

emersonsgreenvoice

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September 2026, Edition — Issue 113

FREE EVERY MONTH IN EMERSONS GREEN, LYDE GREEN, SHORTWOOD & PUCKLECHURCH

A great start



Lyde Green Community School head teacher Tom Hill and Year 7 students got to know each other, and their multi million-pound new school, when it opened for the first time in September. Full story: Page 5

Scooters seized in crackdown

POLICE have seized more than ten electric scooters, motorbikes and e-bikes in response to a rise in crime and antisocial behaviour.

Officers have been carrying out "enhanced patrols" along the Bristol & Bath Railway Path following a stabbing, a mugging and a rise in complaints about illegal use of e-scooters and modified e-bikes.

Patrols have involved neighbourhood policing teams, mounted officers and specialist bike units,

with support from South Gloucestershire Council's community safety team.

As well as high-visibility patrols, the force has also carried out "targeted enforcement operations" involving plain-clothes officers.

Away from the path, police have also been targeting illegal e-bike and scooter use in Mangotsfield, Frenchay and Emersons Green - seizing one e-bike that had a top speed of 62mph.

Turn to Page 2



Volunteers aim for nature haven

The Friends of Blackhorse Meadows are creating a community orchard and wildlife haven on the green space near the primary school.

PAGE 21

Surgery reopens after two years

Emersons Green Medical Centre is open again, almost two years after shutting because boiler repairs were needed.

PAGE 4

MP tells story of mother's death

Emersons Green's MP Claire Hazelgrove made a moving speech about her mother's last hours during a Commons debate on assisted dying.

PAGE 7

Craig Anthonys

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

A member of the



Bikes and scooters seized

From Page 1

An Avon & Somerset police spokesperson said that in the first two weeks of September, officers seized six e-scooters being used illegally on the Staple Hill, Mangotsfield and Emersons Green stretches of the Bristol & Bath Railway Path, another in Mangotsfield and two in Frenchay.

An e-bike which had been illegally modified was seized in Mangotsfield and a Sur-Ron off-road e-motorbike was seized in Emersons Green - a total of 11 vehicles being used illegally.

All of them will now be destroyed.

It is illegal to ride privately-owned e-scooters on public roads and paths. Illegally-modified e-bikes are those that can go above the legal speed limit of 15.5mph, have a battery of more than 250wh and are capable of being ridden using a throttle instead of pedals.

The e-bike being ridden in Mangotsfield on September 7, which was being ridden by a teenager wearing a balaclava, had been modified to travel at up to 62mph. The e-scooter seized the same day could travel at up to 31mph.

Police say many of the riders they have stopped have never passed a driving test, have no training and are riding on roads, pavements and green spaces as well as the cycle path.

Neighbourhood Inspector Barney Mabbett said "a significant number of officers and staff" were involved, adding: "The operation has generated considerable community engagement, with officers speaking to path users, local businesses, and residents to provide reassurance and gather information and intelligence relating to concerns on the path."

Insp Mabbett said patrols would continue "for the foreseeable future" to reduce anti-social behaviour, tackle the unlawful e-scooter and e-bike use, and make the railway path safer for "legitimate users".

Police launched patrols after two incidents in two days on the path. On August 11 a man in his 30s was stabbed on the railway path at Bitton, suffering what police described as "non-life-threatening injuries". Two boys were arrested on suspicion of attempted murder and later released on police bail.



Police cycle patrol officers with a seized e-scooter

The following day a boy in his late teens suffered what police described as "minor physical injuries" when he was mugged by eight masked youths on a stretch of the path close to the former Mangotsfield station. The boy had a grey Carrera Crossfire 2 bike taken from him by the group, who were described as in their late teens or early 20s.

Police said the attackers were wearing black face coverings and bucket hats, and black jogging bottoms and jackets. Four of the suspects were white, one was black, one was Asian and one was of mixed race. One was riding a black e-scooter with red markings and a screen, and others had e-bikes or road bikes.

Anyone with information about the mugging should call 101 and quote the crime reference number 5226 227 034; the reference number for the stabbing is 5226 226 130.

South Glos Council is installing 20 permanent CCTV cameras on the path between Staple Hill Tunnel and Mangotsfield Station.

• Police are trying to trace a man who assaulted a teenage boy on an e-scooter who collided with a woman "at low speed" on the Emersons Green Lane, near the junction with Guest Avenue, at around 12.35pm on August 14. The boy suffered minor injuries, while the woman was unharmed.

The suspect was white, in his mid-30s, with brown, curly shoulder length hair, and was wearing a dark baseball cap, a navy-blue T-shirt, khaki shorts, sunglasses and orange shoes. Anyone with information should call 101 and quote the crime reference number 5226 228 878.

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DEADLINES

Our November edition deadline is October 14.

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'Exceptional' school is recognised

A PRIMARY school has been recognised for its "exceptional" inclusive culture and practices.

Ofsted has given Emersons Green Primary School a rare top rating for its work with children who have special educational needs and disabilities, and disadvantaged pupils.

It is the first school in the region and one of only 11 in the country to be given the regulator's highest judgement for inclusion since the grading system was changed last year.

Ofsted says inspectors "only award this grade when we see practice that is among the very best nationally, which should be shared with other schools or providers to help them improve".

The school, which has 207 pupils aged from four to 11 on its roll, has a specialist resource base for children with physical disabilities.

Ofsted's team of three inspectors, who visited the school in June, said: "Leaders' high aspirations for all pupils to achieve, belong and thrive underpin all aspects of the school's work.

"Staff are highly effective at precisely identifying the varied needs of pupils. They use this information to plan well-tailored support so that barriers to learning and well-being can be rapidly removed.

"Most impressive, however, is pupils' own understanding of the importance of including everyone.

"This means they actively look for opportunities to help and include others, for example by choosing to play accessible sports so they can all be part of one team."

The inspectors said school leaders ensured pupils with special needs or disabilities have the adaptations they need to "learn very effectively alongside their peers", including large print and Braille for visually-impaired children and teaching pupils across the school how to use communication devices and Makaton sign language.

Ofsted said: "This means that those pupils who use these are seamlessly included in lessons and social times by their peers."

Highly-trained staff ensure pupils with visual impairment and physical disabilities take part in "all aspects of school life",

including trips, and community volunteering, and the school uses additional funding to help disadvantaged pupils participate in clubs and trips.

The school in Guest Avenue received 'strong standard' gradings in all other areas: achievement; attendance and behaviour; curriculum and teaching; Early Years provision; leadership and governance; personal development and well-being.

A 'strong standard' grade has been compared to a high 'outstanding' rating under Ofsted's previous rating system by the school's executive head teacher, Simon Botten.

The report highlighted pupils' high quality written work and the school's higher than average national test results, as well as the high expectations for attendance, and carefully-planned, "broad and ambitious" curriculum.

The inspectors said: "This school firmly believes that all pupils can be 'mighty'.

"This motto has instilled in pupils the confidence that everyone can be successful so long as they are brave enough to try.

"Consequently, pupils have a highly positive attitude towards their learning.

"Pupils make excellent progress from their starting points.

"The high-quality curriculum and effective teaching prepare pupils well for their next phase of education.

"Pupils are exceptionally proud of their school.

"The highly inclusive culture of the school means that pupils feel that they belong."

Head teacher Soraya Young said: "Our shared ambition for the children of Emersons Green Primary is written into every aspect of our Ofsted inspection report – 'strong' in all areas and 'exceptional' for inclusion.

"I am most proud of the way our mission of 'forging mighty futures' was seen and clearly permeates all we do.

"The inspection report is tremendous, with so much well-deserved praise heaped upon our school. "The outcome reflects our children's hard work and talent, the incredible commitment and dedication of all our staff and



Headteacher Soraya Young and deputy head Laura Morson with pupils

the support, encouragement and partnership of our parents."

South Gloucestershire Council director of education, learning and skills Hilary Smith said: "I would like to congratulate all school staff on the wonderful outcome of the

inspection.

"It is great to see Ofsted recognise the commitment to inclusion which is embedded across the whole school, ensuring a positive experience for all children."



Emersons Green Baptist Church

Sunday service 10:30am

Emersons Green Village Hall

Monday Bible study 2pm



Free Children's Craft Service

11th October



Website



Facebook

Medical centre is open to patients again

EMERSONS Green Medical Centre is back in action, almost two years after it was suddenly forced to close.

The surgery in St Luke's Close, which has more than 11,000 patients on its books, reopened to patients on September 14.

Staff were on duty from 7.30am, ensuring everything was ready for people to arrive for routine and emergency appointments.

The surgery had to shut in October 2024 when the building's water and heating failed.

Green Valleys Health, the medical practice which runs the surgery, said the closure had been "necessary for infection control and patient comfort".

But the process of finding funds for the repairs took longer than expected, and it wasn't until April of this year that the practice confirmed it had reached an agreement with Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Integrated



Staff at Emersons Green Medical Centre ready to welcome back patients

Care Board (ICB), which is in charge of funding NHS services, for work to start.

The work took place over the summer and, following a clean-up and health and safety checks in September, the centre was cleared to reopen.

A Green Valleys Health spokesperson said: "The team have been looking forward to providing care from Emersons

Green once again.

"Following the temporary closure, we are delighted to welcome patients back to the surgery.

"The building has a new heating and water system, new lighting and has had some redecoration.

"Once again, we would like to offer our sincere apologies for the inconvenience and

disruption that the closure may have caused.

"We are grateful for everyone's patience, understanding, and continued support."

During the closure patients who usually had appointments at the centre were diverted to the practice's other two surgeries, Leap Valley in Downend and Abbotswood, in Yate, with most attending Leap Valley.

Councillors on South Gloucestershire Council's health scrutiny committee raised concerns that some patients had trouble reaching the other surgery, and that waiting times for appointments had gone up.

Patient frustration was in evidence during the two national NHS GP patient surveys taken during the closure: last year only 32% of Emersons Green patients said their experience of the practice was good, and this year it was 45%, compared national averages of 75% and 77% respectively.

village church

Sunday | 10:30am

Mangotsfield Primary School

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New schools, new beginnings in Lyde Green

THEY have been years in the making, and cost almost £60 million to build - but finally, on September 7, it was time for lessons to begin at Lyde Green's two new schools.

