEAZE LADIES' CHOIR** Come and join us at St Peter's Church Hall. 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.

Friday

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

■ **WESTBURY ON TRYM COUNTRY MARKET** 10:00 - 11:30 every Friday in the Westbury on Trym Methodist Church Hall. A cooperative of local producers selling seasonal items including baked goods, preserves, local honey, eggs, cheese, ham, plants, flowers and hand made craft. It's free to come in and view. New producers, particularly cooks, are especially welcome. More information www.avoncountrymarket.co.uk, mail@avoncountrymarket.co.uk or call 0117 950 3897.

■ **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 and listen. Call 0117 959 0834

WHAT'S ON

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 Sat (except August). Voluntary service run by experienced repairers. Donations welcome. FFI see Facebook @seamillsrepaircafe or email: repaircafe.seamills@gmail.com

■ **FAMILY ART WORKSHOPS** at Goldfinch Create and Play, Canford Lane in Westbury-on-Trym. These take place on the first Saturday of every month from 10am – 11am and are designed for the whole family to enjoy together in a relaxed environment. Seasonal nature based crafts for older and younger attendees and fun, sensory trays for toddlers. Please visit <https://www.goldfinchcreateandplay.co.uk> to book your spot and view our other offerings for toddlers, children, teens and adults.

Sunday

■ **BRISTOL ORCHESTRAL PLAYERS** are a friendly orchestra meeting monthly for workshop-

style rehearsals. We enjoy exploring varied classical repertoire, from well-known symphonies to lesser-played orchestral works. Musical Director Nicola Ashton started with us in November. Join us on Sundays 6:30-9:00 in St Peter's Church Hall Henleaze. New members very welcome, particularly string and horn players. Contact joannamellors34@gmail.com or check our website <https://www.bristolorchestralplayers.co.uk/> for further information

Send details of your events and activities in the following format:

**WHAT IT IS,
WHERE IT IS,
WHEN IT IS**

in no more than 40 words,
email us at: news@henleazeandwestburyvoice.co.uk

Chance to try pickleball

WESTBURY Park Tennis Club is welcoming the whole community to a Pickleball Open Day 2-4 on Saturday 28 March, offering a relaxed and friendly chance to try one of the UK's fastest-growing sports. No experience is needed and all equipment will be provided — just turn up, have a go, and enjoy a fun introduction to the game. The club is expanding its pickleball offering this year and is delighted to have received a generous equipment grant from the LTA, whose support has helped make the open day possible. Whether you're curious about the sport, looking for something new to try, or simply want to enjoy an active afternoon with others in the community, you'll be very welcome on court.

Look out for Easter bunny

AN Easter bunny trail for children is taking place in Clifton Village.

Thirty-five hand-made felt bunnies will be hidden in shops and businesses that take part in the trail.

It is being organised by Clifton Business Improvement District (BID).

Children will need to complete an entry form and list the names of the bunnies they have found.

"Everyone who completes the trail by finding all the bunnies will receive a treat, and this year the top prize will be a special bunny for one lucky winner," said a spokesperson for Clifton BID.

The bunny trail will run from March 30 until April 12.

Send us details of your group's event



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SPORT

Clifton strive to secure league points

AT the turn of the year and mid season for rugby clubs it was already apparent that in National League One there were already four teams competing for the one promotion place to progress to the Championship League.

From mid table to the bottom club, seven teams were already looking over their shoulders at avoiding the three lowest positions by the season's end in April when three clubs would be placed in the regional leagues for the 2026-27 campaign. Some clubs had recruited on-loan players from the Premiership to boost survival chances.

Both local clubs Clifton and Dings Crusaders were in the group of seven with few points separating them. Consequently securing wins, losing bonus points and extra points for touching down tries were crucial!

Clifton's aborted trip to top team Rotherham in January when the hosts called off the game as they arrived after a four-hour journey meant that they had to return there in February on what



Tom Quinlan breaks through

was planned to be a rest day in the league. Several players had arranged to be away that weekend and Clifton had incurred injuries to key players. With those facts in mind there was no real surprise in the result with their hosts cementing their league leadership!

