

cliftonvoice

July, 2026 Issue 35

www.cliftonvoice.co.uk

FREE EVERY MONTH IN CLIFTON AND SURROUNDING AREA

Old and new

It's a new beginning this month as the site that is home to the ss Great Britain, is rebranded as Bristol Dockyards. The new museum opens on July 18.

Photo courtesy of Adam Gasson and ss Great Britain Trust



Mermaid has many a tale to tell

Mermaid Hannah Pearl, author of the Ruby Rockpool books, is taking part in Clifton Children's LitFest this month.

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Burnout forces MP to take a break

Bristol Central's Green Party MP Carla Denyer is taking several weeks' leave of absence to recover from burnout.

PAGE 5

High Sheriff shows the way

Clifton's Anne Nisbet tells readers about her role as Bristol's High Sheriff.

PAGE 7

Progress on cycle loop plans

CYCLING enthusiasts have won backing from the powerful Downs committee for traffic restrictions on Ladies Mile.

The Bristol Cycling Campaign has revived a plan to create a cycling loop around the Downs, which would involve traffic restrictions on Ladies Mile.

They want to see Fountains Hill, which connects the bottom of the road with Bridge Valley Road, made one-way southbound, as well as a banned

right turn from Stoke Road to the top of Ladies Mile.

Ian Pond, chair of the campaign, made the case at the June meeting of the Downs committee, which is made up of councillors and members of the Society of Merchant Venturers business group.

Mr Pond said: "It bisects the Downs and it's a much faster road than Circular Road. A way to

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August deadline

Our August deadline is July 15. 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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NEWS

Two thriving schools mark anniversaries

TWO north Bristol secondary schools are celebrating 20-year anniversaries this summer.

Fairfield High School is marking two decades since it moved into its new building in Allfoxton Road while Redland Green School is commemorating the arrival of its first pupils in 2006.

The schools were part of big changes in secondary education in the city in the early years of this century. They were the only two built by the city council; many other schools were rebuilt under private finance initiatives.

One of the aims was to stem the flow of children out of Bristol to secondary schools in South Gloucestershire and North Somerset. This, coupled with the unusually large number of independent schools in the city, was distorting exam performance figures.

The new Fairfield was built on the site of the former St Thomas More School while the new north Bristol school, after some years of wrangling, was built in Redland. The building was not ready until 2007, so the first RGS pupils were taught in the old Fairfield building in Fairlawn Road, which later became Fairlawn Primary School.

FHS and Redland Green, like others in Bristol, later became academies, run independently from the local authority. Both are now part of the Excalibur Academies Trust.

Redland Green School is running a programme of events, performances, exhibitions and community activities through June and July to mark its 20 years, culminating in an anniversary concert and celebratory school dinner.

A centrepiece of the celebrations is a striking new mural, unveiled in the school's main thoroughfare known as The Street. Created as a lasting legacy, the mural captures the diverse experiences and opportunities that define life at Redland Green School. It

features imagery representing music, drama, sport, science, languages, learning, community and aspiration and reflects the journeys of thousands of students

Headteacher Ben Houghton said: "Our 20th anniversary is an opportunity to celebrate not only the achievements of our students and staff over the last two decades, but also the incredible support we have received from families and the wider Bristol community."

"The new mural beautifully captures the creativity, ambition and inclusivity that are at the heart of Redland Green School."

For more information about Redland Green School's 20th anniversary celebrations, please contact fhickson375@redlandgreen.bristol.sch.uk.

Meanwhile, Fairfield plans to showcase its 20 years in Horfield at its Summer Fiesta on July 15 from 5.30pm, which will feature dance, drama, music, multi cultural food stalls and much more.

The school also organised a mini festival to celebrate refugees, with a particular focus on the students and families who are part of the school community.

Guests enjoyed an exhibition of student artwork, shared cultural food, plus had the opportunity to exchange experiences and stories.

Organiser Mariluz Garrido-Ruiz said: "This was a fantastic opportunity to celebrate the cultures, experiences and contributions that make our school community so special. It was wonderful to see students share their artwork and messages, and for families to come together and celebrate. We are grateful to everyone who helped make the event such a success. We remain committed to creating an inclusive environment where every student and family feels welcomed, valued and a true sense of belonging."

NEWS

Time to go elephant hunting!

THE days when an elephant named Rosie became a legend at Bristol Zoo during its years in Clifton are being celebrated later this month.

Rosie, an Asian elephant, arrived at the zoo from a circus in 1938 and remained at Clifton until her death in 1961. During those 23 years, she became famous for wandering around the zoo grounds and giving rides to thousands of youngsters.

Now, Rosie is returning as the inspiration behind a heritage experience for Clifton Village in the form of an illustrated guidebook, titled Rosie's Trail. It has been created by Lucy Shaw, Clifton Village BID manager. She says that the book celebrates both Rosie and the history of the area.

"Rosie still holds a special place in the memories of many local families. In this

book she returns not simply as a nostalgic figure, but as a symbol of Clifton Village itself. She leads readers through some of Clifton's historic locations, including the railway that once ran from Hotwells to Clifton through the rocks, and the street where every front door is curved — the only street like it in Bristol," says Lucy.

The book invites children and families to take part in a year-round creative competition writing their own stories about Rosie and sharing sketches inspired by her adventures. The best stories and artwork will be featured across social media platforms, and in a dedicated online gallery where participants can upload and showcase their work through the Discover Clifton website.

The guide book will cost £5 and will be available from Clifton Suspension Bridge

Visitor

Centre or online via the Discover Clifton webpage. A free online version will also be available from 25 July.

"To celebrate the launch, a number of goodie bags containing surprise gifts for children will be given away at selected locations, which are still to be confirmed" said Lucy, who spent a year devising Rosie's Trail with the help of local historians.

"Rosie's Trail will encourage families to explore the village again and again, while also helping people discover the many independent businesses, shops and cafes," said Lucy.

More BID news: Page 4

• **Lucy Shaw, Clifton BID manager and, above, the Rosie's Trail book cover**



Plans for cycle loop

From Page 1

achieve a more calm and safer environment for people to cycle, and also to be safer for dog walkers and all the other users of the Downs, would be to restrict through-traffic on Ladies Mile.

"This could be an interesting way to make the Downs a more peaceful place for all its users; not restrict vehicle access in any way, so people could still get to the Downs who have mobility issues or the need to bring equipment; and would simply stop rat-running and commuter cut-throughs, which I think does create an issue for everybody."

The family leisure loop would go along Downlease, Rocklease, Circular Road and Ladies Mile.

The committee backed the plans, but it is Bristol City Council that has the power to make the road changes so the scheme would need to go before a transport committee and probably a public consultation.

It would be likely to be opposed by motorists, who use Ladies Mile as a cut-through from north Bristol to the Portway.



Ladies Mile

Liberal Democrat Councillor Caroline Gooch said: "Ladies Mile urgently needs traffic calming. I had to lend a spade to a neighbour recently, to bury their dog after it was killed by a car speeding along Ladies Mile. It's a dangerous road."

Traffic calming was preferred over building a new cycle path next the road, given the expensive cost and impact on the grass and nearby trees. Ladies Mile has twice been closed recently for a Sunday, as part of a trial, hailed as a "big street party" including with children learning how to ride a bike.

By Alex Seabrook, Local Democracy Reporting Service

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CLIFTON BID

Passionate people, proudly supporting Clifton

HERE at Clifton BID, we are fortunate to have a fabulous team working hard behind the scenes to maintain, improve, and move forward our social platforms and online presence.

Many of you will already have met our Marketing and Social Media Manager, Imogen, whose energy and enthusiasm shine through in everything she does. From promoting local events and supporting our businesses to keeping our social media lively and up to date, she plays a huge part in what we do — and quite honestly, we would be lost without her!

We are also incredibly lucky to have Mike, our Web Page Administrator, who continues to improve both the look and functionality of our website. He is constantly working behind the scenes to make sure the site remains fresh, user-friendly, and informative for everyone who visits. As we all know, a website is never truly "finished", and Mike's dedication means he is always finding new ways to make it even better. Safe to say, he never sits still for long!

