Keynsham Town Council is looking to work with the police, other statutory authorities and the community to tackle anti-social behaviour around the town.

A recent spike in incidents has seen the bandstand in the Memorial Park damaged and a football pitch at Manor Road put out of commission for the rest of the season due to vandalism. Last week, youth workers at the council-run TimeOut Centre and music studio on Bath Hill had to call the police following problems with a group of youths on the premises.

Town clerk Dr Cheryl Clerk says the council has been receiving an increasing number of complaints from residents and would like to see a coordinated approach in response. She said: “The town council is aware of increasing concerns being expressed by residents and business owners in respect of an escalating level of

Continued on page 2
Coordinated approach to Keynsham anti-social

Continued from page 1

anti-social behaviour and vandalism that started during the summer, and the town council itself is also suffering from the effects. “The town council youth

workers have been trying to engage with the group of young people riding bicycles in Market Walk, who have attended open access sessions at TimeOut. However earlier this week,

the level of disruptive behaviour from this group became unacceptable and the youth workers had to summon the police.” The damage to the football pitch occurred on Saturday

11th November and the bandstand was vandalised on the night of Tuesday 14th November. Keynsham Town Council is unique in that it runs its own professional youth service, current employing a full-
time team leader and six part-time youth workers. Two outreach workers have recently been employed to commence work, starting in Queens Road, the Memorial Park and the High Street. But as Clive Fricker, who chairs the council pointed out, the youth service is intended to provide for the needs of young people in the town, not resolve problems of anti-social behaviour. He said: “The council want to ensure that all young people in Keynsham have the opportunity to participate in the activities at TimeOut and it is very disappointing that the behaviour of this one group impacted on the enjoyment of the rest of the young people who were participating in a rapping workshop at the time. “It is not the responsibility of our youth workers to ‘solve’ the anti-social behaviour problem in Keynsham but the town council is mindful that the youth service is in place to help assist the authorities in tackling the problem - hence why we have initiated a pilot outreach project. However, the level of abuse
our staff have been subjected to recently has been intolerable, and we have a duty of care to ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and the other young people participating in youth service activities.”

The next Keynsham Area Forum meeting is on Thursday 30th November at The Space and residents who have concerns over anti-social behaviour in the town are urged to attend.

Dr Scott said: “Residents can assist by reporting all incidents of anti-social behaviour to the police and, if safe to do so, taking pictures of the incident. We would particularly like to request Manor Road residents keep an eye out for any further vehicular activity on the football pitches. We would also like to hear from residents who feel they are living in a particular hotspot that hasn’t already been identified as part of the outreach pilot.”

See also Letters page 10

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**Kingswood Park is suffering from ongoing vandalism.**

Sometime during the evening or night of last Tuesday (14th November) the remaining trunk of an old tree was pushed over and left on the ground.

“The trunk was about 1.5 metres high and about 30cms in diameter, so it must have taken some effort to topple it,” said Jim Whittaker, secretary of the Friends of Kingswood Park.

“The trunk was halfway along a footpath running parallel with the burial ground. We have reported this to the police because of the similar attack to our owl carving late last month.”

The crime reference number for this latest incident is 31615112017. If you have any information that can help the police call 101. Mr Whittaker said that on a happier note, the Friends are expecting work to begin soon on installing much-needed new equipment for the children’s play area. This will only be the first phase of a more substantial improvement programme.

“And we will soon be ordering some more benches so we can sit and relax in next year’s sunshine,” he added.
Police have charged two people in connection with arson attacks on commercial premises in Saltford and Bath. Michael Graham Warman, 38, of Upper Weston, Bath and Liam Joseph Waugh, 29, from Bishopsworth, have been charged with conspiracy to commit arson and possession of a stun gun which is a prohibited weapon.

The arson charge relates to fires at Morris Barber Shop on Bath Road in Saltford and Just Good Tattoos in Cork Place, Bath, in August.

The police ask if anyone has information for which can help their inquiry to call 101 and give the call handler the reference number 5217181621.
Bath & North East Somerset Council is looking to shed 300 jobs to help meet the pressures on its budget. The council is assessing how it can save a further £16m by 2020 – on top of the £27m that is in the process of being saved, and the £15m announced in the previous budget – while continuing to deliver essential services. This will help to close a growing funding gap, due in part to the increasing demand and rising cost for adult and children social care.

The council says its priorities are to put residents first; protecting and caring for its most vulnerable residents, nurturing people’s health, safety and wellbeing, and providing ways for everyone in the community to reach their full potential, and that over the next 12 months it is committed to working closely with the local community to help reduce demand and make the money go further.

Keynsham North councillor Charles Gerrish, who is the Cabinet Member for Finance & Efficiency, said: “Despite already making significant savings and capitalising on opportunities to earn income, we will need to change the way that we work, identify what we can do differently less of, or stop, and how we can raise additional income. “We are already working hard to maximise extra income and will be putting our case to Government to recognise the unprecedented challenges that we face.”

The council estimates that in future it will become a smaller organisation as it changes the way it works, which will result in a reduction of around 300 full-time-equivalent (FTE) jobs in its 2,000 FTE-strong workforce (15%).

The detailed presentation going out to local area forums says there are many reasons why the authority is under financial pressure and it forecasts that by the end of this year, 80p in every £1 will be spent on social care.

An increasing number of people are living longer with complex conditions that require support which is expensive; more children and young adults are living with complex care and educational needs – some costing up to £250,000 per person – and there are 14 per cent more children in council care than last year.

The council wants to hear people’s views on how best the authority can meet the pressures on its budget, and people are invited to one of the council’s local area forums. The Keynsham one is on 30th November at The Space at 6.30pm.
When South Gloucestershire Council announced earlier this month that it would be trialling a change at the Hambrook traffic lights to “keep traffic moving” during the Bromley Heath Viaduct works, there were warnings from motorists and residents that it wouldn’t work.

And if comments on the council’s dedicated Facebook since the two-week trial began on 6th November are anything to go by, it’s not. Southbound traffic on the B4058 (from Winterbourne) can no longer turn left onto the ring road at the Hambrook lights. Traffic in lane 1 is still able to travel straight on towards Frenchay or right towards the M32. Lanes 2 and 3 remain right turn only.

The aim of the trial is to improve traffic flow and reduce queuing from Winterbourne, while at the same time helping traffic flow on the M32 by creating space at the Hambrook lights for traffic to move into.

Here are some examples of what people have been saying:

“The trial changes are shifting a problem from one area to another. The traffic in and around Frenchay and the Cleeve Wood Road area is very, very busy. There is congestion in every direction around rush hour. A usual 10 minute journey from Frenchay Common to Bromley Heath Road (at the same time) is taking on average 3x longer .... up to 30 minutes. This trial really does need to be rethought. Clearly a great number of cars are going straight through the lights at Hambrook and not right as you suggest. It’s causing a real problem.”

“I commend the attempt to change the traffic flow but unfortunately, the reality is very different. And although it may improve traffic from the M4/M32, it is adding misery to local people who have already had to put up with MetroBus works for the last 18 months. Put yellow boxes on the M32 roundabout, increase the number of cars that can get through a green light in the filter lane to Winter-bourne/Bradley Stoke and you may see a difference. Asking people nicely to use the diversion properly is just NOT going to work.”

“This has been the most hideous week. Please reverse this awful awful AWFUL decision for everybody’s sanity. My 20 minute journey is now 80 minutes. Trial has failed I think?!”

“What about the cars that still turn left which there are still a fair few that do. Been behind cars every day this week that go past the closed bit then swing hard left with no indication. It’s an accident waiting to happen.”

“Please, please reinstate the left turn. I live in Frenchay and regularly travel to Bromley Heath. The congestion in and around Frenchay is really bad with all routes in and around the area gridlocked. The stopping the left turn really does need to be re-thought.”

