

henleaze&westburyvoice

November, 2026 Issue 142

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Rev Mark Pilgrim gives his farewell speech at St Peter's in Henleaze

A send-off in style at St Peter's

WHY have only one excuse for a party when you can have two? St Peter's Church in Henleaze did exactly that when it entertained 200 members of its community (and beyond) to celebrate both its centenary and the retirement, after almost 25 years, of its vicar, the Rev Canon Mark Pilgrim.

At a party held in the church, those who have known Mark in many capacities over many years and more recently, came together to share stories, enjoy live music from Beatles tribute duo the FAB Twins, and dance the night away fuelled by a delicious buffet.

Acting as his own Master of Ceremonies, Mark spoke fondly about his time at St Peter's, recalling stories and thanking many for their support and sterling work for him and the church.

The former Head of Henleaze Junior School, Adam Barber, recalled the school's close involvement with the church and his enduring friendship with Mark, thanking him for his support of so many families in our local area.

Amid all that he has been involved with over the last quarter-century, typified by endless energy and dedication, one of Mark's great passions has been



The FAB twins entertain guests at the celebration

the support of the older members of the community – establishing and managing the Later Life Hub in close collaboration with Age UK Bristol, Home Instead (NW Bristol), BDAA and Harold Stephens Financial Planning.

Andrew Wood, CEO of Home Instead and Kay Libby, CEO of Age UK Bristol, both spoke on the night of Mark's commitment and infectious enthusiasm which has seen the development of the FAB Café, specialist support sessions, Seniors Film Club and fundraising tea parties. A sea of hands



Dementia award winners hailed

Bristol Dementia Action Alliance chair William O'Neill and founder Tony Hall welcomed guests to the 2026 Bristol Dementia Awards.

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Young dancers' UN mission

Youngsters from the north Bristol based disability dance charity Flamingo Chicks took an important message to the United Nations in New York.

PAGE 5

Arts trail marks silver jubilee

The popular North Bristol Arts Trail celebrates its 25th anniversary this month with 110 artists and makers exhibiting at 56 venues.

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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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December deadline

Our December edition deadline is November 18. 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

Send-off in style

From Page 1

was raised in answer to 'who here has attended one of these events?' It is a legacy which will clearly long continue.

However, this legacy has also touched many in the congregation, past and present, in other, personal ways, as summed up in a moving speech by Sarah Thomas, one of St Peter's three Lay Ministers. Stories and memories of Mark's ministry were also shared in a newsletter, with reflections of Crib Services, lockdown



poetry readings over Zoom and singalongs in Sidmouth! Yet the overarching theme was one of inspiration, encouragement, optimism, guidance and a

genuine interest in people as individuals. One summed it up succinctly: "I believe he has changed me. It is as simple as that."

The final part of the weekend saw the Centenary

Celebration Communion and Vicar's Last Sunday on October 4. More than 170 people, aged from 0 to 97, saw the new altar

(see full story below) dedicated by the Rt Rev Neil Warwick, acting Bishop of Bristol.

Following this, 140 people of all ages sat down in St Peter's Hall for the Vicar's Farewell Lunch – a splendid meal of home-cooked cottage pie and Colin the Caterpillar Cake, with speeches and the presentation to Mark and his wife Gabrielle of a generous cheque and a wonderful bunch of flowers.

As Mark departs for pastures new, the church will be seeking its next minister to lead it into its next 100 years. Hopefully, much of Mark's good work will still be around then too.

MARK PILGRIM tells the story of the centenary altar

ST Peter's changed fairly dramatically in 2013 when, thanks to two legacies, we were able to install a platform and nave altar between the choir and congregation - so bringing the leading of services and events much closer to people in their seats.

At that time, I thought it would be really good to have a nave altar you could see through in order to see the high altar, golden backdrop and richly coloured East Window

behind. The resources to do this weren't available and St Peter's made do by using a large wooden table from the back of the church as its regular altar.

As the 100th anniversary of the church drew near we explored ways to build or make something of lasting value to celebrate the centenary. Among ideas researched were a large-scale outdoor Easter Garden/Christmas Crib scene and life-size Crib willow sculptures.

These ideas, however, turned out to be just too impractical. Then, in February this year, Pauline, a member of the congregation,

wondered if a new item of furniture for the interior of the church might be a possibility - and soon shared a photo of a splendid wooden nave altar belonging to a church near Swindon through which you could see a high altar and East Window behind.

The carpenter responsible was soon contacted and agreed to design and make a similar bespoke altar for St Peter's. This he did, and delivered to St Peter's from his workshop in Somerset on September 29, 2026 – 100 years to the day that St Peter's Foundation Stone was laid on September 29, 1926!

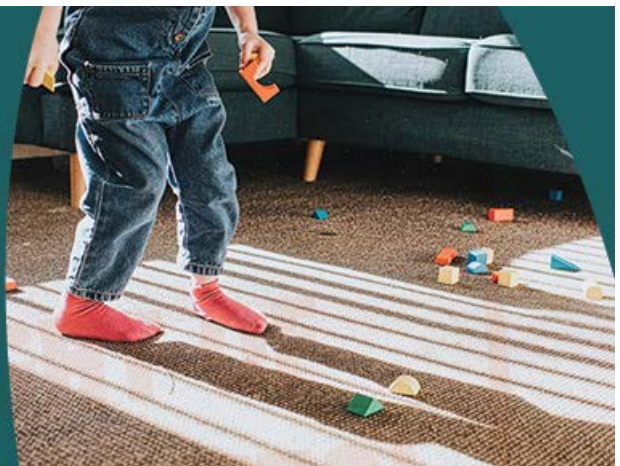
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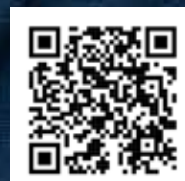
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**Reception Open Morning
Tuesday 17 November**

NEWS

Move over world leaders – Flamingo Chicks take to the UN stage



NINE young people from Bristol-based inclusive dance charity Flamingo Chicks took centre stage at the United Nations in New York, making a speech about breaking down barriers to inclusion and a fair future for all children.

Bringing together young people from the UK and the USA, the group shared different communication styles, spoke with confidence and supported one another beautifully.

Katie Sparkes MBE, founder and CEO of Flamingo Chicks, described what it meant to them: "It was so important to have these powerful voices heard."

"Our Agents of Change showed what can happen when young people are given the platform, support and opportunity to lead change, and what true inclusion can look like

when disabled and non-disabled children work together as equals."

After the speech, the group's global dance project was shown on the UN's big screens. Delegates from 53 countries watched it, sparking conversations about inclusion around the world.

While in New York, Flamingo Chicks also went on tour, visiting media outlets including NBC News, The Week Junior USA, PIX11 and UNICEF's Media Team, sharing Flamingo Chicks' inclusive interviewing guide and techniques. They also met New York City Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Limón Dance Company and the Marionette Theatre to share the organisation's inclusive dance curriculum and exchange ideas.

On the final day in New York, they worked

with Unicef's disability team and, following the visit, sent a report with recommendations for making the UN Headquarters experience more accessible for disabled visitors.

Flamingo Chicks is now building on the connections made in New York, developing new partnerships and working to turn this remarkable moment into lasting change.

The charity has space for new young people to join the Agents of Change programme, so please get in touch to find out more (www.flamingochicks.org). Open to disabled and non disabled people aged 6-21, they meet monthly on Zoom plus special trips and experiences.

Watch the speech on Flamingo Chicks' YouTube Channel: <https://tinyurl.com/266csjbf>

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NEWS

Dementia charity salutes hero carers and supporters

AN afternoon tea at the Aztec Hotel & Spa celebrated all those making a difference to the lives of people affected by dementia across the city, as Bristol Dementia Action Alliance held its awards ceremony for 2026.

Actor and BBC Radio Bristol presenter Joe Sims hosted the event for the third year running. He thanked everyone in the room for leaving the world a nicer place than they found it and shone a light on all the brilliant individuals, groups and organisations making a difference to the lives of those affected by dementia.