Lyde Green Community School welcomed its first 145 pupils, for whom the trepidation of starting secondary school was mixed with the thrill of having new buildings, with state-of-the-art facilities, all to themselves.

They may be in Year 7 but they will always be the oldest kids at the school, which is starting from scratch, with no other year groups.

Head teacher Tom Hill and his staff were also experiencing "the excitement of seeing the school come to life".

He said: "Our students have settled in remarkably well and have approached this new experience with enthusiasm, curiosity and confidence.

"We have been particularly impressed by the way they have embraced our expectations, engaged with staff and shown a genuine eagerness to learn.

"Our founding staff team has also been exceptional. Opening a brand-new school comes with plenty of challenges and opportunities, but the dedication, energy and teamwork shown by colleagues has been fantastic.

"There is a real sense of pride in building something special for the community.

"Having just one year group certainly feels different to a traditional secondary school, but in many ways it has been one of the most rewarding aspects of opening.

"It has enabled us to get to know every student incredibly well and to establish the culture, routines and relationships that

will underpin the school's future growth.

"There is a real family feel around the school, while at the same time students are enjoying being the founding cohort and helping to shape the school's identity."

Next door, Lyde Green Primary School's Honeysuckle Road site saw its first 21 Reception children arrive, joined by 80 Year 6s from the school's twin site in Willowherb Road.

The older children have moved to the new school to support their transition to secondary school next year, and to relieve the Willowherb Road site, which has had to host extra 'bulge' classes while the Honeysuckle Road school was being built.

Head teacher Tom Hutchings said: "We are delighted to finally be in the building after many months of planning and hard work. The Year 6 pupils have transitioned to the new building very well indeed - they are enjoying the fantastic spaces and facilities that the new site offers.

"We have also welcomed a new Reception class to Honeysuckle Road and they are getting to know the staff and building. As the only class on the ground floor, they have exceptional amounts of space and resources open to them."

Mr Hutchings, who is in overall charge of both primary sites, said operating them in tandem was working well.

A new deputy head, Katie Wightman, has been added to the staff leadership team.

Mr Hutchings said: "The staff are currently learning how the logistics of working across two sites is going to work.

"However, having embedded



Lyde Green Community School head Tom Hill and pupils in the hall



In the library at Lyde Green Community School

a new set of school values and principles throughout the last academic year, we have a very clear vision and understanding of what it means to be a pupil at Lyde Green Primary School, whether that be at the Willowherb Road or Honeysuckle Road site.

"There has also been an immediate and very positive impact at the Willowherb Road site. We have straight away been able to open a dedicated music room, and now have several additional spaces around the building for group work and

pastoral support. In addition, we have also expanded our own SEND provision to include more pupils for focused support."

The two new schools together cost £58.3 million, paid by the government and South Gloucestershire Council.

Their opening follows decades of campaigning, for a secondary school to serve Emersons Green and for enough school places for Lyde Green. Funding was approved in 2021, but the project was hit by a series of delays before work finally began in earnest in 2024.



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Dangerous driver who fled police is jailed

A DRIVER who mounted a pavement, went the wrong way around a roundabout and forced oncoming traffic to stop as he tried to flee police has been jailed.

Duran Amet sped at more than 60mph on a 30mph road before driving into a dead end, abandoning the car and running off into traffic on the Avon Ring Road.

Amet, aged 36, was jailed for 28 weeks after he admitted dangerous driving, driving while disqualified, driving without insurance, failing to stop for police and using a vehicle without a valid MOT.

Police officers tried to stop a Ford Focus estate on September 10 as it approached the Wick Wick roundabout on the ring road, between Bromley Heath and Emersons Green, after it was flagged as uninsured.

Instead of pulling over, Amet drove off down Folly Brook Road towards Emerald Park industrial estate, forcing oncoming traffic to stop, driving on a footpath and reaching more than 60mph as he tried to evade the officers.

He was carrying a 16-year-old passenger, who was not wearing a seatbelt.

After driving the wrong way around a roundabout Amet drove into Longmead Road, a dead end.



The car mounts a pavement

There he dumped the car before running through a hedge and over a fence and onto the ring road, where traffic had to stop on the dual carriageway to avoid him and a police officer chasing him on foot.

After his arrest Amet, of Berwick Road in Easton, was remanded in custody and jailed at Bristol Magistrates Court the following day.

PC Jack Fare said: "Amet's driving showed a complete disregard for the safety of other road users and pedestrians. Throughout the incident, his actions created significant risk to



Amet running on the A4174

members of the public.

"It is particularly concerning that he carried out these dangerous manoeuvres while a passenger, who was a minor and not wearing a seatbelt, was in the vehicle.

"We welcome the custodial sentence, which reflects the seriousness of his offending."

A video of the police pursuit and arrest can be seen at tinyurl.com/yp3w3hx8.



Duran Amet

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Kimmi takes on the world

AN EMERSONS Green gymnast took on the world in an international competition.

Kimberley Chilcott, aged 12, and 15-year-old Shayla McCaughey, from Yate, were selected to represent Great Britain at the 14th Acrobatic Gymnastics World Youth Championships in Pesaro, Italy, in September.

Competing against 40 other women's pairs in the dual disciplines of balance and dynamic routines, they made the combined final and finished eighth overall.

Kimberley, known as Kimmi, and Shayla are members of King Edmund Acrobatic Gymnastics Club in Yate.

A club spokesperson said: "We are so incredibly proud of Shayla and Kimmi, and what they have achieved at the Youth World Championships.

"At the start of the season, the goal was to make the England squad.

"They then went on to be selected to represent Great Britain and, somehow, they kept going and made it all the way to the world championships!

"They have absolutely exceeded every expectation and achieved far more than we could have ever imagined at the start of the



Kimberley Chilcott, right, with partner Shayla McCaughey

season.

"They stepped out onto the main stage and delivered three clean routines, finishing eighth in the world...what a journey!"

"We couldn't be prouder of you, Shayla and Kimmi."

Shayla and Kimmi were selected for Team GB earlier in the year, along with two other pairs from the club.

They won the IDP2 Women's Pair category



Kimmi and Shayla in action in Pesaro

Picture: S&G Media

at the English Acrobatic Championships in October last year.

Kimmi, a Year 8 pupil at Mangotsfield School, has been practising gymnastics since she was two years old, starting off at a club in Emersons Green Village Hall before going to the King Edmund club at the age of five.

She joined the acrobatic squad in Yate when she was nine, and trains for 16 hours every week.

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TURNER'S VISION

Autumn eyes: When the seasons change

ANOTHER month passes, and Autumn, albeit a mild one so far, is definitely in full swing. It's not often I hear us Brits welcoming the rain, but it's made more than just a few folk I know smile - broadly!

For me, I'm re-visiting my back catalogue of glasses. I have a set made with a rain deflector. Now before you start imagining me walking round with some weird and wonderful contraption on my nose, don't worry, it's just a lens I was trying out a few years ago that the rain drops off more easily than most. They do work, although for various reasons they never really took off.

As seasons change our eyes have to adapt too. If you've noticed a change in how your eyes feel then you are not alone. Our dry and watery eye specialist Optometrist has noticed an increase in clinic bookings again this month. Marta commented that although the warm summer notably helped people, they are now reporting concerns again.

If your eyes are just not right, then most likely we have a solution for you. Please get in touch and we'll be happy to see how we can help.

It's not only how our eyes feel that can change at this time of year either.

The days are getting shorter, the light levels lower and, before we know it, many of us will be driving to and from work in the dark. I often find patients who have been perfectly happy with their vision throughout the brighter summer months suddenly notice that things don't seem quite so effortless.

Headlights become more distracting, road signs aren't quite as crisp, reading in the evening becomes a little more tiring or you find yourself reaching for brighter lighting.

Sometimes there is a very straightforward reason. Your glasses may simply need updating. At other times dry eye, early cataract or another change in the eyes can reduce the quality

of vision, particularly as the available light falls.

And sometimes, of course, you just need to clean your glasses. As an Optometrist (my excuse is the cycling) even I occasionally discover the miraculous improvement in vision achieved with a clean lens cloth! If you feel it's time for a new cloth you are welcome to pop in to either practice and pick one up, with our compliments.

Seeing clearly is important, but so too is seeing comfortably. You shouldn't have to squint, strain or simply put up with eyes that feel tired, gritty or watery because you've assumed that's just what happens to our eyes over time.

Whether it's dry eye treatment, a change to your prescription, clearer lenses for driving, or simply reassurance that everything is healthy, the starting point is finding out why something has changed.

So, as we dig out the coats, umbrellas and, in my case, rain-



Peter Turner
of Turners Opticians
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deflecting glasses, perhaps take a moment to think about your eyes too.

If your vision or eye comfort isn't quite what it was during the summer, we'd be delighted to help at Turners Opticians in Henleaze or Downend

Peter

Peter Turner is an Independent Prescribing Senior Optometrist at Turners Opticians in Bristol. He also works as a Senior Medical Optometrist at Bristol Eye Hospital and has a specialist interest in visual development and performance.

Autumn eyes?

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MP shares story of mother's lonely death

EMERSONS Green's MP has shared the story of her terminally-ill mother's decision to end her own life alone, after suffering "excruciating" pain.

Claire Hazelgrove made a moving speech calling for an end to the "harmful status quo", as Parliament debated a proposed law to allow people who have less than six months to live to seek medical help to die.

She said: "Last October my mum, Ruth Hazelgrove, chose to bring her late-stage terminal illness to an end, on her terms, at home, with dignity and with a strength that I can only try to imagine."

Ruth died aged 61, having been diagnosed with a rare blood cancer, polycythaemia vera, at the age of 32.

Ms Hazelgrove said that in 2024 her mum's condition took a significant turn.

The Filton & Bradley Stoke MP said: "That autumn, while we debated the initial version of this Bill, her pain was excruciating.

"She had access to good palliative care, but what we learned the hardest of ways is that not all pain can be palliated.

"I will never forget seeing her writhing and screaming in pain, at points for weeks.

"For Mum, it was not a choice of life or death; it was a question of what kind of death she would have.

"She was clear that she did not want a painful or undignified death. She wanted peace.

"For us, it will always be a tremendous personal sadness that the current law meant that she could not tell us her plan, and we could not say goodbye to her—but more importantly than that, that she could not say goodbye at the end of her life, or be surrounded by her loved ones, which is what she would have wanted for her death.