But a few people are happy with it. One said: “The changes are a big improvement for travelling from the M5/M4/M32 onto the ring road! Thank you!”

Writing on Facebook at the end of the first week of the trial, the council said: “Thank you for all your comments regarding the trial changes and the effect it is having. We are reading all the constructive posts and will take your feedback into account when we decide what to do at the end of the trial. Can those of you who would normally turn left at Hambrook and are now using Cleevewood Road and Cleeve Hill please try following the signed diversion and go around the M32 and then onto the Ring Road and let us know how you get on. We have changed the signals on the M32 so it should be quicker to follow than going straight directly into Frenchay.

“The diversion for left-turning traffic during the trial is to turn right at the traffic lights, travel around the M32 and then continue, as you would have done, eastbound on the ring road. Please follow the diversion signs, this will help your journey.”
Saltford

Find out about new play equipment

People are welcome to go along to Saltford Hall tomorrow (Thursday) to have their say on the new designs for play equipment for Chelwood Road Play Area.

There will be an exhibition in the Wansdyke Room at the hall from 3.15pm to 4.30pm.

Kingswood

Shock departure of school principal

The principal of John Cabot Academy has resigned unexpectedly after just over a year in the role.

Letters were sent to parents last Tuesday by Dr Dan Nicholls, executive director of education for the Cabot Learning Federation, telling them that Simon White had left John Cabot Academy in Woodside Road.

Mr White had previously been head of school at Wellsway School in Keynsham.

Dr Nicholls said in his letter: “I wanted to share with you personally some important news about the leadership arrangements at John Cabot Academy, which have taken effect today.

“Following a period as principal of the academy, Simon White has decided to resign from the Cabot Learning Federation. I am sure that you will join me in thanking Simon for his hard work and commitment during his time at John Cabot Academy and wish him well for the future.

“This sudden news will of course be a surprise, but should not be a cause of alarm. The school has an able and stable senior leadership team who will now welcome Sally Apps, executive principal, as the school’s headteacher.

“Before taking up the post of executive principal this year, Sally was the principal at Bristol Metropolitan Academy, part of the Cabot Learning Federation, which, under her tenure, became one of the most consistent highly performing schools in the South West.”

In June 2016 John Cabot Academy was told by Ofsted that it needed to improve. At its previous full inspection in 2009 it had been rated as Outstanding and described as “an exceptional school”.

The school was last visited by Ofsted in July for a monitoring inspection when Mr White’s leadership was praised including efforts to tackle behaviour and attendance issues.

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Ofsted says that Hanham Woods Academy is “Inadequate” and has placed it in special measures. The report is critical of the effectiveness of leadership and management at the 862-pupil school, as well as of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment; personal development, behaviour and welfare; and outcome for pupils.

Ofsted’s verdict is a blow to efforts to improve secondary education standards in South Gloucestershire. The council’s new Scrutiny Commission recently ordered an in-depth review into why progress has not been made in raising standards.

The Ofsted report said senior leaders have failed to secure improvements in pupils’ progress in key subjects and that very recent changes to the leadership of the school have not yet made a difference to the achievement of pupils.

“Pupils have underachieved across a range of subjects for too long. Pupils’ progress in GCSE English, mathematics and science has been unacceptably low. The pace of improvement has not been swift enough.

“Disadvantaged pupils’ progress from their starting points falls well short of the progress made by other pupils nationally. Consequently, many disadvantaged pupils leave without attaining the qualifications needed to succeed in the next stage of their education or training.

“Teachers’ expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough. As a result, senior leaders and governors have had an inaccurate picture of the performance of the school.”

The report adds that work is poorly planned and too often fails to engage boys and challenge the most able pupils. Pupils’ literacy skills are not developing quickly enough and some teachers do not pay close attention to pupils’ spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Behaviour is inadequate because too many lessons are disrupted when pupils lose concentration. There is a revised system for promoting better behaviour, but it is in its infancy. Many pupils are said to not take enough pride in their work, rates of pupils’ attendance have remained well below average, and too many parents are unhappy with the lack of information they receive from the school.

Governors have not ensured that Pupil Premium funding is used effectively and efforts to improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils have had little impact.

However, the report acknow-
Inadequate’

ledges that senior leaders have ensured that safeguarding practices have improved. Pupils are said to be safe and well cared for and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported well by the curriculum and through assemblies. Governors and senior leaders have also stabilised the finances of the school, with a large budget deficit having been eradicated.

A new chair of the academy council was recently appointed and Ofsted says he has the necessary experience “but has not had time to make a demonstrable difference in the school”.

In a letter sent to parents before the report was published last Friday, Cabot Learning Federation chief executive Steve Taylor says: “This was the first inspection at the school since March 2012 and it is the first to have been carried out since the academy became part of the Cabot Learning Federation in September 2014. We have been in discussion with Ofsted throughout the inspection and since, as we did not feel that all aspects of the reports are a fair assessment of the academy. While the outcome is certainly a serious blow, we nevertheless have to accept that the inspection report has highlighted a number of key areas in which we must urgently improve.”

“The inspectors recognised that the current leadership team is taking the steps necessary to improve the academy although after only four weeks of the school year there had been insufficient time for the impact of some of these changes to be measured.”

Mr Taylor reminded parents of the vision of the federation to work together to accelerate school improvement and “embed excellence”. He said the federation has “a solid track record in turning round schools that have faced difficulties”. He added that the federation will be supporting the principal Steve Kneller and his team as they work through the inspectors’ recommendations: “I remain confident that we will be able to get Hanham Woods Academy back on track.”

A spokesperson for the CLF added that the current assessment from Ofsted reflects the fact that Hanham Woods is going through a substantial period of change and considerable consolidation under the leadership of Mr Kneller who arrived a year-and-a-half ago.

“On leadership they (Ofsted) said, ‘The principal has worked hard and with determination to secure a committed team of senior leaders. The great majority of these senior leaders took up their posts just a few weeks before the inspection.’”

The spokesperson added: “Both before and since the inspection, the academy has taken action to make the swift improvements that will help to equip the students with the skills – academic and social – they will need for a happy and fulfilled life in adulthood. There are very encouraging signs of recent marked improvements and the academy is extremely confident they can meet the challenges and targets that have been set by Ofsted.”

Mr Kneller added: “We recognise that the phrase ‘special measures’ sounds worrying to parents, but in practice it means we have to take immediate action with regard to the inspection report’s recommendations, so that we can demonstrate tangible improvement by the time Ofsted carries out a follow-up inspection. I want to assure parents that we will work tirelessly to achieve this. We need to work together to ensure the very best outcomes for all young people who attend the academy.”

A South Glos Council spokesperson said: “We are deeply disappointed that Hanham Woods Academy has been placed in special measures and we are already in discussion with the sponsors Cabot Learning Federation to make sure the action plan is implemented at the earliest opportunity. Improving educational outcomes for every child in South Gloucestershire continues to be a top priority for us.”

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Sudoku

1 - Easy

2 - Hard

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Chemists Weekend Opening

Sunday 26th November

- Boots, Gallagher Retail Park, Longwell Green (10.30am-4pm)
- Asda Store Longwell Green (10am-4pm)
- Boots, Emersons Green Retail Park (10.30am-4pm)
- Sainsbury's, Emersons Green (9.30am-4.30pm)
- Stockwood Pharmacy 78 Hollway Road, BS14 8PG (9am-7pm)
- Keynsham Pharmacy, 15 Station Road, BS31 2BH (10am-5pm)
Use of Manor Road Playing Fields
Dear Stephen
Following receipt of a complaint, and other accumulating circumstances, Keynsham Town Council have asked me to write to you as they would like to remind everyone that Manor Road Playing Fields is:

a) a registered ‘Fields in Trust’; 
b) managed by the town council on a long lease from the landowner B&NES;  
c) classified as a public open space; and therefore 
d) subject to some restrictions on use.

