

# cliftonvoice

May, 2026 Issue 33

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FREE EVERY MONTH IN CLIFTON AND SURROUNDING AREA

People living in vans by the roadside will have to move on this month or face eviction



## SIX of the best

E-Act Montpelier High School pupils performed SIX: The Musical to packed houses of parents and friends.

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## Pop-up questions

Plans for a pop-up restaurant on the former WH Smith site in Clifton Village have met a mixed response from local people.

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## Theatre role

Supporters are being offered the chance to sponsor a seat at the Redgrave Theatre to mark its sixtieth anniversary.

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## Pillar restored

An historic stone pillar in Oakfield Grove has been made safe and renovated thanks to residents' and councillors' efforts.

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## Court ruling on vans

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

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

City councillor Stephen

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

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

District Judge John Napier reserved judgement on the council's application to extend an injunction granted last year to prevent van dwellers returning

to live at the Downs.

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

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

Campaign group Protect the Downs welcomed the ruling and said if the council failed to carry out evictions it would seek a Judicial Review.

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## June deadline

Our June deadline is May 13. 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, Clifton Voice, 16 Ashmead Business Centre, Ashmead Road, Keynsham, BS31 1SX. The editor reserves the right to edit your letter.

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

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

A member of the



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## NEWS

Plans for a pop-up restaurant at the former WH Smith site have provoked some concern but also won some support



## Plan sparks noise fears

RESIDENTS are split over the plans for a pop-up restaurant on the former WH Smith site in Clifton Village.

Speare Developments, which has bought the site, has applied to the city council for the "meanwhile use" for the land for two years while they develop their long-term plans for it.

Most people and business owners in the area are pleased at the prospect of the site in Clifton Down Road, derelict for more than 15 years, coming back into use but some close neighbours are concerned about possible noise and nuisance and potential parking problems.

The developers envisage a restaurant in a stretched tent marquee seating up to 150 people, with two shipping containers housing a kitchen and a cellar and bar. They say the space will occasionally be used for workshops, demos, community events and a market.

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

The councillors say the proposal will enhance the area and support surrounding businesses. They say planning conditions and licensing restrictions could be used to mitigate any problems.

However, some people living nearby have submitted objections to the plan. They are particularly concerned about recorded music and suggest that the restaurant should be restricted to daytime use.

One said: "As it stands, this plan for an open-air restaurant and bar will be hugely disruptive to residents living in the surrounding area in terms of noise pollution from ambient music, drinkers and diners eating outside until 10pm in a residential neighbourhood which is quiet after 6pm. No other restaurant in the area does this."

"This plan will also exacerbate traffic congestion ... it will also increase the parking problem we already face as Clifton residents as 150 diners try and find somewhere to leave their car."

Objectors say approximately 100 people in about 50 households live in Rodney Place, opposite the site, would be adversely affected.

One opponent said: "The proposal is for an over development of the site without proper consideration of the associated impact on the local residents. It should also be remembered that we are the people who support the Clifton businesses on a day-to-day basis and if residents are driven out of Clifton by this sort of insensitive proposal which ignores local people, then Clifton will lose the community feel that makes it so special and local businesses will suffer as well."

However, the council has received as many comments in favour of the scheme as against. One said: "I fully support this wonderful proposal which will bring much needed vibrancy and a fresh new approach to the dreadful eyesore that has blighted this prominent location in Clifton Village. It is wholly in keeping with the market atmosphere of the Victorian arcade and Boyces Avenue."

Another said: "For too long this derelict site has been a blot on the village landscape and a scandalous waste of available land. The meanwhile use will allow the site to be brought into use quickly and boost activity and employment in the village before formal development starts on the eventual building."

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

The application is on the council planning portal, ref 26/10409/F

NEWS

# 'Let's bring clean air to classrooms'

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

viruses and particulate matter from pollution are removed from the air.

But she believes investment in suitable equipment could benefit many schools and she has met her MP, the Greens' Carla Denyer, to push for Bristol to become a leader in providing clean air in classrooms.

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

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

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

Ruth's research shows that it could cost less than £150 million to install air filters in all schools in the UK, while savings of many times that amount could be saved on supply teacher costs and heating bills. Improved attendance rates – currently a major concern for schools in the UK – would be another bonus.

"Installing air filtration is cost-effective. Schools could provide safer air per child per

year for the price of a coffee & cake, at around £10 per pupil," Ruth told the Voice.

"We drink two litres of water and breathe in 11,000 litres of air every day. We all expect to drink clean water and eat healthy

food, so why are we neglecting air quality?"

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



One of Ruth's air filters

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NEWS



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

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

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



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NEWS

# Chance to sponsor a seat in theatre's diamond year

THE Redgrave Theatre is launching a Buy A Seat campaign as part of the celebrations marking its sixtieth anniversary.