"Instead, the harmful status quo meant that Mum died alone, with photos of us around her."

Ms Hazelgrove said that in her final note, her mum wrote: "I wish the Assisted Dying Bill would have come into force in my lifetime... Maybe there will be hope for others in the future."

After five hours of debate, MPs voted down the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill by 286 votes to 270. A new version of the bill could be reintroduced next year.

Ms Hazelgrove, Bristol North East MP



Claire Hazelgrove makes her speech.

Picture: UK Parliament

Damien Egan, whose constituency includes Siston Hill, and Thornbury & Yate MP Claire Young, who represents Pucklechurch, all voted in favour of the bill.

Afterwards Ms Hazelgrove said she was glad to have spoken up for her mum and "others with terminal illnesses who want to have choice over their life and their death".

She added: "The hardest part is knowing that many more people will now have to go through this same experience as my mum, me, and my whole family, before this next comes back to the Commons - and I truly wouldn't wish this on anyone."

TURNERS HEARING CARE BLOG

Hearing clearly as the seasons change

October always feels like a month of change. The evenings have begun to draw in, there's a definite freshness to the morning air, and after the slightly different routines of summer, life seems to find its rhythm again.

It's also a surprisingly good time to think about your ears.

As an audiologist, one thing I regularly hear is, "I'm not sure if my hearing has changed, or whether my ears are just blocked."

And actually, that's a very good question.

A build-up of ear wax can gradually reduce the sound reaching your eardrum. Because this often happens slowly, you may not immediately notice. Instead, you might find yourself turning the television up another notch, struggling with conversation when there's background noise, or thinking that family and friends have suddenly developed a terrible habit of mumbling!

There may be other clues too. Your ear might feel full or blocked, you may notice ringing or buzzing, or one ear might simply seem different from the other.

The important thing is not to worry or assume it will just fix itself!

That's why an ear examination is such a useful starting point. At our ear wax removal clinic, now in the heart of Downend, I can carefully examine your ears and show you what I can see. If wax is causing the problem, we can discuss removing it using gentle microsuction.

Microsuction allows me to work precisely under direct vision, carefully removing troublesome wax without introducing water into the ear canal. Where appropriate, softening the wax beforehand with olive oil spray can make removal easier and more comfortable.

And please resist the temptation to investigate things yourself with a cotton bud! Ears are remarkably good at looking after themselves and wax has an important protective role. Poking around can push it further down the canal and turn a little wax into a much bigger blockage.

Of course, not every change in hearing is caused by ear wax. That's another reason I'd much rather you came in and let me have a look than simply put up with it. If something needs further investigation, I can advise you on the appropriate next step.

So, as October has brought us back to lunches with friends, clubs, family gatherings and everyday conversations, perhaps ask yourself one simple question:

Am I hearing them as clearly as I used to?

If the answer is "I'm not quite sure," come and see me in Downend.

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Pride in GCSE achievements at Mangotsfield

MANGOTSFIELD School "could not be prouder" of its Year 11 leavers after this summer's GCSE results.

The school said 61.3% of candidates achieved grade 4 or higher in English language, and 61.4% achieved grade 4 or higher in maths.

Almost a quarter of students (23.8%) achieved a grade 7 or higher - the equivalent of A or A* under the old grading system - across all of their GCSE entries.

In vocational and technical awards, 92.3% of pupils received a pass or higher.

Among those whose achievements were highlighted by the school is Noelle Hui, who achieved ten grade 9 GCSEs, which head teacher Hetty Blackmore described as "an incredible tribute to her hard work and attitude".

Other students who achieved "incredibly strong results" include Charlie Elkington, Humaira Islam, Daniel Pak, Mollie Chilcott, Freya Harding, Taiiya Buckley and Chloe Harris.

Mrs Blackmore said: "I could not be prouder of our Year 11 students.

"These results reflect real determination - theirs, and that of the staff who have supported them every step of the way.

"For every student who has achieved the grades they hoped for, and for every student who has worked hard against real challenges to get here, this is a

moment worth celebrating.

"We were proud of all our students but a few had overcome incredible challenges to secure the results they needed to get to their next stages of education. For these students, attending school and sitting the exams were reward enough but then to go on and achieve as well as they did was certainly tear jerking!

"We continue to drive forward improvement in our school so that every child leaves with the best life chances and best life choices for their future.

"Thank you to our staff, whose commitment to every student has helped make these results possible, and to our families for your continued support of your children's education. "Congratulations, Year 11 — we wish you every success in whatever comes next."

Across the country around 600,000 Year 11s received their GCSE results in August, with another 400,000 or so people taking resits or sitting exams as adult learners.

Overall, GCSE results improved for school leavers, with 70.7% of grades at 4 or above - up 0.2% on last year - while the figure for all candidates, including over-17s, was 67.3% (down 0.1%).

The government hailed the performance of 16-year-old candidates in maths, where the number achieving grade 7 and above in maths was up by 6,000



Alfie Jordan, Mohammed Eltahir, Will Jenkins, Harrison Hathaway, Taiiya Buckley, Humaira Islam, Olimpia Sochanowska and Chloe Harris pick up their GCSE results at Mangotsfield School.



Noelle Hui achieved ten grade 9s



Mollie Chilcott with head teacher Hetty Blackmore



Charlie Elkington

this year, the largest ever rise in the top grades, which are



Freya Harding

equivalent to A* and A in the previous system.

Downend sees 'strong set' of results

DOWNEND School said its students' "strong set" of GCSE results reflected their hard work, resilience and determination.

Overall, 73% of Downend GCSE candidates achieved a grade 4 or above in both English and Maths, while 48% achieved a strong pass (grade 5 or above) in both subjects.

Head teacher Rachael Corns said: "These are excellent results, and a real testament to the hard work, resilience and determination of our students.

"I would like to congratulate every student on their achievements and thank our dedicated staff and supportive families for the important role they have played in helping our young people reach this point.

"These outcomes represent a significant achievement for our students and provide a strong foundation for their next steps beyond Year 11.



Downend School pupils pick up their GCSE results

"We are incredibly proud of our students and the progress they have made. These results provide a strong platform for their next steps and we wish them every success for the future."

The school said the results showed the "sustained commitment" shown by students throughout their time in secondary



education.

Downend students are now moving on to a wide range of destinations, including studying A-levels at the joint Downend and Mangotsfield Sixth Form, which is based at Downend School, moving to other sixth forms or colleges, starting apprenticeships or training.

School welcomes little learners

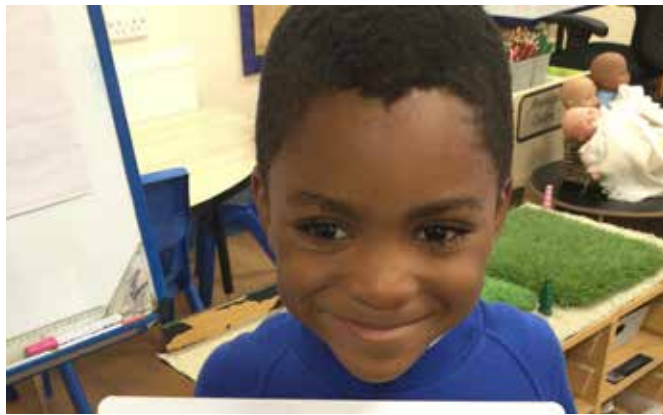
NEW pupils at Mangotsfield C of E Primary School have been finding how much fun school can be.

The Reception pupils have been dressing up, painting, drawing pictures - and reading and writing, too.

Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1 lead Jo Sihag said: "This term we have been welcoming our new littlest learners into our Mango family."

"We are so proud of our EYFS children, who are polite, kind and learning routines whilst settling into full time school."

"We have enjoyed our first week of phonics learning, PE lessons, exploring our learning environment both indoors and outdoors and making new friends."



Nursery survey

PUCKLECHURCH C of E Primary School has launched a survey to find out whether there is enough demand for the school to open an on-site nursery.

School leaders are doing initial research into the need for provision for children aged four and under.

Head of school Gemma Jones said: "Before any formal work to do so begins, we must first collect data to establish whether there is sufficient need within our community."

"We'd be grateful to anyone who could spare a few moments to complete a quick survey to help gauge the local demographic of families with children aged 0-4 who may require a child-care and nursery facility, open from 8am-6pm Monday to Friday, all year round, within the site."

The survey can be found at tinyurl.com/udfmc4ej.

In the summer committee-run pre-school Pucklechurch Playgroup close after 60 years, with organisers saying that many families needed full-time childcare rather than the three-hour sessions playgroup provided.

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School hails 'fantastic' GCSE results

LEADERS at Winterbourne Academy have hailed the "fantastic set of GCSE results" achieved by students this summer.

The school said 28% of grades were at grade 7 or above, the equivalent of an A or A* under the old grading system - well above the national average of 21.8%.

More than half of pupils (52%) achieved a grade 5 or above in both English and maths, and 74% achieved a grade 4 or above in both subjects, considered a 'standard' pass. Individually, more than 80% of results in English and maths were above grade 4.

Subjects with particularly strong performance included drama, where 89% of candidates achieved grade 7-9, and physics, where 57% of grades were 7-9. Half (50%) of chemistry candidates achieved grades 7-9 and the top three grades were also achieved by 44% of music candidates and 46% of Spanish students.

In vocational BTEC exams, grades of Distinction or Distinction* were achieved by 41% of sport and 44% of media students.

The overall exam pass rate was 99%.



Aisha Shah finds out her GCSE results

Head teacher Jenny Cartwright said: "We are very proud of this Year 11 cohort, who have performed so well in their exams and who have also contributed so positively to the school during their time here."

"Students of all abilities, with a variety of circumstances and needs, have achieved their best and should feel proud of what they have done."

"Their teachers have offered great support, which I know so many students are very grateful for, and students have dedicated themselves to achieving their best."

Among the individual achievers highlighted by the school were:



Micaiah Scott sees his results

Aisha Shah, of Downend, who achieved eight top grade 9s and three grade 8s;

George Turner, of Frenchay, who achieved eight 9s, one 8 and two 7s;

Micaiah Scott, of Emersons Green, who achieved four 9s, one 8, two 7s, three 6s and a Distinction;

Phoebe Turner, of Emersons Green, who achieved six 9s, three 8s and two 7s;

Jonas Zhang, of Emersons Green, who achieved seven 9s, one 8, two 7s and a Distinction*.