The town council recognise the importance and value of this facility to both immediate local residents and the wider community. It is therefore important that the community continues to work together with the town council to manage this wonderful space for everyone’s positive benefit – despite some recent unpleasant events.

Fireworks - As a public open space, there are certain legal restrictions.

It is against the law to use a public open space (i.e. Manor Road Playing Fields) for private firework displays and this “could” be punishable with a fine and/or prison sentence. Fireworks are only permitted on public land in Keynsham if they are part of a professional display, whose organisers have submitted appropriate risk assessments/events management plans to B&NES for sign off and have also sought the permission of the landowners (B&NES) and any leaseholder (which in the case of Manor Road is the town council).

The town council is disappointed to learn that the perpetrator of a recent firework event on our facility did not contact the town council in advance to seek permission/advice. The council is “doubly disappointed” that it appears the perpetrator did not liaise with immediate neighbours so local residents were not forewarned to undertake preventative measures to avoid distress for any family members or pets.

Having undertaken an investigation, the council understands this was an exceptional one-off event by a naïve individual, so will not be taking any further action on this occasion. However, once this letter is published, Keynsham residents need to be aware that any future discharge of fireworks on or over Manor Road will be subject to criminal prosecution.

Recent vandalism
Regrettably – “some person/or persons” drove a vehicle over the playing fields on Saturday 11th November resulting in severe damage/ruts to Football Pitch No 3 so it will now have to be out of action for the rest of the season whilst our groundsmen undertake repairs.

Whilst committing to a longer-term plan to try to permanently prevent this type of situation in the future; as an interim measure, the town council would like to request that all residents in the area remain vigilant and if they see any further anti-social activity that they contact the police expediently or, (if after the event), the town council at townclerk@keynsham-tc.gov.uk

Pictures are welcome providing they can be taken in safety.

In conclusion
“Good neighbourliness” has always been one of Keynsham’s strengths and long may it continue. The town council would like to request that users of our open spaces continue to espouse this – whether it be cleaning up after your dog or requesting permission from the town council to stage an event before it is held (and please also advise the neighbours). Whilst it may be tempting to use Manor Road for some ad hoc sports training or other event at short notice – despite the fact it is a public space, the town council as the “owner” does need to be contacted in advance so we can ensure appropriate permissions/pitch allocation/planned maintenance/permissions are in place.

Finally, the council and its grounds maintenance staff would like to thank everyone who has taken the time to express compliments on the standard and upkeep of Manor Road this year. They are therefore upset about the recent level of vandalism that negates all their efforts to date.

If, as a town, Keynsham wishes to tackle the current escalation in anti-social behaviour from young people, then as adults we firstly need to set a continuous example in good neighbourliness.

Dr Cheryl Scott
Town Clerk, Keynsham Town Council

Teenage choices
Dear Editor
It is always sad to hear about youngsters behaving irresponsibly and putting themselves and others in danger. I too was caught up in the Halloween behaviour you reported in Issue 499.

I was driving my car down Memorial Road when I met a crowd of cyclists riding in the middle of the road, most of whom seemed to have no lights. I’m afraid my immediate instinct was to keep driving very slowly and hope they would disperse. Luckily, they did, as some sensible person was calling out “Get off the road, get off the road!”

They had been wheeling around every-which-way which is most disconcerting when one is used to order and expected traffic manoeuvres.

The dangerous mayhem was a sad contrast to the Remembrance Service I attended in one of our local secondary schools this year. The pupils read out the poems and lines that describe the horrific scenes of the First World War and were listened to in utter silence by their fellow pupils. Their complete attention added to the occasion and made it all the more moving. We also remembered all who had fallen or were injured in subsequent military actions. I admire the contribution the readers and listeners made and hope that the others on Halloween, who contributed nothing but alarm, have come to realise how foolish they were. It’s a choice: make a contribution for the better or worse. The youngsters throwing fireworks, breaking a bus window and riding so stupidly around a busy road made a foolish and senseless choice that benefited no one - least of all themselves.

April J Begley
Resident of Hanham

Shedding light on mystery
Dear Sir
I write in answer to a question raised by Julia Chandler, one of your readers in the Letters section of The Week In, Issue 499 - ‘Little Choir Boy Mystery’.

In November 2008 Keynsham Town Council held a competition asking local children to design a Christmas light, the prize being that the overall winner...
The Week

The Week

We very much hope that the choir on his lamp post – he always makes us seeing the little choir boy hanging back Christmas since then we look forward to and for us as a family and every Christmas. This was a very proud moment for Izzy (now 16) and our family and friends.

Sharon Goddard

Concern over £3m council borrowing

Dear Sir

All residents in Keynsham will recently have received a very lengthy community consultation questionnaire to complete. I felt rather daunted by the length of it and some of the questions were rather complex. However, I diligently tackled it and was rather taken aback to see towards the end a reference to the town council borrowing £3m which will be repaid by council tax payers.

Application has been made to the Secretary of State to borrow this sum to buy/develop a site for community facilities. I do encourage everyone to at least look and make comment about this issue as this is a large amount of money to borrow. We in Keynsham already pay the largest precept in B&NES and this would of course rise if the decision is made to borrow the £3m.

I have lived in Keynsham for 40 years and very much value the amenities here, such as the Memorial Park, library etc., but I do think that the town council needs to keep a sense of proportion about their plans for the future. My understanding is that their powers are rather limited anyway and in fact, the majority (71%) of the town council budget is spent on administration. I really do urge residents to respond to this consultation and also wonder just how much this exercise has cost.

In all this time, however, Keynsham has never truly boasted its own, dedicated voice, and it is this which is so exciting about KTCR. The town has a long association with radio in the popular imagination – older readers will recall that Horace Batchelor broadcast his adverts on Radio Luxembourg (which broadcast from high-power transmitters in the Grand Duchy, much to the annoyance of the British state) in the 1950s. At the end of each advert, Mr Batchelor would spell out clearly the town’s unusual name for far away listeners: “K-E-Y-N-S-H-A-M”.

Incidentally, my request to the town clerk in July for a replacement notice board in the Memorial Park so that memories for Izzy (now 16) and our family and friends.

Sharon Goddard

Good luck to Keynsham’s radio station

Dear Editor

I was delighted to read in Issue 500 of your fair and balanced journal that Keynsham Town Community Radio (KTCR) has been granted a licence to broadcast over a few miles’ radius of the town centre.

Community radio was hard won in the British Isles. Whereas in countries like Italy and France, left-leaning governments implemented a regulatory framework for community and special interest radio and TV in the 1970s and ’80s, both Labour and Conservative governments proved very hostile to the idea of small-scale radio in the UK.

Labour was ideologically opposed to any non-BBC radio, whilst the Tories feared giving the public an unmediated voice. As a result, there was a significant movement of unlicensed broadcasting and by 1988, the government conceded that there were more than 200 pirate radio stations on the air across the UK: indeed the pirate radio movement of the ’70s, ’80s and ’90s constitutes one of the most long-lasting campaigns of civil disobedience in Britain.

Many of today’s household names in broadcasting started as pirates during this era, including dance music station Kiss FM, London Greek Radio, Asian station Sunrise Radio and south-west London’s much-loved Radio Jackie. In the Greater Bristol area, too, unlicensed stations proliferated. Their history and legacy are preserved at a website called https://www.thepiratearchive.net/

Starting with the John Major government, and then quickening in the Blair era, there was a gradual relaxation of the rules governing broadcasting, with the development of internet radio also leading to democratisation of the medium. Community and special interest stations were gradually legalised.