For a contribution of £300-£500, an Individual can have a plaque on a selected seat for three years. Contributors will also be given a certificate and will be invited to a special event behind the scenes at Clifton College.

Laura Gammage, director of development at Clifton College, said: "Whether you are honouring a loved one, marking a special moment, or simply showing your support for the arts, naming a seat is a meaningful way to become part of the theatre's story."

"Your dedication will be seen by audiences for years to come and will help support the Redgrave's artistic and community work".

Funds raised will support capital improvements to preserve the venue, as well as funding scholarships for young people with a passion for the arts to join the school.

The theatre is now inviting

applications for its second Youth Theatre programme. Designed for young people aged seven to 14, the programme provides a space to explore creativity, build confidence, and develop performance skills.

Amy Iles, youth theatre programme leader, said: "Shaping the next generation of performers at such a historic theatre is very exciting. Our young participants are engaging brilliantly, and we're looking forward to another fantastic term ahead."

Theatre Manager Sue Ellicott said: "The Youth Theatre is a significant step in reaffirming our commitment to being a space for the community."

The Redgrave Theatre in Percival Road was originally known as the Clifton College theatre when it was built in 1966. It was officially opened by Bristol born actor Sir Michael Redgrave who had been a pupil at Clifton College. After his death in 1985 the theatre, which was one of the first purpose-built school theatres, in the country, was renamed in his honour.

Details of the seat scheme and the youth theatre are on the college website.



Redgrave Youth Theatre



Supporters can have their name on a seat at the Redgrave Theatre

FREE half-term event

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## NEWS

# Boost for surgery

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

# Radio splash hit

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

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

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

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

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

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



Emily Koch

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## ■ ADVERTORIAL

# Tell BID what you'd like to see in Clifton Village

FROM November 2025, Edward Payne took on the role of chair of Clifton Village business improvement district (BID). As director and founder of Clifton Mortgages, he's had an office on the Mall in Clifton Village for the past six years and has sat on the board of the BID for the past two years. He therefore has a good knowledge of the Village and many of its businesses and a sense of what makes Clifton Village so unique.

"I was delighted to take on a role of Chair of the BID and to do what I can to help support Clifton Village and my fellow business owners. There are actually a huge range of businesses here. As well as the retailers, bars and restaurants that are so obvious on the High Street there are also a wide number of professional services firms and also large businesses, schools and hotels. Each of these faces its own particular challenges. The BID needs to do what it can to help

to support all of these businesses to ensure that Clifton Village remains a thriving and welcoming area to do business in as well as being a lovely place to visit".

The BID works closely with Bristol City Council and receives great support, particularly from Clifton Councillor Paula O'Rourke and will continue to work closely to achieve the best possible results for businesses in the Village.

It is important to remember however that all of the directors of Clifton Bid are volunteers and work in Clifton. They have to take time out of running their own businesses to support the BID and couldn't do it without the tireless efforts of the BID Manager, Lucy who is the BID's only employee and central to running so many



Edward Payne

activities in the Village.

"We have a wide range of events that we support throughout the year to not only improve the Village but also to help encourage people to come here so that they hopefully spend their money here too. From supporting community events such as the Lit Fest, Summer screening and running events such as Clifton Village Day, we organise the summer hanging baskets and also pay for the Christmas tree whilst helping as stewards for the switch on. All of our activities are there to improve the village as a place to visit and a place to do business."

Ed commented further "We are keen to look at new events and activities too. I'm happy to listen to ideas from business owners across the village – it is the levy contributions of business owners who make our work possible of course, we have a number of plans for new events."

In terms of the future he said

"One of the biggest challenges we face is ensuring that people know we are here to help their businesses and also gaining engagement from the business community. Business owners are always welcome to get involved whether it be by joining the board or on a less formal basis and can come to speak to us at one of our monthly sofa chats if they wish."

"From a strategic perspective, the BID wants to engage with more professional services focused businesses, schools and hotels to see how we can help them as well, whether this be in terms of support for their activities, networking or liaising with Bristol City Council. The BID is there to help all businesses by improving the wonderful village that we are all so lucky to live and work in."

If you are interested in getting involved with the BID or if you have any comments or suggestions please go to [www.discoverclifton.co.uk](http://www.discoverclifton.co.uk)

## ■ FROM BRISTOL CENTRAL'S MP

# I'll keep speaking up for climate action

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Carla Denyer  
writes for  
the Voice

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

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

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## NEWS

# 'Welcoming, inclusive school' praised

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

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

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

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

"Leaders and staff know pupils for the individuals they

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

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

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

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

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

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

The curriculum was

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Yassin to be Lord Mayor

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

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

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

## BADMINTON SCHOOL NEWS

# Badminton School Highlights Strong Benefits of All-Girls Education from Age Three



BADMINTON School, in Westbury-on Trym, Bristol is spotlighting the growing evidence around the significant advantages of an all-girls' early years education, emphasising how starting at age three can shape girls' confidence, curiosity, and ambition throughout their education.