A well-deserved home win over Sedgely Park with maximum points had boosted morale but a home loss to Leeds Tykes was disappointing. They had arrived with loanees from Premiership



Brad Talbot on the charge

club Sale Sharks providing extra muscle. With both influential fly half Tom Quinlan and all-action flanker Jay Evans suffering head injuries in the same collision they will be missed as they sat out the concussion protocol time during the rest of February.

Against Sedgely two trademark Brad Talbot tries delighted the crowd and young winger Ollie Harris touched down a thrilling try in the corner. Little surprise that Harris was called up by the Bears

for Premiership Cup games. This win placed Clifton for the time in a more comfortable league position.

The outcome of away trips to Reading Rams and Bishop Stortford as well as the home clash with bottom team Leicester Lions will have proved vital as Clifton head into season-defining encounters in March and April.

The visit of Dings Crusaders on March 21 will be an intense occasion.

Roger Opie

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The 2027 Inheritance Tax changes: key planning options to consider now

With major changes to inheritance tax (IHT) incoming from April 2027, many people are beginning to realise that their pensions which currently fall outside the estate, will push them over IHT thresholds.

While everyone's situation is different, there are several planning options worth considering well ahead of the 2027 deadline – and now is the time to start thinking about this.

1. Reviewing how and when you take pension benefits Under the current rules, pensions have often been left untouched and passed on to the next generation. If your pension is likely to be included in your estate from next year, it may be sensible to review whether drawing some income or lump sums earlier fits with your wider plans. This isn't about rushing decisions, but about understanding how your pension interacts with the rest of your estate.

2. Making use of gifting allowances Gifting can be an effective way to reduce the value of your estate over time. This might include making use of the annual gifting allowance, small gifts, or gifts made from surplus income. These rules can be generous, but they need to be applied carefully and documented properly.

3. Reviewing your Will and estate structure Changes to IHT rules often highlight issues in existing Wills. It may be time to check whether your Will still reflects your wishes, makes best use of available allowances, and works alongside any pension nominations you have in place.

4. Understanding the allowances The nil-rate band and residence nil-rate band can make a significant difference, particularly for couples (married or in civil partnership). Understanding how these apply and where they may be lost or tapered is an important part of effective planning.

5. Taking a joined-up view of your finances

Perhaps most importantly, planning works best when pensions, property, savings and investments are considered together. Decisions made in isolation can have unintended tax consequences later on.

Why timing matters Although April 2027 may feel some way off, the next 12 months represent a valuable planning window. Early action usually means more flexibility, more choice, and fewer rushed decisions.

If you're concerned about how the upcoming changes could affect you, book on to one of our free planning seminars: **The Swan, Thornbury: Tuesday 17th March – 10.30 – 11.30am. St Peter's Church, Henleaze: Wednesday 18th March – 2.30 – 3.30pm. Stoke Lodge, Stoke Bishop: Tuesday 24th March – 4.30 – 5.30pm.**

Call 0117 3636 212 or email community@haroldstephens.co.uk to book or find out more.



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■ MESSAGE FROM POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

Volunteers protect rights and dignity

THE TV documentary *24 Hours in Police Custody* shapes many people's views of custody.

Dramatic moments often take centre stage, but the reality is more complex.

Custody is a highly pressured environment, where people are at their most vulnerable, and where decisions are made that have real consequences for individuals and for public confidence in policing.

What happens in custody matters. It is not a place the public typically sees, yet it is an area where human rights, dignity and safety must be protected without exception.

People arrive in custody in many different circumstances: some accused of serious

offences, some experiencing mental ill health, and some under the influence of substances.

Whatever the situation, they are entitled to fairness and appropriate care.

That is why public scrutiny is so important and is provided by independent custody visitors (ICVs). They are volunteers from our communities, who help my wider work in scrutinising the police and holding them to account, on behalf of you.

The volunteers who are recruited, trained and supported by my team are empowered to make unannounced visits to police custody suites.

Crucially, they operate independently of the police and

their role is to check the welfare of detainees, ensuring rights and entitlements are upheld.

During visits, ICVs are escorted to the custody area and may speak to detainees in private, out of hearing of officers.

They look at conditions in the suite, access to food, water and hygiene, and assess if people understand their rights.

After each visit, they produce a report which is shared with me and with the police. These reports enable issues to be identified quickly, improvements to be made, and trends to be monitored over time.

Throughout January, we trained a new cohort of ICV volunteers to bolster those already in post.