In all this time, however, Keynsham has never truly boasted its own, dedicated voice, and it is this which is so exciting about KTCR. The town has a long association with radio in the popular imagination – older readers will recall that Horace Batchelor broadcast his adverts on Radio Luxembourg (which broadcast from high-power transmitters in the Grand Duchy, much to the annoyance of the British state) in the 1950s. At the end of each advert, Mr Batchelor would spell out clearly the town’s unusual name for far away listeners: “K-E-Y-N-S-H-A-M”.

So, good luck to KTCR. I look forward to hearing you on the air next year sometime.

Terry Starr

Radio enthusiast

South Bristol

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Design A Christmas Light Competition

The Week

Sharon Goddard

services...
Sadness at café closure

Dear Sir

I just want to say how sorry I am to hear that Esther’s Café at the Batch in Cadbury Heath is closing. The Batch, a lovely building, was opened about two years ago, and indeed is the jewel in the crown for the Cadbury Heath area. This area has had a few issues in the past, and I am glad to say now, that with the co-operation of the various groups in the area working together, we got it together in Cadbury Heath!

Esther’s was the diamond in this crown, offering wonderful home-made food; the soups and cakes were delicious, amazing omelettes, and the best chips in the west, a really diverse menu, giving you lots of choice, and always a smile from Esther and Pete.

Anne Thomson, Longwell Green

What’s going on at The Batch?

Dear Stephen & Becky

We just wanted to express our disbelief at the sudden closure of Esther’s Café at The Batch in Cadbury Heath last week. What a travesty that this has happened as it was the only cafe in this area, which is also a Priority Neighbourhood. We have loved having this wonderful cafe in our community and has been used loads by us and our friends.

We need somewhere for all our residents where they can be socially included, that is in walking distance and is affordable. Where will we go now?

This just seems to be another sudden change at The Batch in recent months. South Glos Council own this building and funded its build to the tune of £2m.

As far as we know, BICSA (Banjo Island Community & Sports Association) runs it as the trustees. Why then has the youth club moved out? StreetGames moved out? Jackie and the job club gone? Restrictions on who uses the park? The manager gone? Who next? Who is this community building for as it doesn’t feel like it’s for our community much?

We want our cafe back and we want Esther and Pete back, please.

D H & friends

Cadbury Heath residents

Editor’s note: Minutes of the trustees’ most recent meeting show that the café’s contract was being terminated with BICSA saying it would employ staff and take over the day-to-day working of the kitchen.

This week Erica Williams, chair of the trustees, told us the cafe would be a lot cheaper for the residents and standards raised. She said Esther and Pete had chosen to cease trading, albeit they were given until 28th November.

In response to the other points raised in the letter, she said: “The job club continues as before, Community Learning are supporting this project by providing qualified tutors. The youth club has not moved out as it runs on a Monday and Friday as it has always done. There have been a couple of times that they haven’t been there and not informed the staff at the Batch or the children. StreetGames goes out to where children hang about and either run activities in the park or on the golf course. Their Fit & Fed also runs activities in the park and the golf course. “There are no restrictions on who uses the park. It is a public open space for everyone to use. If anyone wishes to hold an event in the park, the usual procedure follows, that BICSA is informed by the group/charity/agency when they wish to hold their own event as we have football and cricket throughout the year, so that if those activities have to be moved, then we can arrange that if advance notice is given. Those groups would have to apply to South Glos Council for a licence to hold an event as we do ourselves to ensure that the correct risk assessments are carried out and that the police are also happy with the type of event that is to be held.”

She added that the trustees would not publicly discuss why the manager had left to protect both them and the trust.

• Esther’s Café is rated by the Food Standards Agency as 4 star – or Good

Lidl car parking

Dear Sir

In your edition dated 15th November you carried an article about the new Lidl store in Kingswood.

Keynsham

Food for thought

Is it possible to choose a diet that’s good for our health, protects the environment and helps prevent climate change? Keynsham’s community groups have come together to organise an event that aims to try to answer that question.

Patrick Holden, chief executive of the Sustainable Food Trust, organic farmer and former director of the Soil Association, has been invited to speak at the Space on Wednesday 6th December at 7pm.

Tickets are £5.50 (£1 for under-18s) from keynshamtickets.cloudvenue.co.uk
Could you please clarify whether there is any “free” parking in their car park? Is it restricted exclusively to Lidl shoppers?

The reason that I am asking is that this site used to be part of a Coop store in which there was some free parking for shoppers other than the supermarket. Also the wording of your article seemed to indicate that the new site also provided some parking for non-Lidl shoppers. I know from my visit on Friday last that there is a restriction on the time that you can stay.

I would be most grateful if you could clarify this matter for me, please.

NH Wooding

Editor’s note: Parking is free for two hours and a Lidl spokesperson has this week confirmed that the parking is currently for public use, as well as customers.

Thanks to you and your team

Dear Stephen

I would like to say thank you to you and your hard-working team for keeping so many of us informed about what is happening in our areas in The Week In. You have always remained unbiased at all times and this has enabled us all to be evenly informed, make up our own minds on certain issues, and be given the opportunity to write letters and comments. Long may you continue!

With many thanks

Amorée Radford, Keynsham

Make the most of Keynsham’s culture

Dear Editor

I sometimes wonder whether those of us who live in the Keynsham area realise how fortunate we are to live where we do. Here we are roughly halfway between two major cities with cultural, musical and theatrical performances available ‘on our doorstep’ so to speak. In addition to that however, there are such treats available in Keynsham. For those of us who enjoy live performances of classical music, the Keynsham Orchestra, under conductor Mark Gateshill, comes several times a year. Their recent visit on 18th November to St John’s Church gave much pleasure with a programme including Mozart’s Magic Flute Overture, Schumann’s Cello Concerto with 18-year-old soloist Joe Pritchard, and Brahms Symphony No 2. How wonderful it would be if we could give our own orchestra just a little more support and give ourselves an evening’s entertainment?

Morris Powe

Thank you for showing such respect

Dear Stephen

On behalf of the Royal British Legion Keynsham Branch I would like to say a huge thank you to all those who marched in the parade and to the wonderful people of Keynsham and surrounding areas who lined the streets to show their respect on Remembrance Sunday.

It is estimated that around 3,500 people attended, what an amazing show!

Amorée Radford
Secretary, Royal British Legion Keynsham Branch

We need real consultation on one-way system

Dear Editor

Does anyone have any idea how BANES Council will survey the Keynsham residents and shop owners to either accept or reject the one-way High Street?

It does seem that the severe traffic congestion caused by the trial system means that many potential customers etc. are avoiding Keynsham which will eventually lead to the High Street losing more shops.

Residents do not want the council to just make their own decision without REAL consultation. The recent council circular re waste collection could have included a questionnaire for return in December to save money but is that too easy?

David Whalley

LETTERS
Jail for killer of man whose body was dumped in Siston

Last Christmas Eve The Week In received a call from a local resident to say that a dog walker had stumbled upon the body of a man in Siston.

He had been stabbed multiple times to the body and face and his head was covered in a black bin bag. Gibbs Lane was sealed off and police were combing the area when we arrived. They would only say the death was “unexplained” but on Boxing Day announced that they had launched a murder investigation and named the victim as 31-year-old Mohammed Abdurezek.

He had been born in Ethiopia and came to the UK in 2004/05. He had been living in the Swansea area but was staying in Bristol at the time of his death. He had lived in the Swansea area but was staying in Bristol at the time of his death.

Two days later detectives said they believed he had been murdered elsewhere and his body transported to the remote spot.

On 30th December they said they were carrying out searches at St George’s House in Church Drive, St George, where Mohammed – known to his friends as Maratu – had been living. And just days into the new year, police made three arrests, seized a car to conduct a full forensic examination and searched a property in Craftes Road, Fishponds.

Two men were subsequently charged with the murder - Karl Cullen and Abdiwahab Abdulahi. And last Monday, after a trial at Bristol Crown Court, 43-year-old Cullen, of no fixed address, was found not guilty of murder but previously admitted a charge of conspiracy to supply class A drugs. He was sentenced to six years and eight months.

