

cliftonvoice

October, 2026 Issue 38

www.cliftonvoice.co.uk

FREE EVERY MONTH IN CLIFTON AND SURROUNDING AREA



Sir Gregory Doran is returning to Bristol Old Vic Theatre School, where he trained as an actor, to help celebrate its 80th anniversary. He will direct third year BA Acting students in a production of Romeo and Juliet.

Report: Page 17



LitFest expands to three days

Clifton LitFest has unveiled its most ambitious programme yet, with 70 speakers scheduled for the three-day event next month.

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Dinosaur plaque unveiled

A plaque has been unveiled in Clifton marking the discovery of the Bristol Dinosaur, a thecodontosaurus, 200 million years ago.

PAGE 9

Winning start to rugby season

Clifton Rugby Club has made a promising start to the 2026-27 season with two victories, one away and one at home.

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Downs 'close to disaster'

THE Downs was "close to disaster" several times this summer due to people having barbecues during the drought and drivers parking on the grass. Last month both the eclipse and the Balloon Fiesta saw a dangerous amount of people gather, prompting calls for a safety review.

Despite warnings of wildfire risks, barbecues were still lit on the dry, brown grass at the Downs and in parks across Bristol. A lack of parking controls led to chaotic scenes during the eclipse. And just a wobbly fence separated lots of people watching hot air balloons from a steep cliff top.

As future summers are forecast to be even hotter, the Downs committee was urged to consider how the historic parkland in north Bristol could soon face similar fire risks. The committee also heard about a plan to upgrade the cliff top fence, which is being held back by a funding shortage.

Ben Skuse, parks supervisor at Bristol City Council, said: "I'm on the ground seeing the near fire risk. My team are out there clearing up. We're seeing really vividly how close we have come, last summer and this summer to having some

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November deadline

Our November deadline is October 14. 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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Further details of the complaints process can be found on the Voice website here, or can be obtained by contacting the Publisher.



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NEWS

Disaster fears over Downs popularity

From Page 1

disastrous fire events. One of the things that could happen that would help is if a permanent ban on disposable barbecues comes into law."

However, this summer saw less of a risk of fire from gas canisters than previous years, after people living in vans left the area due to changing council rules. And an injunction has led to fewer Travellers staying on the grass, with the police able to take action much more quickly. But with the climate heating up, discussions are already taking place about fire risks next summer.

Another problem is at the Observatory Hill, next to the Clifton Suspension Bridge. This year saw more people than usual gather to watch the lifts during the Balloon Fiesta, however the fence along the clifftop is "a bit wobbly in places" and not safe enough to protect such a large crowd.

Mr Skuse added: "It is in no way geared to crowds of people up against it looking into the distance. And then hot off the heels of that was the solar eclipse event. People were driving their vehicles onto the Downs, in and among the crowds, and it's potentially disastrous. Cars driving on the grass areas of the Downs is a huge risk."

In August disposable barbecues were temporarily banned from sale across the country, due to the drought and heatwave increasing the number of wildfires. The government also sent out an alert to mobile phones in England and Wales warning of the "very high risk of wildfires", and warned against using disposable barbecues.

Also this summer, a fire in Shirehampton prompted road closures and emergency warnings for local residents to keep doors and windows closed. The M5 was closed southbound Thornbury and Almondsbury because of a wildfire. And a strong smell of smoke wafted over Bristol from wildfires in the South Wales Valleys.

An eclipse viewing session was held at the Sea Walls viewpoint, with specialist

telescopes and free cardboard observing glasses. Crowds of people rushed to get cardboard glasses and drivers flooded the grass with parked cars. The event was organised by the Bristol Astronomical Society, Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge, and We The Curious.

Ian Witham, chair of Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge, said: "I actually organised it. We went through all the due event processes. We had feedback from the fire brigade, emergency services and police. At all times I made it very clear the event that we organised was specifically to observe the sun with a very small number of people and a small amount of equipment."

"I made it very clear to the events team [a Bristol City Council] that you're going to get thousands of people there. This is not within our remit, we don't have the facilities, we're not charging, and I'm afraid what came true came true."

Similar crowds filled the Observatory Hill for the Balloon Fiesta when organisers closed the entrance to an already full Ashton Court.

Replacing the clifftop fence is one of the main actions in the Downs 2030 programme. It's unclear how the committee could get money to pay for this. But the council and the Society of Merchant Venturers have both chipped in for "seed funding", to pay for a professional fundraiser to help set up a pilot project and secure the money needed for the programme. This also includes creating a new goat enclosure, improving access for climbers and redeveloping the Sea Walls public toilets into a new café.

Bevis Watts, a member of the Merchant Venturers, said: "The first project, after discussion with various parties, will be the replacement fencing along the gorge and Downs boundary. Partly because that's very complementary to all the species recovery work, but it also addresses submissions we've previously had to the Downs committee about safety concerns."

By Alex Seabrook, Local Democracy Reporter

NEWS

Expanded LitFest set to spread joy

CLIFTON LitFest has unveiled its biggest programme yet for its 2026 event.

The festival has expanded to three full days for the first time to accommodate more than 70 writers, thinkers, journalists, artists and cultural figures,

Among them are Mary Portas, Baroness Hale, Michael Gove and Jonathon Porritt.

Events are taking place from November 13-15 in venues including Clifton Library, Christ Church, Clifton High School, the Clifton Club and Pavey House.

Paula O'Rourke, chair of Clifton LitFest, said: "When we began putting this year's programme together, we kept returning to the idea of positivity and happiness. There is no shortage of difficult news in the world, and we wanted LitFest to offer something different: a weekend that doesn't shy away from the big questions, but also gives people space for curiosity, pleasure, discovery and hope."

"I think this is our most ambitious programme yet. We have extraordinary national speakers alongside brilliant Bristol writers and thinkers."

For the first time, the festival begins with a full Friday programme, with the Clifton Club hosting a day celebrating writers and stories with strong connections to Bristol and the surrounding area.

Friday evening brings a big debate, as former Education Secretary Michael Gove and economist and author Professor Guy Standing discuss How Can Education Fix Society? Against a backdrop of AI, automation and rapid technological change, the



Michael Gove Photo: House of Lords photography by Roger Harris

pair will consider what education should be for – and what the next generation will need from it.

On the Saturday, former Supreme Court President Baroness Brenda Hale will draw on cases from her career to explore how the law shapes ordinary lives.

Mary Portas joins BBC journalist Harriet Robinson to discuss I Shop, Therefore I Am, looking back at the 1990s transformation of Harvey Nichols and her belief in business as a creative act.

Art historian Andrew Graham-Dixon presents new research for his biography Vermeer: A Life Lost and Found, while Michael Lewis, curator of the British Museum's Bayeux Tapestry exhibition, joins historian and History Extra editor David Musgrove to investigate the stories and mysteries contained within it.

Other speakers include environmental campaigners Guy Shrubsole and Jonathon Porritt.

Saturday closes at Christ Church with a celebration of West Country writer Laurie Lee.

Sunday explores some things

that can make life richer, from art, food and nature to purpose, philosophy and happiness.

Philosopher Julian Baggini teams up with Bristol's Clifton Coffee to explore coffee, philosophy and the good life, while Bristol-based MasterChef winner Brin Pirathapan shares the story and flavours behind his new book Elevate.

Cheesemonger Ned Palmer offers a journey through 6,000 years of British cheesemaking while University of Bristol psychologist Bruce Hood examines the science behind what really makes us happy.

There are more challenging conversations too. Political journalist Michael Crick and Bristol's Baroness Thangam Debbonaire examine Nigel Farage's impact on British politics, while Afghan journalist Zahra Joya shares her story of disguising herself as a boy to attend school under the first Taliban regime, becoming a

journalist and ultimately being forced to flee Kabul in 2021.

Journalist John Kampfner brings the weekend back to its hopeful theme with Braver New World: What's Going Right in a World Going Wrong.

