

keynshamvoice

March 2026

Issue 166

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Cheers to
charity
success:
Page 10

FREE EVERY MONTH IN KEYNSHAM & SALTFORD

Bid to build 550 homes at Hicks Gate unveiled

CREST Nicholson has unveiled a bid to build 550 homes at Hicks Gate, near Keynsham.

It is seeking to develop just over 60 acres (25 hectares) north-west of the Hicks Gate roundabout, alongside the A4 Bath Road.

The company intends to submit a joint outline planning application to Bath & North East Somerset Council and Bristol City Council. The site lies within the jurisdiction of both councils but is mainly in B&NES.

Crest Nicholson has made a scoping application to B&NES Council as a first step before submitting its planning application.

Scoping is the process of asking a local planning authority to identify key issues that must be looked at as part of an environment impact assessment (EIA).

The green-belt site stretches up from the A4 to the River Avon in the north. It includes a football pitch currently used by Brislington FC.

Crest Nicholson says the proposed development would include public open space, equipped play areas, and pedestrian and cycle
■ Turn to Page 3



Leo Nicholls and his mum Aimee, from Keynsham, met TV presenter Emma Willis as part of a campaign to raise awareness of heart disease - full story on Page 5

INSIDE

Speed limits cut

Lower speed limits aimed at improving safety are being brought in on routes in and around Keynsham.

PAGE 13

Save our K1 bus

Uncertainty remains over the long-term future of Keynsham's K1 bus amid a funding review.

PAGE 17

Alley campaign

More than 100 people have signed a petition calling for lighting to be installed on a well-used alleyway.

PAGE 23

Play area revamp

Residents are being asked what they would like to see in the refurbishment of the Park Road play area in Keynsham.

PAGE 31

Salute to veteran

Tributes have been paid to war veteran Stan Ford, who survived the D-Day landings and has died at the age of 100.

PAGE 38



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April deadline

Our April edition will go to print on Monday March 30. To ensure your news or letter is included, please contact us by Wednesday March 25. Advertisers are asked to contact us by the same date.



Your views

Letters for publication can be emailed to news@keynshamvoice.co.uk or posted to Letters, Keynsham Voice, 16 Ashmead Business Centre, Ashmead Road, Keynsham, BS31 1SX. The editor reserves the right to edit your letter.

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

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NEWS

Free birthday bus pass scheme is quietly axed

A SCHEME giving people in the West of England free bus travel during their birthday month has been quietly axed.

The birthday bus scheme allowed people in Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset to sign up for a pass for free bus travel, valid throughout the month of their birthday.

The scheme, funded by the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) and North Somerset Council, was launched in August 2023 and was relaunched for another year in December 2025.

But WECA has now quietly confirmed that it will not be repeated again. The end of the scheme was mentioned in a single sentence at the end of a WECA press release, which said: "The birthday-related bus scheme in the West of England came to an end late last year, with no plans to continue it after a fall in the number of new users and wider increased pressures on funding."

Around 72,000 people applied for a birthday bus pass in the first year of the scheme, making a collective 1.17 million journeys. Some people used the pass more than 200 times in the month of their birthday. But the scheme was criticised by some as a "gimmick" and a task group looking into the project said it



was benefiting richer people more than poorer people.

Former West of England mayor Dan Norris had said the scheme was his main achievement in the role.

He told the Local Democracy Reporting Service in 2024: "It's important

to get people out of their cars and it's also helped those who are totally reliant on public transport in a cost-of-living crisis."

Rather than birthday buses, Helen Godwin, who succeeded Mr Norris as West of England mayor, has run a 'kids go free' scheme, giving children aged 5-15 free bus travel on the region's buses over the holidays.

Children's journeys increased by 30% over the summer holiday when it was first run and by 50% when it was repeated over the Christmas holiday.

WECA has received a £42.4m bus grant from the government for the next three years, including £9.9m for fares initiatives such as the child fare cap and the 'kids go free' scheme.

But people living in rural villages have urged WECA to prioritise keeping threatened supported bus routes going over schemes like 'kids go free'.

Fiona Gourley, Bath and North East Somerset Council's rural transport project lead, said: "It is only good if you actually have a bus."

John Wimperis, Local Democracy Reporting Service

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Solving your legal problems ...locally

NEWS

550 homes bid at Hicks Gate unveiled



The area outlined in red is the subject of Crest Nicholson's scoping application *Image: Groundsure Location Intelligence*
Right, green fields to the north-west of the Hicks Gate roundabout that Crest Nicholson wants to develop *Image: Google Earth*

From Page 1

connections. The site would be served by a signal-controlled single-entry point along the A4, about halfway between Ironmould Lane and the Hicks Gate roundabout.

Crest Nicholson proposes that the EIA should include the likely impact on roads, including the A4, A4175 Durley Hill and the A4174 ring road between the Hicks Gate roundabout and the Kingfield roundabout at Longwell Green.

The Hicks Gate site is within an area earmarked by B&NES Council as a potential site for new homes in its draft local plan.

The government has told the council it needs to build 27,000 homes by 2043, and the local plan will set out where new developments should go to meet that target.

B&NES Council has been criticised for proposing to put most of the new homes in areas such as Keynsham and Saltford outside Bath, to avoid risking the historic city's UNESCO World Heritage Site status.

There has been much opposition among Keynsham residents and councillors to some of the potential housing sites identified within the town, such as west of Charlton Road.

Hicks Gate is seen by some as a potentially acceptable option that would strengthen residents' argument for rejecting the development that the town does not want.