DCI James Riccio, who led the inquiry, said: “Mohammed Abdurezek was executed by Karl Cullen in revenge or retribution for him taking a mobile phone used to organise drug deals.

“He suffered a horrifying death and his body was transported in a black wheelie bin to a country lane and callously dumped in undergrowth.

“Following the discovery of Mohammed’s body, we launched a full-scale investigation and were able to trace his movements in the days leading up to his murder.

“It became clear that Mohammed had become involved with a drugs supply network which operated out of a flat in Church Drive, St George. This established clear links between him and Karl Cullen – who was running the network along with Abdulahi.

“This flat had belonged to a vulnerable man with significant health problems and Cullen had moved into it without permission to use it as a base to deal drugs – a practice known as ‘cuckooing’.

“It was here that Cullen carried out his deadly attack on Mohammed, on or around 9th or 10th December, before removing his body and carrying out a concerted clean-up operation inside the flat.

“Our inquiries focused on telephone usage, ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) data and CCTV inquiries and we located footage showing Cullen’s Ford Mondeo travelling towards Siston on 10th December. This is when we believe Mohammed’s body was deposited.

“Forensic investigators found traces of Mohammed’s blood on the floor and walls at the flat and behind a sofa bed.

“It was here that Cullen carried out his deadly attack on Mohammed – he was runnning a drugs network along with Abdulahi.

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Black Friday is one of the best days of the year to bag a bargain as retailers slash prices.

But if you can’t face the chaos, crowds and queues, but still want a great deal on a new TV – including 12 months’ interest-free credit - head to The Aerial Man which is opening its new showroom on Friday to coincide with the official launch of the Christmas shopping season.

The TV aerial and satellite specialist was based on Hanham High Street for many years but relocated over the summer to the former electrical wholesaler premises on the corner of Two Mile Hill Road and the Kingsway, and has dedicated free parking bays outside.

You’ll get expert, friendly advice from operations manager Richard McKenzie and his team, and can decide at your leisure which is the best LG TV for you. The range includes Which? Best Buys like the award-winning OLED TVs.

The Aerial Man also sells Humax recorders, DVD and Blu-ray players including 4K technology.

The business has grown significantly since it began 13 years ago but still holds the values of a local, family-run company and prides itself on the highest possible level of service at affordable prices. It is a certified Which? Approved Trusted Trader and proud to be a member of CEDIA, the international trade association for more than 3,700 member companies worldwide who design, manufacture, and install technology for the home.

The Aerial Man offers a wide range of services, including new digital TV aerial and satellite installations, TV aerial repairs, Freeview and Freesat. It also offers great subscription-free TV solutions.

If you want one of the team of professional engineers to visit you for a free consultation and quotation, call 01179 679028. The Aerial Man at 204 Two Mile Hill Road is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm with plans to open soon on Saturdays.
On Friday 24th November, Keynsham will be the centre of attention for a completely different reason. The annual Winter Festival not only signals the switching on of Keynsham’s Christmas lights, it is also a chance for the town’s businesses to show off the wide range of options in both retail and entertaining during the build-up to Christmas. For Friday night only, Temple Street will be completely traffic-free so that the expected crowds can enjoy a wealth of activities, entertainment and festive cheer at the market stalls and shops which are staying open for the evening. You can see the various car parking options on the map opposite and there is also a free Park & Ride service between the Waitrose Car Park on Broadmead Lane and the town centre. For the several thousand visitors expected on Friday night, it is also a timely reminder of just how much there is on offer in Keynsham. Since the implementation of the one-way traffic trial on the High Street, new and improved road signs will guide you to the nearest car park where there are almost 700 spaces.
available. In some, you can stay for up to 10 hours and the cost is only £1.70.

If you come to Keynsham to do your shopping on a Saturday, you can even park free of charge at the Bath Hill East Car Park. From there you simply need to walk up the steps into the new Market Walk, Temple Street and the High Street. With no pressure to get back to the car before your time runs out, there’s plenty of time to relax after your shopping to enjoy a coffee, lunch or a drink.

Christmas shopping and eating in Keynsham? Really? Yes, that’s right. It’s not just shopping malls where you have to do that. If you do set out with a shopping list of gifts for the family, what items are likely to be on it? Computer/hi-tech gadgets, clothes, toys, books, records, jewellery, household items, perfumes and toiletries? How are we doing? Well, in fact that’s only about half of the retail offer in Keynsham town centre. And then there’s the pop-up arts shop and the monthly farmers’ market to factor in as well.

And as for the relaxation afterwards, new eateries continue to open in the area in recent months, and each one has brought a new and varied option to the town centre offering. From organic pulses to macchiato coffee, Italian to Asian, Keynsham town centre really does cater for every taste – and not just during the day. The town’s evening economy is also burgeoning with not just its restaurants but music venues, film club, comedy club and professional theatre performances – when parking of course is free.

So why not set yourself a challenge this coming festive period? See if you can do all your Christmas list shopping in Keynsham town centre. Whether you succeed or come tantalisingly close, then there’s no shortage of watering holes in which to celebrate or commiserate. Doesn’t that sound more appealing than sitting in a traffic queue trying to get near a shopping mall this Christmas?

This feature was sponsored by Bath & North East Somerset Council’s business support service ‘Invest in Bath’. Email investin@bathnes.gov.uk
Kingswood new store ‘will boost town’s economy’

Kingswood councillor Pat Rooney, who is the leader of the Labour Group on South Glos Council, cut the ribbon to open the new Lidl store in Kingswood town centre last Thursday.

The store in Halls Road offers 199 free parking spaces.

Cllr Rooney said: “I am very pleased to welcome this brand-new Lidl store into Kingswood. It will attract more people into our town centre, which will boost our economy and other local shops and businesses. I wish it every success.”

Kingswood’s councillors have been actively engaged in helping to revitalise the local business association in recent months.
Siston Common campaign success

The Secretary of State has approved measures to protect the section of Siston Common in front of the Horseshoe pub from unauthorised traveller encampments.

Parish councillors have been keen to get a bund built to protect the green in the wake of a series of unauthorised encampments which have sparked complaints from local residents about intimidation and mess.

But South Gloucestershire Council, which maintains common land in the district, said it could not authorise (or pay for) the work, saying it was restricted by the Commons Act 2006 and 1904 Scheme of Management because 150 metres of the allowed 200 metres had already been used to protect nearby Siston Park from travellers.

Instead it advised the parish council to seek permission for the work from Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government Sajid Javid.

And last week the Planning Inspectorate said he had approved the parish council’s application to install the bund, which will be over 175 metres long and will protect over 7,500m² of precious common land.

MP Chris Skidmore, who has been actively involved in the campaign, said: “This will be a significant step forwards in ensuring that no unauthorised vehicles can access the Common. I will work with all parties involved to ensure that the work can be carried out as soon as possible.

“I am incredibly proud of the beautiful common land that we have right on our doorstep, it is a precious resource which strongly defines the character of our local area.

“I am sure that this will come as some very good news for residents and I’d like to thank the people of Siston for standing up for their local community as it would not have been possible to achieve this step forwards without the strong local support that we have seen on this issue.”

Ian Adams, who represents Siston on South Gloucestershire Council, and is also a parish councillor, has been closely involved in the application. He said: “I think it is fantastic news and demonstrates what patience and perseverance can do.”

He praised the chairman of Siston Parish Council John Hunt: “He has used his vast experience to ensure no stone went unturned when liaising with South Gloucestershire Council and putting together the application to the Secretary of State.”

The chairman of Siston Parish Council John Hunt said councillors were delighted and they would arrange for the works to be completed next March/April, before the traveller season begins.