Mrs Heidi Welch, Head of Prep at Badminton said: "we are often asked by prospective parents what the benefits of an all-girls' education are and, whilst we live the advantages on a daily basis with our own pupils, we wanted to investigate further why they do so well from such a young age. The appointment of Vince MacLeod as Head of Early Years at Badminton School Prep last September, with his academic background and interest in research, combined with his teaching experience, has enabled us to do this".

With research showing that gendered behaviours begin to emerge as early as preschool, Badminton argues that an all-girls' setting in the Early Years helps level the playing field before social pressures take hold. "From the moment they join us at age three, our girls are learning in a space built entirely around them," says Vince MacLeod, Reception teacher and Early Years Lead at Badminton School Prep. "Every girl is encouraged to speak up, explore boldly, and take the lead."



Research led by Erin Pahlke in 2014 revealed that girls in single-sex settings show higher levels of confidence and a greater willingness to take intellectual risks—advantages that are particularly impactful when established early. Studies suggest that girls aged 3–5 may show less overt risk-taking in mixed settings, where boys often dominate both physically and verbally, dominating the space which unintentionally limits girls' participation. In an all-girls' environment, these pressures are removed, allowing girls to take more initiative, show greater confidence, and participate more actively. This aligns with further findings with evidence supporting reports of higher engagement and confidence among girls in

single-sex learning environments, as well as a more positive attitude towards learning.

Girls in the early years typically excel in communication, collaboration, and imaginative play. Badminton's all-girls' approach builds on these strengths through discussion led, exploratory, and creative learning experiences designed to challenge and inspire. "Because our Early Years classrooms are designed specifically with girls in mind, our teachers can deliver a curriculum that both stretches and supports them," Mrs Heidi Welch, added. "This is where a love of learning truly begins and it's a joy to see on a daily basis."

Badminton believes its all-girls' Early Years programme, for girls aged 3-5, offers a distinct advantage. "By removing subtle social expectations, we help girls see every opportunity as one that belongs to them. This then plays through in the girls individual academic and social progress" MacLeod continues. "Our aim is simple: to give every girl the best possible start. When girls are encouraged to lead, collaborate, and explore from the very beginning, it transforms not only how they learn—but how they see themselves."

Badminton School Prep is the only single-sex Early Years provider in Bristol.

**admissions@badmintonschool.co.uk**  
**0117 905 5271**

## FROM YOUR COUNCILLORS

### News from Green Party Clifton Down councillors George Calascione and Serena Ralston

#### Have your say on 20mph roads

The council is proposing reducing speed limits from 30mph to 20mph on around 100 roads in Bristol including one in our neighbourhood, Upper Belgrave Road. While these roads make up roughly only 5% of Bristol's road network, 30% of the city's serious and fatal casualties occur on them. Research shows that lowering speeds to 20 mph reduces fatalities and injuries.

Many of you have contacted us about speeding on Upper Belgrave Road and reported some very nasty collisions there. We had raised the problems on Upper Belgrave Road at Area 3 committee last year. Last month, the transport and connectivity committee approved the important next step in the 20mph process which is for the plans to go out to public consultation. Serena spoke at the committee in support of the plans. You can find out more and have your say on the council's consultation engagement web page. The deadline for feedback is Sunday 17th May.

#### Cracking ideas for community projects

Following the Area 3 community workshop on 9th March, the committee has received some cracking initial ideas for projects for Community Infrastructure Levy funding in our ward. These include an art installation to improve a mini recycling centre outside a church, a new road sign to improve children's safety near a local school, and improvements to the outside area of a community club. Thank you to all the local groups who submitted their proposals for Community Infrastructure Levy funding to the Area 3 committee.



#### Pillar pitched perfect

The Easter Bunny came early to Oakfield Grove! We were very chuffed to see before Easter that work to protect and secure the wonky and fenced off pillar there was finally complete. The pavement has also been widened and bollards installed around the pillar to prevent future collisions.

It's taken several years of pressing for this both by us and the Oakfield Residents Association (ORA).

Andrew Findlay from ORA said: "As residents of Oakfield Grove we are so pleased that this historic stone pillar has finally been made safe and the renovation completed. It has been a real eyesore for over five years since being hit and twisted on its base by a large vehicle. The metal fencing subsequently erected around the pillar made entering and leaving the road whether as a pedestrian, or by car, or for delivery lorries, frustrating to say the least. Serena and George have been brilliant in listening to our concerns, actively pursuing the right departments to draw up plans and to secure funding for the project within a limited budget."