IMOGEN

I lead on the social media strategy and content for Discover Clifton, with a focus on growing the platform as a community-led, lifestyle destination. My work centres around creating engaging, social-first content that showcases Clifton Village in a way that feels relevant, people-driven and reflective of the area.

This includes planning and managing ongoing content across social, capturing and creating content on-site with local businesses, and developing campaign-led ideas that support key events and initiatives. Alongside this, I focus on evolving the content approach to drive stronger engagement, reach and overall visibility for Clifton.

My role is also to ensure the channels consistently highlight the variety of



businesses, experiences and moments that make up Clifton, helping to position it as a go-to destination within Bristol.'

MIKE

I support the Clifton BID primarily through website administration, alongside contributing to graphic design and various other projects as needed. By trade, I'm a self-employed marketer, which allows me to bring a broad skill set into the role and adapt to whatever is needed to support the team.

My main focus is the Clifton Village website, ensuring it remains a useful, up-to-date hub for both businesses and visitors. One of the key projects I've been involved in recently is a full redesign of the website, with the aim of creating a comprehensive directory of every business in Clifton. This has been an ongoing process, particularly as there isn't a single up-to-date directory to work from, so we're always keen to hear from any businesses who feel they're not yet represented.

The website plays an important role in connecting people with what's happening in the village, from events and initiatives to discovering local businesses. By improving accessibility and visibility online, we're helping to encourage more people to explore and engage with Clifton.

I've been supporting the BID for around two years now, and what I enjoy most is being able to contribute to something that has a visible impact on a place I know well. I've lived in or around Clifton for most of my



Imogen, our Marketing Manager

adult life, and although I'm currently based in Bedminster, I still spend a lot of time in the village working with local clients.

For me, serving the community means helping to strengthen the connections between businesses and the people who visit and live here. It's about making sure Clifton continues to thrive as a vibrant, welcoming destination.

We've already seen the impact of this work, with website traffic increasing and more people attending BID initiatives and events. Engagement is clearly growing, and that momentum is important.

It's vital that businesses get involved in community initiatives like this. The more businesses engage with the BID, the more support we can provide. In my experience, those who actively work with us see real value, while those who remain disengaged often miss out on the benefits, something that can reinforce the idea that it's not worthwhile, when in reality the opposite is true.



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NEWS

BRISTOL Central's MP Carla Denyer has won praise for her decision to take leave of absence to recover from burnout.

Ms Denyer, who was elected as the city's first Green MP in 2024, said she wanted to be honest about her "incredibly difficult" decision, taken on the advice of her doctor, while also stressing that her constituency team would continue to support residents while she was away.

In a statement issued on May 22, she said: "I want to be open about the fact that what I am suffering from is burnout – and the mental and physical symptoms that arise from it. Burnout is a condition that does not tend to get better on its own. If left unmanaged, it can worsen and increase your risk of long-term health problems.

"This is something that I know will be familiar to many people in all walks of life, especially those working in high-stress environments and in people-facing professions such as nurses, teachers and social workers. But it is also something that too often is not openly discussed. I hope that by sharing

Burnout forces MP Carla to take leave of absence

my own struggles, I can help in some small way to combat the stigma around it and contribute to a more open conversation."

Ms Denyer, who has been active in public life for more than a decade as a councillor and a spell as her party's national co-leader, praised Labour's Nadia Whittome, who made a similar move for her health's sake in 2021.

While her decision attracted some criticism and derision online, Ms Denyer also received messages of support from people in Bristol and further afield. Stephen Williams, Lib Dem councillor for Westbury on Trym and Henleaze and a former MP for Bristol West, said: "Being an MP is a largely unrelenting

24/7 role, split across two locations with multiple competing demands. It can take its toll on anyone, and if you are determined to do it well, which applies to Carla, then the regime can be really punishing. It's also hard to do everything (including much of your private life) in the public eye, with the pressure of often unrealistic or unfair expectations, while under assault from 'social' media."

Brian Dow, Chief Executive, Mental Health UK: "Left unchecked, sustained and severe stress can pose a huge threat to our health, but stigma means many people try to cope on their own. Burnout is not something you can push through, it's a significant health

issue that requires recognition and support. Carla is not alone, and her openness about her experience of burnout will hopefully encourage others to prioritise their health. We wish her all the very best in her recovery."

'Burnout' is recognised by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as an 'occupational phenomenon'. Burnout is a state of physical, mental, and emotional exhaustion. It can occur when you experience long-term stress and feel under constant pressure.

According to Mental Health UK, levels of stress remain extremely high among adults in the UK with 91% report high or extreme levels of pressure or stress in the past year.

According to recent reports, it's estimated that 65% of UK workers feel burnt out. This is 11% higher than two years earlier, showing it's becoming increasingly common.

One in five needed to take time off in the last year due to poor mental health caused by pressure or stress.

FROM BRISTOL CENTRAL'S MP

Why I have had to take a break

Dear Constituents,

I've worked in politics for over a decade: as a Councillor, for an MEP, as the Co-Leader of the Green Party, and now it is a privilege to serve as the MP for Bristol Central.

Over the last few years, I have been struggling with persistent health issues and I have been trying to manage these alongside the long hours and significant responsibility my work entails. It has become clear that this is not an effective strategy and that doing so is inhibiting my ability to recover. Having taken advice from my doctor, I will be taking several weeks off in order to try to get back to full health.

I want to be open about the fact that what I am suffering from is burnout – and the mental and physical symptoms that arise from it. Burnout is a condition that does not tend to get better

on its own. If left unmanaged, it can worsen and increase your risk of long-term health problems.

This is something that I know will be familiar to many people in all walks of life, especially those working in high-stress environments and in people-facing professions such as nurses, teachers and social workers. But it is also something that too often is not openly discussed. I hope that by sharing my own struggles, I can help in some small way to combat the stigma around it, and contribute to a more open conversation.

Making the decision to take time off for my health was incredibly difficult. It is an honour to represent the people of Bristol Central. And I know that by stepping back for a little while now, I will ultimately be able to return as a better champion for the community that means so much to me. I am grateful for the

kindness and understanding I know my constituents will show if they see me out and about while I am recovering.

I want to say a huge thank you to all of my colleagues in the Green Party, in Parliament and in my Constituency team for their understanding and support. I also want to thank Nadia Whittome MP for the leadership she showed in 2021 when she took a leave of absence for her own recovery. Her openness then helped make it possible for me to do what's best for my health now.

During my time away, my Constituency office will be functioning as usual and will be there to support all my constituents who need help, so please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Thank you in advance for your understanding.

Carla



Carla Denyer's letter to constituents

• If you live in Bristol Central and need help with a local issue, email bristolcentraloffice@parliament.uk or write to Carla Denyer MP, House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA
For national issues email using carla.denyer.mp@parliament.uk
My team will be there to support you.

NEWS

Children's LitFest set to make a splash

A NEW children's literary festival will transform Clifton into a hub of imagination, storytelling and family fun this summer on Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 July.

Taking place in and around Clifton Library, the two-day festival will bring together bestselling authors, live performers, interactive workshops and creative activities for children aged 3–10, with events for older children and young people.

Following the success of last year's Clifton LitFest, the new family-focused festival has been made possible thanks to proceeds from the original event being reinvested directly back into the local community. The aim is simple: to inspire a lifelong love of books, storytelling and creativity in children of all ages.

Among the headline attractions will be Bristol's much-loved mermaid performer, Ruby Rockpool, who will be making a splash across the festival weekend with magical



Mermaid Hannah Pearl, author of the Ruby Rockpool books, will entertain audiences at the Children's LitFest

appearances guaranteed to delight young audiences.

The programme will also include a series of bilingual 'Speak in Tongues' storytimes, where children can hear classic stories read in both English and a second language, including Italian, Mandarin, Spanish and

French, helping young audiences discover new words and cultures in a fun and interactive way.