One local B&NES councillor, however, has criticised Crest Nicholson for making its scoping application for Hicks Gate while the draft local plan is still at the consultation stage.

George Leach (Liberal Democrat, Keynsham North) said: "It's disappointing to see more speculative steps towards planning applications from developers before the local plan has been agreed.

"It is important we agree a long-term housing plan, not continually looking at proposal sites on an ad-hoc basis without integration to a wider strategy."

Meanwhile, Bellway Homes is seeking permission to build more than 500 homes at Hicks Gate south of the A4.

It submitted a planning application to Bristol City Council in 2024 to develop green fields between Brislington park-and-ride and the former Wyevale Garden Centre, next to the boundary with Bath & North East Somerset.

B&NES Council, which had previously raised concerns about the impact on traffic, told the city council in January this year that a strategic masterplan covering the wider Hicks Gate development area should be prepared as part of the Bellway Homes application.

It said: "This could identify opportunities for higher density development and should include a comprehensive route and access strategy, including the safeguarding of rapid transit routes along the A4, segregated cycle routes throughout, and a clearer understanding of the relationship to the proposed Hicks Gate transport interchange."

Bristol City Council has yet to make a decision on the Bellway Homes plans.

Regarding its local plan, B&NES Council will run its next round of consultations when it has picked the sites and written up its draft version of the plan in spring/summer this year.

The plan will then need to go to the government for examination before it can be approved by the council, with the council expected to finally be able to approve the plan and bring it into effect in the summer of 2027.



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■ ADVERTISING FEATURE

Your tax year end checklist

As the end of the tax year approaches, you might be wondering whether there's anything you should be doing before the 5 April deadline. The good news is that you don't need to overhaul your finances to make a difference. A few simple checks now could help reduce the amount of tax you pay and put you in a stronger position for the year ahead. Even small actions can add up over time.

Local Financial Planner Jonathan Southgate, of Southgate Wealth Management Ltd, highlights some key areas worth reviewing.

Use your ISA allowance

ISAs (Individual Savings Accounts) are one of the easiest ways to save or invest without worrying about any further liability to tax. Each tax year, you can put up to £20,000 into an ISA. Any interest, growth, or income you earn stays free from Income Tax and Capital Gains Tax, both now and in the future.

If you have a spouse or civil partner, they have their own £20,000 allowance. That means between you, you could potentially protect up to £40,000 from any further tax.

You can also save for children or grandchildren using a Junior ISA. Up to £9,000 can be contributed per child each year. A parent or guardian must open the account, but friends and family can also add to it. Over time, this can grow into a useful pot for later life.

Check your pension contributions

Pensions are a tax-efficient way to save for your future. Check what you've paid in this tax year and whether you could afford to top it up. You may also be able to use unused pension allowances from the previous three years.

If you're approaching retirement, planning when and how you take money from your pension may help reduce the tax you pay overall. And remember, you are never too young to start paying into a pension!

Check your Capital Gain Tax allowance

When you sell something that has increased in value – such as shares, a second property, or valuable personal possessions – you may pay Capital Gains Tax (CGT) on the profit. Everyone has a CGT allowance of £3,000. Reviewing this before the tax year ends may help you use it more effectively.

Don't forget gifting and business finances

You can gift £3,000 each year without it counting towards Inheritance Tax, or £6,000 if you didn't use last year's allowance.

If you run your own business, it's also a good time to check whether your mix of salary and dividends still makes sense.

A simple tax year end check doesn't need to feel overwhelming. Get in touch today to see how Southgate Wealth Management can help. Email Jonathan.southgate@sjpgp.co.uk or call 07863 164159.

The value of an investment with St. James's Place will be directly linked to the performance of the funds selected and may fall as well as rise. You may get back less than the amount invested.

The levels and bases of taxation, and reliefs from taxation, can change at any time and are generally dependent on individual circumstances.



Jonathan Southgate

■ NEWS

Children's social care managers vote to strike

CHILDREN'S social care managers at Bath and North East Somerset Council have voted to go on strike.

Team managers and deputy team managers in the children's services department were balloted on taking industrial action after pay regrading at the council put them on the same pay grade as some of the staff they manage.

All of the returned ballots supported striking, on a turnout of 94%.

The council said: "During the course of any industrial action, children's services will work to ensure continuity of service provision for the children, young people and families we work with and to meet any new safeguarding requests made for support."

No date has yet been set for when the strike will take place.

UNISON branch chair Amy Rushton said: "There's still

time to get back round the table and avoid strike action. But the result of the ballot couldn't be clearer."

More than 40 people, including UNISON staff from across the council, attended a "practice picket" outside Keynsham Civic Centre on January 14 to show support as the ballots were sent out.

Councillor Dave Biddleston (Keynsham South, Labour), who attended the practice picket, said: "Social work is a highly skilled profession, and we should be paying people fairly for their expertise, experience and responsibility. When pay structures fail to reflect real-world roles and accountability, it damages morale, retention and ultimately the safety and quality of services. Councils cannot afford to get this wrong."

John Wimperis, Local Democracy Reporting Service



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March, 2026

NEWS

Leo takes a seat with TV Emma for heart campaign

A KEYNSHAM boy is being honoured as part of a British Heart Foundation campaign fronted by TV presenter Emma Willis.

The charity is unveiling 65 red "living memorial" benches across the UK - one for each year the charity has been established - in tribute to those living with cardiovascular disease.