Once the contractors have installed the realigned double yellow lines, they will remove works road signs and traffic cones.

Thank you, Oakfield residents, for your patience and perseverance!

Area 3 includes Clifton, Clifton Down, Cotham and Hotwells and Harbourside wards.

The next Area 3 committee meeting, which will select ideas to go forward to the next stage, will be held at 6pm on Tuesday 19th May at Redland Library on Whiteladies Road. All are welcome to attend.

#### Local history comes alive

Serena thoroughly enjoyed learning more about the council's very own local history resource 'Know Your Place (KYP)' at an event at Redland Library. Its creator, Pete Insole, gave a fascinating live demo on how to get the most out of this

free digital tool. KYP provides a series of historic maps of Bristol as well as images, notes and film footage. You can contribute your own material too.

The event is just one of a very successful series run by Friends of Redland Library. You can find out about future events on their website Home - Friends of Redland Library

#### Flipping flytipping

Frustratingly, flytipping remains a persistent problem at mixed recycling centres (the big communal bins) throughout our area. These include Oakfield Place, the corner of Southleigh and

Oakfield Roads, and Alma Vale Road. Flytipping is hazardous and deeply unfair on those who live near it.

We have seen people drive up and simply dump stuff by these bins. We have again reported the issues on the FixMyStreet app. Please do the same if you can as the app is very easy to use. We are also seeking a long-term solution from Bristol Waste and the council's senior waste team.

#### Contact us

**Serena Ralston:** [clr.serena.ralston@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:clr.serena.ralston@bristol.gov.uk)  
**George Calascione:** [clr.george.calascione@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:clr.george.calascione@bristol.gov.uk)



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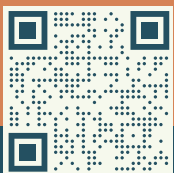


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## FROM YOUR COUNCILLORS

### News from Clifton councillors Paula O'Rourke (Independent) and Jerome Thomas (Green)

#### Jacobs Wells Baths update

Jerome, together with fellow councillors from Central and Hotwells & Harbourside wards, recently visited the former Jacobs Wells Baths on Jacobs Wells Road to see progress on its exciting transformation. We were joined by Emma Harvey from Trinity Community Arts and Sean Redmond of PH3, the architects leading the renovation.

Closed since 2018, this much-loved historic building is now entering a new chapter. Trinity Community Arts has taken on the site and work is underway to bring it back to life as a vibrant, multi-purpose community, arts, and heritage hub. All asbestos has either been removed or is being safely managed, and the building is currently wrapped in scaffolding as essential roofing repairs and replacements take priority.

Over £1 million has already been invested in these crucial early works. Further funding will soon be needed to progress the next stages of the project, and we are



Jerome with other local Green councillors and the project team at Jacobs Wells Baths

excited to support its continued development. This is a fantastic opportunity to restore a treasured local landmark for the benefit of the whole community, and we look forward to being involved as the plans move forward.

#### Extending the 20 mph limit to Hotwell Road

More than 85% of Bristol's roads are already subject to a 20 mph speed limit, helping to make our streets safer and improve air quality. Reducing speeds from 30 mph to 20 mph has been shown to significantly decrease the risk and severity of collisions while creating

a more pleasant environment for everyone.

Bristol City Council's Green administration is now proposing to extend 20 mph limits to over 100 additional roads. Local councillors have successfully requested that Hotwell Road be included in these proposals, and we are pleased that it is part of the consultation.

Residents are encouraged to share their views. The consultation is available on the Bristol City Council website and will run until 17 May.

After this date, you are also welcome to email your local councillors to provide your feedback.

#### Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding available

Did you know that local developments contribute funding for community improvements? Through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), developers support projects that enhance neighbourhoods and benefit residents.

Recent initiatives funded in this way include tree planting, new bike racks, streetscape enhancements, and equipment for community organisations—such as chairs and tables for Redland Library. Clifton and neighbouring wards typically have around £50,000 each year available for such projects.

We would love to hear your ideas for local improvements. If you have a suggestion that could benefit the community, please get in touch with your local councillors to discuss how CIL funding might help bring it to life.

#### Proposed pop-up restaurant for Clifton Down Road

A planning application has been submitted for a temporary pop-up restaurant at 2-16 Clifton Down Road, bringing forward plans to revitalise a prominent site in the heart of Clifton Village.

Speare Developments, the applicant behind the proposal, is working closely with Bristol City Council to ensure that all planning requirements are met and to support a smooth and transparent planning process. Subject to approval by the council, the development is targeting an opening in Summer 2026, creating an exciting new destination in one of Bristol's most popular neighbourhoods.