Award-winning Bristol author, illustrator and animator Mikey Please will appear on Sunday with a series of live events inspired by his bestselling picture books *The Cafe at the Edge of the Woods* and *The Cave Downwind of the Cafe*. Families will be able to enjoy illustrated storytelling sessions and musical draw-along workshops where children can learn to sketch beloved characters René and Glumfoot alongside cosy café soundscapes.

The packed programme will also feature author events and creative workshops from a range of much-loved children's writers and illustrators, including fantasy author Ash Bond, illustrator Yasmeeen Ismail, author and environmental storyteller Martin Kiszko, poet

and performer Tom Bonson, illustrator Hannah Rose and interactive sessions from The Bristol Crocodile.

Alongside the literary programme, the festival will include illustration workshops, live storytelling, family activities and face painting across Clifton, and Pokémon card swap sessions designed to appeal to older children and teenagers.

Paula O'Rourke, Chair of Clifton LitFest, said: "We are delighted to be launching the first Children's LitFest. We want children to discover the joy of books, stories, creativity and imagination in a welcoming and fun environment. We are especially pleased that the success of last year's literary festival has enabled us to invest directly in young readers and families."

Edouard Gallais, events manager at Waterstones, added: "We're very excited to open this new chapter in the Clifton LitFest and offer this children's programme in 2026, the National Year of Reading. Events with brilliant local authors and illustrators are a wonderful way of introducing children to the fun of reading and sharing stories."

Organised by Friends of Clifton Library, in partnership with Waterstones and the Clifton BID, all festival events will be free to attend, with tickets being available to reserve online via Eventbrite.

Further details, including programme information and booking details can be found at <https://www.waterstones.com/events>

Gallery owner dies

VINCE John, a popular gallery owner and supporter of street art, has died after battling with cancer for a year.

His gallery, known as I Love Art was closed earlier this year when Vince John underwent medical treatment. He died on May 20.

In a statement on social media his family described him as "an integral supporter of street art". The statement added: "It breaks our hearts that he has passed away".

Vince John was father to Gracie, Josiah and Archie. He was the long-term partner of Becky Delve.

His pop-up gallery was established in Bristol in 2006. It had been based at various locations, including Park Street, Stokes Croft and more recently in Clifton Arcade in Boyces Avenue. He also ran pop-up galleries in London. It specialised in limited edition prints and original work by street, urban and contemporary artists as well as national and international names in the art world.

In September 2021 after requests from art lovers he organised the repainting of murals on the corner of City Road in Stokes Croft and Mina Road Park, in collaboration with street-artist Stinkfish.

NEWS

Anne lifts the lid on High Sheriff role

ANNE Nisbet belongs to one of the most exclusive ‘clubs’ in England and Wales. There are only 55 ‘members’ and all have the title of High Sheriff.

The High Sheriff is His Majesty The King’s appointee for the maintenance of justice and preservation of peace in their respective counties during their year of office.

“It is a non-political, independent, and unpaid office,” said Mrs Nisbet of Clifton Village, who is the current holder of the post. “But it is a tremendous honour to be asked to do it.”

While the origins of the office date back to Saxon times, the duties have evolved to be largely ceremonial and representative. However, supporting the Crown and the Judiciary remains core to the role. High Sheriffs actively support and encourage the police, the emergency services and the voluntary sector.

Sheriffs also engage directly with the police, prison and probation services, along with other local law enforcement agencies, to champion their efforts.

Supporting the judiciary includes entertaining High Court judges to dinner and also introducing them to the city while they are sitting in Bristol Crown Court, explains Mrs

Nisbet.

“I am taking a High Court judge to the theatre tonight to see a light-hearted play. It makes a difference to some of the grim things they hear in court cases all day.”

Mrs Nisbet, who describes herself as being “passionate about charitable causes”, is also supporting organisations across the city with a “special focus on championing opportunities for the next generation.”

The work of the High Sheriff is nothing new to the Nesbit household for Mrs Nesbit’s husband, Andrew, was High Sheriff for Bristol from 2012 to 2013.

One of the highlights of her year of office will be a that she organises at Bristol Cathedral in October which marks the start of the Legal Year. It brings together judges, barristers, solicitors, local authority officials and other invitees.

Supporting the judiciary includes entertaining High Court judges to dinner and also introducing them to the city while they are sitting in Bristol Crown Court, explains Mrs

By Maurice Fells



Anne Nisbet, High Sheriff

BRISTOL ROVERS COMMUNITY TRUST

AS the 2025/26 season has come to a close, Bristol Rovers Community Trust (BRCT) reflects on a year of significant growth, recognition, and measurable impact across Bristol.

This season has reinforced its commitment to using the power of football to address health inequalities, reduce isolation, and improve life opportunities through education, inclusion and wellbeing programmes. BRCT continues to deliver a commercially focused, partnership-led model that creates scalable, long-term social value.

This year saw BRCT expand its work significantly across health, education, and community engagement, supported by key partners including North Bristol NHS Trust. A landmark two-year NHS collaboration delivered national recognition and high-impact interventions including CPR training, workforce health checks, screening programmes, and matchday health activations.

Innovative projects such as 5K Your Way, Rebound with Rovers, Extra-Time, and the Talk Club Cup helped reduce stigma, increase participation, and bring communities together.

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NEWS

Home EV charging 'too expensive'

AN innovative trial in Bristol making charging electric vehicles at home easier has been criticised for costing too much. Digging a gully in the pavement to pass a cable through from a house to an on-street parking space is expected to cost residents £2,000 to £6,000.

Bristol City Council is launching the gully charging trial to encourage more drivers without driveways to switch to electric vehicles. EVs pollute the air and contribute to climate change less than petrol or diesel cars, but the cost and difficulty of charging puts many drivers off the switch.

A common problem faced by people who don't have a driveway outside their house is running a cable across the pavement. This creates a trip hazard and is technically illegal, although many drivers do so anyway. The gully charging trial aims to get around this problem



A pavement gully

— but at a price.

The gully is a small trench running along the pavement in which the cable sits flush, so there is no trip hazard. An update was given to councillors on the environment policy committee in May.

Green Councillor James Crawford said: "I have had some feedback that the cost of that seems relatively high. EVs are relatively expensive anyway, so any way that we can make it cheaper and easier for residents to decarbonise would be really

beneficial."

The council is taking applications from people who want a gully dug on the pavement outside their house. Initial estimates range from £2,000 to £6,000, which residents will have to pay, to get the gully. However, for this amount of money, you could buy both a second-hand Volkswagen Polo and a second-hand Ford Fiesta, both petrol cars.

Sam Robinson, the council's head of City Leap client and energy service, said: "I saw £2,000 to £6,000 quoted, which is hedging our bets a bit. We've had, I think, over 100 expressions of interest, but the development work hasn't been done yet to see what that looks like on the ground — hence the quite broad range that's been quoted.

"For context, my charger at home was £1,200 on the drive. So if you're at the £2,000

end, you're not a million miles away. But clearly if you're at the £6,000 end it's a big gap and the payback period is going to be challenging."

The actual costs for residents will become clearer once the team has worked through the applications. From August until June next year, the gullies will be installed in batches. Then from July next year until August 2027, the council will monitor and evaluate the project.

Many houses in Bristol are part of Victorian terraces with no driveways and high demand for parking spaces. Another problem with the trial that has been raised is that even if you pay to have a gully installed outside your house, you cannot reserve the parking space. Public chargers meanwhile have been criticised as expensive and not always well maintained.

By Alex Seabrook, Local Democracy Reporting Service

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NEWS

Playgrounds app proves a boon for families

A REDLAND mum has launched an app designed to encourage children and families to explore more of the city's parks and green spaces.

The Bristol Playgrounds app allows users to discover, visit, and log parks across Bristol, while building their own virtual playground that grows the more places they explore.

The idea came from Emily Smithson, a maths teacher turned app developer, after she began visiting parks across the city with her three daughters during the pandemic lockdown. She began blogging about their adventures, sharing reviews of each park they went to, and soon other parents began recommending new places for her family to visit.