BDAA was delighted by the number of nominations received this year. The awards highlight the fantastic work taking place across the city to raise dementia awareness and support those impacted by dementia. The deciding panel included experts from organisations other than BDAA.

Acknowledging all the finalists, BDAA added: "Being recognised as a finalist is a fantastic achievement, and we are grateful to everyone who took the time to nominate and celebrate the amazing work happening across Bristol."

"A massive thank you to the Aztec Hotel & Spa for their wonderful hospitality, to all our sponsors for helping make the awards possible, and to our fantastic volunteers who worked so hard behind the scenes."

"And last, but definitely not least, a huge thank you to the brilliant Joe Sims, who once again hosted the awards with such warmth and enthusiasm. We are so grateful that he gave up his time to help make the afternoon so special. Congratulations to everyone involved. You should all be incredibly proud."

BDAA chairperson William O'Neill said: "These awards shine a spotlight on the extraordinary people and organisations helping to make Bristol a more dementia-aware city. The standard of nominations was exceptionally high and reflects the passion and commitment of those supporting people affected by dementia every day. We are proud to celebrate their achievements and the positive impact they have across our communities."

Any businesses, organisations or groups wanting to apply for the awards next year can contact BDAA on office@bdaa.org.uk to express their interest.

BDAA AWARDS 2026

Barbara Award: Collegiate School
Community Care Award: Home Instead Bristol North
Community Fundraiser Award: Teresa Grunshaw
Corporate Fundraiser Award: Briggs & Forrester Engineering
Place of Worship Award: Westbury Baptist Church
Volunteer of the Year Award: Mary Jones
Corporate Award: Wessex Water
Dementia Hero Award: Beverley Forrester
Dementia Friendly Space Award: Age UK Bristol
Innovation Award: Mini Concerts
Organisation Award: Co-op Avonmouth & Your Care South-West
VCSE Organisation Award: Alive Activities
Residential Care Award: Bristol Care Homes
Informal Carer Award: Teresa Grunshaw
Small Business Award: Sweet Silent Disco
Dementia Research Award: Brace Dementia Research
Special Recognition Award: Dr Julie Clayton

HANDEL MESSIAH

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CHORAL SOCIETY



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Henleaze Choral Society is a Registered Charity no. 1218124

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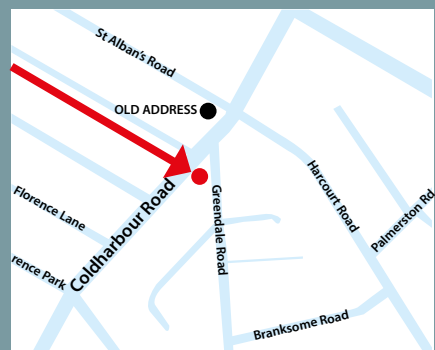
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■ NEWS

Getting set to light up the skies

FOLLOWING record ticket sales in 2025, Bristol Round Table and The Rotary Club of Clifton will again hold their firework display at Canford Park in Westbury-on-Trym on Saturday November 7.

The display raises thousands of pounds for charity, with the main beneficiaries being the Lord Mayor of Bristol's Children Appeal, which helps less fortunate families at Christmas, and both Bristol Round Table's and The Rotary Club of Clifton's charities, along with other good causes.

The pyrotechnics start at 7pm, with Skyburst providing a fabulous display of fireworks wizardry, all choreographed to a selection of pop music hits.

Popular family entertainment provider, Party Peeps, will keep the crowds entertained on the run-up to the display, with a Foam Party to end the night once the pyrotechnics have finished.

A range of outlets will provide hot and cold food and drink throughout the evening, along with the usual 'Glowsticks' stand and mobile sellers within the park, offering a variety of light-up goodies for the little (and big!) kids alike.

Tickets can only be purchased in advance of the event from the Fiesta's website - <https://bristolfireworksfiesta.co.uk> - priced at £12 per person with children aged three and under admitted free. Gates open for admittance at 5.30pm.

■ WESTBURY ON TRYM SOCIETY

SOCIETY members have continued to work maintaining the flower beds in the sunken garden at Canford Park. The water level in the pond was very low during the heatwave and we endeavoured to top it up, but sadly leakage from the supply tap meant that we were unable to do so.

We have three sessions planned for work in the sunken garden, on Wednesday 4th, Friday 13th and Wednesday 25th November from 9.30 - noon before a winter break. Tools will be supplied but do bring your favourite fork or pruners if you have them.

We are investigating possible locations for additional trees to be planted in public places, where they can enhance the scene without interfering with pedestrian movement and services. The Society has also purchased additional planters to help compensate for the loss of the hanging baskets that the council will no longer allow. This summer's exceptional flower displays have lasted superbly into late October. As the winter plantings are installed, normally shortly before Remembrance Sunday, our team

of weeders will remove the weed growth in and around the war memorial, so they will not detract from the wreath laying ceremony.

We await with interest the outcome of the parking survey, we understand that Churchill Homes transport consultants have finally undertaken as part of the planning application for 31 elderly persons flats. Part of the car park, which had been reopened by the 'Westbury Fairies' and was being well used, was temporarily blocked by cars from a security company for 4 days to create the conditions to provide a more reliable parking survey. It will be interesting to compare their survey with the one undertaken by Society members.

The Society's next talk in Westbury library will be on November 18 at 7.45, when Jenny Weeks from the Stoke Bishop Local History Group will give a talk entitled 'Leaving Home to Fight - Stories of Westbury men from the 1st World War'. Places are limited, so to reserve a place please contact the Society by e-mail at: westburyontrysociety@gmail.com or call Malcolm Neave on 0117 950 2825.



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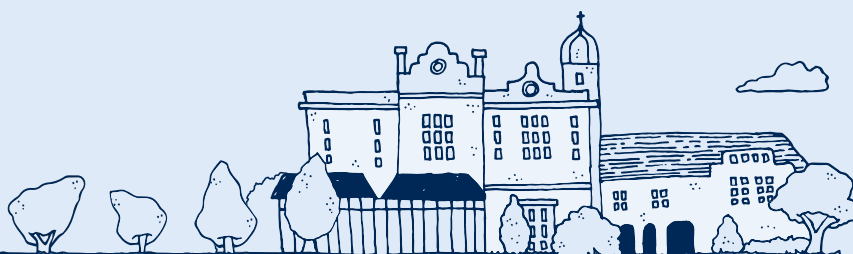


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Friday 27 November

Friday 12 March 2027



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EDUCATION

India link

CLIFTON College has announced an international partnership in India.

It is linking with Lighthouse Learning to launch PSG Clifton International School in Gurugram.

The former Pathways School Gurgaon is one of India's most prominent schools.

The three institutions will work together to explore new approaches to preparing young people for a rapidly changing world.

Dr Christopher Stevens, executive head of Clifton College Education Group, said: "This is a unique opportunity to collaborate with a leading education group and an outstanding school to enhance strengths and look towards an exciting future together. Our spirit and values are well aligned and we share a commitment to helping young people flourish through a child-centred education."

Judo champ inspires girls

REDMAIDS' High School welcomed British judo champion and Commonwealth Games medallist Lele Nairne for an assembly with junior pupils.

Fresh from securing a bronze medal for Team England in the women's -57kg category at the Glasgow Commonwealth Games this summer, Lele shared her inspiring sporting journey and the lessons she has learned through dedication and perseverance.

Having started judo at the age of eight, Lele spoke about discovering her passion for the sport and the determination that has driven her to compete at the highest level. She encouraged the girls to always believe in themselves, embrace challenges and never give up, even when faced with setbacks.

The assembly highlighted the many benefits judo has brought to her life, including increased confidence, courage, new skills and lasting friendships. Above all, she emphasised the importance of enjoying the journey and having fun along the way.

Lele's impressive sporting achievements include competing at the Birmingham Commonwealth Games in 2022, representing Team GB at the Paris Olympic Games in 2024, and most recently winning Commonwealth bronze this summer.

As Redmaids' High's lead judo coach, Lele is already proving to be an inspirational role model.