One of the benches will be named after Leo Nicholls, aged eight, of Keynsham, who had open-heart surgery as a newborn baby.

His mum Aimee Nicholls was born with a hole in her heart and underwent a keyhole procedure at the age of four.

The former air hostess was able to live a relatively normal life, but after falling pregnant with Leo, a 20-week scan picked up that Leo would also be born with a hole in his heart.

However, once Leo was born in November 2017, Aimee and husband Alex were told their son had several heart defects and would need open-heart surgery at just a week old.

"When we were told about Leo's conditions, our world collapsed," said Aimee, now aged 32.

"We'd gone from being told he had a minor heart defect that wouldn't require surgery and would rectify itself, to being told that without open-heart surgery he wouldn't survive. We just broke down and couldn't process it at all."

Following successful surgery, Leo was discharged from hospital just two days before Christmas. He had a long road to recovery, and whilst he continues to be monitored by doctors, Leo - a fan of football, rugby and golf - may require further surgery.

At the launch of the British Heart Foundation campaign, Leo and Aimee met TV presenter Emma Willis, who shared her experience of discovering she had a



Leo Nicholls with mum Aimee and Emma Willis



The book written by Aimee to explain things such as Leo's scar from his surgery



congenital heart condition, following a routine health check in January 2025.

Doctor found she had an enlarged heart and a hole between the upper chambers of her heart (an atrial septal defect), which was closed during a keyhole operation at the Royal Brompton Hospital in London.

Emma said: "The last thing I expected my cardiologist to say was that it was a congenital heart condition. I was floored as I had gone 48 years oblivious, not knowing anything was wrong.

"It was a bolt out of the blue, and I had a million questions going through my head. The mental shift was the biggest challenge, because when you hear those words, it terrifies you.

"My perspective on life shifted. From

diagnosis to surgery was the most present I have been in my life."

She added: "I'm hoping that sharing my story will help others going through something like this."

The British Heart Foundation says that her story, alongside Leo's, highlights the importance of early diagnosis, research, and ongoing support.

It has not yet been decided where Leo's bench will be placed, although it will be somewhere in the local area.

Aimee said she is thrilled that Leo, who goes to Chandag School, is one of the children being recognised in this way and that it is "an incredibly emotional and meaningful moment for our family."

She added: "Leo's surgeon is funded by the British Heart Foundation and his work directly impacts Leo, which is why we're so heavily involved, and passionate about the campaign."

When Leo started school at Chandag infants at the age of five, he settled in with help from a book written by his mum.

Aimee wrote *Leo's Heart* initially for Leo but thought it would be a great way to help his new classmates understand his circumstances, such as the scar that showed whenever he changed for PE.

The book is available from the Heart Heroes website. To buy a copy, visit heartheroes.co.uk and click on 'shop'.

Public to be consulted again on parking charge plans

COUNCILLORS have agreed to further consultation with local residents in Bath & North East Somerset about proposed changes to parking charges.

These include proposals to introduce charges based on vehicle size for residents' parking permits and changes to all day parking at Bath's three park-and-ride sites.

Initial public consultation on the proposals ran from October 17 to

November 7, attracting 490 responses and 660 comments.

As reported in last month's *Voice*, plans to extend parking charges at Bath Hill East car park in Keynsham to include Saturdays will not go ahead after Keynsham councillor Andy Wait highlighted the importance of free parking to residents and businesses.

Councillor Joel Hirst, cabinet member for sustainable transport strategy, and

Councillor Manda Rigby, cabinet member for communications and community, have now agreed to further public consultation later this spring.

Councillor Manda Rigby added: "After careful consideration of the feedback, we've decided to move forward with some of the recommended changes, and we will go out to seek further views on more detailed proposals."

NEWS



Residents get action on sorry state of road

RESURFACING work is scheduled to take place along Lays Drive in Keynsham later this month.

The project, starting on Monday March 23, is expected to take up to five days to complete, depending on the weather.

Road closures will be in place from 7am to 7pm. Vehicles parked within the closure may be removed to avoid delaying the work.

Bath & North East Somerset Council, which is working in partnership with its contractor Volker Highways, said: "Residents will need to make their own arrangements to find alternative parking. Unfortunately, this also applies to disabled parking spaces within the area of work. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause."

Advance notices will be placed at the road entrance to warn drivers of the closure. Restricted vehicle access for residents' private driveways within the closures will be maintained whenever possible.

Access will be controlled by traffic marshals, who will also advise on likely access windows as the work progresses.

B&NES Council's highways team said: "Unfortunately, there will be times when access will not be possible, so please be prepared for delays, disruption and make alternative arrangements before these works start."

Residents are advised to warn any delivery drivers or visitors of the closure. Emergency services will always have access during the work, and the council is working with its waste service team to ensure collections are not disrupted, although there may be occasions when this is not possible.

News of the resurfacing project has been welcomed by councillors George Leach and Alex Beaumont, who represent Keynsham North on B&NES Council.

Cllr Leach said: "Myself and Cllr Beaumont secured funding for this work so are pleased to see it scheduled to take place.

"Residents are frequently telling us that the desperately poor state of the road on Lays Drive has been one of their biggest frustrations, so we're pleased we've been able to resolve that despite the tight budgets and challenges facing local authorities."

Come and swap your plants

A COMMUNITY plant swap will return to the Meadows Community Building in Keynsham in May.

The event, hosted by Katie Brandwood and Emma Ford, who are both gardening volunteers at Castle Primary School, follows their successful first plant swap last September.