Assistant head teacher Sarah Barker, who leads the school's Key Stage 4 years, said: "I'm so proud of every one of our Year 11 students."



George Turner collects his results

"These results reflect a huge amount of hard work, determination and resilience, and they should all take a moment to celebrate what they have achieved."

"It's been a privilege to watch them grow over the last few years, and we're excited to see where their next steps take them."

"Congratulations to all our students, and thank you to our staff and families for the support they've given along the way."

Many of the students will move on to the school's sixth form, while others will head off to colleges, apprenticeships and training.

Academy trusts join forces

THE organisation that runs Downend School and Mangotsfield School has merged with another educational trust.

Castle School Education Trust (CSET) and The Priory Learning Trust (TPLT) officially joined together at the start of the academic year in September to form Pathway Trust.

The new organisation is responsible for 11,000 pupils aged from four to 18, in a total of 20 schools in South Gloucestershire, North Somerset, and Somerset.

Schools that were part of CSET in the area also include Lyde Green Primary School, Cherry Garden Primary in Willsbridge and two other secondary schools, Castle in Thornbury and Marlwood in Alveston.

Former Priory Learning Trust schools include three secondaries

in North Somerset and Somerset, Priory, Worle and King Alfred.

The chief executive of the merged trust is Will Roberts, who was head teacher at Downend School from 2012, before becoming chief executive of CSET in 2016.

He has also been part-time chief executive of TPLT since 2023, with responsibility for all of the schools now in Pathway Trust, during three years of "successful formal collaboration" between the two organisations.

Mr Roberts said: "Coming together as a single family of schools is central to our shared ambition of achieving a great education for every child."

"Through working together, we have significantly improved outcomes in recent years."

"Across a larger trust, we can more easily connect colleagues and direct resources where they

make the biggest impact."

The new trust says the merger will enable it to improve education through its "regional school network", allowing greater collaboration between schools.

It also says merging its central services provision will enable it to provide "stronger operational support at a lower cost through improved purchasing power, allowing savings to be directly reinvested into schools and professional development".

The new trust has more than 1,500 staff, and says it is expanding initiatives to "recruit, train and retain top talent" through training, development, apprenticeships and leadership pathways.

Ahead of the merger teachers and support staff at Downend School and Mangotsfield School held four days of strikes in a dispute with CSET management.



Will Roberts

Members of the National Education Union said concerns over "excessive workload", "inappropriate direction of staff" and "lack of consultation on important working arrangements" had not been addressed by the trust, and said more strike action could follow.

The NEU is calling for an increase in staffing capacity, and has raised concerns over a move away from South Gloucestershire term dates and a new curriculum being introduced this academic year.

October 3

■ **HARVEST COFFEE MORNING** with bacon butties and stalls, 9.30am-12.00noon. Supporting Turnaround Bristol (homelessness charity). Food donations welcome for Turnaround. At Badminton Road Methodist Church BS16 6NU.

October 10

■ **ART EXHIBITION** by Badminton Road Methodist Church Monday Group, Badminton Road, Downend, 10am-2pm. Christmas present ideas, percentage of sales to Help Bristol's Homeless charity. Tea & coffee.

October 13

■ **SODBURY AND DISTRICT Flower Arrangement Society** practice class at The Old Grammar School Rooms, Chipping Sodbury, 7.30pm. Theme: creating an Autumn Cornucopia. For further information please contact rosemary.cummins2@gmail.com.

October 16

■ **RAINBOW TOTS** celebrates 20 years of sessions for pre-school children, Emersons Green Village Hall. Emersons Green Baptist Church will host a cake-cutting event at the village hall to celebrate, at 10.30am. Parents or grandparents who have previously attended sessions are very welcome to come along. For more information call 07765 201435.

October 17

■ **TALENT IN THE GREEN** at Emersons Green Village Hall, 4pm. Family event with acts of all ages with judging panel and awards for best acts. Free entry but please book tickets at www.egvh.org.uk or drop in at the village hall. For more details call 01454 862182 or email reception@egvh.org.uk.

October 20

■ **WEAR IT PINK DAY** at Lyde Green Community Centre, 9am-3pm. Wear pink and raise money for Breast Cancer Now charity. More details at lydegreenca.org.

October 29

■ **HALLOWEEN DISCO PARTY** at Lyde Green Community Centre, 2-3.30pm. Fun event aimed at junior school-aged children. Also Halloween crafts on same day: 45-minute sessions between 12.30pm and 4.15pm. Book tickets for both events at lydegreenca.org.

October 30

■ **HALLOWEEN CAKE AND DOUGHNUT DECORATING SESSIONS** at Lyde Green Community Centre. Three sessions between 9.30am and 1.15pm. Advance booking at lydegreenca.org.

REGULAR EVENTS

Monday

■ **PUCKLECHURCH SHORT MAT BOWLS CLUB** are looking for new players. We meet every Monday evening (7.15-9.30) and Sunday & Wednesday afternoons 3.15pm-6pm at Pucklechurch Community Centre. Refreshments available. For more information contact John 07926541933.

Tuesday

■ **RIDGEWAY BADMINTON CLUB** meets every Tuesday Evening from 8-10pm at Downend Sports Centre for informal badminton doubles/singles

matches between adults of all ages. First visit free. More info from Graham on 07968 050320.

■ **MESSY SPACE** at Badminton Road Methodist Church, Downend, 10-11.45am. Term-time group for toddlers and carers. Toys, books, crafts, singing and refreshments. First visit free. More information at badmintonroadmethodist.org.uk or 0117 956 1106.

■ **MONDAY ART GROUP** Spaces available Meets Monday 10-12.30 Badminton Road Methodist Church BS16 6NU Come along to see if you like it. Just doing your own art work with a sociable group.

■ **PUCKLECHURCH FOLK DANCING CLUB** Pucklechurch Community Hall. Abson Road every other Tuesday from 7.30 to 10.15pm. All welcome either with a partner or solo. Enjoy an evening with us. Call Sue on 07742114566 or Linda on 0784324014.

■ **BRISTOL MILITARY WIVES CHOIR** meets at Mangotsfield and Castle Green United Reformed Church, Cossham Street, every Tuesday 7-9pm. Open to women with a military connection. No audition or experience needed. Cake and tea/coffee provided. More details from bristol@militarywiveschoirs.org.

Wednesday

■ **THE WOMEN'S SECTION OF THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION** meets on the first Wednesday of the month, 1-3pm at the YOU Foundation, Page Road, Staple Hill (by the long-stay car park). New members welcome. More details from Diane Roberts 0117 956 3407.

■ **MANGO JAMS BABY & TODDLER GROUP**, meets at Lyde Green Community Centre, 9.15am-10.45am, term time only.

■ **FRENCHAY FOLK DANCE CLUB** meets alternate Wednesdays, English and American folk dancing to live music, 7.45-10.15pm, Frenchay Village Hall. New dancers always welcome. More details at www.frenchayfdc.co.uk or email FFDCSecretary@gmail.com.

■ **CLEEVE SINGERS OF DOWNEND** Enjoy singing, then come and join this four part choir who meet on Wednesday evenings at Lincombe Barn, Overndale Road 7.30 p.m. from September until July. For more information contact the Secretary on 0117 9561881.

■ **DOWNEND FLOWER ARRANGING CLUB** meet at Emerson's Green Village Hall twice a month on a Wednesday evening, term time only. We are a friendly relaxed group, why not join us. For more information Downendflowers@gmail.com

Thursday

■ **COFFEE, CAKE AND COMMUNITY MORNING** at Emersons Green Village Hall. Free Tea, Coffee, and Cake served 10am to 12pm, with extra time to relax and finish your drinks until 1pm. Everyone is welcome! Donations to Emersons Green Village Hall welcome. Supported by Emersons Green Town Council.

■ **WALKING WITH FRIENDS**, free group walks at a gentle pace around Siston Commons. Start and finish at Kingsmeadow@Madeforever Community Centre, Fisher Road, BS15 4RQ, 1-2pm. For more details email kingsmeadowmade4ever.org.uk or call 07588 622 372

■ **SHORTWOOD VILLAGE WI** meets on the second Thursday of the month at 7.30pm, at Shortwood Village Chapel, Main Road, Shortwood. More details from millhousejoinery@aol.com.

■ **BEECHMERE BELLES WI** meet in Emersons Green Village Hall at 7.30pm on the fourth Thursday of the month. More details from beechmerebelles@gmail.com or Facebook.

Friday

■ **PAGE PARK UKULELE CLUB**, Bean Tree café, Fridays at 1pm. All abilities welcomed. Places £4 each. For further details call or text 'Ukulele' to Ben on 07910 668258.

■ **RAINBOW TOTS** parent and toddler group meets at Emersons Green Village Hall on term-time Friday mornings, 10-11.30am. All welcome. For more details email church.egbc@outlook.com.

■ **MANGOTSFIELD AND CASTLE GREEN UNITED REFORMED CHURCH** regular coffee mornings, held on the first Thursday of the month, 10.30am-noon at the church in Cossham Street.

■ **LATER LIVE MUSIC**, Resound church, Blackhorse Road, Mangotsfield. Every second Friday monthly, except August & December, 8-10pm, £2.50. More details at facebook.com/lateratresound.

Saturday

■ **STAPLE HILL METHODIST CHURCH** Coffee mornings in our beautiful building every Saturday 10.00-12.00 in aid of church funds or charities. Enjoy Fairtrade coffee, tea and cake, and stalls.

Sunday

■ **MANGOTSFIELD AND CASTLE GREEN UNITED REFORMED CHURCH** hold regular weekly Sunday morning worship at Cossham Street. Services start at 10.30 a.m. with different speakers each week. New members very welcome. For more details please contact Peter Redding (Ch.Sec.) on 0117 9657075.

■ **BADMINTON ROAD METHODIST CHURCH** Sunday worship followed by sharing refreshments, 10.30am Service of Holy Communion usually fourth Sunday of the month, led by Rev Leigh Maydew. More information from www.badmintonroadmethodist.org.uk.