Junior headteacher, Mrs Newton said: "It was a privilege to welcome Lele to our Junior School and hear about her journey. Her message of resilience and self-belief resonated strongly with our pupils and reflects the values we encourage every girl to develop. We are thrilled to have Lele as part of our judo coaching team and look forward to seeing the positive impact she will have on our girls."



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- Monday 9th Nov, 1:45pm
- Friday 13th Nov, 9:15am
- Thursday 19th Nov, 1:45pm
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Friday 27 November

Visiting Morning (ages 3 – 18)

Friday 20 November



NEWS

'Worrying' lack of detail

CAMPAIGNERS say the revised plans for development of the St Christopher's site are severely lacking in detail.

"There is a disappointing and deeply worrying lack of basic information to help the community understand what the development will actually look like or the impact it will have on our neighbourhood," said a spokesperson for SCAN, St Christopher's Action Network.

"Traffic congestion, road safety and parking are the community's number one concerns - but we can't give any meaningful feedback if we don't have the full facts."

SCAN, which wants to see a sensitive and appropriate development of the site, is concerned that the total number of housing units and parking spaces on the site is unclear. The developers, Square Bay and Acorn, have reduced the number of new-build homes proposed from 40 to 34 - but the campaigners fear that the

number of flats in the converted Victorian lodges on the site could increase.

They also object to plans to increase the size of some of the new houses from two storeys to three, which they say would be out of character for the neighbourhood.

SCAN's comments came after the developers held a consultation event on September 24 to discuss the changes they had made to their proposals for the former special school site in response to comments from the public.

The developers say they expect to put in a planning application to Bristol City Council this month and will include a consultation report summarising all feedback received. According to their website, they expect the project to be completed by 2030.

"Throughout the process, we plan to provide updates via our website, as well as via community groups," the developers say.

'World's priciest bus lane'

A MAJOR road in Bristol will become the 'world's most expensive bus lane', a councillor claims.

More than £23 million has been committed to upgrade the A4 Portway, with works ongoing.

This includes 24-hour bus lanes, cutting speed limits, better junctions, road resurfacing and improved shared paths for pedestrians and cyclists.

A report to Bristol City Council audit committee said it was in the top 10 of the authority's largest projects in terms of money to be spent, at number nine.

Cllr Jonathan Hucker (Conservative, Stockwood) told the meeting: "The Portway is costing a colossal amount of money. When it opened 100 years ago in 1926, the Portway was the world's most expensive road. It cost £800,000 to construct - £42m in today's money.

"So I would be interested to see how that compares with the Portway project today.

"When it was the world's most expensive road then, I suspect it will have the world's most expensive bus lanes when the project is finished," he told the meeting on September 29.

Councillors on the transport and connectivity committee agreed last month to increase the scheme's budget by £1.35million from £21.7million to £23.1million in February because of rising costs.

The money comes from the government and is distributed by the West of England Combined Authority (Wea).

By Adam Postans, Local Democracy Reporting Service

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■ FROM BRISTOL NORTH WEST'S MP

The state of the water industry

OVER the past few months my inbox has been flooded with emails from constituents concerned about the state of the water industry.

Many of you have called for water companies to come back under public ownership. But nationalising the water industry would mean the government would have to spend money like water, with an estimated cost of £100 billion.

Instead, the government has focussed its efforts since coming into office on tackling the core problems with the water industry.

The upcoming Clean Water Bill, for example, will deliver major reforms to the water system – improving water quality and tackling pollution at its source.

There are strong measures in the Bill, including the creation of a single, powerful water regulator that has teeth to act where the current regulator has not – something that often frustrated me during evidence sessions as Chair of the former Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee in

Parliament. The Bill also stipulates new MOT-style checks on water company assets and 'no notice' inspections – exactly what we need to rebuild public trust in our water industry.

And, at the end of September, it was announced that the Bill will also remove the limit on government ownership of shares in water and sewerage companies in England, which is currently capped at 1% to 3%.

Now, this isn't the first step to nationalisation of water companies – private sector investment will continue to play an important role. Frankly, it must. But the announcement gives the government flexibility to consider a wide range of possible future interventions and ownership models.

One ownership model that I'm particularly supportive of is the idea of mutually owned water networks for new towns – accountable to residents, not shareholders.

The Clean Water Bill builds on the reforms that have already been introduced in the govern-

ment's Water (Special Measures) Act 2025, which came into force in February 2025. This Act introduced measures to increase the ability of the Environment Agency to bring criminal charges against water bosses who break the law – with executives facing possible imprisonment if companies fail to cooperate or obstruct investigations.

The Act also pulled the plug on bonuses being paid to water bosses who fail to meet high standards to protect the environment, their consumers, and their company's finances. In 2025, six water companies were banned from paying bonuses totalling more than £4 million thanks to this Act, including Wessex Water – the company responsible for sewerage services in Bristol. (To its credit, though, Wessex Water is now spending £8.5 million a month over the next five years on storm overflow improvement schemes.)

The biggest win is that the Environment Agency has published data showing a 35% fall in sewage



Darren Jones
writes for
the Voice

spills in 2025 compared with 2024.

Change is possible – and it has already begun!

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



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FROM YOUR COUNCILLORS

Southmead: Kaz Self and Kye Dudd (Labour)

More money for buses

The previous Labour administration allocated £10M of Clean Air Zone (CAZ) receipts to transport improvements in the city. An attempt was made by the current Green Party led council to spend a large portion of this on a scheme to permanently close Park Street, something that we successfully opposed. As a result, we are now able to put some of that money towards bus service improvements, with Cllr Self being part of a group of councillors tasked with deciding how best to allocate it.

CAZ money has previously been used to introduce three new supported bus services in the city, including one that connects Hartcliffe to employers in Avonmouth. The first meeting of the group took place in October and will be working to identify bus service improvements, with the aim of making the first changes by spring 2027.

Road safety

On 22 October, the Transport Committee considered the introduction of more 20mph roads across Bristol. The council identified around 100 roads across the city that would benefit from safer 20mph speed limits. These roads make up roughly 8% of Bristol's road network, but account for around 30% of serious injuries and fatalities in the city.



There was a downwards trend in the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads since they were first introduced in 2014. However, in recent years there has been an uptick in the number of people killed or seriously injured in Bristol.

There were a number of roads in Southmead ward included in the proposal. At the time of writing, councillors are yet to vote on these new speed limits. We will report back on the decisions made in the Transport Committee in next month's column.

Climate change

Have you seen the People's Emergency Briefing, a new film aimed at enhancing

public awareness of climate and environmental risks? The film has been shown at local community venues and is well worth viewing.

We have experienced the hottest summer on record, with Bristol Water having to introduce a hosepipe ban for the first time in 50 years. The climate is changing and we need to adapt to the change and tackle the man-made emissions causing it. We can all play a part in this, by adapting our lifestyles and changing behaviours.

Awaab's Law

Everyone deserves a home that is safe, secure and well maintained. A new social housing law, known as Awaab's Law, came into effect on 27 October 2025, and means landlords must investigate and fix emergency and significant hazards within strict timeframes when an issue has been reported.

Awaab's Law was introduced following the death of two year old Awaab Ishak in 2020 due to prolonged exposure to mould in a social housing flat.

Kye & Kaz

Contact us

cllr.kye.dudd@bristol.gov.uk
cllr.kaz.self@bristol.gov.uk

07795 509 531
07386 698 716

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■ FROM YOUR COUNCILLORS

W-o-T & Henleaze: Stephen Williams, Caroline Gooch, Nicholas Coombes (Lib Dem)

Library strategy

Bristol's libraries will have a bright and secure future. Over the last six months a new strategy for the service has been drawn up, overseen by Councillor Stephen Williams.

Sixteen options for change were considered by the Public Health and Communities Committee on October 19. More detailed work will now be done, for the strategy to be adopted in January. The overall intention is to expand the hours some libraries are open and to increase library membership and active regular users. The staff budget of roughly £4.5 million has been protected thanks to the Liberal Democrats for the last two years, after years of cuts by the previous administration. It will now be spent in a more optimal way, to shift opening hours to times that suit local communities. In some popular high street locations that could include Sunday afternoon openings, for which Henleaze Library is an obvious candidate.