Inspired by the Gromit Trails, Emily decided to turn the idea into an interactive app that could help other families find new parks and make outdoor adventures more exciting. One of her daughters, who was 10 at the time, even helped design some of the characters featured in the app.

Emily, whose daughters Jess, Sophie and Martha are now 17, 14 and 11, has updated and relaunched the app in time for the summer holidays. She said: "It's to encourage other people to get out there and visit other parts of the city because there's so much to offer and it's all free - so that's amazing."

"I think, especially since Covid, our kids have been so constrained by it, they've had such a different upbringing, and



Daughter Martha tries out the newly refurbished Kingswood Park

this is just a really great way to get them outside and exploring and adventuring."

The app features information on 59 parks mainly across Bristol and South Gloucestershire, helping families find the perfect place to visit. Users can filter parks by facilities such as cafés, toilets, duck ponds and playgrounds, as well as find directions and details about each location.

To make exploring feel like a game, children can earn rewards and collect items for their own virtual playground. Each park visit unlocks a new piece of equipment, while special challenges offer extra rewards - including an early bird award for visiting before 9am and a prize for completing all the adventure playgrounds.

Emily also created printable versions of the activities,



Emily Smithson, who founded the Bristol Playgrounds app

recognising the irony of encouraging children to spend less time on screens while using an app to do it.

"I feel like parents can use the app to find playgrounds and then there's a printout so the kids can have a physical thing to rate the playgrounds," she said. "There are also a few activities they can do."

Having visited most of the parks in the city, Emily knows a thing or two about Bristol's best playgrounds. Her daughters are big fans of larger parks such as Blaise Castle Estate and Hengrove Park, but Emily prefers something a bit more low-key.

"Those huge parks are amazing, but as a parent I sometimes find them a bit overwhelming," she said. "My personal favourite is probably Page Park in Staple Hill - it's just got absolutely everything."

By Ailsa Marshall

Support for family

CLIFTON-based outdoor retailer Ellis Brigham has pledged its support to a family fundraising in memory of their son 18-year-old Arthur, who sadly recently lost his battle with T-Cell Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia.

Arthur's father, Andrew, along with his brother Chris and cousin George, will lace up their hiking boots and take on a 150-mile trek to raise awareness and funds for Teenage Cancer Trust through their campaign, Walk 4 Arthur.

The challenge will see the trio walk from Ashton Gate, home of the Bristol Bears, to Mawgan Porth in Cornwall—a place that held a special place in Arthur's heart after many family holidays there. Setting off on Sunday 26 July, they will cover between 20 and 25 miles each day, aiming to reach Mawgan Porth on Saturday 1 August.

Mark Brigham of Ellis Brigham said: "When I heard that Andrew, Chris and George were taking on this incredible

challenge, we wanted to support them in any way we could. The team has visited our Bristol store, where we fitted them with hiking footwear and packs to help them tackle the 150-mile journey in comfort.

"Everyone at Ellis Brigham is behind them, and we wish them every success as they raise vital funds and awareness for Teenage Cancer Trust in Arthur's memory."

Leukaemia is the most common cancer in children and teens, making up about a third of childhood cancers. To offer your support for the Walk4Arthur trek in aid of the Teenage Cancer



Trust, head to their JustGiving fundraising page.

FROM YOUR COUNCILLORS

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

Bins, glorious bins!

Students on the move

Bristol Waste launched their Students on the Move campaign last month which runs until 1st July. It encourages students to recycle or dispose their unwanted possessions responsibly. Extra big bins are dotted around our area including Alma Vale Road, Oakfield Place, Whiteladies Road (near the entrance to Clifton Down station), and Aberdeen Road, at the junction with Cotham Hill. These are emptied each weekday. Anyone caught leaving waste next to these bins could be charged with a criminal offence and receive a fine of up to £50,000. If you see any move-out mess, please report it on Fix My Street

Communal bins

After several requests, we are pleased that one of the communal large steel bins on Oakfield Road has finally been replaced. It had been lidless for some time and had attracted sea gull and rats. However, a long term solution is needed for these communal bin sites (mini recycling centres) which are too often used for flytipping. We will continue to push for action.

St Josephs, Cotham Hill

We've received a lot of emails from residents concerned about a planning application to turn St Josephs, the former care home and convent on Cotham Hill, into student accommodation. We share these concerns. We do not believe that it is an appropriate location for this use. We both met with the planning officer. Serena also met with local residents recently. Serena has put in an objection and we have also asked for the application to come to committee should the officer recommend it for approval.

Apsley Road traffic calming

The one-way section proposed as part of the Apsley Road traffic calming scheme will no longer go ahead after many local people said they didn't want it. There were just under 500 responses to the



Serena tries out a Dott scooter

informal public consultation survey, around half of which were from people living in the ward. Most people – around 74% - were against the idea of a short one-way section between Whiteladies Road and St Johns Road. However, there was support for other elements of the scheme such as speed cushions.

Apsley Road residents have had to put up with problems with traffic on their street for years. The road gets very busy with drivers using it as a rat run, including HGVs, and there have been instances of speeding up to 60 mph. Clearly, an effective traffic calming scheme will be really important.

Serena presented the consultation responses, new draft design ideas and next steps at a well-attended community meeting in June. Serena is taking feedback from the meeting to officers who will be working on the final versions of the

designs. The next step will be formal statutory consultation.

A big thank you to everyone who took part in the consultation and to the Clifton Down Community Association for organising the community meeting.

CIL funding news

Congratulations to the following Clifton Down projects which will go forward to the next stage of the Community Infrastructure Levy funding applications round. This follows approval by members at the last Area Committee 3 meeting. The projects are:

- Redland Club, Burlington Road: Environmental improvements to external area
- St Paul's Eco Arts Community Hub: Art installation to publicise and improve the communal bins (mini recycling centre) on Oakfield Place
- New sign for cyclists to warn of school children crossing (this funding may come out of a different funding programme).

Wheel-y good ideas for better cycling provision?

Do you have ideas for where more cycle racks could go in our area? Are there other small cycling improvements that could be made such as exemptions for 'no entry', and dropped kerbs? The council has some funding available for cycling provision across the city and it would be good to see further improvements in our neighbourhoods.

Dott is also looking for more, and better, locations for its scooter and e-bike parking. (Serena had a go on one of their scooters for the first time at a Dott Open Day last month and enjoyed it. She was chuffed with herself for not falling off!).

Please send us your ideas.

Contact us:

Cllr.george.calascione@bristol.gov.uk

Cllr.serena.ralston@bristol.gov.uk

LETTERS

Buses are a lifeline

I READ the recent letters from two disgruntled residents about the buses in Clifton. From someone who lives in Clifton on this bus route I just wanted to say I feel the opposite of both the writers. I regularly see the buses with lots of customers on, I use them regularly and I have not seen any speeding. These buses are a life line for elderly people in Clifton. My mother loves them as they take her straight to Whiteladies Road (Clifton Down) or Blackboy Hill. She can get to appointments at Southmead easily and has rarely had to wait too long. I often use the number 8 to Temple Meads and it's never taken more than 25 minutes max even in rush hour

with all the new bus gates, usually 15 at off peak times. I think all these buses are fantastic, well used and we should be celebrating them being in place.

I just wanted to let you know an alternative view to the two views you printed in your June issue.

**Sarah,
Clifton**

We deserve better

YOU kindly published a letter of mine regarding the lack of response from Helen Godwin, the West of England Mayor, about buses in the Clifton area.

I received a reply from the Mayor in early June. Of note is the admission of Helen Godwin that 'For context, service 8 is a commercially-operated bus service

and at the moment, First decides the route', and later 'We are also exploring other options for bus reform, which includes a better Enhanced Partnership (EP+). This would give us more control over the network.'

What really annoyed me is her suggestion to contact First directly. I already told her that I had done so and contacting First Bus about anything is a complete waste of time.