Clifton LitFest is organised by volunteers from the Friends of Clifton Centre and Library (FoCCaL), which has become a registered charity. Profits from the festival are reinvested in projects supporting reading and the local community. More than 70 volunteers will help deliver this year's festival.

Tickets are on sale online and from Clifton Library. Fifty Golden Tickets have been hidden inside copies of the festival programme at the library; each entitles its finder to a pair of tickets to a Clifton LitFest event of their choice, subject to availability. For the full programme and ticket information head to <https://foccal.com/litfest>.

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NEWS

Ban on fast-fashion ads

A BAN on adverts for Black Friday, holidays abroad, fashion flash sales, flights, cruises, airports, and travel agents has been approved by Bristol City Council in a crackdown on goods and services that could harm people or be bad for the environment.

The new restrictions apply to the authority's property, including bus shelters, digital screens and billboards, after councillors voted 8-1 in favour of the new policy.

But Cllr John Goulandris (Conservative, Stoke Bishop) said: "Whilst there is logic in supporting advertising restrictions on products which are clearly linked to public health, such as measures to discourage smoking, these latest proposals are grossly patronising and a hideous example of woke virtue-signalling by the Green administration."

Bristol City Council deputy leader Cllr Heather

Mack (Green, Lockleaze) said the new rules prohibited adverts of high-carbon products on the authority's property.

She said: "Advertising forces itself upon all of us. Whilst scrolling, whilst walking, whilst waiting for the bus, it has negative impacts on our health and wellbeing, as well as the climate, environment and local economy."

"The Bristol Greens are committed to pushing back on this."

"As the first council to introduce restrictions on the advertising of fast fashion, we will continue to look at how we can keep improving our advertising policy so that our outdoor spaces reflect the positive values of Bristol, reduce our climate impact and improve our local neighbourhoods and economy."

Bristol campaign group Adfree Cities said the decision last month was an important moment for the city.

By Adam Postans, Local Democracy Reporter

Homegrown? Oh yes it is!

FOR the first time in its sixty-year history the Redgrave Theatre, part of Clifton College, is to produce its first in-house Christmas pantomime.

The curtain will be going up on a new Bristol-focused adaptation of Dick Whittington which gives the rags-to-riches tale a West Country flavour.

"When we say in-house debut, we mean that it's our first production made in-house by the Redgrave Theatre team, rather than a pantomime company coming in," said Sue Ellicott, manager of the 320-seat theatre in Percival Road.

"We are proud to be working directly with Bristol talent from local performers to designers shaping our sets and costumes".

The pantomime will be produced by James Moore, Director of Performing Arts at Clifton College. He will be working with the Redgrave Theatre team.

Performances run from December 4-January 3.

A specially adapted Relaxed Performance will take place on Sunday 27th December at 10:30am.

Relaxed performances create a more welcoming environment for audience members with sensory and communication needs or anyone who may benefit from a more relaxed setting. Adjustments will include a relaxed attitude to noise and movement in the auditorium, along with reduced sound and lighting effects. There will not be any flashing lights or pyrotechnics.

A British Sign Language signed performance will also take place on Tuesday 29 December at 2pm.



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■ NEWS

Back to last century – or the one before? I'll drink to that!

AMY FOSS-CLARK discovers the charms of a traditional social club night out

THE average price for a pint in Bristol is £6. Combined with Bristol recently being labelled as being the most expensive city to rent in the UK, it's no surprise that people are feeling less inclined to go to the pub, meet new people and socialise. So a thought came into my head, what's happened to Bristol's old pubs and clubs? Surely they're still offering cheaper prices - but are younger people like me welcome?

It was dark as I walked towards The Somerville Club, a pen and paper in my bag, fascination pushing me forwards - the streets were quiet as it was a Wednesday night and I could just about make out some bunting billowing in the wind and a red and blue 'Open' flashing against a window. I walked up towards the cream building and rang the buzzer - in I stepped.

The club was founded in 1893 as Horfield Liberal Club. By 1923 the name had changed to the North Bristol Liberal Club and subsequently to the non-politically aligned Somerville Club. According to the website, it seems the road name was spelled both with single and double Ms and when the club was named a single M was in vogue.

Anyway, 133 years in, it is among a handful of clubs in Bristol that operate on a 'members only' basis. I managed to secure a way in by being friends with one of the bar staff - nerves were high as I was aware that it was only five years ago that the club began allowing women to become members independently.

When I walked in, it felt as though I was stepping inside a pub that time had forgotten. It was warm and cosy with carpeted floors and cushioned chairs and everything was



CHAIRMEN		
J. C. HALL	1893	1894
J. A. DAVIS	1894	1895
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P. COOK	1896	1897
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M. J. OLIVER	1913	1914
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J. STOKES	1917	1918
C. COOK	1918	1919
R. M. HOWE	1919	1920
	1920	1921
	1921	1922
	1922	1923

Honours board at The Somerville

wooden - except for the little fruit machine that couldn't have been much younger than 50 years old. In a time of AI and endless 'self-checkout' machines in supermarkets, walking into this club was like remembering what life used to be like.

I sat down at the bar, on a green cushioned stool and ordered a pint of Madri. £4.40!

Taking my first sip, I noticed that the price for a double vodka was just £4! Was I sure I hadn't been transported back to the 90s?

My friend behind the bar had told me just the other day how keen the club was to get new members, how desperate they were for it. This surprised me as I thought that such a small and old club would surely not appreciate lots of new faces, surely they'd want to keep it how it is?

So I spoke to the club's treasurer, Naomi Knotts, who said: "If we don't have enough people being members, coming in regularly then the club will disappear and it will have to be sold and shut down. We can't compete with the quality of food



Amy Foss-Clark at the club with regulars Jason and Sean Keene

on Gloucester Road, so this is an affordable little den and what we've got to do is provide something that gives people a reason to come in for.

"For instance we have Open Mic nights on Thursdays, bingos on Wednesdays and live bands once a month."

I asked Naomi what she would say to new people considering becoming a member.

"It's a safe, comfortable environment and you get cheap drinks! At only £35 a year, I see it as a no brainer."

Two well known characters on Gloucester Road, Jason and Sean Keene, are twins who love coming to the Somerville. They told me: "It's a chance to meet new people, feel safe and everyone's nice and welcoming." One of the twins, Jason, pointed to my friend behind the bar, smiled and said: "The bar staff are nice, especially trouble!"

My pint was half finished and people had started arriving for the bingo - it was a Wednesday, remember - my friend behind the bar knew all the people's names and remembered their usual drinks. Everyone greeted

everyone with a smile.

A man named Jeff stood next to me to buy his bingo cards, I turned to him and asked him what he thought about new people becoming members: "I say to them, just get in here. It's a safe place to drink, reasonable prices, good entertainment and good company." Jeff has been a member of the club for 45 years and welcomes the prospect of getting new, younger members joining up.

Paul, who has been a trustee at the club for 15 years, said: "More members will make it more fun, pubs are going downhill now, they're too expensive. Here you will always have cheap beer and no trouble."

As a 24-year-old woman, I'll admit I did feel safe and even took part in a night of bingo - I won £2! So maybe it's time more members-only clubs started branching out and encouraging younger people to join, and maybe it's time for us all to take a step back in time and welcome cheap booze, community focused spaces and support our old clubs that have been around for centuries.

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CLIFTON VILLAGE AWARDS 2026

The inaugural Clifton Village Awards – created and launched by Clifton Village BID

Clifton Village BID is proud to introduce a new celebration of the very best of our Village

Celebrating the exceptional businesses, people and organisations that make Clifton Village the remarkable place it is.

Alongside our nominated businesses, Clifton Village BID will also present a Special Recognition

Award, honouring those whose exceptional contribution, dedication and support have made a real difference to Clifton Village and its community.