With Police and Crime Commissioner Clare Moody

They all bring a breadth of life experience and perspectives that will strengthen scrutiny.

Their willingness to give their time, often at unsocial hours, is deeply appreciated.

Transparency is at the heart of public confidence in policing, and custody is no exception.

I remain committed to supporting the volunteers whose independent oversight ensures that fairness, accountability and dignity remain at the core of policing.

■ ADVERTORIAL

One team to one in ten homes – the Window Hub's success story

Every great local business starts somewhere. For The Window Hub, it began in Bristol with a single team, a simple belief in doing things properly, and a promise to treat every customer like the only customer. Fast forward to today, and that same family-run, independent business now completes one in every ten domestic window and door installations across the South West and South Wales – without ever losing sight of what made them successful in the first place.

2025 has been a landmark year. The Window Hub was proudly crowned UK Installation Company of the Year at the prestigious national G-Awards, placing this Bristol-born business firmly on the national stage. As if that wasn't enough, two outstanding members of the team were also recognised with National



Fenestration Awards, proving that behind every great company is an even greater team.

Despite the national recognition,

The Window Hub remains rooted in the local community. Being named finalists for Retailer of the Year at the Bristol Life Awards is

a reminder that supporting local businesses really does matter. When you choose local, you're investing in local jobs, local families, and local success stories – and sometimes, those stories go on to achieve incredible things.

Whether you're upgrading your home, improving energy efficiency, or simply looking for honest advice from people who care, The Window Hub delivers award-winning quality with a personal touch.

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Westbury on Trym **£895,000**

Fantastic four-bedroom semi-detached family home offering generous ground-floor living space, well proportioned bedrooms, multiple bathrooms, open views over the University of Bristol playing fields, off-street parking, a level rear garden. EPC C.



High Kingsdown **£565,000**

A four-bedroom home in a central Bristol location. An architecturally recognised development from the early 1970s. Light-filled with large windows and a south-westerly orientation. Pleasant courtyard garden and single garage. No onward chain. EPC C.



Redland **£720,000**

Set in an elevated position on a quiet side road on the Cotham/Redland borders this comfortable three-bedroom home offers classically proportioned accommodation in a great location. Benefits from downstairs WC and garage. EPC E.

Experts in residence

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■ TURNER'S VISION

How to finally get glasses that really work for you

If you're over 45, chances are you've been told some version of this before:

"It's just your age."

"You'll get used to them."

"All varifocals are much the same."

And if you're honest... you're still lifting your glasses to read, stretching your neck at the computer, or avoiding certain tasks altogether. Here's the truth most opticians won't say out loud: most people don't struggle with varifocals, they struggle with poorly thought-through ones.

At Turners, we see it every day. Intelligent, successful people who assume discomfort is inevitable. It isn't. The problem is that modern eye care has become *transactional*. A quick test. A prescription. A standard lens. Job done.

But your eyes don't live on a prescription sheet. They live in the real world, reading, driving, screens, hobbies, low light, fatigue, posture, stress.

That's why our approach is different. We start by asking important questions:

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- How much time do you spend reading, driving, or on screens?
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- Have you quietly lowered your expectations because "that's just how glasses are"?

Then we measure more than just letters on a chart. We assess how your eyes work together, how they focus, how they cope under load, and how lenses will behave *in your life*, not just in theory.

This is why many patients tell us, often with relief:

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And why upgrading their glasses doesn't feel like a luxury, it feels like a correction that should have happened years ago.

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And when varifocals are designed properly, personalised, balanced, and

crafted around you, you stop thinking about your glasses altogether. That's the goal.

If you're wearing glasses but still adapting your behaviour around them...

If reading feels harder than it should...

If you've accepted compromise as normal...

Then it may not be your eyes that are the issue.

It may simply be time for an eye examination, and lenses, designed for how you actually live. When you're ready, we'll take the time your eyes deserve.

To find out more or to book an appointment, visit our website or contact our friendly team by calling our Henleaze practice on **0117 9622 474** or our Fishponds practice on **0117 965 4434**.

Peter

Peter Turner is an Independent Prescribing Senior Optometrist at Turners Opticians in Bristol. He also works as a Senior Medical Optometrist at Bristol Eye Hospital and has a special interest in visual development and performance.