■ **STAPLE HILL METHODIST CHURCH**, High Street BS16 5HQ
Sunday services 10.30am + Sunday Club for ages 5-17. Holy Communion 2nd Sunday of the month – all invited. Taizé worship 6.00pm 3rd Sunday of the month. Contact Rev Dr Aboseh Ngwana 07482 550888, Philippa Church Liaison at staplehillmethodist@hotmail.co.uk or www.staplehillmethodist.com

■ **EMERSONS GREEN BAPTIST CHURCH** services are held every Sunday morning from 10.30-11.30am at Emersons Green Village Hall, Emersons Way. We also hold regular craft services. Contact Simon on 07765 201435, visit www.emersonsgreenchurch.org or Facebook page for more details.

■ **LYDE GREEN LITTER PICKERS** meet at 10.30am on the first Sunday of the month outside Lyde Green Community Centre, Thistle Close. See www.cleanupuk.org.uk/groups/lyde-green-litter-pickers for information.

■ **SERVICES AT ST JAMES CHURCH, MANGOTSFIELD**: 8am, holy communion. 10.30am, services rotate between all-age service (1st Sunday), morning worship (2nd & 4th Sunday), holy communion (3rd Sunday) and healing service (5th Sunday).

■ **PUCKLECHURCH BADMINTON CLUB**, Pucklechurch Village Hall, 8pm weekly. Play friendlies and mixed doubles. Over-18s only. For more details contact Mark on 07866 375512 or Pauline on 07570 046177.

We need our Post Office services back

I'VE been campaigning to bring the local Post Office services we need back to Downend following the closure of the local branch.

More than 120 residents have filled in my local survey. I have shared this invaluable feedback with the Post Office, arranged a meeting with the relevant government minister, and will continue pushing for a solution.

Thank you to everyone who shared my survey, particularly local residents Sue and Hillary, who helped take paper copies around, and the Lincombe Barn team for kindly taking in returned paper copies.



Claire Hazelgrove discussing bus services at an event in Winterbourne

This shows what we can do, working together as a community, for our community.

I recently hosted the launch of the Hydrogen in Aviation Alliance's new report.

It highlights our area's world-leading aerospace heritage and potential to lead the future of hydrogen-powered flight, reducing the environmental impact of aviation.

I want to see Britain seize the opportunity to lead this, with Filton at the very heart of it.

I also met with the Defence Procurement Minister to discuss the important work so many do locally to support our national security and that of our NATO allies. This is all the more important in these more uncertain times globally, and our local contribution is highly valued by the Government.

Following my visit to the Frenchay Brain Injury Rehabilitation Unit, I was pleased to co-chair a parliamentary round-table discussion on brain injury rehabilitation, with the team based there and other experts from across the country.

I also visited 'mydentist' in Filton following the launch of my second survey on local NHS dentistry. This was the first issue I raised for us in Parliament, and we've seen some good progress with over 19,000 more urgent NHS appointments in our NHS area, but there's more to do.



As with my first survey, I will use this insight to continue to champion what we need locally. Please share your experiences at clairehazelgrove.co.uk/survey-dental-services.

This month, my small team and I worked on 528 cases to support residents directly - including at my advice surgery, held in Bradley Stoke.

I ran my latest 'Coffee with Claire' event in Winterbourne, bringing residents together to share their experiences and make the case for better buses, particularly for journeys across our community. I have shared local views from this, and my online survey, directly with transport ministers, First Bus, and the West of England Combined Authority.

I spoke in the Commons about the importance of our local pubs, and welcomed government action to cut their business rates bills by 20%. My first job was waitressing and pot washing in a pub, aged 14, and I know how much they all matter to us locally.

You can get in touch anytime at claire.hazelgrove.mp@parliament.uk.


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Call for slaughterhouse decision

ANIMAL rights campaigners are calling on South Gloucestershire Council to make a decision on plans to expand a slaughterhouse where up to 3,000 pigs a day are killed.

Pilgrim's Pride applied to the council for planning permission to build new facilities at its Pilgrim's Europe abattoir at Oakley Green Farm, Westerleigh, north of Lyde Green, in October last year.

The consultation period over the plans closed in June, but the council has not yet said whether the application will be decided by a committee or officers, or when it might make a decision.

More than 4,100 objections have been made to the plans: many have been from people raising animal welfare concerns but nearby residents have also written to object in large numbers, with one writing that the "pervasive smell" from the slaughterhouse "frequently engulfs the whole village and its surroundings", earning Westerleigh the nickname 'The

Smelly Village'.

Residents have also raised concerns about effluent leakages into the ground and local waterways.

There have been 55 comments in support of the expansion, which the company says will "upgrade and expand" the livestock processing facility so that it can slaughter 25,000 pigs per week.

It says: "The proposals aim to improve operational efficiency, enhance environmental performance, and provide modern infrastructure in support of the site's existing lawful use."

In September, more than 70 activists held a vigil outside the slaughterhouse, organised by Animal Save Movement through Bristol Pig Save.

Representatives from Animal Justice Project, Animal Aid, Viva!, the Vegan Society, VegfestUK and Bristol Animal Rights Collective also attended.

Organiser Andrew Garner said: "We are calling for an end to the killing.



The vigil outside the Pilgrim's Europe abattoir

"If these were dogs being sent into gas chambers, there would be public outrage. Pigs feel fear and pain too, yet because they are farmed for food, society has been conditioned to look the other way.

"We are calling on South Gloucestershire Council to do the right thing and reject this expansion. Councillors now have a choice.

"They can reject plans to expand this slaughterhouse, or approve an expansion that will further entrench the killing of

pigs at this site.

"We urge them to reject it and not have the blood of these animals on their hands. Stopping the expansion is only the first step.

"Ultimately, we want to see these gates close for good and slaughterhouses consigned to history."

The Voice has asked the council whether the application is going to be decided on by council officers or a planning committee and if so, when the committee is likely to meet.

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A name on the memorial, remembered

ANYONE who lives in Downend will be familiar with the Boy Scout Memorial which stands outside Sainsbury's.

It commemorates six young men of the local scout group, and their leader Rev Alexander, who all lost their lives in the First World War.

However, there were many more local men who made the ultimate sacrifice. If you look above the door of the porch at Christ Church, you will see a large memorial plaque in their memory – 164 names in all.

One of these young men was Frederick James Coates. Born on June 3, 1891, he lived in Winterbourne in his early years.

His mother Paulina died when Freddie was just six years old, and his sisters Beatrice and Flossie were ten and eight. Their father Edwin died a few years later, in 1904. It is difficult to imagine how the young family coped with these hardships.

Freddie attended



Frederick Coates was awarded the 1914-15 Star and two other medals for his service

Winterbourne School and left aged 15, in 1907, to join the Royal Navy.

His family's financial situation may well have been the prime driver in Freddie's decision. In the Navy he had board and lodging

and a regular wage, so he could send money home to his family.

At this time boys as young as 14 could join up, but could not enter combat until they were 18.

We don't have a picture of Freddie, but naval records describe him at age 18 as 5ft 6in tall, with dark brown hair and light blue eyes. He had a tattoo on his left forearm.

Freddie did not marry or have children.

His naval career was varied, aboard many ships including HMS Impregnable, Vivid, Bellerophon and Cornwallis. He served at the Battle of Jutland during his time on HMS Marshall, from 1915 to 1916.

Freddie's final ship was a torpedo-boat destroyer named HMS Foyle, tasked with escorting convoys and hunting down the U-boats that mined British waters and attacked merchant vessels.

On March 15, 1917, HMS Foyle struck a contact mine laid by German submarine UC-68,

approximately 12 miles southeast of Plymouth breakwater.

The explosion blew the ship's bows off, resulting in the loss of 27 of the 70 crew, including Freddie.

His body was not recovered.

Freddie's sister, Florence, was his next of kin and lived on Badminton Road in Downend.

Freddie is also commemorated on the war memorial at Page Park and on the Plymouth Naval Memorial.

He was awarded three medals for his service: the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Able Seaman Frederick James Coates, service number 23829: a young man who, like thousands of others, made the ultimate sacrifice for his country. Remembered with honour.

• For more details about Downend Community History and Arts Project (CHAP), visit www.downendchap.org or write to CHAP, 49 Overhill Road, Downend,

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BEECHMERE BELLES WI

I THINK we can truly say that the weather is back to 'normal', the children are back to school and the shops have been selling Christmas goods for weeks.

We had a lovely evening in August for our picnic in the park. The highlight of the evening was our quiz about Bristol – luckily I was quizmaster, but I think the ladies all found out things about the city that they didn't know.

Our September talk was with one of the Cyber Team from Avon & Somerset Police, discussing cyber security and scam prevention. Being able to spot and avoid these crimes is so important these days – it's so easy to fall prey.

We welcome guests to any of our meetings. It's free for your first meeting (unless it's a craft evening, when we charge £5 to cover materials).

We promise you a warm welcome, as well as tea or coffee and cake! We meet in Emersons Green Village Hall at 7.30pm on the fourth Thursday of the month.

If you would like to know more about our WI, we are now on Instagram - you can follow us at beechmerebelleswi. Of course, you can still contact us via email at beechmerebelles@gmail.com or follow our Facebook page, Emersons Green & Lyde Green WI Beechmere Belles.

Wendy

SHORTWOOD VILLAGE WI

HERE we go heading into autumn, shorter days and, dare we say, Christmas.

Our August meeting was fun as, after our usual business and a cuppa, we headed into the chapel for a games evening, including traditional Snakes and Ladders and Guess Who?

In September, we were visited by ex-detective Rob Jones with his Real-Life Whodunnit talk, on a case

that began in the 1990s.

It was very much audience participation, so at the beginning we were detectives and towards the end we were the jury, who found the suspect guilty.

The sunflower competition was not as successful as in previous years, probably due to the extreme heat and various times of flowering, but we did have one winner, with a height of 90 inches (seven and a half feet) and the biggest flower.

Some of our members went to the Avon Federation of WIs annual general meeting in Weston-super-Mare, and we also joined Rodway Rubies for their Country and Western evening.

We are a small friendly bunch: if you would like to see for yourself, we will welcome you to our next meeting, which is our AGM on October 8, at 7.30pm in the vestry of Shortwood Village Chapel, Main Road, Shortwood.

For more information, questions or just a chat please email millhousejoinery@aol.com, with the heading Shortwood Village WI.