The recipients of these Special Recognition Awards will be revealed exclusively at the Awards Ceremony on November 19.



Proudly Presenting The 2026 Award Categories & Nominees

1. Clifton Village Business of the Year

- Clifton Cobbler
- Clifton Hardware
- Maze Clothing
- Portabello
- Reg the Veg
- The Mall Deli
- Chandos Deli

2. Hospitality & Social Venue of the Year

- The Albion Pub
- Somerset House
- Primrose Café

- Spicer & Cole
- Clifton Village Fish Bar

3. Restaurant & Dining Experience of the Year

- Bosco
- The Ivy
- Milk Bun
- Clifton Sausage
- KIBOU
- Bar 44

4. Café, Brunch & Casual Dining of the Year

- Foliage Café
- Mercy Mercy Mercy
- Cino's
- Burra

- ANNA Cake Couture
- Saffron
- Samosas Chai Chaat
- Catleys

5. Independent Retailer of the Year

- Shy Mimosa Perfumery
- Doghouse
- Blossom Co
- Longwell Records
- Hermione Harbutt
- Smaller Footprints
- Sheri's Ottoman Emporium

6. Professional Services Excellence Award

- Farrow & Ball
- Savills Estate Agents

- Clifton Mortgages
- Clifton Village Post Office
- Seventh Avenue Hair & Beauty
- Hydes of Bristol Estate Agents
- Eden Hardwood Flooring Ltd

7. Health, Beauty & Wellbeing Award

- Townhouse Nail Salon
- Feel Fit Studio & Gym
- Andrew Jordan Psychotherapy

8. Community & Clifton Champion Award

- Redgrave Theatre
- Clifton Suspension Bridge Trust
- The Clifton Arcade
- Mary's Living & Giving

NEWS

Village Day proves a great success

CROWDS of people packed the streets of Clifton Village for the third annual Clifton Village Day.

Shoppers and their families were treated to everything from free Turkish coffee workshops to vintage-style musical performances, and from a tour of a church to face-painting for children.

A vintage bus was also giving free rides between Long Ashton and Clifton Down Road throughout the day.

The Village Day was organised by BID (Business Improvement District) Clifton aimed at getting people from all over Bristol to visit Clifton Village and discover what was on offer at its many independent shops, restaurants and bars.

"The day was another wonderful success. The village was absolutely heaving throughout the day. It was lovely to receive so much positive feedback" said one of the organisers.

"Clifton Village Day is not about one event or one organisation. Its success comes from all of us working together- our businesses and our community".

One of the popular attractions was the guided tours of Christ Church, a Grade II * Listed Building. One of the guides who was leading visitors around the Victorian church said: "We counted well over 100 people coming in".

It was the first time Christ Church had taken part in the Village Day.



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FROM YOUR COUNCILLORS

News from Clifton Down councillors George Calascione and Serena Ralston (Green)

Hello again. We hope you have enjoyed the summer break. Welcome too to all our students, whether you are new to Bristol or returning for another year.

Recycling news

From last month, you should have started to receive new recycling containers as part of improvements to help everyone recycle a little more for Bristol.

New red bags are replacing the old brittle green boxes, providing 60% more space for recycling plastic and cans, and residents will also receive a new blue bag for card, cartons and paper - making sorting easier.

Both bags are squashable so they're easy to store between collections, sealable to help stop recycling blowing out when it's windy and have a QR code which links to further information about what goes in each container and why recycling is so important for our city and our planet.

We've listened to people's frustrations about recycling blowing out of boxes and littering our streets and having to pay for replacement boxes when the green boxes break. These new and improved containers have been chosen to help resolve these issues.

Households without, or with damaged, brown food waste bins

Our oldest resident: Dinosaur plaque unveiled

We were very excited to see the unveiling of a new plaque last month to mark the spot where the remains of the fourth dinosaur ever to be identified were found. Local historian Ashley Coates had got in touch back in 2024 to tell us about his campaign to get a plaque put up. We were very happy to amplify his campaign in this column then and it is fantastic to see the plaque now in place.

Over 70 people, including young and grown-up palaeontologists, as well as local residents, gathered outside 9, High Street near Quarry Steps for the unveiling. Michael Benton, the University of Bristol's Professor of Vertebrate Palaeontology, spoke about the thecodontosaurus, a small, two-legged dinosaur that lived in the Bristol area just over 200 million years ago. He then showed us where the first remains were found in 1834 at the former quarry near the top of Blackboy Hill. The plaque was dedicated by the Lord-Lieutenant of the County



Chair of CHIS Brian Worthington; Lord-Lieutenant Peaches Golding; Professor Michael Benton; Cllr Serena Ralston

and City of Bristol, Peaches Golding. A big thanks to the Clifton & Hotwells Improvement Society for organising this fascinating event.

will get new ones and the more durable black recycling boxes will remain for glass bottles and jars. Batteries, vapes and small electrical items can also go in the black box as long as they're in separate clear untied bags.

Everyone should have received a letter to explain the changes and what the new containers are for. Please continue putting out all your containers on the usual collection day ready for crews to make the swap. Into November, recycling containers will be changed for around 175,000

homes across Bristol, so it's going to take a few weeks to get to everyone. All old containers will be collected and repurposed or recycled.

The new containers increase the overall recycling capacity for a household from 213 litres to 250 litres per week – that's an increase of 17%.

Come and say hello

Instead of our usual October surgery, we'll be holding a drop-in session at Clifton Down Shopping Centre in mid-October. Why not

come and say hello, whether you have lived here a while or are new to our community? If you'd like to have a chat about any local issues or just want to meet us then we'd be delighted to see you. To find out about the date and time of this event, email us and we will confirm the details. A big thank you to Richard Ryan, the shopping centre's manager, for offering to host us!

Contact us

Cllr.george.calascione@bristol.gov.uk
Cllr.serena.ralston@bristol.gov.uk

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Welcome to the West Bristol Arts Trail 2026

This is the 19th Year of showcasing artists in the west Bristol area. Over 120 artists will exhibit their work over 34 venues, often private homes and studios but also larger venues hosting multiple artists.

Each year we have seen new artists as well as returning artists exhibiting with us and there is a range of work to be seen: paintings, sculpture, prints, ceramics, jewellery, textiles, photography and mixed media.

Why come to the trail? It's a great day out, the art is affordable and there is a chance to talk to the artists. While there is no pressure to buy, the arts trail offers a unique chance to buy directly from the artists if you wish to do so.

The trail is one of the main events in Clifton each year, but also covers Cliftonwood and Hotwells.

We are delighted to welcome back established large venues—including Holy Trinity Church, the Scout Hut (Clifton Village) and The Chesterfield (Nuffield Hospital). We are also excited to introduce new locations this year: Bristol Grammar School, Future Leap (The Old Chapel) and St Paul's Church.

For more detailed information on the artists and venues please visit www.westbristolartstrail.co.uk

Children are most welcome at the Trail but must be supervised.



To advertise, contact Emma on 0117 9082121 or 07715 770448 or email emma@cliftonvoice.co.uk

NATURE WATCH with Dawn Lawrence

How the railways helped spread 'fireweed'

AUTUMN is here, offering the last sun-baked blackberries warm and jammy on the tongue (eat them quick – they become cursed after Hallowe'en). Meanwhile, all the birds of the year pass through our garden as they fatten up, or head south, for winter, the last butterflies suck the juices from fallen fruit and sweet, smoky bonfires blurr the allotments. It is mellow and fruitful, as the poet says, softer and less sudden than spring but with that same feeling of changing course as we sail round from one main season to the next.

The fiery blossoms in the picture are now almost spent and their delicate seeds are flying away on silky feathers, catching the breeze and playing with the autumn light. This beautiful plant, growing up to two metres tall, is called rosebay willowherb and it is good enough for any garden (though it needs a firm hand to curb its enthusiasm). 'Rosebay' for its similarity to the Mediterranean flower of similar colouring which is more commonly known as oleander, and 'willowherb' for its slender leaves that recall those of our native willows. Also called fireweed, it is native right around the northern hemisphere and it has an unusual history in Britain.