South Glos Council’s new Scrutiny Commission recently ordered a review of the authority’s gypsy and traveller policy. There were unauthorised encampments in Stoke Gifford and Patchway this summer, as well as in Siston.

Boyd Valley councillor Steve Reade, who pushed for the review, said the council’s current policy had failed to deal quickly with incursions, trespass and damage.

Open day at new nursery class

St. Barnabas C of E Primary School at North Common is opening a nursery class called Little Stars in the New Year and is holding an open day on Thursday 28th November at 6pm.

It will be an opportunity to meet the team who will be leading and running the nursery class, to hear how it will work with the rest of the school, and the learning opportunities the children will have.

The new class will open on Thursday 4th January. There is more information on the website http://www.stbarnabasprimaryschool.co.uk/ or call 01454 862233 if you wish to attend the open day.

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Roller - Conservatory - Panel
Perfect Fit - Velux
Free measuring, fitting service & quote
20yrs Experience

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BS31 1DS T: 0117 966 3265
www.trojanblinds.co.uk

Hanham Christmas Fair

Saturday 2nd December from 3pm till 6pm

Father Christmas will be in his Grotto from 3.30pm till 5pm

This is also Small Business Saturday
Shops will have bargains and discounts on this day Come along and support your local High Street

Happy Christmas
from Hanham Business and Community Partnership
South Gloucestershire Council is asking for residents’ views on various levels of council tax it is considering for 2018/19. Now in the eighth year of national austerity measures, all local authorities are experiencing unprecedented constraints on spending and must continue to review what they do and how they do it to balance their books.

Prior to 2016/17, the council had frozen council tax levels for five consecutive years. However, for 2016/17 the Government ended its council tax freeze grant scheme and allowed local authorities with adult social care responsibilities to raise an additional 2% council tax ‘precept’ to support care for older people. This flexibility was subsequently increased to allow local authorities to increase the adult social care Precept by up to 3% per annum, capped at 6% across 2017/18 to 2019/20.

In February the council approved its 2017/18 revenue budget, confirming a council tax increase of 1.99% along with the 3% precept for adult social care. It also approved outline budgets for the following three years (2018/19 to 2020/21) to help it plan for the future. These included planning assumptions for council tax to rise by 1.99% each year, as well as adding the 3% adult social care precept in 2018/19 followed by 0% further increase in 2019/20 to make maximise use of the new flexibility and cover additional spending on adult social care costs.

In 2017/18 these changes meant an increase of approximately £65 per year (or equivalent to just £5.40 per month) for a band D household. Despite the council tax increases last year and those proposed for future years, the council still anticipates that current annual spending will be more than its income through to 2021/22. From 2011-17 the council has realised cumulative savings of £63.6m in annual spending, and identified a further £10.5m per annum of future savings to take place across 2018/19 and 2019/20.

Even with the assumption that the full savings plan is achieved, there is still a predicted budget gap amounting to £15.7m by 2021/2, meaning it will need to plan for further ongoing savings.

The council would like to hear residents’ views on the level of council tax the council should consider for 2018/19:

**Option 1**: To increase council tax in 2018/19 by 1.99% and in addition to raise a 3% council tax levy specifically to support care for older people this would mean a 4.99% council tax increase for South Gloucestershire Council and an increase of £67.84 per year (or £5.65 per month) for a band D household, raising an additional £8.7m.

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**SITUATIONS VACANT**

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**SITE SUPERVISOR VACANCY**

Hanham Health are seeking to appoint a professional, organised and enthusiastic Site Supervisor who will be responsible for maintenance, security and the health & safety of patients and staff across both Hanham Health sites.

Reporting to the Customer Service Manager, the main duties of the Site Supervisor are:

- To lock/unlock surgery buildings and to be responsible for the security of the premises and contents: to be available for emergency call out and allow access to the buildings whenever reasonably required to do so.
- To play a leading role in the maintenance, security and cleanliness of the buildings and grounds of both the Hanham Health sites.
- To carry out basic DIY maintenance to the practices interior and exterior buildings.
- To ensure that all Health & Safety regulations are observed at all times and assist in the development of policies.
- To be the primary point of contact for the contracted cleaning teams and to liaise with external contractors as necessary to resolve site issues.

The successful candidate will have a current clean driving licence, be flexible, reliable and have excellent organisational skills.

Hours: 30 hours per week – 8.30 am to 12.30 pm
Salary: £16,150 per annum

For a full job description please go to the recruitment section on our website: www.hannahhealth.co.uk

Please apply with full CV and covering letter to Anne.Kinch@nhs.net or by post to Hanham Health, 33 Whittucks Road, Hanham, Bristol BS15 3HY marked for the attention of Anne Kinch. Business & Finance Manager - closing date: Tuesday, 5th December, 2017.

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**Alexandra Homes**

**Full time Support Worker required**

Based in either Knowle or Kingswood, supporting adults with Aspergers & Autism.
- work shifts
- work 40 or 49 hour weeks
- work unsociable hours (8am-10pm)
- work weekends and bank holidays
- do at least one paid sleep in per week
- £7.86 or £8.26 per hour starting pay, depending on qualifications. £43 per sleep in.

Work involves, 40 or 49 hour weeks on a rota basis. Experience not necessary but desirable. Excellent training & promotion opportunities in a pleasant working environment with good CQC rating.

See website for rota example and company info

Please call or go to our website for an application pack.

Tel: 01179 678054
jobs@alexandrahomes.co.uk
www.alexandrahomes.co.uk

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**MERIDIAN TYRE REPAIR CO.**

**7.5 tonne Driver/Rep**

to cover existing runs
Must be fit and reliable
5 day week – Digi and CPC required
Tel: Steve Johnson on 0117 937 2139
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**Full Time Assistant Manager**

Duties include: working on reception; housekeeping; waitressing; bar work. Computer literacy is essential. You must be flexible, helpful and polite. Previous experience preferable, but full training will be given.

**GRASMERE COURT HOTEL**
To find out more, call 0117 986 2862, or email your CV to generalmanager@grasmerecourt.co.uk
**SITUATIONS VACANT**

**HorseWorld**

Corporate, Community & Events Fundraiser

Full Time

Up to £25k per annum

Established in 1952, HorseWorld Trust is committed to rescuing, rehabilitating and re-homing horses, ponies and donkeys in need.

We also run a ground-breaking educational programme called Discovery.

We are seeking a pro-active Corporate, Community & Events Fundraiser to help enhance our profile and grow support from corporate sponsors, community groups and fundraising events.

For more details please ring 01275 893035 or visit: www.horeworld.org.uk/jobs

Charity No. 1121920

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**Southdown Fish Bar**

Experienced Fish Fryer required

Hours and wages negotiable

Counter Staff required

Various shifts available

Please text and leave your number 07791 898464 or 07771 848453

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**Kingswood**

**Man arrested and suspected cannabis seized**

Police seized more than 160 suspected cannabis plants from an address in Kingswood last Wednesday.

At 10.45am officers searched a house in Blue Falcon Road following complaints from the community about a smell of cannabis in the area.

Officers found four rooms full of plants up to two metres tall and arrested a 27-year-old man of no fixed abode on suspicion of producing cannabis.

Neighbourhood PC Nick Smart said: “Information from the public gave us enough evidence to put before the magistrates’ court and get a warrant to search the property.

“We’re grateful to local people for giving us information about criminal activity – even small details will add to our intelligence picture and can be the final link, enabling us to take action.”

The attending officers were concerned about the electricity supply to the house and called out a power company to make sure the property was safe.

PC Smart said: “There have been a number of fires in the Avon and Somerset policing area which have been a result of tampering with the electricity supply in order to grow cannabis. Drug supply can also be behind anti-social behaviour and other crime which can have a significant impact on a community, so we’ll always take this sort of information seriously.”

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**Noisy roadworks begin this week**

Feltham Road at Pucklechurch and Pucklechurch Road at Hinton will be closed from tomorrow (Thursday) until 8th December for major resurfacing works.