The site has remained vacant for some time and occupies a highly visible position within

Clifton Village. Its temporary redevelopment is expected to enhance the appearance of the area while also supporting surrounding businesses by increasing footfall and activity.

The proposed restaurant will provide an opportunity to celebrate local produce and cuisine, further contributing to the vibrancy and appeal of the neighbourhood.

#### Addressing residents' concerns

Your local councillors are in regular contact with the Speare Developments team and are actively responding to residents' concerns, particularly regarding potential noise nuisance. We are confident that the developer recognises the importance of minimising any impact on nearby homes. Appropriate licensing conditions are expected to be put in place to ensure that noise levels remain low and that activities conclude by 10:00 pm, helping to safeguard the amenity of the local community.

Speare Developments has committed to ongoing engagement with both Bristol City Council and the local community as the planning application progresses, with further updates to be shared in due course.

Residents and businesses who would like more information or wish to raise questions about the proposal are encouraged to contact the project team: Email: [info@clifftondownload.co.uk](mailto:info@clifftondownload.co.uk) Telephone: 0808 143 4781

#### Travelling season

While some residents may have been concerned by the recent Traveller encampment on the Downs over the Easter period, we would like to reassure the



community that important measures are now in place to address such situations.

Following significant pressure from local councillors and residents last year, an injunction was granted to prevent encampments on the grassed areas of the Downs, including Ladies Mile. This legal measure enables Bristol City Council to act swiftly when unauthorised encampments occur.

As a result, encampments can now be required to move on immediately, without the delays previously experienced while legal papers were prepared and submitted to the court. This has significantly strengthened the Council's ability to protect this valued public space and respond promptly to residents' concerns.

Bristol City Council is also seeking to extend and expand the scope of the injunction, which would provide even greater protection for the Downs and surrounding areas in the future. We understand that these situations can be distressing for nearby residents, and we will continue to work closely with the Council and other partners to ensure that the community is supported and kept informed.

**Paula and Jerome**

#### Contact us

**Jerome Thomas:** [cllr.jerome.thomas@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.jerome.thomas@bristol.gov.uk)  
**Paula O'Rourke:** [cllr.paula.orourke@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.paula.orourke@bristol.gov.uk)

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## NEWS

### Have your say on public transport

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

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

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

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

To take part, visit [haveyoursaywest.co.uk/betterbuses](http://haveyoursaywest.co.uk/betterbuses). Paper copies are available at Bristol bus stations and at libraries.

## LETTER

### Bus routes 'random and out of date'

IT is disingenuous for Metro Mayor Helen Godwin to imply in your April issue that by asking for our views on what matters when travelling by bus that she has any statutory authority over bus routes in the Clifton area; indeed in Bristol at all.

Only the bus company decide routing and timetabling without any survey or discussion with residents. My experience has shown that First Bus are obdurate to change and that bus routes in Bristol are decided in their Glasgow head office and not locally.

Over several years I have campaigned to try to sort out what is now a very random and out of date bus service in Clifton.

For example, the current No 8 routing makes no sense at all. The No. 8 used to take hundreds of passengers daily to the Zoo. Now I doubt if the 100 or so daily services, which still use the renamed College Road bus stop, pick up/drop 10 passengers a day on this part of route.

This part of the service also

duplicates the 505 half-hourly service which is heavily subsidised. Why the No. 8 service with its smaller buses does not now run via Alma Road to Clifton Down (returning to Clifton via Upper Belgrave Road and down Pembroke Road) to interchange with 11 other bus routes and the railway station not forgetting the variety of shops there and a shopping centre I simply do not understand.

The No.8 also wends its weary way after reaching Bristol Bridge through a largely deserted Broadmead where now almost no passengers disembark.

Regarding the 'new' 5 and 77 routes through Clifton from Stoke Bishop via Clifton Down to Horfield or St Annes (university term time only, else Black Boy Hill), these services use the least reliable, largest, least manoeuvrable and oldest buses in the First Bus fleet travelling inevitably with problems in Alma Road and environs. They are a poor substitute for re-routing the No.8. These services should be routed via St Paul's Road and Pembroke Road to Clifton.

While you can at almost any time of the day get by bus from anywhere in Bristol to Southmead

Hospital, unbelievably there are practically no services at all via Park Row to the Bristol Royal Infirmary from anywhere in Bristol. It is a long walk uphill crossing busy roads to get there from the Haymarket/Bus Station where nearly all bus services in Bristol stop. Surely it would make more sense to at least route the 5 and 77 buses along Park Row thence Whitson Street stopping at the Bristol Royal Infirmary and outside the bus station?

It would also avoid the congestion at the bottom of Park Street.

Finally, the much used bus shelter on Christchurch Green, where all return Clifton bus services stop, vanished a year ago and has never been replaced.