There will be much more engagement with volunteers, to expand hours further and to enable library buildings to be used much more for community activities and cultural events. More details will be announced in January.

New recycling bags issued

Bristol Waste have been delivering new recycling containers to every home in Bristol this Autumn. New larger and heavier duty blue bags are to be used for cardboard and paper. Large red bags are for plastics and tins, replacing the green boxes which should be retained for glass bottles and jars. You can also put small electricals and batteries/vapes in here by using separate, clear, untied bags so our crews can easily separate them into the right sections of our trucks, reducing the risk of fires.

By mid-November all deliveries should have been completed; let us know if yours have not been delivered or if your old solid plastic green boxes and small blue bags have not been collected.

Bristol residents currently recycle 45% of our waste; a level we first reached in 2012. However, while our rate has plateaued over the last decade, other areas are now recycling over 60% of their waste. Bigger bags and simpler rules give us the opportunity to catch up.

Transparency and accountability for the Council

As Vice-Chair of the Audit Committee, Cllr Nicholas Coombes has consistently called for greater transparency and accountability.

By sharing what we know and involving residents in decision making, the Council can make better decisions and earn the trust of



our citizens. After a number of high-profile failures, including judgements against the Council by the Information Commissioner, Nicholas called the Chief Executive of the Council to the Audit Committee to explain.

At September's meeting the new Chief Exec promised a culture change, and a fresh report into the long-running scandal of the Stepping Up programme.

20mph zone set to expand

More roads in Westbury and Henleaze are set to have their speed limit reduced to 20mph, to make them quieter, cleaner and safer. We are pleased that Canford Lane, Parrys Lane, Kellaway Avenue and Wellington Hill West (among others) are included, and we know that residents consulted supported these changes.

We have asked that Falcondale Road remains at 30mph as it is a through route, and this change was not supported by the public. A number of options will be presented to the Transport Committee, which will vote after this magazine goes to print.

Henleaze Scouts sign new lease for Baldwin Lodge

We are pleased that the 227th Bristol Henleaze Scouts have secured a new lease for their building on Eastfield Terrace. Using a Community Asset Transfer arrangement, the scouts will have use of this council building for 35 years, giving them the confidence to invest in improvements.

New scooter parking bays proposed

Bristol Council and the Regional Mayor are proposing new marked bays for parking

rental e-scooters. Two hundred are planned across the city, with sixteen planned in and around our area. These include six on Coldharbour Road and Kellaway Avenue, three on Henleaze Road, and one each for Westbury-on-Trym High Street, Stoke Lane and North View. You can find details of the proposals online by searching for 'Bristol micro-mobility parking proposal'. Alternatively, we can send you links to live consultations directly in our monthly email newsletter if you register at www.bristollibdems.org/enews

Local action

As ever, we have been working to look after Westbury and Henleaze. Cllr Nicholas Coombes persuaded the council to cut back vegetation overhanging Falcondale Walk, seven years after a neighbour first raised it with our predecessors. He is now trying the same for Henleaze Road, outside Studland Court and Old Quarry Park. Cllr Caroline Gooch is chasing a repair to a streetlamp at the corner of Royal Albert Road and Westbury Park and the poor condition of Devonshire Lane after the development of 99 Devonshire Rd. Cllr Stephen Williams secured enforcement action against an abandoned caravan on Westbury Park and moving a litter bin on North View that was too close to some houses. As ever, let us know if we can assist.

Bristol Council cuts carbon emissions 75%

Over the last decade, Bristol City Council has reduced emissions from our buildings, vehicles and assets by 75%. The latest Environmental Performance Report highlights LED bulbs halving the electricity use of our street lamps, and generating more electricity from wind and solar that we use.

In recent months Stephen Williams and Nicholas Coombes have both attended screenings of the People's Emergency Briefing in Henleaze and in Westbury-on-Trym. This film and audience discussion highlights the imminent danger of climate change to our way of life, and the opportunities we have for mitigating it.

As your local councillors, we will continue reducing the climate impact of public services, and make it easier for the public to live more sustainable lifestyles.

Contact us

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07386 698 750

cllr.caroline.gooch@bristol.gov.uk 07386 698 669

cllr.stephen.williams@bristol.gov.uk 07386 698 772

■ ADVERTISING FEATURE

Navigating Christmas as a separated family – Katie Thomas looks at arrangements for children over the festive period

For children, Christmas is a time of joy, excitement and spending time with their loved ones. For separated parents, Christmas can be a complicated time as you try to navigate where the children should spend Christmas.

Both parents are likely to have their own wishes about Christmas and their own traditions.

Where should the children spend Christmas? There isn't a clear outline or guidance which answers exactly where or how a child should spend their time over Christmas. Ultimately, it is for the parents to work together to make an arrangement which works for everyone, especially the children.

Parents are encouraged to consider Christmas arrangements as soon as possible so they can manage the children's expectations regarding Christmas.

Commonly, parents will choose to alternate Christmas between them,

allowing both parents to spend Christmas with the child every two years. Some parents prefer to split the day, so the child can spend the morning with one parent and the afternoon with the other parent. There is no one right answer and it is all about finding what works best for you and your family.

What if the parents can't agree?

If parents are not able to reach an agreement, there are a number of options available to them:-

Mediation - This involves a neutral mediator discussing the topic with parents to help them consider the options and each other's views. This can be a useful tool in helping parents to work together to reach an arrangement which not only suits them, but crucially considers the child's best interests;

Solicitor involvement – A solicitor can help you by providing you with advice and by drafting a letter to the other parent to set out your

proposals. A Solicitor can also advise on other options for resolving matters outside of Court;

Court proceedings - If you have tried the above options and still cannot reach an agreement, you can consider an application to the Court.

Tips

- Plan early- raise the subject with your ex-partner as early as possible to avoid potential disruption to the festive period;

- Try to establish a pattern. This will help to prepare the children and manage their expectations;

- Communicate clearly- Keep the other parent informed of your Christmas plans and ensure plans are clearly communicated to the children where appropriate;

- Don't involve the children in these discussions until a plan is finalised as this could make them uncomfortable or feel as though they have to pick a side.



At AMD Solicitors, we understand that Christmas can be a difficult time for separated parents to navigate and one of our supportive team would be more than happy to discuss with you the available options if you are unable to reach an agreement between yourselves.

You can arrange an initial consultation with a member of our team by calling **0117 962 1205** or by email at **Info@amdsolicitors.com**.



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■ PHARMACY COLUMN

Looking after your health and wellbeing



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

WINTER can be a beautiful time of year, but it can also be incredibly difficult. As the days grow shorter and temperatures fall, many of us face challenges that go far beyond coughs, colds and seasonal illnesses.

For some, winter brings loneliness. For others, it means worrying about heating bills, managing existing health conditions, or simply finding the energy to get through another day while caring for and supporting others.

If you are finding things difficult, please remember: you matter, your health matters, and you do not have to face everything alone.

Looking after our wellbeing means caring for both our physical and mental health. They are deeply connected. Getting enough rest, eating nourishing meals, staying active and maintaining contact with friends, family and neighbours can make a real difference. Even a short walk,

a conversation or a moment of kindness can help lift someone's day.

We will always make time for you at Kellaway Pharmacy but looking after ourselves also means knowing when to ask for help.

Kellaway Pharmacy is more than somewhere to collect medicines. It is a community health-hub: a place of care, compassion, reassurance and practical support.

Through the NHS Pharmacy First service in England, our pharmacists now assess and treat common conditions, providing effective treatments including antibiotics for infected sore throats, sinusitis, earache and urinary tract infections. You can receive the advice and treatment you need without waiting for a GP appointment.

Winter also brings increased risks from flu and Covid, particularly for older people and those with underlying health conditions. Vaccination remains

one of our most important protections. Remember that unpaid family members with caring responsibility are eligible for the free NHS flu vaccination.