Lynne Miller

RAINBOW TOTS

EMERSONS Green Baptist church will soon be celebrating 20 years of running our Rainbow tots session for pre-school children.

The church runs the sessions at Emersons Green village hall on Fridays, during term time, from 10-11.30am.

The church will be celebrating the occasion at the village hall on Friday October 16 at 10.30am, when we will be cutting a special cake.

Any parents or grandparents who have previously attended the sessions are very welcome to come along.

For further information contact 07765 201435.

Simon Budd

LYDE GREEN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

HELLO! I'm Shae, and I'm really pleased to be joining Lyde Green Community Association as the new Community Connector.

My role will involve getting to know local residents, listening to what matters to people in our community and helping to bring people together through activities, events and opportunities.

I'll also be working alongside local groups and organisations to make sure residents have a voice and can get involved in what's happening locally.

Over the next month or so, I'm looking forward to getting out and about, meeting people and learning more about the community and what residents would like to see happening in

Lyde Green.

I absolutely love events and event planning, so I'd really love to hear your ideas for activities or events you'd like to see in the community.

Hopefully, together, we can bring some of those ideas to life!

Ultimately, I'd love my role to have a positive impact by helping Lyde Green feel like a friendly, welcoming and connected place where everyone feels included and has the opportunity to get involved.

If you see me around, please feel free to pop in and say hi!

We have lots of events coming up in October, from a Wear It Pink party raising money for Breast Cancer Now to a Halloween disco.

For more details, see the what's on listings, on page 14.

Shae Williams

MANGOTSFIELD DOLLY MIXTURES

THE Dollies have just had their meeting in the hall after the summer break.

It was lovely to catch up with one another and discuss our plans for the Autumn with a nice cup of tea and a piece of home-made cake.

We had sign-up sheets for a visit to Glenside Hospital Museum.

Their mission is to de-stigmatise mental illness and learning difficulties, bring attention to personal well-being and increasing understanding of the brain and self-care.

Consultant director Stella Man was our guide for the afternoon; it was a very interesting and thought provoking tour.

The grounds and the museum are well worth a visit. More details at www.glensidemuseum.org.uk.

Our next trip is a guided walk and talk on Bristol's chocolate history, with Duncan from St Nicholas Market Tours.

The October meeting in the hall will feature a speaker on breathing exercises; also in October we have organised our first evening out to a Greek restaurant. All the Dollies have signed up for this, as I believe they are all intrigued.

In November one of our members who is a florist will be demonstrating making a table decoration from silk flowers, and in December we have booked a minibus trip to Wells Christmas market, with lunch in the Swan Hotel.

Our meeting won't be in the hall but an evening meal in Madison's with entertainment by Frankie Johns and his grandson Lucciano.

For more information, email carol@applause.co.uk.

Carol Coombs

BRISTOL U3A

Rewrite the rules of ageing

THERE are plenty of studies that prove that the key to ageing well is about keeping your mind, body, and social life active.

Unfortunately, society is still somewhat ageist, and there isn't a wealth of activities for vibrant older people when they leave the workplace.

Isolation can be a major health risk when your social circle shrinks overnight, through leaving work or losing a partner, raising stress levels and speeding up physical ageing.

This is where u3a (you in your 3rd age)

steps in: we're an organisation of active, curious individuals determined to prove that growing older is not about slowing down or losing the ability to learn something new.

U3a runs on the simple idea: "Build it and they will come." It provides an environment where members meet to share skills, interests and hobbies. We come from all backgrounds, and there's lots to do while seated or active.

Locally we have around 25 seated groups, covering areas from discussion, language, games, arts and crafts to singing and ukulele.

We have 11 activity groups, including dancing, walking, table tennis, tai chi shibashi and cycling. There are even more groups to

join across Bristol – around 200 in total.

Why not pop along to one of this month's café socials to meet existing members and find out more about u3a in general?

You'll find us at Turners in Fishponds (previously known as Grounded, flat access) on October 13, the Crafty Egg in Fishponds (ramp) on the 21st, Hillfields Community Centre (flat access) on the 22nd and Mokka Downend (flat access) on the 26th.

Curious but can't make it to any of those events? Email me at learnlaughlive@bristolu3a.org.uk and I'll do my best to answer your questions.

Lindsay Gough

Cambodia trek will raise money in memory of Sandie

A FORMER councillor's son and daughter are embarking on a trek through Cambodia to raise money for the hospice that helped her in her final days.

Sandie Davis was a South Gloucestershire councillor for New Cheltenham ward, which includes the Siston Hill estate.

A charity trustee and school governor, her personal dedication to improving life for people with disabilities saw her and husband Jim foster around 35 children and adopt four children with disabilities.

Sandie, who moved to Emersons Green from Downend in 2000, was diagnosed with stage 4 pancreatic cancer in March 2024, the day before her golden wedding anniversary.

She went into St Peter's Hospice the day before her 70th birthday and died there less than two weeks later.

But her short time there made a deep impression on her family, with staff helping Sandie and Jim host her planned family birthday party at the hospice.

Now Sandie's eldest daughter Louise and son Liam are about to embark on a nine-day hike through forests, valleys and mountains in Cambodia to pay something back to the charity that runs the hospice.

Louise, of Mangotsfield, is a former deputy head teacher who is about to start a



Sandie Davis

civilian job with the police, and Liam, of Soundwell, works for South Gloucestershire Council.

Louise said: "Mum spent so much of her life doing things for other people - as a nurse, foster mum, adoptive mum, councillor, charity trustee and governor, and particularly through her work supporting and advocating for people with disabilities.

"After losing her, we wanted to do something positive in her memory and

hopefully continue just a little bit of that legacy.

"Although Mum's time at St Peter's was short, what they did for her, and for all of us, has stayed with us.

"They helped us celebrate her 70th birthday there as a family and cared for her with such dignity and kindness. At probably the worst point in our lives, they looked after not only Mum but all of us around her.

"It's very difficult to appreciate quite what a hospice does until your family needs one. We can't ever really repay them for what they gave us, but raising money so they can provide that same care for another family feels like a pretty good place to start."

Alongside their training, Louise and Liam have so far raised around £6,000 for the hospice, through events including quiz nights, and sponsorship.

Anyone who would like to donate can do so via their fundraising page at tinyurl.com/yjxm7e38.

Louise said: "We've been absolutely blown away by the support we've received so far.

"I think Mum would be really proud that we're raising money for St Peter's, although she'd probably think choosing to trek up mountains and sleep in tents was absolutely ridiculous!"

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Prison is 'well-run'

A PRISON housing sex offenders in Pucklechurch is "well-run", inspectors say.

HM Inspectorate of Prisons visited Ashfield, a category C training prison for more than 400 adult male offenders, earlier this year.

The jail, run by private contractor SERCO, has specialised in holding men convicted of sexual offences since 2013.

The inspectors said: "Ashfield was a well-run prison with a positive culture and committed leadership and staff.

"Strengths included the induction of new prisoners, the quality and quantity of key work, support for older men, and work to promote family engagement.

"Violence in the prison was very low, with no recent serious incidents. Use of force was rare, and prisoners told us they felt safe.

"The use of prisoners to provide peer support, the promotion of healthy eating, and the well-embedded reading strategy were also notable.

"At this inspection, we found the prison had maintained its reputation for safety, stability and a clear commitment to rehabilitation. Outcomes for prisoners were good in three of our healthy prison tests – safety, respect and preparation for release – and, although outcomes in purposeful activity were assessed as not sufficiently good, there was evidence of progress."

The inspectors said that oversight of prisoner complaints, health care, education and work required improvement, and more also needed to be done to "promote inclusivity and fair treatment".

"Weaknesses in the handling of complaints, including those relating to staff and discrimination, undermined confidence among some prisoners. Despite these concerns, this was a very good inspection."

The Prison Service has produced an action plan in response to the report. It includes ensuring the handling of complaints is subject to quality assurance by a senior manager "to ensure consistency, proportionality, and robust scrutiny".

Horses are a big hit

HUNDREDS of people found out more about the police, their work and their equipment at a community event organised by the force.

The Emergency Services Fun Day in Page Park gave people the chance to try on riot shields and helmets, chat to their local officers and sit in the

driving seat – or be locked in the back – of a police van.

Police horses Michael and Windsor received plenty of attention from animal lovers visiting the event in September.

Although commitments elsewhere meant the fire and ambulance services were unable to attend, organisers from the Avon & Somerset Police Diversity and Inclusion Team said the event went very well.

Diverse outreach worker Abdulkadir Sheikhussein said: "The feedback from residents was overwhelmingly positive, and there was a genuine sense of community spirit throughout the day.

"For us, the event was all about bringing people together, strengthening community cohesion, and creating opportunities for local residents to connect with each other and the organisations that serve them."

The team hopes to bring the event back to Page Park for a fifth time next year.



Police horses Michael and Windsor and their riders meet the public in Page Park



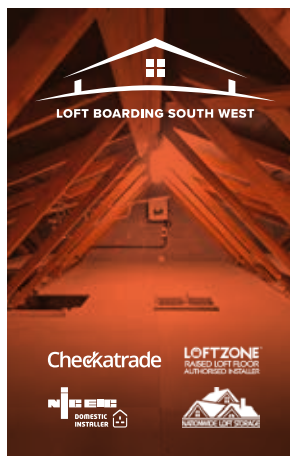
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Volunteers create community orchard

A GREEN space near a primary school is being made even more nature-friendly by a team of volunteers.

The Friends of Blackhorse Meadows are working with Hambrook-based environmental organisation One Planet Matters to create a community orchard and 'pollinator pathway' to encourage insects at the South Gloucestershire Council-owned site near Blackhorse Primary School.

One Planet Matters director Kevin Thomas said: "The site has had little land management over the last few years but has a range of different habitats, all of which need managing and developing in a way that creates opportunities for both wildlife and the community to be involved."

"In a few years it will provide lots of wonderful fresh fruit for community members to come and help themselves to!"

The area has now been added to the Pollinator Pathway Project, run by an Avon Wildlife

Trust and funded by WECA.

Avon Wildlife Trust nature recovery officer Ben Stainton said: "The Pollinator Pathways project set out to restore and create pollen-rich habitats to support species at risk, and empower communities to develop and maintain the pathway in their area."

He said the aim is to create "strategic corridors" connecting areas with the best opportunities for restoring wildflower-rich habitat across the country.