The free event on Saturday May 2, 11am-2pm, will allow local gardeners and allotmenters to come together and exchange indoor and outdoor plants. It promises to be inclusive of a range of abilities and ages, offering something for everyone.

Representatives from Keynsham Group AWT (Avon Wildlife Trust) will be on hand to give advice on how to take action for nature and support local wildlife, while supervised children can

enjoy free nature-themed craft activities.

There will be a pay-as-you-feel cafe serving hot drinks, homemade cakes and biscuits. Weather permitting, the event will include an outdoor area for people to bring their own picnic and enjoy the green space.

Healthy, pest-free indoor and outdoor plants, cuttings, seeds and vegetable plugs can be brought to swap. They should clearly labelled beforehand where possible.

Parking will be available at Castle Primary School (access via Newlands Road) and attendees are encouraged to bring cash for refreshments and donations.

The Meadows Community Building is in Greenfield Road, Keynsham, BS31 1FL. What3words: ///onions.games.bank



Volunteers Sue (left) and Debbie (right) at the first community plant swap in September



Welcome news - Cllr Duncan Hounsell by the moorings in Mead Lane, Saltford

Extra funds for better moorings

EXTRA funding is to be spent on improving moorings for boats on the River Avon in Saltford.

Bath & North East Somerset Council has allocated £314,000 to the 'Better Moorings Project - Mead Lane' in its capital budget for 2026/2027.

This new money goes with £400,000 already allocated, which gives a total of £714,000 for the relocation of 14-day moorings to a new, purpose-built location with suitable facilities away from residential properties.

The project is expected up to take two years and will need planning permission because the site would be in the green belt. However, it is

expected that "special circumstances" can be demonstrated that will outweigh any perceived harm to the green belt.

Saltford ward councillor Duncan Hounsell (Lib Dem) said: "This is amazing news in the current financial climate.

"Relocation of moorings to a more suitable site with facilities is not solely a local Saltford matter but of wider benefit along the river and a positive move for all involved, including boaters.

"Problems can always arise with a major capital project like this but having the funds available is a significant step forward by this current Lib Dem B&NES administration to create a better situation for all."

NEWS

MP: I'm doing my best for constituents

LOCAL MP Dan Norris has insisted he is serving his constituents to the best of his ability in one of his first public statements since he was arrested on suspicion of rape in 2025.



Mr Norris has been further arrested on suspicion of rape against a second woman, sexual assault against a third woman, and voyeurism and upskirting against a number of women, it was revealed last month.

Mr Norris, who remains on conditional bail, has not been charged with any offence and has said he "vigorously and entirely" denies the allegations.

He continues to be the North East Somerset and Hanham MP but is understood to have been banned from entering Parliament since shortly after his initial arrest in April 2025.

There have been calls locally for Mr Norris to step down, but

the MP has said he is continuing to do his job.

Mr Norris told the Local Democracy Reporting Service on February 6: "I would like to make clear that I am still representing constituents on a broad range of issues, including handling casework and policy, submitting written questions, voting by proxy and staying across all local and national developments in order to continue to serve constituents to the best of my ability."

"My constituency office is operating as usual, prioritising the most urgent cases as always, replying to all constituents, resolving issues with public bodies and raising broader policy concerns in Parliament."

It is the first time that Mr Norris has responded to a request for comment from the Local Democracy Reporting Service since shortly after his initial arrest in April 2025, when a member of his team confirmed

that staff were continuing to work on casework.

The MP only broke his public silence last month when he said in a statement after his further arrest: "I vigorously and entirely deny the serious allegations made against me. They are untrue. I am challenging them through my legal representatives."

Parliament's register of interests of members' staff shows that, as of December, Mr Norris no longer has any staff with a pass to enter the parliamentary estate.

Mr Norris responded himself to an email to his constituency office asking how many staff continued to work there, although he did not directly address the question.

More than 3,200 have signed a petition started by North East Somerset and Hanham constituent Andrew Gray and sent to Mr Norris in December, calling for him to step down.

It said locals respected the principle of innocent until proven guilty but that the restriction on his attending Parliament had "created a situation that many residents feel is untenable."

Mr Norris continues to vote frequently via proxy, with his proxy vote being cast by the Labour whips despite the party having suspended him after his initial arrest.

Avon and Somerset Police, who have not named Mr Norris, said in a statement on February 2: "An investigation into allegations of non-recent sexual offences which resulted in the arrest of a man in his sixties is continuing."

"The investigation, which is being led by officers with Operation Bluestone, our dedicated rape and serious sexual assault investigation team, began in December 2024."

John Wimperis, Local Democracy Reporting Service

CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

The power of the daffodil

ACROSS our town, daffodils are showing their bright yellow heads, marking the beginning of spring.



The national flower of Wales, it's worn on St David's Day. But it's also a symbol of new year in China and Iran, and in Japan it's associated with joy and mirth.

Daffodils were first cultivated in the Mediterranean from around 300BC and brought to Britain by the Romans. Today, daffodil growing is a multi-million-pound industry, and the UK grows around 90% of the world's commercial crop, the majority of it in Cornwall.

The flowers are incredibly popular, and at just a pound a bunch in most supermarkets they bring much-needed sunshine into our homes in the dark days of late winter. But given their ubiquity, are they an environmental force for good or bad?

Although intensive growing can destabilise and erode the soil and contribute to greenhouse gas emissions through the use of heavy machinery, more and more farms are turning to methods that are

less harmful to the environment.