Evidently First Bus don't care about what passengers want regarding their services or routing particularly as 'options for bus reform' do not in reality exist and there is no current legislation in progress to do so.

Regarding the current First Bus services in Clifton: they

have withdrawn without prior consultation or notification the No.77 route from service through Clifton until September. There is no service to the Bristol Royal Infirmary in contrast to that provided by other operators to Southmead Hospital. The No. 8 service to Temple Meads Station can regularly take 40 minutes because of poor routing decisions but still goes to the defunct Zoo 100 times a day and instead does not interchange at Clifton Down with eleven other services and the Railway Station.

We deserve a much better response regarding these issues from our hopeless elected representatives.

**Don Shapland
Clifton**

FROM YOUR COUNCILLORS

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

Area Committee funding proposals

At the Area Committee meeting on 19 May, covering Clifton, Clifton Down, Cotham and Hotwells, councillors considered a range of local spending proposals. Funding was approved for several projects, including tree planting near the former Zoo North car park site. Other applications are still under consideration, with decisions expected later this year or early next year. These include garden restoration and sound system improvements at Hotwells Primary School, additional litter bins, and further floating green spaces in the harbour. These floating habitats could be like the green pontoons opposite the SS Great Britain, which provide valuable space for plants, insects and wildlife.

Encampments on and around Clifton Down

We are pleased that the number of occupied vehicles on Clifton Down has reduced substantially in recent months. This follows sustained work by your local councillors and Bristol City Council in response to concerns raised by residents. At the same time, high housing costs continue to create significant challenges, and homelessness—both visible and hidden—remains a serious issue. The Council's provision of "meanwhile" sites for vehicle dwellers reflects the city's commitment to providing practical accommodation alternatives for people who have been living in vehicles on public highways and around Bristol's

parks.

Summer road resurfacing: why the disruption?

We have previously written about the benefits of surface dressing, a cost-effective way of extending the life of roads and reducing the need for more extensive repairs in future. We appreciate that the work can be inconvenient, particularly when residents need to move their cars on the days their roads are scheduled for treatment. This year, some frustration was caused when wet weather delayed works, leading contractors to continue into the weekend and requiring some residents to move vehicles on a Saturday morning. Unfortunately, both surface dressing and the subsequent road-marking work are highly weather-dependent. However, completing the lining work promptly is important. In previous years, delays have led to problems with illegal parking while yellow lines were temporarily absent. We appreciate residents' patience during these short-term disruptions. The result will be roads that last longer and are less prone to potholes during the winter months.

Princess Victoria Street in the news

Clifton has been making headlines for all the right reasons. A recent article in Bristol 24/7 has highlighted the successful pedestrianisation of Princess Victoria Street, quoting leading authors and urban mobility advocates who described it as "a compelling



Paula and Jerome with residents and members of the Bristol City Council transport team visiting Dowry Square

Dowry Square

As plans progress for lower speed limits and improved bus lanes on the Portway and Howell Road, your local councillors are working closely with residents to introduce traffic-calming measures at the western end of Howell Road, around Dowry Square. We have met with local residents and the council team to look the right mix of trees, benches and changed parking and junction arrangements to improve safety and enhance our local environment.

case of how such measures can reshape public opinion". Back in 2016, Paula and Jerome's Green Party manifesto committed to exploring, with residents and traders, the possibility of a car-free Clifton Village. We are delighted that what began as a tentative vision ten years ago is now widely recognised as a significant success. This achievement has been made possible through persistence, hard work, constructive engagement with

residents and traders, and vital public investment.

Councillors' surgery

Jerome and Paula continue to meet residents at Clifton Library on the first Wednesday of each month at 5pm. If you have a matter which your councillor can deal with, do pop in for a chat.

Contact us

cllr.jerome.thomas@bristol.gov.uk
cllr.paula.orourke@bristol.gov.uk

NEWS



Caroline Quentin with the rose

Fragrant way to raise funds

A BEAUTIFUL new rose named in honour of actress, presenter and gardener Caroline Quentin is raising funds for St Peter's Hospice.

The 'Caroline Quentin' rose was unveiled at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2026, and is an elegant, fragrant floribunda with soft pink double blooms, glossy dark green foliage and an intense floral perfume. It has been bred for modern gardens and flowers

repeatedly throughout the season.

Caroline said: "To think this gorgeous rose will carry my name into the future is such an honour."

Garden experts Thompson & Morgan say for every full-priced rose sold £1 will be donated directly to St Peter's Hospice, a charity that holds special significance for Caroline.

The rose was on show at the hospice gardens in Brentry last month.

■ FRIENDS OF REDLAND LIBRARY

THE Friends of Redland Library are hosting an event to coincide with the Council of British Archaeology's 2026 Festival of Archaeology.

On Tuesday July 21, in Books That Made Me An Archaeologist, a panel of archaeologists will talk about the books that have influenced their life journey. The panel includes Dr Lorena Becerra-Valdivia (Lecturer, Department of Anthropology & Archaeology, University of Bristol), Dr Jenni Butterworth (Archaeologist and former member of Time Team) and Dr. Aisling Tierney (Archaeologist and Lecturer, Bristol Institute for Learning and Teaching, University of Bristol).

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

The Festival of Archaeology (Saturday July 18 to Sunday August 2) is the biggest archaeological celebration in the UK. Bristol Museum and the National Trust are organising events in and around Bristol.

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

■ WESTBURY LIBRARY GROUP

WE hold our Coffee Morning on the last Saturday of the month, so our next one will be on July 25. Why not come and join us for a drink – hot or cold, depending on the weather! – a cake or biscuits and a chat! The morning lasts from 11.15 am until 1pm, and refreshments are free.

The Westbury on Trym Society will be holding their monthly talk in the Library on Thursday July 16, when Ian Witham will be talking about "Friends of the Downs". The talk starts at 8pm and seats can be booked by emailing westburyontrymociety@gmail.com

Finally, the Westbury Forum will be on Thursday July 7. This is an opportunity to discuss local issues and raise concerns with our three Councillors, Caroline Gooch, Nicholas Coombes and Stephen Williams. While it is dangerous to try and predict the future, it is likely that Carlton Court and the Westbury Hill car park will feature, and Stephen may be able to shed some light on the recent Library Strategy consultation. Please continue to visit and support our local library.

Malcolm Neave
westburylibrarygroup@gmail.com

■ BOOK REVIEW

Villager by Tom Cox

WELCOME to Underhill, a village in the West Country with a lot of history buried in its boggy ground and harboured by its ancient all-seeing tor. It's a village which is rarely quiet and not only because of its residents, from folk musicians to a piano tuner to the green protestors to the many ducks, but also due to the river, the wind and the almost constant rain which bring their own identities to a small but very busy community.

Villager is told by some who know its environs by heart as well as those passing through who find an eccentric, if damp, home there and leave their mark in ways that may lie undiscovered for decades. The story moves back and forward in time, gently revealing connections between centuries ago and the year 2099 – despite that future proving a time when humans rarely connect with each other, only with the strange visors they are plugged into, an even more invasive invention than today's ubiquitous screens. The narrative often returns to 'now' from the point of view of the tor itself, a characterful landscape inspired by aspects of Dartmoor as well as Cox's tendency towards the folkloric and brilliantly off-kilter.

The result is a superb exploration of memory, our place in the environment, the stories hidden in rocks, in paintings, in music and weird carvings on a medieval church. And then there are the tenants who find a doll in the wall of their home and the many reincarnations of Little Meg, resident of Underhill in various forms for centuries, including lurking in the village's message board amongst the notices for the latest local history talk about letterboxes.

Cox's writing is funny and uplifting with a hard edge, as appropriate to its setting. The novel is moving too – there are love stories and family histories, as well as kind strangers who offer a haven to oddballs and to animals. Villager leaves you feeling for the land as though it were a beloved friend or parent, as well as craving a curry from the excellent local and hoping that all the band names and their albums are real.