We will help you understand your eligibility and access NHS flu and Covid-19 vaccinations where available. Our super affordable private flu and Covid vaccination offer is designed to make being protected easier.

And if improving your weight or managing your long-term health is a priority, we offer supportive, confidential conversations about healthy weight management, lifestyle changes and appropriate treatment options. Our affordable ethical weight-loss clinic is transforming the health and wellbeing of many people locally.

There should be no judgement, no embarrassment and no shame in asking for support.

Perhaps most importantly, let's look out for one another. Community is where the

treasure of life is. Check in on neighbours, call someone who lives alone. Notice when a friend seems withdrawn. Small acts of kindness can have an extraordinary impact. Volunteer if you can, our community most certainly needs you!

In our pharmacy, we see every day that healthcare is not simply about treating illness. It is about listening, understanding and helping people feel valued.

This winter, please don't wait until things become overwhelming. Come in and see us, have a conversation and please let us help. Call us on 0117 9246579

Because a healthier winter begins with compassion, connection – and the reassurance that nobody should be left behind.



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Tel: 0117 924 6579

WHAT'S ON NOVEMBER EVENTS

■ **LA SCALA DELI** - The Italian Hub of Henleaze. Join us for one of our signature Wine Tastings led by our in-house sommelier - 5 wines, aperitivo board.

Annual Special- Big Christmas Wine Tastings:

Nov 12th, 14th, 18th, 19th, 28th
Dec 3rd, 9th, 10th, 17th, 18th, 19th

Wine & Dine

5 courses paired with 6 wines
November 20th & 21st - Christmas
December 11th & 12th - Christmas

Looking for the perfect gift for a wine lover? - Gift a voucher for an upcoming tasting to round off 2026 or chose from **2027 specials - Winter Classics - Venice - British Wines - Greek Wines**

Call for Corporate/Private bespoke bookings . Tickets at www.lascaladeli.com/tickets and in-store

November 14th

■ **BLAISE COMMUNITY GARDEN**, behind Blaise Museum, BS10 7QS. Open Wednesday and Saturday 10-2. Interesting walled kitchen garden, free entry, new volunteers welcomed. Plants always available. Cash & cards accepted. Events: "Our annual Winter Market & Cafe on 14th November 9.45am - 3pm, and further cafe celebrating The Gwent League Races in Blaise on 5th December 9.45am-3pm

■ **OUR NORDIC WALKING AND INDOOR WOMEN'S STRENGTH CLASSES** (free trial) are run by friendly, professional, experienced instructors. Nordic walking beginners are held on Clifton Down and Women's Strength classes in Henleaze & BS5. Visit www.bristolnordicwalking.co.uk & www.womensstrength.co.uk or call Ros 07886 885213.

November 19th

■ BRISTOL OPERA CLUB

Verdi: - Rare and Medium Rare. Verdi's operas, both his masterpieces and less performed operas, are typically distinguished by their stirring, highly melodic music and compelling dramas. Andrew Borkowski will explore the superb music of some of his lesser known works, including I Lombardi, Giovanna d'Arco, I Due Foscari, Attila, and Luisa Miller. Apostle Room. Clifton Cathedral (Worcester Road Entrance) 6.30 for 7.00 Admission £8.00/ Students £1.00 - cash only please. Easy parking, Bar. Further details 01275 848526 borkmail100@gmail.com

November 23rd

■ HENLEAZE SENIOR FILM CLUB 2pm.

Mother's Pride (12) From the team behind 'Finding Your Feet' and 'Fisher-man's Friends', Mother's Pride follows a grieving family whose fortunes begin to change when they start brewing their own beer and take a chance on entering the Great British Beer Awards. Starring Martin Clunes, Mark Addy & Josie Lawrence. Carers welcome, easy access. St. Peter's Church Hall, The Drive, Henleaze BS9 4LD. For more information, please call 0117 435 0063

December 11th

■ **THE 2026 WESTBURY SINGERS CHRISTMAS CONCERT** will be held at Westbury Baptist Church in Reedley Road on Friday December 11th, starting at 7:30pm. Doors 7.00pm. Our exciting programme includes well known carols (some with the opportunity for you to join us!) and a variety of other delightful seasonal pieces. Adult tickets are £10 (Young folk are encouraged so it's free for under 19s) and will be available from members or on the door. Cash or Card. Ticket enquiries to wotsingers@gmail.com. Free refreshments are included.

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 Thursday to Sundays from 10am to 4pm. Refer to the website [wwpf.uk](http://www.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.woebridge-club.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. BHLVisits@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 wotsing-ers@gmail.com.

ers@gmail.com.

■ **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.

■ 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_izy

■ **WESTBURY ON TRYM WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION** meets on the third Monday of the month in the Westbury Village Hall, Eastfield Road, BS94AG, from 2.00 - 4.00 pm. We have interesting speakers, and extra activities of crafts, lunch club, skittles, book club, coffee mornings and pub evenings. Our lively, friendly and inclusive group welcomes visitors at any meeting. For more information call Sascha on 07961619806 or Liz on 07587170766.

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

Tuesday

■ **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 ses-

WHAT'S ON

sions 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.

■ **WESTBURY ON TRYM WOMEN'S INSTITUTE** is now meeting in the Atrium Oatly Hall, St Monicas Village, Cote Lane, BS9 3UN. At 2.00pm on the 4th Tuesday of the month. For more information, please contact Sue – M - 07971556859

■ **WOTS TOTS - NOW ON TUESDAYS!** Starting on Tuesday September 15th 2026, 9:30am - 11:30am. Do you have a pre-school child or children? Our fortnightly Tuesday community toddler group @ Westbury Baptist Church: Reedley Rd. BS9 3TE. Crafts, toys, singing and stories for families & carers. Cost is £2.50 per family including refreshments. For more info, please visit our www.westburybaptistchurch.org.uk

■ **CARERS' SUPPORT GROUP** run by Bristol Dementia Action Alliance, held on the first Tuesday of each month, St Peters' 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

■ SCOTTISH DANCING TO KEEP FIT AND HAVE FUN.

Bristol Westbury Scottish Country Dance Club. Beginners taster package (phone Tina 07568 537154) : £25 for 5 wks starting 29 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.

■ **WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP** meet on Tuesday mornings at Westbury-on-Trym Methodist Church, 10.30am-noon. An interesting pro-

gramme of speakers; come along to make friends. For more details, ring Kate 07905 064720.

■ **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 bedsides 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/>

■ **OPEN CIRCLE** is a relaxed weekly gathering for anyone who enjoys good company, thoughtful conversation in small groups and a welcoming atmosphere. It takes place every Wednesday from 2pm to 3pm at River of Life Church, 26 Trym Road. To find out more visit www.riveroflife.co.uk/open-circle/

■ **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 goldenhillwi@gmail.com.

■ A CLASS FOR EVERY-BODY! 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

■ 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>

■ A GENTLE WAY TO KEEP FIT & HAVE FUN! CHAIR AERO-

BICS, 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 wellness. Call Louisa: 07725 091429. Email Louisa: chairaerobicslouisa@gmail.com

■ BRISTOL SCRABBLE CLUB

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

■ 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.

■ **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

■ **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 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

■ **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

■ **ART GROUP AT ST PETER'S HENLEAZE** on Thursday mornings specialising in long poses with models for figure and portrait painting and drawing. An untutored but gentle and supportive group. Call or text Liz 077092357998 to visit and/or join us.

WHAT'S ON

■ **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 Brockeridge, 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

■ **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.

■ 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

■ **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.

■ **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: rodathey@gmail.com or call 07792 200949.

■ 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.

■ **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

■ **HENLEAZE BOWLING CLUB.** New and experienced members welcome, free tuition and a free shirt with annual membership. Coaches available. A friendly club with good facilities and social events throughout the year. Whist on a Wednesday morning all year round open to anyone and short mat on Thursday afternoons out of season. For more info. www.henleazebowlsclub.org.uk

■ **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.