One Cornwall business, Varfell Farms, produces 65% of the world's daffodil flowers and holds 60% of the

world's daffodil varieties. It's a LEAF (Linking Environment and Farming) demonstration farm, committed to practices that are sensitive to the local landscape. Working with LEAF and the local Wildlife Trust, they also support other farm businesses to take up sustainable practices that protect and enhance the soil and the natural environment.

Daffodils have another potential environmental superpower. Trials are ongoing to feed the bulbs to cows to reduce their methane emissions. This would be another really important tool in decarbonising agriculture, which is one of the country's highest emitting industries.

So, the next time I buy a bunch of daffodils, I'll not just be seeing them as a harbinger of spring, but of hope for a resilient world in the face of climate change.

Elizabeth Willitts
image: Erika Varga, Pixabay


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A white mug is shown on the left side of the image. On the right side, a white mug is decorated with the text 'home is where the heart is' in various colors and fonts, surrounded by floral patterns and a heart. Several cookies are scattered around the decorated mug. The background is split into a light blue vertical band on the left and a dark blue vertical band on the right.

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■ KEYNSHAM SCOUTS



The Scout group is seeking more adult volunteers

Right, the team from 1st Keynsham (Axe Troop) who took silver in the cooking competition



Help record-breaking group keep growing

EVERY January, all Scout groups across the UK share their membership numbers with the national HQ.

We're excited to let our readers know that in 2026, 1st Keynsham and the Keynsham Explorer Scout unit have achieved a record-breaking count - not just for young people, but also for our dedicated adult leaders, skilled instructors, and qualified supporters.

This fantastic achievement means Keynsham may now be home to the largest Scout group in the UK, which is something we can all be proud of.

Each week, around 300 enthusiastic young people walk through the doors of our Scout HQ in the heart of Keynsham - fondly known as 'The Scout Hut'. However, we're sad to share that over 100 young people are currently on waiting lists across all sections, from Squirrel Scouts to Explorers.

Our Scout group trustees are passionate

about finding ways to welcome more adults into volunteering (which helps us include more young people), keeping our facilities and equipment in top shape, and ensuring that adventurous activities and important life skills remain at the heart of what our Scouts achieve.

With 2026 being the year of the volunteer, why not pop in and join our friendly team? You don't need any experience, just a willingness to get involved and have fun. There are plenty of opportunities, so if you're curious, email us at scouts@1stkeynshamscouts.org.uk and ask "how can I help?" We'd love to hear from you.

● On Sunday February 8, nine teams from six districts took part in the Avon county cooking competition at Keynsham HQ - and the standard was incredible!

With just two hours to prepare and cook a full three-course meal, each team showed fantastic teamwork, creativity and skill. Our judges were seriously impressed.

Results: gold, High Littleton Scout Troop; silver: 1st Keynsham (Axe Troop); bronze: 1st Stoke Gifford OSR Troop.

A big well-done as well to participants from 17th Bristol (two teams), Frampton Cotterell (two teams), 174th Kingswood and 2nd Clevedon. Certificates all round, trophies for the top teams, and the county cooking shield going home with the winners! Every single team did their troop and district proud. What a brilliant day.

● Bookings are being taken from individuals or groups of up to 10 people for our fund-raising clay shoot on March 21 and 22. It's excellent value and great fun, with no previous experience required and all equipment supplied. Each slot lasts around two hours. To find out more or book a slot for the Saturday or Sunday, visit www.1stkeynshamscouts.org.uk/clay, email claypigeon@1stkeynshamscouts.org.uk or ring 07961 394264.

■ NEWS

Chance to meet the bishop who made history

ST John's Church in Keynsham will welcome one of the Church of England's most senior and respected leaders this spring as part of its 750 Appeal fundraising programme.

The Rt Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin CD MBE KHC, Bishop of Dover, will appear in conversation at a literary and inspirational evening on Friday April 17.

The event will feature a live interview exploring Bishop Rose's life, ministry and leadership, followed by an audience question-and-answer session. Guests will also be able to buy copies of her book *The Girl from Montego Bay* and have them signed.

Bishop Rose currently serves as Bishop of Dover in the Diocese of Canterbury and exercises

delegated episcopal oversight on behalf of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

She previously served as Chaplain to the Speaker of the House of Commons for nine years and has been Chaplain to Her Majesty the Queen. In 2019 she made history as the first black woman appointed as a bishop in the Church of England.

The evening forms part of St John's 750 Appeal, which is supporting ongoing redevelopment plans aimed at ensuring the church remains a vibrant and sustainable space for worship, community events and outreach.

Councillor Dave Biddleston, who will conduct the interview, said: "We are absolutely delighted that Bishop Rose has agreed

to join us at St John's. She is an extraordinary speaker with a remarkable story, and this promises to be a thoughtful, uplifting and genuinely inspiring evening.

"I would strongly encourage people from across the community to come along - whether you're a regular churchgoer or simply interested in leadership, faith and public service. It will be a fantastic event and a wonderful way to support the future of St John's."

The event is ticketed at £13, with proceeds going towards the 750 Appeal. A licensed bar and refreshments will be available, and doors open at 6.30pm for a 7.30pm start. Tickets and further details are available via St John's Church.



Bishop Rose Hudson-Wilkin became the first black woman appointed as a bishop in the Church of England, in 2019

NEWS

Cheers to £100k charity fundraisers!