Generally unremarked in the lowlands, it was a mainly northern plant that was found



As stunning in close up as it is en masse, this is rosebay willowherb.

Photo copyright Anne Burgess.

only occasionally in its favoured habitats of streamsides and tumbled rocks. But in the mid 18th Century it began to appear throughout Britain and its sudden spread was puzzled over – perhaps a more vigorous variety had accidentally been introduced or maybe a natural mutation had occurred. But the explanation appears to be much simpler: its increase coincides with the development of the railways. The airborne seeds followed the

slipstream of trains and the ballast used for the railbed formed a suitable nursery for this undemanding plant.

Fireweed thrives on disturbance, originally following erosion by rivers and rock falls. But mankind's own propensity towards creating disturbance provided it with an opportunity and it grasped it with its strong roots. The name fireweed comes from its ability to colonise areas razed by flame and after the bombings of World War II it colonised London bomb sites on such a large scale that it became known as bombweed.

Once a scarce plant, rosebay willowherb (fireweed, bombweed, take your pick) is now easily found in verges, broken walls and rough lots all over Bristol (and indeed Britain). A similarly opportunistic species is Oxford ragwort. This cheerful little plant, related to our own blazing yellow common ragwort, was discovered on the slopes of Mount Etna and carried back in triumph to Oxford where it grew politely in the Botanic Gardens for decades. However, the railways lent it an escape route and it is now one of the commonest plants of our pavements and gutters. The adaptability of plants is a constant source of wonder.

© Dawn Lawrence

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NEWS

Cotham Gardens off to a positive start

COTHAM Gardens Primary School has begun the new school year brightly with a positive Ofsted report and an improved outside area at its infant block.

Decking at the Elmgrove site was replaced over the summer after the original construction had proved inadequate.

Chris Seaton, chief executive of the academy trust that runs the school, said: "We are so delighted that the children can once again enjoy the full benefits of outside play at Elmgrove. The new decking lifts the whole site."

"This part of the site is now in a better condition than when it opened 10 years ago, an achievement that required a great team effort from my colleagues in school as well as partners in Bristol City Council. We are grateful to them all."

Cotham Gardens has become a one-form entry school this year. Just before the end of the last academic year, the school received a second monitoring visit from Ofsted following its last full inspection in December 2024. The visit report has just been published, and it makes encouraging remarks about all the main areas of the school.

The inspectors praised efforts to improve reading, noting that "better resources,



Staff and pupils at Cotham Gardens on the renewed decking at the school's Elmgrove site

staff training and consistent approaches to teaching" had resulted in phonics and early reading becoming a recognised strength of the school.

Ofsted also highlighted a culture of belonging at Cotham Gardens, leading to attendance levels above national averages.

Head of school Emmeline Smith said: "We

are so pleased that this report reflects the commitment of our staff, pupils, trustees and families to ensuring every child feels valued, supported and inspired to succeed.

"While we remain ambitious for further improvement, we are proud of the strong progress being made and excited about the journey ahead."



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- who look after others and their world.



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EDUCATION

Badminton boost

BADMINTON School is celebrating a fantastic set of GCSE results, with over a third of Year 11 pupils achieving grades 9-7 in in every subject. Overall, 73% of all grades awarded were at 9-7.

Headteacher Jessica Miles said: "This year's GCSE cohort have all demonstrated incredible determination, studiousness, and enthusiasm, and these results are a reflection of those qualities. I am immensely proud of how they have embraced the demands of their schooling as well as co-curricular commitments with dedication and passion.



"Whether excelling in their classrooms and the exam hall, pushing themselves through sporting endeavours, or contributing to our local community, they have all set a wonderful example of what it means to be a part of the Badminton community.

"I know that the whole school will join me in congratulating them on their efforts, and of course in thanking the staff who have helped to guide and support them throughout their journey so far."

COMMUNITY NEWS

FRIENDS OF REDLAND LIBRARY

On Thursday October 8, the Friends of Redland Library are hosting a talk on "W.A.S. BENSON: an influential pioneer of the Arts and Crafts movement" given by Professor Ian Hamerton of the University of Bristol.

William Arthur Smith Benson (1854-1924) was both an architect and designer renowned for his imaginative and practical metal work designs. A close friend of both William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones, Benson was a founder member of the Art Workers Guild and was instrumental in establishing both the Home Arts and Industries Association and the highly influential Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society. Benson is best known for his daring and innovative work in the sphere of electrical lighting; examples of his work have always been widely admired (even during his own lifetime) and are becoming increasingly rare and desirable. Professor Hamerton is editor of the 2005 book "W.A.S. Benson: Arts and Crafts Luminary and Pioneer of Modern Design".

On Tuesday October, 20 we are celebrating the world's longest-running radio drama series "The Archers", which has aired over 20,000 episodes since its first broadcast in 1951. In "Ambridge Lives: The Archers", we are joined by guest speakers John Telfer and Caroline Harrington.

John Telfer has appeared as the Reverend Alan Franks in over 300 episodes of The Archers since 2003. He is also fondly remembered as Willy Pettit from the BBC crime drama Bergerac.

Caroline Harrington has written 470 episodes of The Archers from 2008 to 2023.

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

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

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

Finally, we need volunteers to help organise and publicise our events. If you would like to help, email FriendsOfRedlandLibrary@gmail.com



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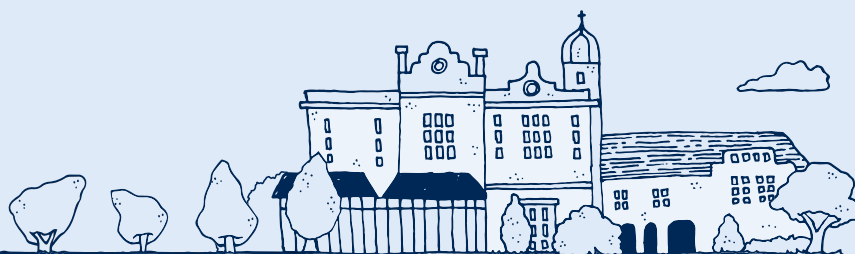


**BADMINTON
SCHOOL**



**From Thornbury,
Backwell & Portishead**

Educating girls aged 3 - 18



Whole School Open Morning (for ages 3 – 18)
Saturday 10 October

Pre-Reception & Reception 'Stay and Play'
Friday 16 October

Visiting Morning
Friday 20 November



Scan to book your place

EDUCATION



CHS's record results

CLIFTON High School's Class of 2026 achieved the best GCSE results in the school's history.

This year, 24% of all grades awarded were 9s, with 43% at 9-8 and 63% at 9-7. 97% of pupils achieved 9-4

William Phelan, head of school, said: "We are immensely proud of our Year 11 pupils and all they have achieved. These record-breaking results are richly deserved and reflect not only academic excellence but also the determination, resilience and character shown by this cohort throughout their time at Clifton High School. "These outcomes are important, but they sit alongside the personal growth, confidence and wider achievements that make each pupil unique."

Redmaids on a High!

REDMAIDS' High students saw 63% of GCSE grades awarded 9-8 (A*-A), significantly higher than the national average of 12.3%, with 82% at 9-7 and 98% of grades awarded 9-5.

The school celebrated strong results across a range of departments including English Language and Literature, maths, art, Latin and modern foreign languages.

Rebecca Armsby, Head of Year 11, said: "We are immensely proud of our Year 11 and all that they have achieved. It has been a real privilege to share this journey with them and to watch them grow into the remarkable young women they are today. It has been a joy to see all that they have accomplished, and we look forward to seeing where their talents and ambitions take them in the years ahead."