This is a well-used cut-through between Pucklechurch and the A46. There will be access to properties and amenities only. Alternative routes will be signposted but South Gloucestershire Council says is possible that delays may occur on the surrounding network.

The works will start daily at approximately 7.30am and remain in place until approximately 4.30pm. These works will create a significant amount of noise.

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**Option 2**: To increase council tax in 2018/19 by 1.99% and in addition raise a 2% council tax levy specifically to support care for older people.

Rather than continuing to take the full adult social care increase in 2018/19 of 3%, the council could choose to increase the adult social care precept by 2% in 2018/19 with a further increase of 1% in 2019/20 possible to ensure it stays within the 6% cap across 2017/18 to 2019/20.

This would mean an increase of £54.38 per year (or £4.53 per month) for a band D household. This would raise an additional £7.5m but could mean further cuts of £1.2m to council services to maintain adult social care services at their current level.

**Option 3**: To increase council tax in 2018/19 by 1.99%. This would mean an increase of £27.06 per year (or £2.25 per month) for a band D household. This would raise an additional £5m.

With no adult social care precept this could mean further cuts of £5m to council services to maintain adult social care services at their current level.

**Option 4**: To freeze council tax in 2018/19 at the current level. While the council is committed to protecting frontline services as much as possible, if council tax is not increased, this would mean further cuts to services. The council would need to make additional savings of around £4.7m more than those which have already been identified.

The online consultation survey will close on 31st December. If you do not have internet access you can tell the council your views by calling 01454 868154.

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**Local disabled lady is looking for a Personal Carer**

I am a cheery active lady living with a disability in Bathford. Experience with disabled people, especially wheelchair users is preferable. Training available if required.

£10 per hour, higher rates for weekends and bank holidays.

You will be part of a team of staff. Part time shifts available are:- Monday to Tuesday - 7am to 5.30pm 2pm to 4pm, 9.30pm to 10.30pm

Main duties:

- Maintaining my Health and Wellbeing
- Driving me to places of interest and appointments
- Personal Care, bathing & support.
- This is a low working position
- Personal Qualities & Attributes required:
- Car driver with a clean licence.
- Reliable, flexible and trustworthy
- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS – formerly known as CRB) check will be required.
- CV’s are not accepted, please contact eleanorw@gmail.com and quote ref LR21977, and a form will be forwarded to you.
More than 70 people attended the annual Mencap quiz held at the Scout HQ in Keynsham. Congratulations to the team called ‘The Hopefuls’ who won the star prize, but then generously donated the items back. Raffle prizes were generously donated by local businesses including Reflections Hairdressers, Pure Beauty, Sainsbury’s, Simply Carpets, Pomegranate, 73 Degrees, Tesco, Bonzo Lounge and Booker. The prizes plus the bar and door sales helped the group to raise more than £800. This money will go straight to providing even more social opportunities to local people that are affected by a range of learning disabilities. Thanks go to all the volunteers who helped stage the event.
B&NES Cabinet has been forced to reconsider its plan to ask community groups and parish councils to take over the running of smaller and rural libraries in the area. Last month, it gave the green light for this proposal along with the plan for the Bath One Stop Shop and Library to share the premises at the Podium (Issue 496). Both decisions were referred by opposition councillors to the Communities, Transport & Environment Scrutiny Panel which met last week. The decision on the Podium move was upheld by the panel, which voted along party lines, but when it came to the community library approach, one Conservative councillor abstained, leaving the vote tied at 4-4. Chair of the panel John Bull then gave the casting vote to send the decision back to B&NES’ decision-making executive. During the hearing, concerns were raised over the lack of clarity over the eventual financial responsibilities of voluntary groups for the running of the service and maintenance of buildings, and a lack of clarity over the future of the ageing mobile library vehicle and what would happen in the event of a breakdown. Duncan Hounsell, a campaigner for Saltford Library and who chairs the Keynsham & Saltford branch of the Liberal Democrats, said: “B&NES Conservatives not only want volunteer groups to run branch libraries but also to pay the bills. People are willing to go this extra mile for a charity but I expect not for what residents expect to be a council-run service.” We understand that B&NES Cabinet is due to review the issue at a special meeting tomorrow (23rd November).
The issue of the A4 Air Decker bus service and Keynsham’s one-way system trial has occupied a lot of space in recent editions of The Week In. The operator, Bath Bus Company, says its service is being delayed and revenues are down, while correspondents to our Letters page claim it’s just semantics and there is a hidden agenda over concessionary passes.

Last week, we sat down with Bath Bus Company managing director Martin Curtis in an attempt to find out what’s really happening with the airport service. Before we started on the main issues, the first thing he wanted to make very clear was that despite the name of the company, this is very much a local business – and not a ‘minnow’ operator either. Bath Bus Company was founded 20 years ago, operating the city sightseeing tours and some local services. In 2011 it was purchased by RATP, the company which runs the Paris bus and Metro services, and is one of the largest transport companies in the world.

Bath Bus Company is an autonomous operation however, and currently has operations in Wiltshire and South Wales. All this is controlled from a depot in Burnett, and Martin, his managers and most of the staff live very locally and are very aware of the situation in Keynsham.

The A4 Air Decker was created by Bath Bus Company just over four years ago after two previous ventures to provide a link to Bristol Airport had started and failed. It was Martin’s belief that a route via the communities around the south of Bristol would be more likely to succeed than the Bath-only service which had run through the country lanes of the Chew Valley. The service had six months to prove itself and, aided by the continued growth of the airport itself, it is fair to say that it has proved a great success. It is not just down to more local residents using Bristol Airport but also the appeal of Bath as a tourist destination. Martin pointed to the number of guesthouses along the Newbridge Road in Bath where his bus stops just outside the door. Bizarrely, the busiest time of day for the service is around 4am as people head for the airport and the first raft of early morning departures of EasyJet and Ryanair. A lot of investment has gone into vehicles (Martin had just returned from a factory visit where the next two of his £230,000 vehicles are being finished ready for delivery at the end of the year), on-board facilities and driver training. And all this is reflected in the fares – a single journey from Bath to the airport is £14 (£20 return).

So why is local traffic even important? “It’s actually quite complementary,” says the MD. “When the airport is quieter, that’s when people are travelling between Keynsham and Bath.”

So does an additional minute on the journey to go around the High Street rather than through it really make such a difference? “The reality is that it is not just a minute. If you catch the lights wrong coming up Bath Hill, it’s more like five minutes and the real problem is that it’s on the way to the airport. People don’t mind about time when they are coming from the airport but on the way, they have a flight to catch and they don’t like delays.”

And what about the ‘conspiracy theory’ regarding concessionary fares. “There is absolutely no hidden agenda. We receive 92p from the local authority for each single journey but we want every one of those 92p fares. “We are actually grateful to the letter writer in The Week In who highlighted one issue. We were able to identify the driver in question who was unaware of the consequences (data retrieved from the concessionary cards has to be submitted to the local authority to enable payment) and has been trained accordingly.”

The Worshipful Company of the Trowel - Freemasons who meet at Keynsham Masonic Hall - raised £500 at their annual dinner dance towards a new scanner for the Bristol Royal Infirmary.

Members Chris Beckett and John Kidd presented the cheque to Elizabeth Pritchard, of the Friends of Bristol Haematology & Oncology Centre at the BRI.
The Week
• Wednesday 22nd November 2017

bus service

So is the threat to bypass Keynsham genuine? “At this stage I don’t know, to be honest. We are watching the situation closely. In the first month after the implementation of the one-way system, single journeys were down 19%. We have seen some recovery and changes to the Keynsham to Bath bus services have helped. But we have not fully recovered that shortfall. The service exists to serve the airport and local traffic tops it up. We want as many people as possible to use it.”