Jemma Lewis, left, who runs the New Inn, with Charlotte Churchill, founder of Operation Community Hamper. Right, donated items stored at the New Inn

A COMMUNITY pub in Keynsham is celebrating after helping to raise almost £100,000 for charity in just one year.

The New Inn was among Craft Union pubs across the UK that raised £1 million for local good causes for the second year running.

The Craft Union's nationwide 'Make a Million' campaign brings together hundreds of community pubs, each supporting local charities through fundraising events, donations and volunteering time.

At the heart of the New Inn's fundraising efforts are Operation Community Hamper and Dogs Friends.

Operation Community Hamper began five years ago in a local kitchen and has grown into a community charity supporting families in need.

The New Inn has supported

the charity by using its skittle alley throughout the year to store donations, hosting fundraising events and acting as a local drop-off hub where people can donate items up to 12 hours a day.

The pub also collects bedding, blankets and food for Dogs Friends, a charity the pub has supported for over 15 years, helping to provide care for dogs in need. Over the past year, the New Inn has hosted a range of activities, including a 24-hour danceathon, ongoing bar collections, and a bake sale by two local girls who sold more than 200 cookies, donating every penny to Operation Community Hamper.

The pub's efforts have been backed by the wider community, with regulars, local businesses, schools and Brownie groups all getting involved.

As part of the support,



Operation Community Hamper has distributed more than £96,000 worth of hampers and gifts, all donated by local people. The pub has also donated around £3,000 to Dogs Friends.

Jemma Lewis, who runs the New Inn, said: "Reaching £1 million raised for charity for the second year running is an incredible achievement for Craft Union, and one we're really proud to be part of."

"For us, it shows that the pub is about so much more than coming in for a drink - it's about people coming together and looking out for each other."

"This achievement belongs to our team, our volunteers and the local community - I simply have the privilege of supporting them. The generosity and commitment they show time and time again is what makes this pub and this community so special."

Nursery worker guilty of child sex offences

A CORSTON man who worked in childcare has been convicted of 21 sexual offences against children.

Following a trial at Bristol Crown Court on February 9, Nathan Bennett, 30, was found guilty by a jury of two counts of rape of a child under 13, four counts of sexual assault of a child under 13, and two other sexual assault charges.

He had previously admitted 13 offences, including sexual assault of a child aged under 13, causing a child under 13 to engage in sexual activity, and engaging in sexual activity in the presence of a child.

Bennett was remanded for sentence at the same court on Monday March 16.

The trial was told that Bennett committed the offences against five children he met at the Bristol nursery where he worked. His crimes came to light when his manager reviewed CCTV, after concerns were raised by parents and other staff.



After suspicious behaviour was seen on the footage, Bennett was sent home and a report made to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

The LADO contacted police on February 26 last year. Bennett was arrested and questioned the same day and later released on bail, with conditions including not to be unsupervised with any person under 18.

Following a six-month investigation by specialist officers, Bennett was initially charged with eight offences in August 2025, when he was remanded into custody by the court. He was later charged with a further 14 offences.

During the trial, Virginia Cornwall, prosecuting, said: "It's every parent's worst nightmare, that a person entrusted to be responsible for your child, care for your child and nurture your child at times when you are unable to provide that parental care, abuses their position and sexually abuses that child."

"The defendant is a paedophile. He has admitted his sexual interest in pre-school age toddlers by his partial guilty pleas to

some charges in this case – the less serious charges."

The investigating officer, DC Bethany Cook, said: "Nathan Bennett was trusted to care for very young children, but instead committed sexual offences against them at his place of work."

"This investigation involving such young children was deeply challenging and distressing for all concerned, and I would like to commend the support and strength shown by those families."

"This case has caused significant anxiety for other families whose children attended the nursery during the time these offences were committed and, when appropriate, we've tried to keep them informed."

"We understand that if your children have been in contact with Nathan Bennett, you may have questions and concerns and you can contact our child protection team through our website."

The child protection team can be contacted at <https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/forms/cob>

ON THE BEAT

How we can help to prevent knife crime

THIS month I want to talk about the serious side of policing and how we can all help each other and know what we can do when faced with a serious medical situation.

Knife crime continues to affect communities across the UK, leaving devastating and long-lasting impacts on victims, families, and neighbourhoods. Whilst I can quote statistics and figures showing that Keynsham doesn't have an issue, I want to ensure we are speaking to our children and young adults about this topic. This isn't meant to scare people, just to reinforce.

Many young people believe carrying a knife will protect them, but the evidence tells a very different story. Crimestoppers warns that carrying a knife creates a false sense of security and significantly increases the likelihood of becoming a victim. Rather than providing safety, knives escalate conflicts that might otherwise remain non-violent, turning arguments into life-threatening situations.

Carrying a knife also has



Sgt Rob Turner
Keynsham Police

wide ranging emotional and psychological consequences. Anxiety, hypervigilance, trauma, and desensitisation to violence all emerge as long-term effects, particularly among young people. The ripple effects extend to families who live in constant fear for their children, altering relationships and leaving emotional scars that last a lifetime.

Legally, the repercussions are severe. New measures introduced through the Crime and Policing Bill and other legislation significantly strengthen penalties for possession, sale, or use of knives. These include tougher age verification requirements for online sales and increased maximum sentences for

illegal possession - from six months to two years.