Ben said: "Blackhorse Meadows is one such area. It offers an opportunity to enhance habitat on a site that will be managed for nature, while also providing a haven for local people to engage with and appreciate nature."

As part of the project, Avon Wildlife, One Planet Matters and the Friends of Blackhorse Meadows held a session in September preparing the ground to sow thousands of wildflower seeds that will create a new more pollinator-friendly habitat.



Volunteers prepared the ground and sowed wildflowers during a Pollinator Pathway Day at Blackhorse Meadows in September

Picture: Kevin Thomas

One Planet Matters works to help communities improve the environment by creating their own orchards, nature reserves and well-being gardens.

Kevin said: "There are many opportunities to volunteer at this wonderful location and over the next few months there will be opportunities to learn about

pruning, coppicing, woodland clearing and dead hedge creation.

"If you live locally, why not come along to one of our upcoming activity sessions?"

For more details visit oneplanetmatters.com or the Friends of Blackhorse Meadows Facebook page.



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Hosepipe ban in force

BRISTOL Water has announced a hosepipe ban for all customers. The company, which supplies homes in South Gloucestershire, says it is introducing temporary restrictions on hosepipe use for all customers to protect water resources in the River Severn, following a drought order by the Environment Agency.

The ban was introduced at the end of August, and people who breach it could face a fine of up to £1,000.

Bristol Water said: "Prolonged dry weather, low river levels, significantly below average rainfall and high demand continues to place increasing pressure on both water supplies for people and the health of river systems and wildlife habitats.

"The restrictions mean customers should not use hosepipes for activities including watering gardens, washing cars, patios and boats, or filling swimming and paddling pools. Water can still be used as normal for drinking, flushing toilets, washing and cooking.

"During periods of dry weather, Bristol Water takes over half of its water from river sources, including the River Severn via the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal, to help manage reservoir levels.

"The drought conditions have resulted in a significant impact to the River Severn, one of its major sources, leading to the Environment Agency and Natural Resources Wales applying for a drought order to protect this essential water source."

A drought was declared in the region by the Environment Agency at the end of July. Despite recent rainfall, it is part of an area covering almost three-quarters of England that remains officially in drought after an exceptionally dry spring and summer.

A drought is only declared over when rivers, groundwater and reservoirs are back to normal levels, and the agency says the country will need 120% of typical rainfall over the next seven months for all areas to be considered out of drought. More details on the ban, and exemptions, are available at bristolwater.co.uk.

No decision on post office

POST Office customers will have to wait a while longer to find out when Downend will have a new counter service.

The area's previous post office closed in August when Morrisons shut the convenience store in Downend Road that hosted it.

All Morrisons and Post Office branding had now been removed from the building.

At the time of the closure, Post Office Ltd said it was "working through" bids from businesses to host a replacement Downend branch, after advertising the vacancy.

However, when asked by the Voice in September, a spokesperson said the company had no update to provide to residents.

The spokesperson said: "We fully recognise the inconvenience the closure has caused our customers and small businesses who rely on our banking and parcel services in particular, so we want to open a replacement branch as soon as possible."

Cafe closes its doors

A BIKE-themed cafe set up in Mangotsfield has closed.

Bristow Bike Café was set up by the team behind the Revolution Workshop next door in Cossham Street at the start of the year.

The owners of the business said the idea was to create a good independent café alongside the bike business, and sold "cyclist-friendly fuel" and bike parts and accessories alongside coffees, teas, cakes and toasts.

But they said a lack of trade in August and September meant the venture was not able to break even, adding: "We've given it a proper go, but unfortunately there simply hasn't been enough regular trade to make a separately staffed café viable."

"The Revolution Workshop next door remains extremely busy, and we're now going to concentrate our time, money and energy on developing the bike business."

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Friends' good deed changes Adam's life

AN act of kindness by a group of friends from Downend has changed the life of a young DJ with autism.

Adam James had travelled to the Boomtown dance music festival in Hampshire on his own. His family was so worried that his dad made plans to bring his 23-year-old son home if he wanted to leave the five-day festival early.

But as Adam set up camp alone, a chance conversation with Ciaran Herniman, of Downend, and a group of his friends from the area changed everything.

Ciaran said: "We'd been to Boomtown before and have a spot where we like to camp.

"We got there and put our tents up, and in the process someone said they needed a mallet.

"This kid who was camped next to us offered to lend his.

"I noticed he was on his own, he had the smallest tent and he didn't have a mattress.

"Then he said it was his first



Ciaran Herniman front left, with Adam James, right, and some of the other Downend friends

festival.

"I thought 'that's bad' - the festival has got about 80,000 people, and he's on his own.

"As soon as he told me that, I said 'jump in with us'. We moved his tent into our circle and just set off from there. We looked after him and made sure he was all right.

"He loved it and when we came to leave, he was crying his eyes out!"

Afterwards Ciaran, who works for insurance company Aviva's accident repair service, and his friends kept in touch with Adam.

They invited him to Downend to DJ at the Trident pub. Then he played at Bambalan rooftop bar, opposite the Bristol Beacon.

Ciaran said: "Some of my boys I hang around with got him on the bill - he absolutely killed it!"

But it was a social media post

from Adam's dad Andy, of High Wycombe in Buckinghamshire, that took things to another level.

Andy's post thanked the "lads from Bristol" for helping Adam to realise his dreams of enjoying the festival.

It went viral, bringing the story to the attention of the music industry and national media.

Adam and Ciaran appeared on *BBC Breakfast News* and *ITV's Good Morning Britain*, and Adam, who performs as Adzo, has now been invited to DJ at next year's Boomtown festival.

Before that, he will perform at a dance music celebration called A History of Rave at Bristol's Prospect Building, headlined by DJ Eats Everything and Groove Armada, on October 17.

Adam said: "It's been overwhelming, but absolutely brilliant."

He said Ciaran and his friends "could have just ignored me, but the fact they saw I was on my own and took me in was just amazing".

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There are limited places available under the scheme so book now. Then Simpson Solicitors will prepare your Will (or 2 mirror Wills for a couple) absolutely free to you. You will still receive their full award-winning service. They will check your home ownership for £7 and advise you on optional extras such as Additional Trust Protection to protect the inheritance you leave against Care Home Fees) and

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Michelle Baden-Daintree says "I hope many people will take advantage of the scheme and leave a generous gift in their Will to the Grand Appeal. Call our friendly team saying you'd like to make a Grand Appeal Scheme Will. Then by leaving a donation in your Will, you can gift a sick child a brighter future."



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Ed completes Tour de CAB

A CHARITY worker has completed a challenge to cycle between all of the drop-in locations where it offers people advice, in a single day.

Ed Phillis, who works for Citizens Advice South Gloucestershire, took on the 35-mile ride dubbed the Tour de CAB (Citizens Advice Bureau) in September, to raise awareness and funds for the charity's work.

He started off on his mountain bike from Thornbury Town Hall and finished at the charity's Yate Advice Centre.

Along the way, he visited the 12 locations where Citizens Advice runs free advice drop-in sessions, including Emersons Green Village Hall and Lyde Green Community Centre.

Drop-in sessions allow people to get advice and support without an appointment on subjects including benefits, debt, housing and cost of living help.

The charity has supported

more than 7,300 people in the past year and saved clients an estimated total of £15 million - equivalent to more than £2,000 per person helped.

Drop-in sessions are hosted at venues provided by town and parish councils, who also fund sessions.

The charity says they are an essential part of how it works, as they allow people to benefit from advice without having to travel outside their local area.

Ed is a 'help to claim adviser', supporting people through the process of making a first-time Universal Credit claim.

The dad-of-two, who lives in Easton, has raised more than £700 for the charity so far, and has a donation page online at tinyurl.com/jnembj7z.

The independent charity relies on donations and grants to support its work.

Ed said: "Luckily, the rain held off, there were no injuries and no mechanical failures!

"But the real highlight of the ride was meeting so many people at the different Citizens Advice South Gloucestershire outreach sessions.



Ed Phillis with Citizens Advice development manager Rebecca Brown, Emersons Green Town Council deputy clerk Jane Wray and assistant clerk Emma Yu, and Emersons Green Village Hall Manager Nikki Frost at the village hall.

"It really brought home just how important community centres and village halls are to the communities they serve, and how valued the Citizens Advice South Gloucestershire drop-in sessions are as part of the support offered from these venues.

"South Gloucestershire is such a varied county, encompassing urban, industrial and rural communities, and I was struck by the number of great cycle routes connecting them.

"It was a long day in the

saddle, but a really worthwhile one."

Citizens Advice South Gloucestershire chief executive Chantal Watts said: "I can't stress how important our outreaches are to this organisation.

"It means that people who have travelling disabilities can reach advice every single day of the week - and Ed's journey has highlighted that."

For more information on Citizens Advice visit southgloscab.org.uk.



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600 watch FA Cup replay

A HECTIC four weeks for Mangotsfield United saw the side take Southern League Premier South side Gloucester City to an FA Cup replay and chalk up three league wins.

The Mangos also won through two preliminary rounds to make the First Round proper of the FA Vase.

A 2-0 home league win against struggling near-neighbours Hallen saw Curtis Jay Jemmett-Hutson score in each half, having opened his account three days earlier at Kintbury Rangers in the FA Vase.

Four days later Thatcham Town were the visitors to Cosham Street in the FA Cup Preliminary Round.

The Combined Counties Football League side were held up in traffic on the journey along the M4 from Berkshire, and it may have affected them as they went down 3-0.

Owen Pritchard netted the first goal on 6 minutes and Harlee Vozza made it 2-0 before the break. Thatcham kept plugging away but to no avail: a late goal by Owen Pritchard sent Mangotsfield supporters home buzzing.

On August Bank Holiday Saturday the Mangos beat Hereford outfit Westfields 4-1

in the league. The score was 1-1 at the break, but a strong second-half display and some clinical finishing ensured the points stayed at Cosham Street, even though Westfields looked a very useful side. Mangotsfield's goals came from Vozza, Pritchard, Mohammed Djalo and debutant Ricardo Thompson.

Two days later, a penalty scored by James Corey Horrocks with just 10 minutes left was enough to win a hard encounter at Malmesbury Victoria, 1-0.

The following Saturday the Mangos travelled to Gloucester City as complete underdogs in the FA Cup First Qualifying Round.