One must therefore really wonder if any of our MP, mayors, and councillors really do care about bus users, indeed ever use buses (I've never seen one on a bus). Do they have really any influence whatsoever over the services in Bristol the bus companies (dominated by First Bus) provide as they often claim?

**Don Shapland, Clifton**

## NEWS FROM THE METRO MAYOR

### A year of progress

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Our creative industries will benefit from £25m of new funding to help support jobs, skills, and opportunities in one of our fastest-growing sectors.

We've also made progress towards North Somerset joining the combined authority, with the majority of responses in a recent consultation showing that people and businesses support the move.

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



**Metro Mayor Helen Godwin**  
writes for the Voice

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

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

We've made real progress in our first year.

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

## NEWS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The plan is for Acorn Property Group to take over



Grace House, above, and the site entrance, top

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

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

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

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

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

that needs a lot of thought.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

## ■ MESSAGE FROM POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

# Antisocial behaviour: don't suffer in silence

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

By bringing together council teams, voluntary organisations,

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

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

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

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

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

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

If issues persist and you feel not



**With Police and Crime Commissioner Clare Moody**

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

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

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

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

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

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■ ADVERTISING FEATURE

THE BS9 Arts Trail returns on 6-7 June 2026 (10am-5pm), with 86 artists exhibiting across 14 venues in Henleaze, Stoke Bishop and Westbury-on-Trym.

Generously supported by VWV Solicitors, the trail offers a unique chance to meet artists and buy work directly from them.

Visitors can explore painting, sculpture, printmaking, ceramics, photography, jewellery, glass and more, displayed in a range of venues - many not usually open to the public. With prices from £3 to £3,000+, there's something

# BS9 Arts Trail returns: 86 artists open their doors – June 6-7, 2026

for every budget, from cards and handmade gifts to statement sculptures and paintings.

Collect stamps from six venues (three large and three small) to enter a prize draw and win one of eight+ original artworks donated by

the artists.

Venues are easy to access, with many offering cafés and toilets. The trail is ideal for walkers and cyclists, is well served by bus routes and all locations have free parking on-site or nearby.

Michelle Rose, Partner and Head of Individuals & Families at VWV, said: "We are delighted to support the BS9 Arts Trail again this summer. It's a fantastic celebration of creativity,

community and talent, bringing people together and showcasing Bristol's artistic energy."

For full details, visit [www.bs9arts.co.uk](http://www.bs9arts.co.uk) or pick up a free trail map from cafés, libraries, galleries and shops across BS9, Clifton, Redland and Bishopston.



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## WHAT'S ON

## Various days and dates

**BLAISE COMMUNITY GARDEN**, behind Blaise Museum, BS10 7QS. Open Monday, Wednesday and Saturday 10-2. Interesting walled kitchen garden, free entry, new volunteers needed & welcomed. Plants always available. Cash & cards accepted. Events: Café on 11th April 9.45-2pm and Spring Market & Café on 9th May 9.45-3pm.

## Various days and dates

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

## Various dates

**WANT TO GET FITTER AND STRONGER?**

Our Nordic walking classes and NEW indoor Women's Strength classes are run by friendly, professional instructors. Nordic walking beginners are on Clifton Down 6th May, 16th 20th & 30th May. Women's Strength is every Tuesday and Fri in Henleaze. Visit [www.bristolnordicwalking.co.uk](http://www.bristolnordicwalking.co.uk) or call Ros on 07886885213.

## Various dates

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

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

## Various dates

**LA SCALA DELI HENLEAZE**

Join us for one of our signature Wine Tastings led by our in-house sommelier:

May 14th & 22nd - Emilia Romagna  
May 21st & 23rd - Dry Whites & Big Bubbles  
June 11th & 19th - Emilia Romagna  
June 12th & 18th - Dry Whites & Big Bubbles  
July 16th & 24th - Meridiana - A producer exclusive  
July 23rd & 25th - Portuguese Tasting  
Aug 6th & 14th - Meridiana - A producer exclusive  
Aug 13th & 15th - Portuguese Tasting

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

May 16th - Calabria  
June 27th - Calabria  
July 18th - Emilia Romagna  
August 8th - Emilia Romagna

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

## 2nd May

■ **BRISTOL ARROW BOWLING CLUB**

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

## Various days

■ **WEST OF ENGLAND BRIDGE CLUB** based at RAFA Club, 38 Eastfield, Henleaze. Five sessions every week, catering for different standards. Thursday afternoon is Improvers. Monday and Friday afternoon is for more capable players; this is an EBU recognised session. You may come alone to any afternoon session; a partner will be found. The evening sessions are on Wednesdays and Fridays, and are open to pairs. [www.woebridgeclub.co.uk](http://www.woebridgeclub.co.uk) or contact Secretary, Chris Frew, on 0117 962 5281.