Elizabeth Moss, Heron Books, Regent Street, Clifton

■ BOOK REVIEW

She Who Remains

by Rene Karabash

SHE Who Remains is a Bulgarian novel translated into English and shortlisted for The International Booker Prize. The story is written in a stream of consciousness style. There is no formal sentence structure providing the reader with lyrical free flowing passages, providing a passionate and propulsive rhythm to the narrative. The story jumps back and forth in time as we follow the life of Bejika, from her conception in an remote Albanian village to the present day, as she recounts her amazing story to a visiting journalist.

Bejika is born into a patriarchal society, where women are told not to look men in the eye, to stay away from the pub and to spend their time, minding the children, washing clothes, cleaning the home and preparing the family meals. Her father Murash, is desperate for a son. He refuses to touch or speak to

her for the first year of her life. She has a younger brother, Sale who is also rejected by her father, as his sensitive and caring soul, prevents him from engaging in the manly pursuit of hunting and killing of animals for food.

Bejika gradually gains her father's love, eagerly carrying out work around their farm and joining him on his hunting expeditions. Her life is transformed by meeting Dhana, a Bulgarian girl who spends each summer with her great-grandmother who lives in the village. They become inseparable, meeting up every evening in the dairy, where Dhana reads her favourite books to Bejika. Their close relationship quickly becomes the subject of village gossip.

Murash reacts by informing Bejika that she is to be married off to Nemanja, a local boy. Bejika escapes the marriage

by becoming a sworn virgin, renouncing her womanhood to live as a man. Her decision sets off a chain of events, including the murder of her father and the disappearance from her life of both her brother and her beloved friend.

This novel is an engaging queer love story, with the author providing us with nuanced and skillfully drawn characters, imaginatively translated by Izidora Angel.

It is above all, a story about resilience and survival, in a world where all the odds appear stacked against you. A big shout out to locally based Pierene Press for naming both author and translator on the front cover.

For this book and many more, please visit your local library

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

NEWS

Bristol inspires Tracy's first novel

AUTHOR Tracy Maton's writing career started thanks to a flyer in the window of the Durdham Down Bookshop in Westbury Park, which advertised a writing class at Clifton Library run by Bristol City Council.

On a whim, she cycled over and a love affair began. Now, that love affair has led to the publication of her first novel, *The Artful Anna Harris*.

Many Bristol people and institutions have been part of her journey to publication.

- The Show of Strength Theatre Company, based in Bedminster, performed two of her monologues in a show at the Create Centre.
- A Bristol-based producer chose one of her short stories for BBC Radio 4, after which, Tracy enrolled on a part-time diploma at the University of Bristol to study creative writing and while there won a national short story competition.
- She went on to write for children, visiting many Bristol



Tracy Maton, whose first book, a psychological thriller, has won praise from critics

schools and libraries to run story-making workshops, before turning her attention to adults.

Her debut psychological thriller is the result of deciding to write what she knows and what she loves.

"What I know," explained

Tracy "is the ebb and flow – sometimes supportive, sometimes stultifying – of living in a small village, because I grew up in one. What I love is *The Talented Mr Ripley*, both the book by Patricia Highsmith and the screen adaptations, because Tom Ripley is such an excellent, morally repugnant character. *The Artful Anna Harris* is the product of these two quite different worlds."

Readers meet Anna Harris as she lies dormant in the depths of the English countryside, about to be poked awake by Sofia, a charismatic newcomer. Poor Sofia. She would have had a happier ending if she had left well alone. The reawakened Anna, bored by her relationship with dependable Ben and suffocated by his close-knit family, encounters the very charming Mark and, on impulse, borrows Sofia's identity to start an affair.

Increasingly Mark feels like the solution to her perpetual

Tracy Maton's book



dissatisfaction. What a shame, he, too, has something to hide.

A review by Publishers' Weekly US says: "Anna's cool, unreliable narration calls Tom Ripley to mind, but Maton freshens up familiar tropes by giving her protagonist uncommon dimension. The result is irresistible." The Sunday Times described the thriller as 'disturbing' and Anna Harris as 'ruthless.'

Tracy added: "The Artful Anna Harris was, in part, written in coffee shops in Henleaze and Westbury-on-Trym and I hope one day to spot someone reading my book in one of them!"

The book is available from any bookshop, online or in-store

Is Your Child Fully Protected Against Meningitis B?

Children born before September 2018 may not have received MenB vaccination as part of the routine childhood programme.

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■ MESSAGE FROM POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

Why we need visible policing

THE public tell me, in so many conversations, how important visible policing is to them.

Visible policing plays an important role in making people feel safe, improving communication with the public, and building trust and confidence in the police.

People want to know their communities are being listened to, and that their concerns are taken seriously.

Neighbourhood officers provide this significant link between the police and the public. They embed themselves into a community and become a consistent, dedicated contact, bringing people together and supporting community cohesion and safety.

Strengthening neighbourhood policing is one of the five priorities in my Police and Crime Plan, and I continue

to consistently advocate for local, visible policing.

It remains a national priority for the government, too, which has committed to an additional 13,000 officers, Police Community Support Officers, and special constables for neighbourhood teams across England and Wales, through its Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee – something I am working with Avon and Somerset Police to deliver locally.

But neighbourhood policing isn't just about being visible – it's also about meaningful engagement, long-term problem-solving, and strong partnership working. This is key to tackling local criminality and antisocial behaviour.

Antisocial behaviour and local criminality have complex causes that require sustained

investment, resource, and dedication.

While response officers play a critical role in responding to immediate threats or crises, neighbourhood policing focuses on solving problems at their root and delivering preventative, proactive action.

This requires coordinated action across all local services and community organisations; while neighbourhood officers play a vital role, they cannot deliver this alone, especially when we know that policing resources are already stretched.

That is why I continue to commission services and initiatives across Avon and Somerset that support preventative work and early intervention, including detached youth work, mentoring, school programmes, trauma-informed support, multi-agency research,



With Police and Crime Commissioner Clare Moody

and youth outreach.

I know there is always more to do, and that antisocial behaviour and local criminality remain pervasive issues for our communities.

I hear your concerns, and I share them.

As your police and crime commissioner, I will continue to advocate for neighbourhood policing, focus resources where they are most needed, and work with partners to build safer communities.

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NEWS FROM THE METRO MAYOR

New buses connect more communities

SUMMER in the West of England is such an exciting time.

From Bristol's Harbour Festival to Valley Fest in Chew Magna, Countryfest at Weston's Grand Pier and open-air Shakespeare at Dyrham Park, there is something for all ages and hopefully we'll all be able to get out in the sunshine soon.

Connecting our communities through better transport is so important, which is why we are continuing to invest in bus services together.

Among the service changes from July 26 are:

65: Thornbury town service connecting more communities to the town centre.

K2: Keynsham town service connecting the Chocolate Quarter and town centre to neighbourhoods in South Keynsham.

100: hourly service between Bath and Bristol to serve Timsbury, Farmborough, Bishop Sutton, and Chew Valley.

101: service between Bishop Sutton and Radstock including Chew Magna, Paulton, and Midsomer Norton.

Y2C: service between Cribbs Causeway and Yate will also serve Ladden Garden Village and provide a bus from Westerleigh Road and Rodford Way into Yate town centre, and service for Severn Beach, Castle School and Iron Acton.

X91: Service between Ubley and Bristol, via West Harptree, East Harptree, Bishop Sutton is being

extended to Dundry.

25 is being extended to connect Southville to Bristol city centre, now terminating at Eastgate Shopping Centre.

768: service between Writhlington, Radstock, Timsbury, and Bath will have earlier and later journeys added.

Y8: Yate to Wotton-under-Edge service will be extended to serve Leyhill.

9, 21, 31, and 41: Park & Ride services in and around Bath and Bristol will be improved, including evening journeys.

525: service between Yate, Pucklechurch and Emersons Green will now run every 60 minutes Monday to Saturday, and every 120 minutes on Sunday.