■ **HENLEAZE FLOWER CLUB** Visitors are very welcome at any meeting £10. (November meeting is £15). No need to book just come to the Bradbury Hall BS9 4BT on the second Thursday of the month, except August and December. We have a floral demonstration from a highly skilled demonstrator followed

by tea and cake; doors open at 1.30pm for a 2pm start. For further details contact Jenny York 07880 700 270.

■ **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.

■ **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

■ **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

■ **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.

■ **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

■ **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

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.spanish-circlebristol.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, 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

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 <http://www.bristolorchestralplayers.co.uk/> for further information



Sneyd Park

Guide Price £1,425,000

Spacious 5-bedroom detached family home set in secluded, one third of an acre plot, in coveted Mariners Drive location. Sympathetically extended and improved over the years and provides excellent and adaptable family orientated living spaces over two floors. Circa 2,848 sq.ft. (Including Garage). No Onward Chain. EPC D.



Henleaze

Guide Price £1,425,000

A superb 5-bedroom detached family home, ideally positioned in the heart of Henleaze. Offering generous and versatile living accommodation with impressive property features. Extensive off-street parking, garage, a delightful family garden and the added luxury of an outdoor swimming pool. No onward Chain. EPC C.



Stoke Bishop

Guide Price £735,000

A distinguished 3-bedroom semi-detached house set in a generous plot with level c.90 ft. south-westerly facing rear garden in a prominent Stoke Bishop location. Spacious accommodation over 1500 sq.ft. Offered for sale with no onward chain. EPC D



Stoke Bishop

Guide Price £450,000

A 4-bedroom, mid-century modern terraced house in Stoke Bishop. Of striking design, this property offers excellent potential to make it your own, with generous living space, front and rear gardens, a garage, and access to a range of additional resident facilities. No onward chain. EPC E.

■ ADVERTORIAL

Britain's Installation Company of the Year is on your doorstep – and in the running to keep the title

Last year The Window Hub was named Installation Company of the Year at the G-Awards, the fenestration industry's biggest night. It was one of three national awards the Bristol, Exeter and Cardiff firm took home in 2025.

This year the judges have called them back. The Window Hub has been shortlisted to defend Installation Company of the Year at the G26 Awards, and is also a finalist for the Business Excellence Award on the same night. Before that, at the National Fenestration Awards on 24th October, the company is up for Customer Care Company of the Year and its Managing Director, Daniel Robb, is a finalist for Managing Director of the Year.

Four national finals in one year is rare for any installer. For a local,

independent company, it's almost unheard of.

Daniel, who has worked in the industry for over 30 years, says the credit belongs to the whole team. "Being asked to defend the title is a huge compliment, but the judges are really just confirming what our customers already tell us. Every installer, surveyor and office colleague we have is measured on one thing: would that homeowner recommend us to a neighbour? That's the award that matters."

Most of The Window Hub's work is replacing tired windows and doors in homes people already love, so the team is used to working carefully around family life and leaving every room clean and tidy. Installations are FENSA registered, and every job comes with an insurance-backed



guarantee from InstallSure, included in the price rather than sold as an extra. Quotes are clear, fixed and free, with no pressure and no gimmicks.

If your home is due an upgrade before winter, why not choose the company the industry itself rates

as the best installer in Britain?

Call The Window Hub free on **08000 219319**, or visit your nearest showroom in Bristol, Exeter or Cardiff for a free, no obligation quote.

G25 INSTALLER OF THE YEAR!

WINNERS!

G25
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 WINNER


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 windows & doors
 with the
UK's #1
 installer!

Get in-touch today for a FREE no obligation quotation ☎ **08000 219 319**

Come visit our showrooms





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  208 Topsham Rd, Exeter EX2 6AA

 info@thewindowhub.co.uk
 www.thewindowhub.co.uk

■ ADVERTORIAL

Left to right, works by Caroline Casswell, Nancy Chambers and Nika Nazarova-Evans

25 years of North Bristol Arts Trail

THE North Bristol Arts Trail returns on 28-29 November 2026, marking its 25th anniversary with 110 artists and makers exhibiting at 56 venues across six Bristol neighbourhoods.

Studios, homes and exhibition spaces in Redland, Bishopston, Henleaze, St Andrews, Ashley and Horfield will open to the public

from 10am to 5pm on both days.

Visitors can explore North Bristol through the eyes of its artists, discover original work, meet local creatives and buy directly from them. The free event will feature painting, printmaking, photography, ceramics, textiles, sculpture, jewellery and more, with pieces available across a wide

range of styles and budgets.

With 56 venues to discover, visitors can create their own route through the neighbourhoods, find unique Christmas gifts and support Bristol's independent creative economy.

The anniversary marks an important milestone for the volunteer-led event, which has grown through the commitment and enthusiasm of the city's creative community. This year's event will support Prodigal Arts, which helps ex-offenders reduce re-offending through positive creativity expression.

Caroline Casswell, co-chair of the volunteer committee,

said: "Over 25 years, the trail has become a much-loved part of North Bristol's creative life. It gives artists and makers a platform while bringing communities together to discover and support independent talent. We expect this anniversary trail to be our biggest and most exciting yet."

Entry is free, making the North Bristol Arts Trail an accessible and inspiring weekend for art lovers, families and anyone keen to explore the city's creative talent.

For the full list of artists and venues, the downloadable trail map and further information, visit northbristolartists.org.uk.



EVENT DETAILS

What:	North Bristol Arts Trail - 25th Anniversary
When:	Saturday 28 and Sunday 29 November 2026, 10am-5pm
Where:	Redland, Bishopston, Henleaze, St Andrews, Ashley and Horfield
Who:	110 artists and makers at 56 venues
Entry:	Free

**28-29
November
2026**

10am-5pm

**NORTH
BRISTOL
ARTISTS**

**ART
TRAIL**

25th Anniversary

Scan to visit our website

■ NEWS

Church to mark 80 years

WESTBURY-on-Trym Baptist Church will be commemorating its 80th anniversary in 2027. A Celebration Service will take place on Sunday April 25 and a community day of celebration on Saturday June 19.

The buildings have grown from the original huts to the present-day base on Reedley Road – buildings that have been used and continue to be used for so many things alongside the regular worship services.

The church is planning to put together a book of memories and would love to include as many as it can.

Maybe you have memories of your connection with the church through toddler groups, pre-school, uniformed organisations, youth club, young people's fellowship, women's fellowship, Senior Circle, Tuesday Together, Tuesday Lunch, Refresh Lunch Café, Refresh Saturday Café, dedication services, baptisms, weddings, School Bus Coffee Stop, film night, Table Talkers, and many more.

For more information or to share a memory for the book, please email Annie at: eighty@westburybaptist.org.uk.

Return of Refutrees

REFUTREES, Aid Box Community's annual Christmas tree fund-raiser, is back for 2026. Each year, around 1,500 Nordmann Fir trees are sold, raising more than £30,000 to support refugees and people seeking asylum in the city.

The trees, from 3ft to 10ft, are grown in Frenchay and are available through online ordering (for home delivery only) and at the seasonal Refutrees Christmas tree shop at St Bart's Church, Maurice Road, St Andrews, BS6 5BZ. Delivery is £10, with all profits helping fund Aid Box Community's work, including emergency support, essential items and community activities.

Online ordering opens Wednesday November 11 for deliveries from Friday November 27. www.aidboxcommunity.co.uk/refutrees

FINANCE

James Kenward - Independent Financial Adviser

Harold Stephens

50 High Street, Westbury on Trym, Bristol BS9 3DZ
T: 0117 3636212

E: office@haroldstephens.co.uk



What are your options for paying for care?

If you are likely to fund your own care, there are several ways to meet the cost. The right approach will depend on your individual circumstances, and there may be more options available than you first realise.

If you own a property that is no longer needed, selling it may release capital to help fund care. There is also a little-known option only available via specialist advisers called an **Immediate Care Plan**. Often purchased from the proceeds of a house sale, this provides a regular tax-free income towards qualifying care costs which has the potential to effectively cap the amount that's paid for care.