I would strongly recommend that people watch the TV series *Adolescence*, which has become a catalyst for national discussion around youth violence, knife crime, and online influence. The show actively encourages families to talk about emotions, masculinity, and conflict and is intentionally designed to help with those difficult discussions around:

- Emotional regulation
- How boys are influenced by online masculinity
- Why some boys may feel angry, rejected, or humiliated
- Non-violent ways of dealing with conflict

As knife crime remains a pressing concern, communities are turning to practical measures to reduce fatalities in emergencies. Bleed control kits - specialist packs containing tourniquets, trauma bandages, chest seals, and other life saving equipment - are being rolled out across the UK.

Knife crime prevention

requires a collective effort. Police, schools, youth workers, parents, and community groups all play vital roles. Encouraging open communication with young people, providing safe spaces, promoting positive role models, and supporting early intervention programmes can help break cycles of fear and violence.

Bleed kits offer a crucial safety net, but real prevention starts long before an emergency takes place. By challenging myths, promoting education, and strengthening community support, we can reduce the prevalence of knife crime and protect future generations.

Within Keynsham, we have 10 bleed kit locations - for details, visit <https://www.heartsafe.org.uk/bleed-kit-homepage/> and use the Bleed Kit Locator Map. The website also has more information about bleed kit schemes and how to get involved.

There is also a secure knife surrender bin based outside of Keynsham Police Centre on Ashmead Road.

Until next time, please, stay safe.



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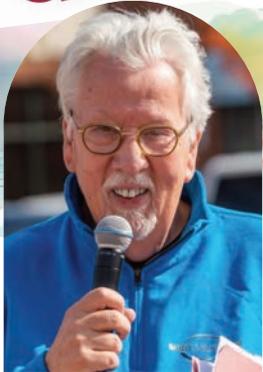
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NEWS

Speed limits reduced to improve safety

LOWER speed limits aimed at improving safety are being brought in on routes in and around Keynsham.

The current 20mph limit that runs along Charlton Road from the High Street to just south of the Charlton Park junction is to be extended west for a further 396 metres.

A new 30mph limit will affect Charlton Road at Queen Charlton, from its junction with Woollard Lane extending east for about 1,500 metres.

A 30mph limit will also be brought in on Redlynch Lane, Chewton Keynsham, from the existing 20mph speed limit extending to its junction with Charlton Road.

Also, a 40mph limit will be imposed on Wollard Lane from its junction with Queen Charlton Lane extending north-east to its junction with Slate Lane.

The changes, approved by Bath & North East Somerset Council, are due to come into effect on March 9.



The 20mph limit along Charlton Road from High Street ends just south of the junction with Charlton Park - it will now be extended

In response to the proposals, Keynsham town councillor Andy Halliday said he felt there was no need to extend the 20mph limit on Charlton Road in Keynsham from the Charlton Park junction to the Monmouth Road junction because there were already school crossing lights, traffic lights and a mini roundabout close by to slow down traffic.

One person who responded after the proposals were

advertised felt the 20mph limit should be extended a further 50 metres to improve safety at the bus stop just south of Lockingwell Road and the busy Lays Drive and Caernarvon Road junctions. Another said it should be extended even further down to Bilbie Green.

Another who supported lowering the limit on Redlynch Lane said the existing 60mph limit was totally inappropriate

for such a busy and, in places, very narrow and windy lane. They were concerned at the speeds at which drivers travel along the road to enter the village.

"Many vehicles come down the hill far too fast and don't start breaking until nearly at the junction with Chewton Road. It is only a matter of time before there is a serious accident."

Another said: "Absolutely support these measures. It is high time all our roads were subjected to proper risk assessment in this manner. 30mph has no place in any urban areas."

Duncan Hounsell, B&NES councillor for Saltford ward, which includes Queen Charlton, said: "I welcome these speed limit reductions. The Redlynch Lane junction with Charlton Road is a particularly dangerous one with poor sight lines. Reducing speeds should help make the roads in this area safer for everyone."

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KEYNSHAM MEMORIES

with Keynsham & Saltford Local History Society



A late burst of wintry weather sets the scene for this photograph taken in March 1975 at the junction of Station Road and High Street, Keynsham. Some of the buildings have changed and the upstairs cafe has gone but the street scene is similar today.

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KEYNSHAM AND SALTFORD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Why 'Kelston for Saltford' station was built



Kelston Station in 1932, left, looking towards Bath

Midland Railway Coat of Arms, below, showing cities served, with Bristol top right

Photo: Stephen McKay, licensed through Creative Commons



MANY readers will have walked or cycled along the railway path from the Bird in Hand at Saltford. Travelling towards Bath, one first crosses the River Avon before passing the site of one of the area's more unusual railway stations.

Kelston station, labelled "Kelston for Saltford", opened in 1869 and closed in 1949. It was of little use to the few residents of Kelston, almost a mile away up a stony track, and of marginal benefit to those of Saltford, who were already served by the Great Western Railway station. So, why was it built?

Mid-Victorian competition led the Midland Railway, based in Derby, to seek to expand into south-west England. It reached down to Gloucester before absorbing the Bristol & Gloucester Railway, which ran into Bristol via Mangotsfield.

To reach Bath, they obtained parliamentary approval in 1864 for a branch from Mangotsfield, with the route along the opposite side of the Avon to the Great Western. The line was forced to cross the land of Inigo Jones (no relation to the 17th century architect) who lived at Kelston Park.

Mr Jones exacted a high price from the Midland and demanded a station named Kelston to serve his estate, plus the right to stop and board any train with 24 hours' notice.

The station had to be on the east bank of the river so, unusually, it did not have road access, and was reached from Saltford by the inclined path and the bridge over the river. In the early years, Mr Jones or his sisters every year used to exercise their right to stop a train to Bath, although it was easier for them to go by carriage.