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NATURE WATCH

with Dawn Lawrence

'Little Brown Job' plays second fiddle to robin

THERE is a bird that flits around our gardens almost unnoticed and, so far, completely unremarked in these columns. Just like the hairy-footed flower bees, unless you know what you are looking for they will easily pass you by. But this archetypal LBJ (Little Brown Job – a birding term for those nondescripts that fail to catch the eye) can really sing and his scientific name, *Prunella modularis*, celebrates that. Meet the “little brown singer” commonly known as the dunnock.

Like the similarly sized robin his voice is surprisingly loud but, unlike the robin, he prefers a low perch and sings mostly around dawn and only during the mating season. The males and females are identical with brown stripy backs and grey heads, chests and bellies, with more striping on the flanks and around the eyes. Their simple plumage, their habit of hanging around low down in thickets, even their choice of a modest singing platform suggest they are happy to play second fiddle to the robin.

We used to know them as hedge sparrows and they are often to be seen poking about the hedge bottoms, but they are not closely related to sparrows so the old name dunnock is now preferred (it simply means “little brown



A dunnock on a garden gate

Photo by Tim Felce (Airwolfhound)

one” – I’m sure you’re getting the picture). Despite their plain appearance and skulking habits they have a wealth of vernacular names including “hedge chanter” and the delightful “hedge Betty” which seems to express a heartfelt fondness. It is obvious why the confiding robin has always been cherished but perhaps this ancient affection for the shy dunnock is explained by his singing: a rapid, tuneful whistle, somewhat scratchy but spirited and cheerful.

As unassuming as they are to look at,

their private lives are anything but. Often dispensing with monogamy, females can share a male, males share a female or even two or three males share two to four females across different territories. They also copulate readily and often, albeit in an act of very short duration. To complicate family matters further the country dunnock is a target for the cuckoo; probably a recent host since the cuckoo has not yet evolved eggs to match the dunnock’s own startling blue clutch and neither has the dunnock developed the ability to reliably detect the dark-spotted intruder egg. Our city dunnocks do not have to face the threat of a cuckoo in the nest and although not in the top ten they tend to hover around 15th in the RSPB Big Garden Bird Watch results table and are present in around 40% of gardens.

Look for them under the bird table or hanging feeder, meekly taking the scraps dropped by the other birds. They prefer to feed low down and scuffle about amongst the dead leaves and emerging shoots around the shrubbery at this time of year. A pleasing bird with an uplifting song, good luck in spotting hedge Betty this spring.

© Dawn Lawrence

Memory Lane

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VINEYARD NEWS with INGRID BATES

Turning all that rainwater into wine

OUT in the vineyards, we've been experimenting with rainwater collection systems. The last few summers have been noticeably drier, which for established vines isn't a problem, but for young vines it can be disastrous. Contrary to popular belief, newly planted vines need a good supply of water during their first year while their root systems are establishing. Depending on soil type, it can actually take three or even four years for a vine to develop a strong, resilient root system.

Our new site near Bath sits on a south-facing slope with very free-draining soil and no access to natural or mains water, so we're planning ahead to make sure any freshly planted vines get the best possible start. We've installed large water butts in the lower corner of the field and are experimenting with different ways of channelling rainwater down towards them - a surprisingly satisfying process to watch!

Elsewhere in the vineyard, vine pruning is almost complete. We've been marking weaker-looking vines so that we can easily return to them over the coming weeks

and give them a helping hand in the form of willow mulch. The soil at our Wrington site is heavy clay and the vines sometimes struggle in drier areas during summer. The willow mulch improves soil nutrient levels but also helps retain moisture so growth can continue even in drought conditions.

Paradoxically, for all this talk of dry weather, the main challenge right now is the opposite - the ground is too wet! The vines are dormant so it's not a major issue, but they'll certainly be feeling a little stressed with their roots sitting in waterlogged soil. Unfortunately, there's not much we can do except wait for things to dry out.

On the wine front, we still have our usual range of sparkling wines and still rosé available. Just get in touch if you'd like to find your nearest stockist or check free local delivery.

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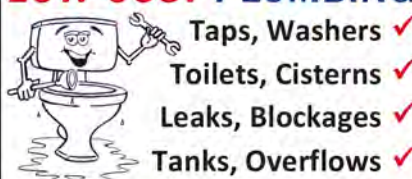
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