534: route connecting SGS campuses in Filton and Stoke Gifford to Downend, Cadbury Heath, Kingswood and Fishponds will run three services on college days Getting our region moving is one of our biggest priorities. Investing in these routes and services means better buses for passengers across the West Country and gives people certainty until at least spring 2029.

You can find the full list of service changes online at TravelWest.info.

Looking ahead, in Keynsham a review will look to ensure that connections currently offered by the K1 are protected going forward.

Options to connect Thornbury to both SGS College and Southmead Hospital are also being explored.



Metro Mayor Helen Godwin
writes for the Voice

More widely, work continues to fully assess options for how to take greater control of the region's buses – including through different types of franchising.

Alongside these changes, we want everyone to be able to make the most of our incredible region this summer, so we are bringing back Kids Go Free.

Running from July 18 until September 6, children and young people under 16 will be able to explore our whole region by bus free of charge again.

Kids Go Free is opening up our region, particularly for children from lower-income areas, and making a real difference to families – like our £1 regional fare freeze for children, saving people millions.

As a result, this August Kids Go Free will be rolled out across England with £100 million of investment – benefitting 7.5 million children.



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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: Henbury Flower Show 18th July 1-4.30pm, further Garden Cafés on 25th July 9.45-3pm & 8th August 9.45-2pm

8 - 18 July

■ **ART NOW!** Celebrating 120 years of Clifton Arts. An exhibition of art and a sale of artists' work. Victoria Methodist Church, 1 Whiteladies Road, BS8 1NU. Open daily 10.00 - 5.00 (Sunday 12 July, open 2.00 - 5.00). Admission free. www.cliftonarts.org

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

■ **BRISTOL OPERA CLUB** brings a successful first year to a close on Wednesday 8th July. Do join us for an informal sociable and informative evening to include opera quizzes, in a team format, presented by Andrew Borkowski, with tasty prizes for the winning teams. 6.30 for 7pm - FREE admission at The Apostle Room, Clifton Cathedral (Worcester Road entrance) - parking - bar. All are welcome. More info 01275 848526 or borkmail100@gmail.com

Various dates

LA SCALA DELI HENLEAZE

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

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

July 16th & 24th - Meridiana - A producer exclusive
July 23rd & 25th - Portuguese Tasting
Aug 6th & 14th - Meridiana - A producer exclusive
Aug 13th & 15th - Portuguese Tasting
Sept 3rd & 16th Italian Islands Wines
Sept 5th & 17th - Tuscany Regional Tasting
Oct 8th & 22nd Italian Islands Wines
Oct 21st & 24th Tuscany Regional Tasting

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

July 18th - Emilia Romagna
August 8th - Emilia Romagna
September 19th - Tuscany
October 10th - Tuscany

Call for Corporate/Private bookings

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

W&D - Tuscany - 19/9 & 10/10

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 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

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 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 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

■ **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. Visit www.facebook.com/CompanionVoicesBristol and 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 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.

■ **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, Wimbleton Rd, BS6 7YA. A vibrant, lively new afternoon WI in BS6. For more

WHAT'S ON

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. Visitors welcome (£5). Visit our blog cliftonwi.blogspot.com for forthcoming events. For info about us contact thecliftonwi@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

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

HENLEAZE BOWLING CLUB. New and experienced members are always most welcome, free tuition and a free shirt with annual membership. Coaches available. A very 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. Check out our website for more information and our contact details. www.henleazebowlsclub.org.uk

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

Thursday

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.henbursingers.org contact secretary at secretary@henbursingers.org.

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

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 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).

HORFIELD ORGANIC COMMUNITY ORCHARD

WHAT a strange start-stop growing season. Temperatures, sunshine, and rainfall have veered from one extreme to the other, and every week has felt windswept. We were delighted that June's Summer Orchard Open day was blessed by warm sun and calm conditions. Perfect for welcoming visitors to the lush green and fruitful oasis of Horfield Organic Community Orchard (HOCO).

Midsummer is a good moment to assess the quality and quantity of fruit and new growth on the trees – and to begin taking action to lighten the load of excess fruit and leafy shoots. It takes knowledge and confidence to thin fruit, and to prune trees in full leaf and fruit.

A moderate crop of fruit is a good thing. Too much fruit can do more harm than good. Branches break under the heavy burden. Hundreds of small fruits are tasteless and tart compared to fewer well sized, beautifully coloured, and sun-ripened fruits. Next year's blossom buds can't be nourished if all the resources and energy of a tree are used up by this year's fruit.

Removing surplus fruitlets is an ongoing task at this time of year. Nature lends a hand thanks to the life cycle of insects that have evolved to nibble young fruits and leaves. Timely growing season pruning also makes a difference. Hand thinning little-and-often is a mindful, caring and helpful process. Remove damaged or infested fruits first, and reduce clusters down to three fruits. After a few weeks, thin to two fruits, and finally, to one. It feels wrong, but it's right!

Growing season fruit tree pruning courses:

- Beginners – Saturday 1 August
- Improvers – Sunday 2 August

Places are limited and must be booked in advance.

Fees are discounted for HOCO members.

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

Words by Shannon Smith aka The Apple Tree Lady

MATTHEW KING

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SPORT

Clifton prepare for success

SPORTS clubs use the period between the end of one season and the start of the next campaign to take stock and plan ahead. Inevitably there is a churn of players with the excitement of new recruits and the retirement of others. Clifton also has a proud history of players moving on to progress to the top level of the game

Clifton Rugby Club's Chairman Aftab "Tabby" Hamid and newly appointed Director of Rugby Paul "Finks" Fincken are both highly optimistic for the September kick off as their club plans for their return to National League West with matches across a league stretching from Cheshire to Redruth in Cornwall

Both are former Clifton 1st XV stalwarts steeped in all things Clifton on and off the pitch.

Aftab comments: "After the promotion we always knew it was a tough ask to stay in National League 1. We did defeat

Rosslyn Park, league leaders at the time, and achieved home and away doubles over Leicester Lions and Sedgley Park. A highlight was the double over local rivals Dings Crusaders. Unlike most of other clubs our loyalty was not to be dependent on long term loan players from Premiership clubs."

The club had the shock of losing Director of Rugby, club legend and friend Matt Salter. Tributes have been paid how his contribution enabled the club to compete in Aftab's words "against city sides with massive budgets like Leeds and Plymouth with huge inputs of dual registered players from Premiership clubs."

Keeping home-grown players is fundamental to Clifton's outstanding club spirit across all teams and Paul Fincken adds: "Prospects look good. We've had a busy few weeks and months retaining the majority of the current squad and bringing

in some exciting new signing. National West is a competitive league, and many teams can beat anyone on the day and aim for promotion to National One. It will be a tough ask of players, the club and supporters and that is our overall goal we are aligned towards. We look forward to a competitive season"

Preseason training began at the end of June with players of all abilities welcome to compete for places in the three senior teams. The second team, the Wanderers, were highly placed in the Counties One league last season and the third XV turned in some high scoring outings in a local Gloucestershire league. All new players receive kit bundles and are sure of a warm reception on and off the pitch in Clifton's traditional manner.



Paul "Finks" Fincken



Roger Opie

Aftab "Tabby" Hamid

NATURE WATCH

with Dawn Lawrence

Grasshoppers: a celebration of summer

AS I write this in mid June, spring seems unsure about leaving us and stormy clouds are creeping across the white and blue of a more summery sky. But already we can see that insects are doing rather well, building on the success of last year following a series of poor years. Recent excursions have discovered good numbers of my favourite group: the bush crickets and grasshoppers.

I have mentioned before the summery-singing dark bush crickets with their exceedingly long antennae – easily found by tracing a gentle "tssp tssp", coming from a bramble patch. Grasshoppers look rather similar but have short, rather thick antennae. In ideal conditions they can be hard to miss with dozens of grasshopper villagers leaping from your every Gulliver footstep, although such conditions have been rare in recent years. If found, this abundance is usually a display of meadow grasshoppers – generally a fairly uniform green and our commonest species. They thrive where the different grasses have grown tall enough to bear the shimmering clusters and the chunky spikes that are their flowerheads, in the long grass on the Downs for example. But even in the more urban parts of the city, especially where there is some



Field grasshopper posing on a bramble leaf
Photo by Rupert Higgins

sparse vegetation adjacent to bare soil, along a path in a sunny section of an alleyway, for example - you might find field grasshoppers.