Jane Prescott, the school's interim head, said: "These extraordinary GCSE results are a reflection of the hard work and determination of our students, and the dedication of the staff who have supported them along the way."



REDMAIDS'
HIGH SCHOOL
FOR GIRLS • BRISTOL
GDST

We invite you this Autumn

to join us at our

Senior School Open Morning, Saturday 3 October



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■ ADVERTISING FEATURE

Helping Young People Feel Like Themselves Again

happyLIFE

BEING a teenager has never been particularly easy. But growing up today brings its own set of pressures, such as school, exams, friendships, social media, expectations and the constant feeling that you're supposed to know who you are and where you're going.

Sometimes, young people just need a little help making sense of it all.

Your child isn't broken. They're just figuring it out.

That simple idea sits at the heart of Happy Young Lives, a Bristol-based coaching and therapeutic service created by Faye, a former secondary school leader with twenty years' experience working with young people.

"I spent my career watching teenagers navigate some of the most important and challenging years of their lives," says Faye. "What became increasingly clear was that sometimes the support they needed went beyond what a classroom could provide."

Today, Faye combines that experience with professional training in life coaching and Rapid Transformational Hypnotherapy (RTT), helping young people who may be struggling with anxiety, low confidence, exam pressure, school worries, fears and phobias, or simply feeling overwhelmed by life.

This isn't about putting labels on young people or telling them what's wrong with them. In fact, it's almost the opposite.

Life coaching gives young people a relaxed, confidential



and judgement-free space to talk openly with someone who isn't their parent or teacher. Together, they can begin to understand what they're feeling, develop practical ways of dealing with challenges and, importantly, rebuild confidence in themselves.

For young people who feel particularly stuck, Faye can also draw on RTT, alongside her coaching work, while her teaching background means she can provide calm, personalised academic support when schoolwork and exams are part of the problem.

And there's another member of the team: Luna. Faye's therapy

dog can join sessions where appropriate, helping to make what could otherwise feel like a daunting experience much more relaxed.

As a mum herself, Faye also understands that when a child is struggling, the whole family can feel it.

"Parents often know that something isn't quite right, but don't necessarily know what to do next. Sometimes having another trusted adult in their child's corner can make an enormous difference."

Faye sees young people in private consulting rooms at **Litfield House Medical Centre in Clifton Village, Bristol**, with

online sessions also available throughout the UK and internationally.

The first step is simply a free 20-minute conversation. There's no obligation and no hard sell, just a chance to talk about what's going on and whether Faye might be able to help.

To find out more or arrange a free chat:

Happy Young Lives
Phone / WhatsApp:
07732 881750

Email:

faye@happyyounglives.co.uk

Visit:

www.happyyounglives.co.uk



ARTS

Anniversary role for Sir Greg

AN 'old boy' of Bristol Old Vic Theatre School is returning this month to help the school celebrate its 80th anniversary.

World-renowned Shakespeare expert Sir Gregory Doran will direct the third year BA Acting students' production of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.

Sir Gregory, who studied drama and English at Bristol University, enrolled at the theatre school which overlooks Clifton Downs on its Professional Acting course in 1980.

"Since graduating from the theatre school Gregory has charted an extraordinary course through the British landscape, culminating in a decade-long tenure as the Artistic Director of the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC)," said a spokesperson at the school.

"This production of *Romeo and Juliet* will showcase fifty



Sir Gregory Doran

per cent of the graduating BA Professional Acting cohort. This offers audiences a chance to see the stars of tomorrow directed by a titan of the British stage."

Stuart Henry, principal of the school which was founded by the actor and theatre director Sir Laurence Olivier in 1946, said: "Reaching our 80th anniversary is a proud milestone for all of us here at the school.

"Bristol has such a rich creative heartbeat, and we feel



Stuart Henry

incredibly lucky to have grown alongside this city. Being woven into the history of Clifton is a privilege, and as we look toward the future of the school, we can't wait to celebrate our legacy with the neighbours and residents who make this community so special."

Romeo and Juliet by BOVTS students will be staged at the Tobacco Factory Theatre in Bedminster from October 31 – November 7.

Panto plea

THE Bartholomites, a local, friendly, inclusive panto group, has been performing in the area for over 50 years, and is now looking for new members young or old.

You could be a main character, part of the ensemble, help with costumes, lighting, even stage managing. A great opportunity if you are looking for the skills/ volunteering part of your Duke of Edinburgh, or a fun activity for the cold winter months.

The group will perform its next show in the February half-term holiday, (tickets on sale from January) with rehearsals held at Horfield Methodist Church on Sunday afternoons/evenTo find out more, or express an interest in a particular role, please send an email to thebartholomites@gmail.com

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Inner Voice Theatre Company presents The Hound of the Baskervilles

MARKING the 125th anniversary of the classic Holmes and Watson whodunnit, Bristol's newly established 'Inner Voice Theatre Company' is delighted to be part of Arnolfini's exciting creative programme this autumn.'

The *Hound of the Baskervilles* is a hilarious modern take on a great British classic, with three fantastic young actors playing fourteen parts between them. When Sir Charles Baskerville is found dead in the garden of Baskerville Hall, his family estate on Dartmoor, with a look of terror carved on his face, and the paw prints of a gigantic hound beside the body, Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson are called in to investigate.

This production played to packed houses back in April at Bristol's legendary 'Tobacco Factory Theatres'. **'Audiences loved the show'** (Tobacco Factory). **'Brilliant, funny, with a great cast and hundreds of jokes'** (Gareth Edwards, veteran TV comedy producer).



INNER VOICE THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS

THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES
A HILARIOUS HIGH-ENERGY COMEDY-THRILLER

At the Arnolfini, Narrow Quay, Bristol

DATES/TIMES: 1st, 2nd & 3rd October: 7.30pm
3rd October: 2.30pm (signed performance)

TICKETS: £22 Standard - £18 Under 30's - £14 Under 18's & Concessions
Available on Headfirst, or via Arnolfini website:
<https://arnolfini.org.uk/whatson/the-hound-of-the-baskervilles/>
AGE RECOMMENDATION: 8+

Script by Olivier Award Nominees Steven Canny and John Nicholson
'Bursts with imagination, intelligence and twinkling irreverence'
The Guardian

To advertise, contact Emma on 0117 9082121 or 07715 770448 or email emma@cliftonvoice.co.uk

NEWS

1hr bus ticket on the cards

A NEW city centre circular bus service and a one-hour ticket are being considered as part of a £4 million upgrade.

A one-hour ticket would let passengers catch two different buses in the same journey, instead of having to pay twice.

The city centre loop bus would run anti-clockwise, potentially running from Temple Meads to Old Market, Cabot Circus, Broadmead, the Centre and Redcliffe.

These are two ideas for how best to invest income from the Clean Air Zone to make travel in Bristol easier. Another is to reduce fares for day rider tickets.

The city council's transport policy committee voted last month to set up a task group of councillors to discuss how to spend the £4 million, with new bus services or ticket changes potentially launching in April or September next year.

HUNDREDS of petitioners have called for better lighting to be installed along the Concorde Way cycle route.

Local councillors said the part of the path between Muller Road and Mina Road was "perilously dark" during the winter months. More than 740 people signed a petition calling on Bristol City Council to install streetlights along Concorde Way near the Ashley Down train station.

The petition was presented to councillors on the transport policy committee September 17.

Green Councillor James Crawford, who represents Bishopston and Ashley Down, said: "This lack of lighting has a disproportionate impact on women and girls, many of whom understandably feel quite unsafe using these isolated, unlit paths after dark.

"This isn't really an isolated problem. Inadequate lighting affects routes and paths across our communities, and we need a much more systemic approach to identifying and addressing these safety concerns. I'm hoping that

Hundreds back call for Concorde Way lights

this petition is a start of a wider piece of work looking at making our city feel safer."