They came away with a 1-1 draw after a valiant performance, with keeper Ellis Parker playing an absolute blinder all game. The hosts led 1-0 at the break, but Horrocks' leveller on 53 minutes ensured the Mangos battled out a deserved draw.

The replay three days later at Cosham Street was played in front of an amazing 601 spectators.

This time the result reflected the visitors' higher status: the Tigers tore into the Mangos right from the start and led 3-0 at the break, adding a further goal after half-time.

However, the Mangos players deserved every bit of praise going for taking a side two levels higher to a replay.

Mangotsfield were back on song on September 12 with a 3-0 FA Vase win at

Combined Counties League club Eversley & California - a side they had never played before.

On a difficult pitch, Archie Morris (37), Francis McKay (75) & Ricardo Thompson (90) got the goals.

Three days later, the Mangos entertained Hellenic League leaders Corsham Town and bagged a deserved 2-2 draw.

Morris put the hosts ahead on 4 minutes, but Corsham regrouped and levelled through Mangos old boy Kye Simpson (26). A superb free kick then put the visitors in front and it seemed the Mangos were going to fall short, as Corsham were not giving an inch.

However, a 40-yard free kick from George Fowler on 87 minutes sailed over everyone's heads, including the Corsham keeper's, to give the Mangos an unexpected but deserved point.

Dave Smale

Upcoming fixtures:

September 26: Roman Glass St George (away)

October 3: Thornbury Town (home)

October 10: Fleetlands (FA Vase - H)

October 13: Hallen (A)

October 17: Cirencester Town (H)

October 24: Tuffley Rovers (A)

October 31: Bradford Town (A)

Flyers beat fly-tippers to start season

DOWNEND Flyers are excited to have kicked off the football season on a high.

All of our home games went ahead as scheduled, despite uncertainty in the lead-up to the season after Johnsons Road was heavily fly-tipped just a week before kick-off.

After a challenging few weeks, it has been fantastic to see our players back where they belong — on the football pitch — and what outstanding football has been played across the club!

One of the highlights has been watching our brand-new Under-18s team take to the pitch for the first time.

Facing stern opposition from a travelling Evesham side, our players showed tremendous ability, determination and composure. It was a hugely proud moment for Downend Flyers to see our first-ever U18 team competing at such a high level.

With the talent within this group, the club has high hopes for their future, and it is exciting to think that we could be watching the foundations of our



Downend Flyers first team

future women's first team.

At the other end of the age spectrum, the FA's introduction of 3v3 football for the youngest age groups has been a huge success. Smaller-sided games give young players significantly more involvement, more touches of the ball and more opportunities to make decisions for themselves. With fewer players on the pitch, there is nowhere to hide

— encouraging confidence, creativity, movement, passing, communication and problem-solving. Most importantly, it keeps young players actively involved and having fun.

There is a fantastic standard of adult female football being played across Downend Flyers, with our women's First Team, Reserve Team, A Team and Under-18s all providing brilliant opportunities for players to

develop and compete.

Join us at Pomphrey Hill or Johnsons Road for our home fixtures and support some fantastic female football - bring the family, bring your friends and be part of something special.

The football doesn't have to end at the final whistle. We love heading to the Pomphrey Hill Sports Bar afterwards for a drink, a debrief and, naturally, a detailed discussion about the tactics — because everyone is an expert after 90 minutes!

Whether you're a lifelong football fan or simply want to support girls and women in sport, come along and see what Downend Flyers FC is all about.

Female football is thriving — and we are incredibly proud to be part of it.

Steve Poole

Home fixtures:

October 11: 1sts v Bishop's Cleeve

A's v Berkeley

October 18: 1sts v

Mangotsfield

October 25: Reserves v Newent

How padel has given me a new lease of life

I've just come off the padel court after another cracking game with Dele, one of our chiropractors, Angie from reception and sports therapist Emily. We have created a Cleve Chiro team!

Unfortunately, Emily and I lost both sets. The second went all the way to six games each before we narrowly lost the tie-break. Despite the result, it was probably some of the best padel we have played.

That may not sound particularly impressive, but six months ago we were all pretty rubbish. We have gradually improved, the rallies have become longer and the games far more competitive. More importantly, we have had enormous fun doing it.

We laughed so loudly at times that I wondered whether we were annoying the people on the other courts but, whenever I looked around, everyone seemed to be smiling and enjoying themselves too. You can be fiercely competitive one moment and helpless with laughter the next – well at least the way we do it!

For anyone unfamiliar with padel, it is a racket sport somewhere between tennis and squash, usually played as doubles on an enclosed court, with the walls forming part of the game. It is sociable and surprisingly addictive – a great new kid on the sporting block.

Rediscovering the joy of sport

When I returned to regular exercise at 40, running became my main activity. Over the past year, I have also introduced more strength training. Both have been beneficial, but padel has added something different: the excitement of playing a competitive sport again.

You become so absorbed in chasing the ball, anticipating the next shot and trying to outmanoeuvre your opponents that you almost forget you are exercising. There is friendly rivalry and the satisfaction of noticing yourself improve. It really has given me a new lease of life.

For me, the combination works brilliantly: weights for strength, running for aerobic fitness and a game that challenges my average coordination and reactions while giving me something to look forward to. Exercise feels much easier to fit in when you actually want to do it.

Padel and the Four Pillars of Health

Padel also connects with the Four Pillars of Health we always endeavour to focus on at Cleve Chiropractic.

Movement is the obvious one. There is plenty of running, reaching and changing direction. Alongside my gym sessions and running, it adds variety to my week.

Nutrition means thinking about fuel and hydration. Turning up thirsty or having skipped lunch is hardly ideal preparation for chasing Dele's shots around the court.

Sleep is our opportunity to rest and recover. Booking another match is also a useful reminder to leave time for recovery between busy days.

Mindset is where padel has made the biggest difference for me. For that hour, I am thinking

exclusively about the ball, my playing partner and the next point. Work takes a back seat and I've discovered that looking after yourself can involve laughing with friends until your sides hurt.

Looking after yourself on court

Of course, enthusiasm can get ahead of preparation. Repeated hitting and sudden changes of direction can put demands on elbows, shoulders, backs and legs, especially when you are new to the game.

It's important to give yourself time to warm up, build playing time gradually and wear footwear suited to court movement. Keep some strength work in your routine and allow recovery between matches. If pain persists or changes how you move, make sure you get it assessed. At Cleve Chiro, we are well known as injury specialists but now we can add another sports discipline to our armoury. So don't hesitate to get in touch if you have hurt yourself and need some specialised treatment and advice.

I still enjoy running and weight training, but padel has reminded me how much I missed playing alongside other like-minded people. The score matters in the moment; afterwards, it is the laughter and the company that stay with you. Emily and I may have lost this time, but we are improving. We'll be back for the rematch, probably just as loudly.



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Under-19s provide perfect end to season

CARSONS & Mangotsfield's Under-19s ended the club's competitive cricket season with a T20 Development Final win that neatly book-ended the summer after their early-season success.

Isaac Buckingham's poised 53, before retiring, not out, gave them their 129-7 backbone and intent.

Tour Ponting's sharp 2-17 led a disciplined squeeze on Stoke Bishop's reply that held them to 107-6; the trophy was defended by a group playing with growing maturity and confidence.

For the first time in six years, there were no promotions for the club's weekend sides.

The 1st XI reached the final game very much in the hunt, only for the day to be washed out before they could lay a glove on champions Frenchay.

They finished in fifth place, ten points shy of promotion, after a debut Division 3 campaign that looked assured throughout, with Kieran Gallagher making 529 runs and Jack Woodland 30 wickets.

The 2nd XI are looking in a



The victorious u19s team

bottleneck in Division 7, where only one side goes up, finishing third despite cricket that deserved more.

Harry Ravenscroft's 431 runs and Ben Child's 28 wickets formed the spine of a side that refused to drift.

The 3rd XI is in a rebuild,

which in club cricket usually translates to "half the team nearly has GCSEs".

Relegation sends them to Division 9, but their purpose remains clear as a proving ground for youth. Mike Norris topped the run charts with 245, while Liam Nichols' 14 wickets

led a bowling group learning quickly.

The 4th XI wrapped up early, finishing mid-table after a season of social, developmental and surprisingly competitive cricket. Tom Carter's 227 runs and Ben Harvey's 15 wickets were the standout contributions.

The Sunday XI's finale was also rained off, and they finished a respectable fourth. George Farmer made 482 runs and Jack Woodland 21 wickets.

So no weekend promotions but a senior T20 league win and junior silverware reminding everyone that the club's momentum didn't stop, it simply shifted.

Cricket seasons aren't judged solely by tables, but by the tales they leave behind. Carsons & Mangotsfield have written a good one in 2026.

To get involved contact [info. carsonsandmangotsfield@gmail.com](mailto:carsonsandmangotsfield@gmail.com) or connect with us on our socials.

Jake Lane

'Fantastic year' for Downend cricket

IT has been a fantastic year for Downend Cricket Club.

The 1st XI just missed out on promotion, finishing third in West of England Premier League Division 2, winning 11 out of 18 games and fighting at the top of the table until the end.

Callum Loud top-scored with 1,180 runs, Jordan Garrett hit 850 and Masoor Khan 832, while Ross Robbins took 30 wickets, Maz Khan 24 and Matt Jackson 21.

The 2nd XI experienced a

challenging but hugely valuable first ever season in WEPL 3.

We knew the step up in standard would be a tough one. Unfortunately, a number of injuries, alongside several players moving away from the area, weakened the squad. The team played some really good cricket, with some excellent highlights, including memorable wins over Knowle 1st XI and Bath 2nd XI. They came agonisingly close in five or six key games, but will be back

in the B&D Senior League next season.

Downend 3rd XI had a good season. After a poor start, they put a good run of results together to finish fifth.

Standout performers included Temoor Naeem, with 27 wickets and 215 runs, and Rehan Shahid, who took on the responsibility of the new ball every week and bowled consistently throughout.

They look to kick on and hopefully gain promotion next

season.

After several years without one the club was delighted to field a 4th team again - a great reflection of the growth of our junior section.

Our Ladies were Softball T20 South champions, thanks to some incredible team performances and outstanding individual displays.

The team represented the club brilliantly all season and fully deserve their success.

Miles Davis

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