On my allotment my disgraceful patches of long grass (mainly false oat grass, queen of the shimmerers) sometimes turn up a grasshopper or two. These are invariably field grasshoppers; the species is a good flier and travels around more than the meadow grasshopper. Its chunky face with big staring eyes cautiously peers at you, perhaps from around the other side of a grass stem. They are amongst the

few insects that seem to really look you in the eye and this elevates them above the moth or the butterfly in my opinion. They are only about 2cm long but with a hoop-stripped body, a couple of chevrons like reversed brackets on their back and, sometimes, a brick red tail end, they are attractive little fellows and I enjoy their companionship even as I fight back the thuggish shimmerers.

Our grasshoppers are vegetarians, feeding, as you might expect, mainly on grasses and they complete their life cycle within one year. Both meadow and field grasshoppers sometimes lay their eggs in the light soil of an anthill where the eggs hatch to produce a tiny larva, ignored by the ants, which wriggles to the surface and casts its larval skin to become a miniature version of the adult, barely a few millimetres long. They then shed again, usually three more times, to emerge as adults around midsummer. The males then sing, each species with its own tune, by rubbing their elongated back legs (also used for the characteristic hopping motion) against special pegs on their wings. An ephemeral celebration of summer, they are gone with the first frost, over-wintering as eggs.

© Dawn Lawrence

FINANCE

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Harold Stephens

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E: office@haroldstephens.co.uk



Taking Advice in Later Life

Anyone in later life may experience circumstances that make managing financial and legal affairs more challenging. Vulnerabilities can be physical or mental, temporary or permanent, and often change over time. They may arise through illness, bereavement, changes in personal circumstances, financial shocks, or simply as part of the natural ageing process.

At Harold Stephens, supporting clients in later life is at the heart of what we do. We have extensive experience helping people and their families navigate a wide range of situations, including long-term illnesses, dementia, memory loss, communication difficulties, limited IT skills, physical disabilities, bereavement, hospital stays, care arrangements, and other challenges that can arise as we age.

Our advisers and support team understand that every client is different. We pride ourselves

on being kind, patient and empathetic, taking the time to understand your individual circumstances and adapting our approach to suit your needs.

We have built our processes around supporting later life clients. This might mean arranging meetings at times that work best for you, allowing extra time where needed, breaking discussions into multiple appointments, or communicating in a way that feels most comfortable. Meetings can take place in our relaxed, living room-style office or in your own home if that is more convenient.

We will always listen carefully, ask open and thoughtful questions, and never rush you into making decisions. Where appropriate, we are more than happy to involve family members or carers in discussions. However, we always remember that ultimately you are the client and will always act in your best interests.

Alongside providing personal support, we offer specialist advice across later life financial and legal planning. This includes pensions, savings and investments, inheritance tax planning, care fee planning, estate planning, Wills, and Lasting Powers of Attorney – all under one roof to make life just a little easier! If we aren't able help you, we'll do our best to signpost you to a service that can.

Our aim is simple: to help you make informed decisions and put plans in place that provide security, clarity and peace of mind for you and your family.

If you would like to arrange a relaxed, no-obligation chat about your financial or estate planning needs, please call us on **0117 3636 212** or email **office@haroldstephens.co.uk**.

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Guide Price £1,350,000

Delightful Victorian home offers comfortable, adaptable family-oriented accommodation, with ready access to Durham Downs. Arranged over three floors, southerly orientated c.80ft. level rear garden, Off street parking. EPC D



Westbury on Trym

Guide Price £525,000

Attractively presented 3-bedroom Victorian property that retains much of its cozy cottage appeal with a c.45 ft. South West facing rear garden, garage & off street parking. No Onward Chain. EPC D



Sneyd Park

Guide Price £799,950

A superb 3 bedroom garden apartment over 2,000 sq. ft in size offering excellent versatility and generous living space, ensuite, bathroom, separate study, private garden, allocated parking space, and a garage. EPC E

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VINEYARD NEWS with INGRID BATES

Raising a glass to midsummer glory

MIDSUMMER in the vineyard is always a busy and exciting time. The first mow of the year has now been completed at our Wrington site. Our sites don't always look as tidy and manicured as others because we mow with the intention of leaving some grass sections long to encourage a greater diversity of insect life.

It's been wonderful to welcome visitors to our second vineyard tour of the season. It's always a pleasure to share the wines and story behind the vineyard with new and familiar faces. Tours will continue on the first Sunday of every month if anyone might wish to come during the remaining summer months.

One of the highlights of the last few months has been watching the swallows return to the Wrington site. Their arrival always feels like a true sign of summer as they swoop across the vineyard hunting for insects.

Over at our new Kelston vineyard site, the young vines are settling in well. While

many people were hoping for sunshine, the recent rain has been incredibly beneficial for the newly planted vines, helping them establish strong root systems during their first growing season. Over the coming weeks I will begin the process of shoot selection. Each young vine naturally produces several shoots, but I will select the strongest one and remove the others. This encourages the vine to concentrate its energy into developing a healthy trunk as a foundation for many years of future growth.

The new site is developing beautifully and I'm looking forward to welcoming visitors there soon.

E: hello@dunleavyvineyards.co.uk

W: www.dunleavyvineyards.co.uk

Tiktok & Instagram: @dunleavyvineyards

Facebook@DYvineyards

Phone: 07779 085420



Dramatic skies over the Kelston vineyard

PUZZLE PAGE

Sudoku

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

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

For younger readers

Summer Sports Boggler Puzzle

How many words of 3 letters or more can you find using the letters below? Words are formed from adjoining letters. Letters must join in the proper sequence to spell a word and may join horizontally, vertically, or diagonally, to the left, right, or up-and-down. No letter square, however, may be used more than once within a single word. You may use plurals if available. Score 1 point for each 3 letter word, 2 points for 4 letter words, 3 points for 5 letter words and so on. Score an extra 2 points for every summer sports word that you make!

A	T	C	S
H	T	I	N
L	E	N	C
K	C	I	R



My points _____

© www.ActivityVillage.co.uk



Txtpert

Theme: Cooking

1	2		3		4		5
	6						
			7				
	8						9
	10						

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

Across

- 1 38243773 (8)
- 6 288 (3)
- 7 748 (3)
- 8 645 (3)
- 10 3987228 (7)

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9

Down

- 2 86266533 (8)
- 3 46875283 (8)
- 4 7728852 (7)
- 5 344 (3)
- 9 768 (3)

Easier sudoku

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

	1	6	3		
	2	3		4	
1			5		2
			4		
		2			6
6					

Solutions

Txtpert

				E		D
L	C	V	R	L	X	E
O		T	V			K
d		n	T	I	O	
		L	I	d		O
G	V		L	n	C	
G	d		O		N	
E	S	E	H	C	n	d

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Clifton, Bristol | Guide Price £2,250,000

An exceptional Grade II Listed Georgian townhouse with sensational views across to Brunel's Clifton Suspension Bridge, stylishly refurbished by the current owners complete with a self-contained studio apartment and a private fully enclosed rear garden

Elegant five-bedroom Grade II Listed family house | Exceptional views from all floors over Brunel's iconic suspension bridge | Self-contained lower ground floor studio apartment (bedroom five) | Beautifully refurbished by the current owners | Open plan kitchen and dining room | Fabulous first floor full-depth drawing room with a family snug | Fitted home office and separate cloakroom | Principal bedroom with a luxury en-suite bath & shower room | Three top floor bedrooms and a family bathroom | Separate utility room and a glazed conservatory | Private, fully enclosed garden catching much of the day's sun | EPC: D

In all circa 2809sq.ft (261sq.m)

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