While Martin is keen to highlight that from his personal experiences, B&NES Council is one of the better authorities when it comes to working and liaising with local bus companies, he believes that the Keynsham one-way trial has proved detrimental to bus use – something all local councils want to promote.

“I question the benefits of the current system,” he told us. “Certainly, I don’t see how stopping the traffic is beneficial to air quality and the traders seem to be suggesting that the High Street is no better as a result.”

So does he have any suggestions of how to improve the situation? “One solution would be for Keynsham High Street to be buses only in both directions. Buses should go where people want them.”

Martin Curtis
In a referendum last Thursday, Whitchurch villagers voted to back the Neighbourhood Plan which has been three years in the making. Neighbourhood Plans were introduced under the Localism Act 2011 and give communities more control over the type of, location, size, pace and design of development in their areas. A total of 413 people voted in favour with just 14 against. Voters were asked the question: ‘Do you want Bath & North East Somerset Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Whitchurch Village to help decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?’ This week Paul May, who represents Whitchurch on B&NES Council, said: “A small group of us have worked for three years to produce a plan for the village. We have consulted and carried out surveys so it is pleasing that such a high turnout and high vote in favour tells us we have accurately reflected the views of the community. “It is especially important at this time because planners are proposing to destroy the village with new strategic roads running through it, 2,500 houses, extra pollution and a Park & Ride. The village will be welcoming new residents from the 50% increase already approved, but cannot cope with numbers that will make it five times bigger than it already is. “The village of Pensford is also worried by the additional traffic on its already dangerous road through their village.” He added: “There are different documents being consulted upon at the same time over the Christmas break. This is confusing for the community so we have fixed a village event on Thursday 23rd November to help people prepare and respond to each. “The Joint Spatial Plan appendix 7.2 sets out the proposal for 2,500 homes in the village, subject to the delivery of a A37/A4 link, A37/ South Bristol link and Park and Ride in the village. The Local Plan shows the proposed areas of development, the roads, options for the green buffer between the village and the city and location of the housing in the Green Belt. “I was elected to represent this lovely, historic village community and will help them have a voice. They deserve to be listened to.” The meeting is at the Royal British Legion at 7pm.

Keynsham

Dani wins Rotary’s Young Citizen Award

The Rotary Club of Keynsham have announced that the winner of their Young Citizen Award (YCA) is Dani Phillips. At their meeting on 8th November she was presented with her award of £50 for a charity of her choice, the YCA cup, a framed citation and medal. Dani attended with her parents, her sponsor Andy Wait (from KeynshamNow), Rotary district governor Alan Hudson, who made the presentation, assistant district governor Judy Powell and club president Norman James.

The Young Citizen Award is for individuals or small groups between the ages of 10 and 18 years who have spent time volunteering, working in the local community or caring for others and Dani ticked all the boxes. She has been a member of KeynshamNow for several years and now chairs the group, and is a keen advocate of young people’s interests in the community. She regularly attends meetings with local opinion formers.

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Shadow Health Secretary visits Cossham Hospital

NHS staff at Cossham Hospital received a visit from Shadow Health Secretary Jonathan Ashworth as part of efforts to keep the NHS high on the local political agenda. Mr Ashworth praised the hospital’s “fantastic and hard-working” staff, but said the future of the NHS is hanging in the balance as hospitals and health services, starved of the funding they need, struggle to cope with the increasing demands of an ageing population.

He said Labour pledged to invest more than £30bn of extra funding over the next Parliament as well as working to avert the recruitment and retention crisis by ending the NHS workers’ pay cap and guaranteeing the futures of EU immigrants currently working in the NHS.
The Britannia Tragedy

Special DVD Offer

On 6th November 1957, the Bristol Britannia airliner G-ANCA, on a test flight from Filton Airfield, plunged into a wood in Downend, killing the 15-man crew, and this year marks the 60th anniversary of the tragic event.

This catastrophe left an indelible mark on those who witnessed the horror unfold, and their memories are at the heart of this story.

The video documentary released by 1st Take in 1997 has now been digitally enhanced and includes coverage of a memorial service in Downend in 2007. It is the only comprehensive account of the West of England’s worst aviation disaster.

£11.95 with free postage – a saving of £4.50.

Wings Over Filton

Celebrate the rich aviation heritage of Filton airfield with this souvenir DVD. Flying machines which were designed, constructed and tested at Filton, have given the city a worldwide reputation for excellence in this field. This documentary is a tribute to Filton’s proud aviation heritage, which is an enduring legacy of the industry’s founding father in the West Country, Sir George White.

Using archive footage, colour cine film of former BAC Chief Pilot Bill Pegg and previously unseen 16mm footage discovered in a house in Filton we have pieced together an amazing aviation story. From the First World War Bristol Fighter, the Second World War Freighter, air-to-air filming of the Britannia and of course, Concorde.

Let’s not forget either the Bristol Sycamore from the 1950s, the first British designed helicopter in service with the RAF.

This unique 102-minute film collection will enthral and entertain while highlighting the incredible contribution Filton has made to British aviation history.

For Week-In readers it will be £11.95 post-free – save £4.50.

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Local funeral business Roy Preddy Funeral Directors asked Year 1 pupils at Barley Close Primary School to help design poppies for their Remembrance window display.

The winning designs were produced by Casey and Ryley and the pupils each received a WHSmith voucher when visiting the funeral directors with headteacher Jo Williams. Mrs Williams said: “Barley Close is a community school and we love to join in with local events. To work with the funeral directors is more uncommon but an important aspect of our community. It is great that the children can do something relevant at this time of year with a local service that is often difficult to talk about.”

Funeral director Jordan Walsh said: “In addition to providing practical help and support to bereaved families we believe it’s important to make a positive contribution to this community.

“We decorated our window with a poppy display to show our support for the Armed Services and those that have sacrificed their lives protecting this country and its interests.”

The new seven-day-a-week self-service system in the district’s libraries is said to be working well.

In a written question to the Executive Member for Communities & Tourism Heather Goddard, the Labour Group asked how successful the roll-out of Open Access has been into the district’s libraries to date. Open Access began in eight of South Gloucestershire’s libraries on 2nd October, allowing registered users over the age of 16 to access services during unstaffed hours. At the same time staffed opening hours were cut as the council needed to save £500,000 from the library budget. The mobile library service was also withdrawn.

Cllr Goddard said Open Access is still at an early stage but she is “very satisfied” with how things have gone to date. “Already over 2,000 people have registered to use Open Access and 1,276 library visits have taken place using it.

“Recorded figures show many people are now using libraries in the early morning when the libraries were not previously available. 46% of users are female, which repudiates concerns about women’s safety in the libraries when they are unstaffed.

“There have been no major problems and we are continuing to monitor Open Access.”

Downend Library will get the new technology later this year while Kingswood Library, which will move into the nearby Kingswood Civic Centre next summer, will have Open Access technology installed when it relocates.

Hanham Library is not getting Open Access because one of the fire exits has steps which would be impossible for people with mobility problems to use without assistance.

Full details of opening hours (staffed and unstaffed) for each library are available on the council’s website.

- Due to scheduled essential electrical work, Open Access was unavailable in libraries last weekend.

Keep in touch, let us know what you think, send us your news
www.facebook.com/theweekin

Sudoku Solutions

1-Easy

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Crossword Solution

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COMEDIAN    CITE
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NIRVANA    MOTET
E   C   T   L   O   B   E   I
LYCHEE    LIGHT
G   O   D   A   L   E   E   L
LAPDOG    IMBRUE
I   A   D   E   R   O   D
SYNOD     NAPALM
T   N   I   V   U   I   L
EVICT     ORLANDO
NEYNSG    S
SURE     GENEROUS
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6 weeks = £17
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26 weeks = £13
52 weeks = £12

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Similar percentage discounts apply equally to larger sized adverts.

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