## Monday

■ **WESTBURY AND CLIFTON AREA**

**DISCUSSION GROUP** meet at Westbury on Trym Baptist Church every Monday 9.45am to challenge ourselves with topical debate on what's happening in the world. If you would like to help to solve some of today's challenging issues with good company, tea and biscuits - contact James Ball 01454 415165 or Ian Viney 0117 9501628.

■ **THE CORNER CLUB.** Banish Loneliness!

We offer a warm welcome to Seniors looking for fun and friendship. Morning coffee and biscuits, a freshly cooked 2 course lunch, varied afternoon entertainment and tea and cake await you. All for £6. Managed by a non-denominational Charity we meet from 10am to 2.30pm in the Apostle Room at Clifton Cathedral BS8 3BX. Contact Helen on 07717405673. Transport Available. New Volunteers and Volunteer Drivers would be most welcome. We'd love to meet you.

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

■ **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](http://www.dickens-society.org.uk) or phone Roma on 0117 9279875 for details.

■ **WESTBURY ON TRYM WOMEN'S INSTITUTE** meets on the third Monday of the month in the Westbury Village Hall, Eastfield Road, BS9 4AG, from 2-4 pm. Interesting speakers, crafts, lunch

club, skittles and outings. Our lively, friendly and inclusive group welcomes visitors. Call Sascha on 07961619806.

## Tuesday

■ **WESTBURY PARK WOMEN'S INSTITUTE**

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

■ **COMPANION VOICES BRISTOL** is recruiting new members We are a 'threshold choir' actively looking for new people to join us. We meet in Easton on the 3rd Tuesday of the month from 7 to 9 pm to learn 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](mailto:bristol@companionvoices.org). Visit [www.facebook.com/CompanionVoicesBristol](http://www.facebook.com/CompanionVoicesBristol) and [www.companionvoices.org](http://www.companionvoices.org)

■ **BRISTOL BRANCH OF THE KNITTING AND CROCHET GUILD** meet on the third Tuesday of the month, 10am-12pm, usually in the function room at the Boston Tea Party on Whiteladies Road. Free to attend, all welcome (members and non-members). We cater for beginners through to experienced makers. Email [BristolKCG@gmail.com](mailto:BristolKCG@gmail.com) for more info.

## Wednesday

■ **HENLEAZE CHORAL SOCIETY** We are a thriving, non-audition choir performing mainly classical repertoire. Rehearsals take place at Henleaze Bowling Club, Grange Court Road on Wednesdays 7.30-9.00pm New members welcome. Go to [www.henleazechoralsociety.org.uk](http://www.henleazechoralsociety.org.uk).

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

■ **BLAISE COMMUNITY GARDEN**, behind Blaise Museum, open Wednesday and Saturday 10-2. Originally a walled kitchen garden. Free to enter. We're looking for volunteers. Our Café (+ homemade cakes) open 10-2, 18 March and 8 April.

■ **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 area. Call 0117 435 0063.

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

■ **GOLDEN HILL WI** Meets the first Wednesday of every month. 1-3pm. Golden Hill Sports Ground, Wimbeldon Rd, BS6 7YA A vibrant, lively new afternoon WI in BS6. We have an exciting and varied programme to offer.

WHAT'S ON

For more information contact Pam Scull at goldenhillwi@gmail.com.

■ **CLIFTON WOMENS INSTITUTE** We are a friendly bunch who meet on the last Wednesday of the month at Alma Church, Alma Road, Clifton BS8 2HG, from 7.30pm. Anyone interested in coming to a meeting as a visitor is most welcome (£5). Visit our blog [cliftonwi.blogspot.com](http://cliftonwi.blogspot.com) for forthcoming events. For info about us contact [thecriftonwi@gmail.com](mailto:thecriftonwi@gmail.com)

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

■ **SPIRITUAL 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](http://www.westburyparksc.org)

Thursday

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

■ **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

■ **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/BristolHealingGroup> or <https://www.thehealingtrust.org.uk/healing/healing-centre> or phone Selina 0117 9466434.

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

■ **HENLEAZE LADIES' CHOIR** Come and join us as we fill St Peter's Church Hall in Henleaze with a diverse selection of music. We are a friendly

choir and meet on Thursday afternoons in term time from 1.45 to 3.45. No auditions, and ability to read music not necessary. Contact Jeanette on 9685409 or Jane on 07752 332278.

Friday

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

■ **BRISTOL SPANISH CIRCLE.** We meet every month from September to June, usually on the last Friday of the month, at St Peter's Church Hall in Henleaze. For more info, see <https://www.spanishcirclebristol.com/>.