In some circumstances a **Deferred Payment Agreement** may be available. This can allow eligible homeowners to delay paying some care costs, with the amount owed usually repaid at a later date, for example when the property is eventually sold.

Savings and income may provide a

straightforward way of meeting care fees. Pension income, rental income from an unsold home and other regular income can contribute towards the cost, while cash savings may be used to cover fees and other expenses.

Investments can also form part of a care funding plan. You may choose to draw from investments over time, switch to an income producing investment, or consider how they can continue to support your financial needs alongside care costs. Independent professional advice can help ensure you're using your assets in the most efficient way possible.

For some people, **NHS Continuing Healthcare** may provide funding towards the full cost of care where the relevant eligibility criteria are met. This is assessed according to an individual's health and care needs, rather than simply their financial position.

With several potential routes to explore, deciding how to fund care is not simply a

question of choosing which asset to spend first. Different options can have different implications for your income, investments, property and wider financial plans.

This November, SOLLA (Society of Later Life Advisers) Accredited adviser Richard Higgs is offering free face-to-face Care Fee Planning seminars. Come along to explore the different ways care might be funded, understand more about the options available and ask any questions you may have.

11th November – 2pm – 3pm – St Peter's Church, Henleaze BS9 4LD

18th November – 6pm – 7pm – Lovell Place Care Home, Sparrowbill Way, Patchway BS34 5AU

25th November – 5pm – 6pm – Stoke Lodge, Shirehampton Road, Stoke Bishop BS9 1BN

Book your place by calling **0117 3636 212** or emailing **office@haroldstephens.co.uk**



If you would like a relaxed chat about how to manage your assets in later life, then we are on hand to deliver it the good old-fashioned way – face to face right here in your local community.

Inheritance Tax Planning

Savings & Investments

Wills & Power of Attorney

Long-Term Care Planning

Pensions & Retirement

Trusts



50 High Street, Westbury on Trym, Bristol BS9 3DZ

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office@haroldstephens.co.uk

www.haroldstephens.co.uk



COMMUNITY NEWS

FRIENDS OF REDLAND LIBRARY

ON Thursday **November 12**, the Friends of Redland Library are hosting a talk on From Page to Screen, A Life in Stories given by Jayne Chard, the multi-award-winning film and TV producer and local author.

Jayne Chard will give a behind-the-scenes look at storytelling, using her experience in theatre, film, and TV and the creation of the crime novels More Than a Murder and The Body That Floats.

Discover where ideas come from, how characters take shape, why locations matter, and what it really takes to turn a spark of an idea into a finished book. Along the way, Jayne shares insights into the writing process, the challenges of bringing stories to life, and perhaps a few secrets of the trade.

Signed copies of Jayne's books will be on sale.

On Thursday **November 26**, Dr Shelley James will be giving a talk Beyond illumination - the science of light, darkness and human health.

Shelley is an international expert on lighting for health, TedX speaker, author, member of the National Care Forum Consultancy Team, and visiting lecturer at the Royal College of Art and UCL Bartlett School of Architecture.

In this interactive talk, she will share the latest research and real-world results that reveal the central role of light in physical and mental health. Learn practical, affordable tips on making the best use of light and also on the surprising role of darkness.

Signed copies of Shelley's book, Light! Your Essential Survival Guide, will be on sale.

Both events start at 7pm and doors open at 6:45pm. Admission is £3 (pay at the door - cash only).

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

Please contact us if you have any ideas for events or possible speakers.

Finally, we need volunteers to help organise and publicise our events.

If you would like to volunteer, please email FriendsOfRedlandLibrary@gmail.com

WESTBURY ON TRYM VILLAGE HALL

MUCH is heard from government these days - both nationally and locally - on the need for volunteers. Many are now helping to maintain our parks and community gardens, running charity shops, and assisting in our schools, hospitals and libraries. Retired people continue to use their lifetime skills for the service of others and enjoy this as much, if not more, than when they were in full time paid work!

Westbury Village Hall is a shining example of what can be achieved by varying teams of volunteers who have looked after and improved it, believe it or not, for the last 55 years - since voluntary management took over in 1971. But new helpers are still needed to ensure its future in the uncertain world we occupy just now. So, have you signed up yet? Our campaign to assemble a list of supporters is still going - it began at the Village Show in September, when a large number of people joined us. No money is required, just your 'love and loyalty' - as is said!

Repairs and renovations are continuing, as money raised from hirings becomes available. The Hall, being a Grade II listed building, requires many and more complicated jobs than the average and often special planning permission, before work can proceed. We are very fortunate to have a retired, professional construction manager in our team, to give advice and guidance and approach responsible firms as appropriate for what is required. Experience in accountancy, publicity and secretarial work and book keeping, are offered by others. A team of volunteers has just completed a garden make over-restoring the lawn at the side of the Hall after the sad but necessary removal of the historic Chestnut Tree.

So you can join our 'Supporters Team' anytime by looking for the relevant page on our website. (any contact details given by you will be kept by the Trustees according to strict data protections rules). If you would like to have more detail about the newly modernized Constitution, hear the Annual report and Accounts for 2025-26, join us for the Annual General Meeting at the Hall on November 16th at 8pm, and sign up as a supporter of the hall (at no cost). - refreshments at the end.)

Hilary Long for the Chairman and Trustees

BOOK REVIEW

The Inseparables

SIMONE de Beauvoir wrote *The Inseparables* in 1954 but it was not published until 2020.

The novel chronicles her friendship with Elisabeth Lacoin who died in 1929 at the age of 21. In the book Simone becomes Sylvie and Elisabeth is called Andree. They meet at a private Catholic school, where nine year old Sylvie is enraptured by Andree's forthright manner, her confidence, her cartwheels, her talent for literature and her mimicking of their teachers. Andree dramatically informs Sylvie that whilst cooking potatoes on a campfire, her dress caught fire and her right thigh was grilled to the bone.

The teachers refer to Sylvie and Andree as *The Inseparables* and they lose themselves for hours in discussions on property, justice and equality. They continue talking for twelve years, which was revolutionary at a time when girls and women were encouraged to keep their thoughts to themselves.

Andree has a controlling and conservative mother, Madame Gallard whose message to her daughter is join a convent or get a husband, remaining unmarried is not an option.

When Andree is bedridden for a year, following the campfire accident, she is visited every day by her friend Bernard. As soon as Andree is better, she is ordered by her mother to end the friendship as his parents are outside their social circle and the mother has an outlandish lifestyle.

We follow Sylvie and Andree through their teenage years as they both pass the baccalaureate and enter The Sorbonne with Sylvie studying philosophy and Andree choosing literature.

by Simone de Beauvoir

Andree begins a romance with a fellow student Pascal, much to the disappointment of Madame Gallard who is determined to marry off her daughter to someone befitting their social standing.

This is a compelling and engaging novel, skilfully translated by Lauren Elkin in pared down prose. Above all, it is a story about friendship between girls as they develop into young women. Witnessing how her best friend was crushed by society was clearly influential in developing the feminist work of Simone de Beauvoir. For this book and many more come and visit your local library where you will be assured of a warm welcome.

Review by Bob Deacon, from Bishopston Library



OPENING HOURS: WoT

Monday	(2pm-7pm)
Tuesday	(11am-4pm)
Wednesday	(11am-4pm)
Thursday	(11am-4pm)
Friday	(11am-4pm)
Saturday	(11am-4pm)
Sunday	(closed)

OPENING HOURS: HENLEAZE

Monday	(11am-5pm)
Tuesday	(11am-5pm)
Wednesday	(1pm-7pm)
Thursday	(11am-5pm)
Friday	(1pm-7pm)
Saturday	(10am-5pm)
Sunday	(closed)

Flashes, fireworks and four generations!

WELL, November is upon us, and with it comes the annual excuse to stand outside in the cold, watching things explode in the sky whilst wondering whether the hot chocolate was really worth leaving the house for!

Of course, as an Optometrist, flashing lights mean something rather different to me.

Flashes, floaters and whizzing shapes across your vision can be signs of a posterior vitreous detachment (PVD). Now, before you start worrying, this is a common change that occurs as our eyes gracefully age, when the jelly inside the eye gradually separates from the retina.