This section of the route is used by many people including schoolchildren at Fairfield High School and passengers heading to Ashley Down train station. But there have been reports of muggings and attacks in the tunnel underneath the railway.

The hundreds of signatures on the petition will demonstrate the support of the local community for better lighting. But at this stage it's unclear how much the lighting would cost to install, and where the funding would come from.

Green Cllr Emma Edwards, who also represents the ward, added: "This is something that we've been working on for a really long time. It's one of the

main walking routes for children at Fairfield School going back up into Bishopston. And then obviously we've got the Ashley Down train station now, so people are walking up to the train station."

Around 1,000 commuters use Concorde Way every day, connecting people to major employers such as the University of the West of England and the Ministry of Defence. The seven-mile walking and cycling route runs through St Pauls, St Werburghs, Ashley Down and Lockleaze, and all the way up to Cribbs Causeway.

Ashley Down station opened in 2024 as part of a major investment in local train services by Network Rail and the West of England Combined Authority.

Reports by Alex Seabrook, Local Democracy Reporter



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FROM YOUR COUNCILLORS

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

Works on Princess Victoria Street

Short-duration repair works are taking place on Princess Victoria Street. When the street was pedestrianised it became clear that, in the event of major storms, water in the street was not draining adequately. Following concerns raised by Paula and local traders, paving slabs have been relaid and drainage channels adjusted. Hopefully now the street will now be able to cope with the worst of British weather!

Bristol Waste new recycling containers

New recycling containers will be arriving across the city before Christmas. These will include a new red bag for plastic and cans, new blue bags for cardboard and paper, and bottles will be collected as now from the black plastic containers.

The main change is that cardboard and paper will now be recycled together and plastic and cans will be collected in a red bag. This is because the storage capacity of the bag is greater than the capacity of the boxes and it's easier for people with limited space to store these bags than the recycling boxes. Old recycling containers that are being replaced will be collected from the kerbside as part of normal collection routines.

Avon Riverside 2100

Bristol City Council is working with the Environment Agency and the West of England Combined Authority to better protect properties along the River Avon.

This includes businesses and homes close to the harbourside in Clifton ward. They are at risk from flooding as the impact of climate change accelerates, with rising sea levels and increased risk of storms. Jerome attended a presentation from Avon Riverside 2100 at the Hotwells and Cliftonwood Community Association AGM to hear about local plans for flood defences. The flood engineer explained why a tidal barrage across the Avon is not the answer and why the Hotwells entrance lock will need to be replaced. To find out more and to take part in any upcoming consultations, go to www.avonriversides.co.uk.

Downs vehicle dwellers

New Bristol City Council policies and enforcement have eliminated (for now) the vehicle dwelling on



and around the Clifton Downs. The possession order for the Downs (which is an important piece of the enforcement 'jigsaw') runs out in May 2027. Jerome is working with council staff to ensure that this possession order is renewed immediately or as soon as possible after its expiry. If it is not, the rapid and inevitable consequence, based on recent history, will be large encampments with associated antisocial behaviour.

Those film trucks

We regularly receive emails from Clifton residents complaining about filming. The trucks, the parking spaces they occupy and the general disruption are understandably a source of irritation. We can see why people ask whether it is all worth it. So we thought we would look at what filming actually brings to Bristol.

Bristol has become one of the UK's leading film and television centres, and the latest figures from The Bottle Yard Studios demonstrate just how much the industry contributes to our city and the wider West of England.

In 2024/25, productions supported by the studios brought almost £23 million of inward investment to the region and supported more than 170 full-time equivalent jobs. Employment among surveyed local suppliers grew by 38% between 2021 and 2024.

And this isn't simply money going into a film studio. Productions employ local crews and freelancers and use local caterers, accommodation providers, transport companies, specialist suppliers and businesses of all kinds. They create opportunities for young people to develop skills and build careers here rather than having to leave Bristol.

There is another benefit which is harder to put a price on. When millions of people watch Wolf Hall, Rivals, A Good Girl's Guide to Murder or The Outlaws, they are seeing Bristol. So yes, I understand the frustration when filming takes up your

parking space. But perhaps the occasional inconvenience is worth seeing in context.

Those trucks are not just carrying equipment. They are carrying investment, jobs, skills — and Bristol's name — out into the world.

Clifton LitFest

One of the things that makes Clifton such a rewarding place to represent is the number of people who give their time and energy to make things happen in the community. The Clifton LitFest is a good example.

Since February, Paula has been working with a hard-working team to put this year's programme together, so she is particularly pleased to see it finally out in the world. Copies can now be found in local shops and cafés, in the boxes at bus stops and, of course, in Clifton Library.

The festival has grown to three full days and has become an anticipated part of the Clifton calendar, bringing a welcome bit of life and activity to the Village

during those dark November days. This year's programme ranges across politics, history, science, music, books and ideas, alongside some lighter and more entertaining events.

For Paula, it is another example of what can be achieved when people in Clifton get together and give their time to make something happen. That community involvement has always been an important part of her work as a councillor, and is one of the reasons she was happy to take on the chair of FoCCaL, the Friends of Clifton Centre and Library.

The full programme is at www.foccal.com, but do look out for the printed brochure too. There's something rather nice about picking one up and browsing through it — and perhaps discovering something you hadn't expected to want to see.

Contact us

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BOOK REVIEW

Pick a Colour

THIS novel is set in a nail salon in an unnamed city in an unnamed country. Our narrator is 41-year-old Ning, an Asian immigrant and the salon owner who lives in an apartment above the salon.

While Ning and her team are all Asian immigrants, the customers are mainly white natives. Every staff member has a name tag with Susan printed on it because Susan is easy to pronounce. Susan is always available. Susan is never fully booked. All the staff have black shoulder length hair and wear black T shirts with black trousers. The novel takes place over one working day. Ning fills us in with her backstory and those of her co-workers. Ning was once a boxer but retired after putting an opponent into a coma. Her trainer fixed her up with a job in a nail salon. After 12 years working for someone else, Ning opened her own salon. She has lived alone for five years, but has invented an imaginary partner called Bob as her customers like it when you have a man to complain about. She often brings him up to fill out a conversation. Every day she hears about babies, affairs and the

by Souvankham Thammavongsa

ups and downs of married life.

Her customers come to talk as well as having their nails done. The salon offers 83 different nail colours. Every customer is met with the phrase Pick A Colour.

Her colleague Mai is confident, assured and lives with her ailing mother. Nok turned up on her first working day with her two kids as she had no place to drop them off with. She subsequently brought them with her for all her shifts.

We meet a fascinating array of customers. There is Marla who has suffered five miscarriages and who has a loud voice, hence her nickname Miss All-Caps. We also met Roger who always has a sport pedicure and always gives the salon a one star rating on Google. Ning and her team often chat to one another in their native language, ridiculing their demanding white customers.

This is a funny, tender and multi layered novel, chronicling the immigrant experience and the dignity and despair of work with savvy witty dialogue between Ning and her co-workers. For this book and many more, drop in on your local librar *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

ADVERTISING FEATURE



DORIS

(The Girl Next Door?)

Written by
Bruce Fellows

Performed by
Kate McNab & Mike Akers

"... goosebump delivery...steadfast performances..."
 A.Joyce (online review)

Doris Day was good at everything... except picking husbands!

A one hour, ten minute roller coaster of song and drama.

AUTUMN 2026

Alma Tavern Theatre, Bristol	Sunday 4th October	at 5.30pm
1904 Arts, Bristol	Friday 23rd October	at 7.30pm
Cleeve Village Hall, Nth. Som.	Saturday 24th October	at 7.30pm
Blake Theatre, Monmouth	Friday 30th October	at 7.00pm
Mission Theatre, Bath	Sunday 1st November	at 7.30pm

links to ticket booking on www.ministryofentertainment.co.uk

DORIS (The Girl Next Door?)