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

Saturday

■ **SEA MILLS REPAIR CAFE** offers sewing, woodwork, general, electrical and cycle repairs at the Methodist Church, Sea Mills Square, from 10am-12pm, every second Sat (except August). This is a voluntary service run by experienced

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## NEWS

# Museum and library given funding boost

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

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

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

The funding forms part of the

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

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

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

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

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

## BOOK REVIEW

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Elizabeth Moss, Heron Books, Clifton

## BOOK REVIEW

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

By Elizabeth Dale

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

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

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

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

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

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

the attendances of the expanded men's league.

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

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

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

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

Review by Bob Deacon, from Bishopston Library



### Clifton Library opening hours

Monday 10am-2pm

Tuesday 1pm-5pm

Thursday 1pm-5pm

Friday 10am-2pm

Saturday 1pm-5pm

SPORT

# Club's looking to the future

FOLLOWING an extended Easter break for National League Rugby the clubs started to face what may be termed the business end of the season when places are fought for the promotion slots to the Rugby Football Union's national leagues and, at the opposite end of table, avoidance of relegation back into the regional leagues.

The season ended at the end of April and two final games towards the end of the month will have decided if Clifton Rugby Club will kick off the 2026-27 season in September remaining in National One or moving back into National League West.

Their first season back on the national scene has, as expected, been tough with some formidable opponents and long coach journeys especially to teams in the north and east of the country. The devastating news in March of the sudden death of their highly regarded Director of Rugby

Matt Salter cast a shadow over everyone at Clifton and across the wider rugby community and the community at Clifton College where he worked as their Director of Rugby.

Highlights of the season will be recognised at the club's annual dinner in May with stories to be shared about individual and team efforts over the long months in games played on muddy pitches and cold temperatures.

Completing home and away double victories over Sedgely Park from Manchester and more significantly over local long standing rivals Dings Crusaders are certain to feature. Bristol can be proud of having two clubs competing at this level as well, of course, having Bristol Bears in the Premiership.

The home win over Dings was played as a celebration of the life of Matt Salter and could not have had a more dramatic conclusion

with clock going into the red a decision was taken not to take a simple penalty kick to draw the match but to go for territory and seek a try. The decision paid off and how Matt would have enjoyed that moment of challenge and enterprise.

Inevitably over the summer months there will be news of players retiring and some moving away as career and playing opportunities take them away from Bristol.

Player recruitment will begin as preseason training starts in June. With Clifton having three regular teams in national, regional, and local leagues players of all abilities will be made welcome to join the Clifton ranks. Details will be on the club's website.

Roger Opie

# GCCC seeks volunteers

GLOUCESTERSHIRE County Cricket Club is inviting fans to become part of its long-running Cricketeers programme, an initiative that supports matchdays and enhances the experience for spectators and visitors.

The Cricketeers are volunteers who contribute to the smooth running of events while representing the club in a friendly and engaging way. Cricketeers play an important role in assisting with matchday operations, welcoming guests, and helping create a positive atmosphere at games and events.

The club is actively looking to expand its group of Cricketeers and encourages anyone with an interest in cricket, community involvement, or gaining experience in a sporting environment to get involved. No previous experience is required. Applications can be made via the club's website.

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**Coombe Dingle**      Guide Price £950,000

This high quality 4 bedroomed detached house provides comfortable, spacious accommodation of a very high standard. The kitchen/diner extends to circa 28 ft. Principle Bedroom with en-suite Rear garden boasts a westerly aspect. Double garage and parking. EPC D



**Westbury on Trym**      Guide Price £695,000

A fantastic 3 bedroom semi-detached cottage close to local amenities. The property offers generous living space, 3 double bedrooms, including a principal bedroom with en-suite. Further benefits include a rear garden, outbuilding, garage, and the advantage of being offered with no onward chain. EPC D



**Clifton**      Guide Price £500,000

This attractively presented garden maisonette is set in a classic Grade II listed Georgian style terrace located a stones throw from Whiteladies Road. Two spacious bedrooms, off street parking provision and additional basement area, private rear garden offered for sale with no onward chain. EPC C



**Westbury on Trym**      Guide Price £725,000

A fantastic 3 bedroom semi-detached 1930s family home, ideally positioned close to local shops, schools. The property offers generous living space, 3 well-proportioned bedrooms, a family bathroom, and an additional shower room. Externally, there is a driveway, garage, and a beautifully maintained rear garden. EPC C

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**125 Stoke Lane, Westbury-on-Trym  
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Tel: 0117 9622299**

■ VINEYARD NEWS with INGRID BATES

**Vineyards bask in springtime glory**

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

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

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

More than anything though, what

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

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

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

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

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

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The buds on the vines have burst open



Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol | Guide Price £3,000,000

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In all circa 9138 sq.ft (849.02 sq.m)

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