Most are harmless, although occasionally the process can cause a retinal tear or detachment, which is rather less welcome than a Catherine wheel that refuses to spin!

So, if you suddenly notice new flashes, floaters or a shadow across your vision, please don't assume it's just the fireworks. Have your eyes checked urgently, really the

same day.

Talking of things that suddenly dawn on you, I had a rather lovely realisation recently.

During a conversation with a colleague, we were discussing the history of Turners Opticians, and I mentioned that two of our three children had worked with us over the summer.

My colleague stopped me. "Hang on, doesn't that make you a fourth-generation family practice?"

Well, goodness me. It does!

Our family optometry story began with my grandfather Harold, continued through my dad Philip, and then, somewhat inevitably perhaps, landed with me.

And now, with two of our children having joined us over the summer, we've reached a fourth generation.

I must confess, I hadn't really thought about it quite like that before.

I remember spending time as a child in our family's spectacle

glazing workshop, fascinated by the machinery, the lenses and the people who worked there. Looking back, I suspect those experiences influenced my future rather more than I realised at the time.

Whether our children will eventually follow the same path remains to be seen. I certainly wouldn't wish to inflict a lifetime of listening to me talk about eyes upon them!

But there's something rather special about seeing the next generation become part of a story that began so many years ago.

Much has changed since Harold's day. The technology, our understanding of vision, the complexity of care we provide and, most recently, the new practice in Downend.

But the important things haven't changed.

Taking the time to listen. Caring deeply. Doing our very best for every patient who trusts us with their eyesight.

And perhaps that's what four

generations really represents. Not simply a family business, but a responsibility to keep improving what previous generations began.

So, enjoy the fireworks, look after your eyes, and perhaps spare a thought for the generations who helped us all get to where we are today.

We look forward to seeing you at Turners Opticians in Henleaze or Downend.

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 Downend 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 specialist interest in visual development and performance.

Flashes, Fireworks & Four Generations

Enjoy the fireworks...
and look after your eyes.

Flashing lights, floaters or whizzing shapes in your vision can sometimes be a sign of a posterior vitreous detachment (PVD). Most are harmless, but it's important to have any sudden changes checked – ideally the same day.

Whether it's fireworks in the sky or changes in your vision, we're here to provide reassuringly thorough eye care for you and your family.



Comprehensive
Eye Examinations



Urgent Eye Care
When You Need It



Specialist Lenses
for Every Lifestyle



Caring for
Generations

DOWNEND | HENLEAZE

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NATURE WATCH

with Dawn Lawrence

Tuning into city's wondrous soundscape

WALKING back from Redland to Bishopston, with autumn well under way, my attention was attracted by the cheerful twitter of goldfinches flying over the lime-lined street. I looked up and barely saw the last one disappearing. I decided to listen all the way home, interested to know what other natural sounds I might hear. Next was the immediate clatter of a wood pigeon's wings against the browning leaves of one of those limes as it left the tree on urgent business. Around the corner the magnificent copper beech on Hampton Road was shifting in the breeze and making the very noise that the word "rustle" was invented for. The tops of tall trees are rarely still, even when it is calm at human height, and it must be an age old instinct to find the gentle sound soothing. The calls of great tits (probably) rang across the next street. In our family it is a rule that if you have to ask what bird made that funny noise the answer must be "great tit", they have such a huge vocabulary.

I stopped under a birch tree, it was almost silent but not quite, not catching as much breeze in its delicate leaves as the beech. In one of Thomas Hardy's novels (it seems likely to be *The Woodlanders* but I can't be sure) some of the characters know where they are in



One magpie, but no doubt another is nearby

Photo by Pete Birkinshaw

the woods just from the unique sound of each stand of trees – imagine! A magpie called suddenly from within the almost perfect leaf-globe of a hornbeam – chuck-chuck creeeek. One for sorrow... I waited and sure enough another chucked and swooped across the gardens, disappearing into the same tree – two for joy! They rarely leave you in sorrow,

as the originators of the ancient rhyme must have known. Being alert to these sounds, even if you don't know what is making them, will often reveal the beast to you if you just watch and wait.

Further on the sycamores stopped me in my tracks with their loud shushing, the loudest trees yet. Standing here I caught the busy buzz of a honey bee gathering yellow pollen from ivy flowers whilst a drone fly (a type of hoverfly with aquatic larvae) sipped the nectar in silence. Ivy's nondescript green umbels are a banquet to late insects, especially bumble-bee queens preparing for their winter sleep. A robin suddenly threw a phrase from high in a sycamore, silver-sweet and distinctive.

I had scarcely noticed the sounds of the city on my walk but on Gloucester Road a scatter of pigeons appeared circling above the rooftops, their wingbeats drowned by the traffic. This pigeon panic can be a sign of a peregrine or sparrowhawk nearby but there was none to be seen. Nearly home, I thought I might finish with a herring gull cackling from a rooftop, or perhaps one of those strange bird-like scolds of a grey squirrel, but no, I had had my lot. And I was satisfied.

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Trees bring new hope for a fruitful future

"If I knew the world would end tomorrow, I would still plant new apple trees today." I love this phrase. It's attributed to Martin Luther, the 15th century theologian who sparked the radical change to Christianity known as the Protestant Reformation. His life and times were at least as challenging as ours. Planting new fruit trees is always an act of faith in the future. It's also a direct action for local food, climate, and nature resilience.

Apple and pear trees do not grow true from seed. If you desire a particular variety it must be propagated by grafting or budding. An unusual combination of dexterity and strength is needed to prepare and bind together the tissues of two hardwood cuttings. It's even trickier when the living wood is only finger thick. Since 2023, orchard volunteers have risen to this challenge. I'm pleased to report no fingers have been lost! The grafts are prone to splitting



Apple Tree Lady at work in the HOCO tree nursery

apart until the living cells form a strong bond. Because the root volume is tiny, the baby trees are vulnerable to water stress. This year's high temperatures, beat-

ing sunshine, and gusting winds tripled the distress. They often needed daily watering. Our excellent value HOCO grafted Apple and Pear trees are now

available for ordering for collection in November. The trees have been lovingly looked after and watered by orchard members for the whole of the growing season. Order quickly! We only have small numbers of each variety.

To help get your new trees off to a sure start, the Apple Tree Lady is offering short how-to sessions on the collection dates. Her tips and advice are informed by the predicted impact of the super El Niño on the 2027 growing season.

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

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SPORT

Westbury Harriers stalwart honoured

GOOD wishes and congratulations have been ringing throughout Westbury Harriers Running Club, since club chair, Geraint Torrington, was recognised as an Unsung Hero of the Year at the England Athletics (EA) South West Region Volunteer Awards.

It was stated that: "Following the loss of his wife to cancer at the end of 2024, Geraint Torrington showed remarkable resilience by stepping into the role of Chair at Westbury Harriers in 2025. Bringing energy, humour and a positive outlook during a difficult personal period, he has helped drive the club forward while ensuring volunteers feel valued and supported. Geraint has served the club in numerous roles over the past 15 years, including Secretary, Development Coordinator and Men's Team Manager. Alongside chairing committee meetings and supporting club development, he organises the annual awards evening, supports cross-country teams, volunteers at club races and brings joy to younger members as Father Christmas and

the Easter Bunny."

Describing how he felt about the award, which was presented at a ceremony in Exeter, Geraint told the Voice: "It was an honour to be shortlisted and even better to receive the award. To be recognised for the work I do for the club is great, but it's something I enjoy and it's great to be able to see the results of the hard work of the committee be translated into success for the club. Success can be measured in many different ways and when we compete at cross country we have athletes aged 9 to 65+ taking part and mostly with smiles on their faces and that's great to see."

On their social media post, the club offered thanks to the EA South West team for organising the event, Olympian Jo Pavey for hosting and GB international Poppy Tank for sharing her thoughts on why volunteers make such a difference to the sport.

Geraint Torrington with Poppy Tank, left and Jo Pavey at the awards ceremony



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