THIS Autumn, The Ministry of Entertainment, the prolific West Country retro theatre company, (590 shows so far), led by Bristol singing legend Kate McNab, takes its latest show, DORIS (The Girl Next Door?) on tour, starting in Bristol at the Alma Theatre and Bristol 1904 Arts, then moving to Cleeve, abroad? to Monmouth and finally back to Bath: Find dates, venues and booking information to your left.

The result of careful research and interlaced with many of Doris's most popular songs, performed to perfection by Kate, the play, written by Bruce Fellows, offers insights into the real woman as Doris relives her successes and heartbreaks with her new beau. Audiences have agreed that Kate gives a superb performance, brilliantly supported by Mike Akers as the men in her life.

******* ... goosebump delivery ... steadfast performances ...'** A. Joyce (online review)

Doris could sing, dance and act, do anything, in fact, except have a happy marriage. Three men, three disasters. Que sera, sera.

■ FROM BRISTOL CENTRAL'S MP

It's great to be back working for you again

As you may have seen, on 1st September I returned to Parliament after taking a leave of absence for health reasons. As anyone who's ever had serious health issues can tell you, recovery isn't linear, but I am making good progress and am proud to be back and able to amplify the voices of those living in Bristol Central.

I firstly want to say a huge thank you to all of you, my constituents, for your understanding and compassion while I have been working on my recovery. Thank you especially to those who sent me supportive messages during my time away, sharing your own stories of burnout and recovery, and words of advice. I have been blown away by your kindness.

I recognise that I have been enormously fortunate to have been able to take this time, and that many people faced with the same situation would not be so lucky. No one should be penalised for being too unwell to work, and no one should have to jeopardise recovery because of job insecurity. This is something I am determined

to change.

My immediate priority as I return to full-time work is tackling the issues that are most important to our community. As you may have read in these pages, over the summer my team has been working tirelessly to help with the individual issues and collective concerns that you have raised. I will now be taking those further: demanding answers and action from those in power.

Already I have put questions to ministers on issues like the delivery of council homes, expanding bathing water designation, and the influence of fossil fuel lobbyists. I look forward to being able to report substantial answers and progress on these and many other issues in the coming months.

I have also been working particularly hard, alongside the other Green MPs, to hold the government to account on their climate commitments in the face of sustained pressure from the oil and gas industry. It is clear that if this government is serious about protecting our health, national security, and ecosystems, they

must prioritise moving faster on the transition to renewable energy and electrification, and leave fossil fuels in the ground. I attended the National Emergency Briefing screening at Cotham Parish Church, and was so inspired by the dedication and enthusiasm to take on this challenge in our community. I will never stop advocating for a safe future for us and future generations.

Finally, I wanted to let you know about my latest efforts to end the housing crisis in Bristol. You might have seen the headlines - Bristol is now the least affordable city for private renters in England, surpassing Greater London! Sadly, this wasn't a surprise to me, as I'm sure it wasn't to many of you. It's something I am committed to tackling. That's why I've launched the Bristol Central Renters Survey, which is open until October 16. I aim to gather hard data on the reality of renting in our city to take to the government and demand change. If you're a private renter and have five minutes to spare, you can contribute anonymously to this



**Carla Denyer
writes for
the Voice**

survey using this QR code.

• **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 carla.denyer.mp@parliament.uk**



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■ MESSAGE FROM POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

Investing in your ideas to cut crime

FROM my experience as your police and crime commissioner, I know that the people closest to local challenges often have the clearest understanding of what could help address them.

I also know there is no shortage of passion, expertise and determination in our communities across Avon and Somerset.

Over the past two and a half years, I've heard brilliant ideas from grassroots organisations, volunteers, residents and community leaders.

But I have also heard that access to funding can be one of the biggest barriers to turning these ideas into action.

That is why I am investing £500,000 over the next two years to support community-led projects that prevent crime, reduce harm and make communities safer.

My new Community Fund

invites voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise organisations to apply for grants of up to £10,000, for projects that will make a real difference and support my Police and Crime Plan priorities.

Those priorities include reducing crime, violence and anti-social behaviour, preventing crime, supporting victims, and strengthening community relationships.

More than 1,000 people across Avon and Somerset helped shape these priorities during my time campaigning and when I was elected as your PCC.

They reflect the challenges, issues and priorities that you raised with me.

While the police have a vital role to play in delivering these priorities, lasting improvements depend on partners, organisations and residents

working together to prevent harm and improve safety in our neighbourhoods.

This fund is about supporting you to do just this. It's about backing local solutions and enabling more of our communities' ideas to become reality. It's about driving positive local change and helping people who are at higher risk of harm, victimisation or offending.

Applications for projects in South Gloucestershire, Bristol, Bath & North East Somerset and North Somerset are being administered through Quartet Community Foundation (quartetcf.org.uk). Organisations in Somerset should apply through Somerset Community Foundation (somersetcf.org.uk).

I encourage you to look at their websites for application rounds and criteria, and to explore whether the fund could support your work to

improve safety and deliver these priorities.

There will be several opportunities over the next two years to apply for grants through the Community Fund, as part of my ongoing commitment to investing in you and your ideas, wherever you live in Avon and Somerset.

I look forward to seeing the ideas, projects and partnerships that emerge through this fund, and the difference they will make to people across our region.



With Police and Crime Commissioner Clare Moody

MATTHEW KING

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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 welcomed. Plants always available. Cash & cards accepted. Events: "Jazz in the Garden" & Cafe on 10th October. 9.45am-2pm and our annual Winter Market & Cafe on 4th November 9.45am - 3pm.

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.

Various dates

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

Oct 8th & 22nd Italian Islands Wines
Oct 21st & 24th Tuscany Regional Tasting
Annual Special- Big Christmas Wine Tastings:
Nov 12th, 14th, 18th, 19th, 28th
Dec 3rd, 9th, 10th, 17th, 18th, 19th

Wine & Dine
5 courses paired with 6 wines

October 10th - Tuscany
November 20th & 21st - Christmas
December 11th & 12th - Christmas

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

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

17 October 2026

■ **BRISTOL BACH CHOIR**
Redland Park United Reformed Church, Whiteladies Road, Bristol BS6 6SA. 7.30pm The Glory and the Dream Tickets: £21 (reserved), £15 (unreserved) Students & under 18s £1 www.bristolbach.org.uk 0117 214 0721. The title piece by Richard Rodney Bennett will be joined by Vivaldi's much-loved Gloria, motets by Purcell and Dove in our autumn concert.

Wednesday 21st October

■ **BRISTOL OPERA CLUB**. Arabella Richard Strauss's charming and effervescent lyric comedy focuses on whether the aristocratic Arabella, performed by the radiant-voiced Renée Fleming, manages to find 'the right man' for whom she craves. All are welcome to The Apostle Room. Clifton Cathedral (Worcester Road Entrance) 6.30 for 7.00. Admission £8.00/ Students £1.00 - cash only please. Easy parking. Bar. Further details 01275 848526 borkmail100@gmail.com

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.

■ **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.

■ **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.

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

■ 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. 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. 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

WHAT'S ON

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

■ **LOCAL CHOIR ACTIVELY RECRUITING NEW MEMBERS.** We meet at Stoke Bishop CE Primary School, BS9 1BW on Thursdays, 7.45 - 9.15pm. We are a well-established mixed choir performing both

sacred and secular music. See website www.henburysingers.org contact secretary at secretary@henburysingers.org.

■ 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.

■ 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).

Send details of your events and activities:

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

in no more than 40 words
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For private patients experiencing persistent pain, diagnosis is often the first step towards finding the right treatment. Alongside diagnostics,

the hospital now offers pain management options, including its new Shockwave Therapy treatment, which can help manage certain painful musculoskeletal conditions and support recovery.

Whether you need a scan to investigate ongoing symptoms or are looking for options to manage pain, fast access to diagnostics and specialist support can help you understand what's causing your symptoms and help you feel back to your best sooner.

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A TECNIS PureSee lens offers a wider range of clear vision, making it an option for active people who enjoy driving, walking, sport or being outdoors and want to reduce their reliance on glasses.

For those who love reading, sewing, painting or other close-up hobbies, a TECNIS Synergy multifocal lens provides clear vision across near, intermediate and distance ranges, helping you enjoy activities at different distances.

If you have astigmatism, a toric lens can correct this alongside your cataract, potentially improving clarity for activities where sharp

vision matters, such as golf or detailed crafts.

Your consultant will recommend the most appropriate lens based on your eyes, lifestyle and visual priorities. Private patients can access treatment through their private medical insurance or by self-paying. Flexible payment options are available.

To find out more or book an appointment at Practice Plus Group Hospital Emersons Green, call 0117 453 0877 or visit www.practiceplusgroup.com



SPORT

Clifton make a winning start to season

WITH a batch of new signings Clifton Rugby Club made an encouraging start to the new campaign with an impressive performance away to Cinderford in the Forest of Dean and at home in a tough local derby against Old Redcliffians.

These two bonus points wins endorsed the preparation by the coaching team and gave spectators an opportunity to positively assess new players.

The Cinderford win featured high tempo running by the backs in the second half and a pack that more than held their own against a club known for forward power. Centres Harry Johnson and Harry Tovey made serious dents in the home defences. The sunshine and firm all-weather pitch presented ideal conditions for the second half recovery.

Crowd favourite Brad Talbot powered over early on and Tovey crossed to counter two Cinderford efforts, and it was 12-12 on the scoreboard before the Forest men opened up a 24-12 lead.

The second half belonged to Clifton who scored five more tries



Tom Anderson in charge

with fly half Tom Quinlan striking conversions and a penalty in a 48-point victory.

The Old Reds game in front of a large crowd of partisan supporters provided high level entertainment. Clifton pulled off a hard-fought victory against tenacious opponents and ran out 35-26 victors in scoring five tries. The boot of Quinlan was again a factor with all tries converted in tricky windy conditions.

Clifton Sausage Man of the Match skipper Tom Anderson led his team admirably through



Jack Grundy on his way

example and commitment. He burrowed over for a try with other scores from lock Toby Hutchinson who charged over, winger Zak Hamid who weaved to the line, centre Dylan Power running a great line and flanker Jack Grundy taking advantage of a quickly taken penalty.

Clifton will be watching the progress of other teams in this competitive league as the autumn unfolds with Luctonians currently looking to be on good form.

Four products of Clifton's long established Mini and Junior section

featured in Bristol Bears opening match. George Taylor, Jimmy Halliwell, Paddy Pearce and Ollie Harris were joined in their team's second outgoing by Joe Owen who playing career developed in the Clifton 1st XV. JJ

The M&J section is in action on Sunday morning with new players welcome. Detail can be found on the club website.

October 3: Loughborough Students (h)

October 10: Bournville (a)

October 17: Devonport Services (h)

October 31: Barnstaple (a)

Roger Opie

VINEYARD NEWS with INGRID BATES

Decision still in the balance

SEPTEMBER is always an interesting month in the vineyard. There is a sudden shift from summer into autumn that seems to happen remarkably quickly within the first few days of the month. The mornings become crisp, the light changes and there's a clarity to the air that wasn't there just a few weeks before in August. Even the smell in the air is different as the plant life begins to shift away from growing and move toward the senescence of winter.

Last month I wrote about trying to decide whether we would pick the grapes at our Wrington vineyard at all this year. Frost earlier in the season had left us with grapes at quite different stages of development which made it hard to decide.

Since then, we've had quite a lot of rain. The berries have swelled and it now looks as though there is a decent amount of fruit to pick after all.

So the question is 'what we're going to do with it?'

We've decided not to make any still rosé this year, so we're considering using the grapes to experiment with something a

little different. At the moment though, that decision quite literally hangs in the balance. We're watching the sugar and acidity levels and letting the grapes tell us what they want to be!

If the acidity drops too far or the sugar climbs too high, they may find themselves heading towards a rather more spirited destiny. If we can retain good acidity while the sugar levels remain stable we might have the makings of something red and fizzy.

By the time I write next month, all of these decisions will have been made and harvest will be behind us. For now, it's a case of testing, tasting, watching the weather and waiting to see exactly what this rather unpredictable vintage wants to become.

And for anyone wondering about the pottery wine noggins I mentioned in the summer, they are coming! I'm hoping to have them available through the Dunleavy Vineyards website within the next month or so. Do get in touch about wine for your Christmas work events because we are



working with another local supplier to create a range of options for everyone.

E: hello@dunleavyvineyards.co.uk

W: www.dunleavyvineyards.co.uk

TikTok & Instagram: @dunleavyvineyards

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Kingsdown, Bristol | Guide Price £1,250,000

A beautiful Grade II Listed Georgian end-of-terrace townhouse presenting elegant and well-proportioned accommodation over five floors, with a sunny southerly facing rear garden.

Stunning Grade II Listed end-of-terrace Georgian townhouse | Walled and very private southerly facing rear garden with rear lane access | Circa 3000 sq. ft of accommodation across five floors | Full footprint open-plan kitchen, dining and family room opening into the garden | Ground floor study and sitting room / library | Full width first floor drawing room | Master bedroom with en-suite bathroom | Four further double bedrooms across the upper two floors and a family bathroom | Elegant, retained period features and superb natural light | Useful vaulted storage | EPC: tbc

In all circa 3000 sq.ft (278.70 sq.m)

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LEESE & GORDON

INDEPENDENT ESTATE AGENTS



Stoke Bishop

Guide Price £1,050,000

A beautifully extended and thoughtfully updated 4 bedroom detached family home, offering spacious and versatile accommodation throughout. Impressive open-plan kitchen, living and dining space. Off street parking for multiple cars, beautiful rear garden. No onward chain. EPC C



Clifton

Guide Price £325,000

Full of character and charm this 1 double bedroom first floor apartment has well-proportioned rooms and large south-facing windows that fill the accommodation with natural light. Approx. 675 sq ft. Attractive communal gardens to the front and rear and an allocated parking space. EPC D



Stoke Bishop

Guide Price £325,000

Fantastic first-floor apartment in the highly sought-after and leafy Sneyd Park area of BS9, offering 2 double bedrooms, a separate study, spacious living accommodation, communal gardens and a garage. EPC D



Stoke Bishop

Guide Price £500,000

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

LEESE & GORDON

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PROPERTY OF THE MONTH



Henleaze Guide Price £1,425,000

A superb 5-bedroom detached family home, ideally positioned in the heart of Henleaze.

Offering generous and versatile living accommodation, extensive off-street parking via the in and out drive, detached garage. Delightful family garden and the added luxury of an outdoor swimming pool. This is a wonderful home that will appeal to a wide range of buyers. EPC C.



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BACP 01047262

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.

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

For younger readers



HALLOWEEN PARTY

1. _____	11. _____	21. _____
2. _____	12. _____	22. _____
3. _____	13. _____	23. _____
4. _____	14. _____	24. _____
5. _____	15. _____	25. _____
6. _____	16. _____	26. _____
7. _____	17. _____	27. _____
8. _____	18. _____	28. _____
9. _____	19. _____	29. _____
10. _____	20. _____	30. _____



Can you find the longest word?



© www.ActivityVillage.co.uk

Txtpert

Theme: Animal world

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

- 1 728 (3)
- 2 228 (3)
- 3 66673 (5)
- 6 8245 (4)
- 7 72632 (5)
- 9 4663 (4)
- 10 744 (3)



Down

- 1 726 (3)
- 2 2433824 (7)
- 4 6722 (4)
- 5 24766 (5)
- 7 787 (3)
- 8 624 (3)

Easier sudoku

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			5		
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1				3	
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