The station was a modest affair, with a stone building on the Bath-bound platform (possibly required by Mr Jones) and a wooden shelter on the other. It was served by only three trains a day on the line from Bristol St Phillips to Bath. Train times were displayed on a board at the Bird in Hand.

There were very few commuters, and most passengers were anglers out for a day's fishing. However, Kelston Station had another role, if only intermittently.

Railway companies found excursion trains very profitable and the Midland, later LMS, Railway ran trains from the north to race meetings at Bath.

Until about 1930 these called at Kelston. On the map it was a walk of only 2.5 miles to the racecourse, although in reality there was a 700-foot climb. Nonetheless, almost half the passengers opted to walk from Kelston rather than go into the city. On these occasions there

were plenty of railway police in evidence as punters and bookies tried to avoid paying their fares.

Perhaps it was a more genteel clientele who alighted at Kelston to visit the annual regatta at Saltford. In 1872 a regatta special brought 1,200 passengers from Birmingham, though this may not have been a regular occurrence.

At one time, the station had a porter. He had an easy job, and the flower beds were always well tended.

One evening during World War 2, a relief porter was on duty and, while the last train stood at the platform, a German plane dropped a flare which appeared to hang over the last coach. The guard, frightened of an imminent attack, hastily waved the train off, stranding the porter, who had intended to catch the train home to Bath!

As well as local traffic, the line carried holiday trains that continued onto the Somerset & Dorset line. In later years, the best-known of these was the Pines Express, which ran from Manchester to Bournemouth.

Kelston Station closed on 1st January 1949, although the line remained open for passenger traffic until March 1966 and for coal deliveries to Bath gasworks until 1971.

Richard Dyson

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KEYNSHAM WALKERS ARE WELCOME

Walkers get creative indoors and out



Wreath-making and a beetle drive have been among the walkers' activities

OUR excited walkers set off from Keynsham Memorial Park armed with greenery collecting bags and secateurs for our annual wreath-making walk.

We followed a route across the back of the field near Pool Barton and along the back of the rugby club and football club, collecting holly, teasels, sprigs of berries and interesting floral pieces to decorate our wreaths.

The weather on December 14 was very kind to us - despite it being a bit chilly, we did not have the snowfall we encountered on a similar walk in 2024.

The perimeter hedgerow of Keynsham Cemetery provided our greenery collectors with some interesting plants.

Our walk ended back at the Scout hut, where the walkers were welcomed with mulled wine and warm mince pies.

The walkers then had time then to turn their collection of greenery into lovely wreaths to decorate their front doors for Christmas.

On January 30, the Walkers are Welcome group stayed indoors to host a beetle drive social evening and American supper. It gave those attending the chance to swap stories from recent walks or catch up with old friends and meet new ones.

On February 8, the group headed outdoors again for a two-mile circular walk to Keynsham Memorial Park and the Somerdale Estate.

Following 37 days of on-and-off rain, our



walking group came prepared for mud. Our stroll, in the drizzle, took us along the River Chew through the Memorial Park and then up the path past the abbey remains. We then crossed Station Road and entered the Somerdale Estate for a clockwise walk around the Somerdale circular path.

Despite the football pitches and much of the green space either side of the path being underwater, overall the pathway was passable by dodging the puddles and muddy patches.

Even though wet and a bit miserable, we were cheered by tuneful birdsong and the bells of St John's Church. Back out on Station Road, we took a different route back into the park, where we said farewell to our 25 walkers.

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NEWS

Fears for K1 bus over review of funding

UNCERTAINTY remains over the long-term future of Keynsham's K1 bus service, as the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) reviews funding for supported routes under its WESTlocal programme.

The K1, introduced in September 2024 and operated by The Big Lemon, was funded through Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) allocations and designed to improve connectivity within the town.

Since its launch, the service has linked neighbourhoods in south Keynsham - including Bilbie Green and the Bilbie Estate - with the town centre, railway station, the Chocolate Quarter, and key local amenities such as St Augustine's Surgery.

Early performance data and local reporting indicate that the K1 has been the most well-used of the WESTlocal services operating in Bath & North East Somerset, with passenger numbers growing steadily month by month.

For many families, the K1 provides a practical and reliable route for children travelling to Wellsway School from Bilbie Green and surrounding areas.

The route is also widely used by older residents. The connection to the Chocolate Quarter has proved valuable for shopping, social visits and community activities. And with St Augustine's Surgery on the route, the service



The Gale family, left to right, Ethan, Lucy, Amber and Nathan

allows residents without private transport to attend GP appointments more easily.

Councillor Dave Biddleston has spoken about the importance of maintaining the service.

He said: "The K1 has quickly become part of everyday life in Keynsham and connects communities that previously had limited options.

"As the most widely used of the WESTlocal services in B&NES, it demonstrates that when a route reflects genuine local demand, people use it. I believe that should be recognised in future funding decisions."

Rob Pearsall, principal of Wellsway School, has also spoken in support of the service.

He said: "The K1 bus is not

simply a convenience for our pupils, it is a vital part of their school day.

"Many of our students travel from Bilbie Green and the south of Keynsham, and the service provides them with a safe, reliable and independent way to get to Wellsway each morning.

"Removing this route would place additional pressure on families and inevitably increase traffic around the school gates. Consistent and accessible transport is fundamental to attendance, punctuality and wellbeing.

"We strongly support the continuation of the K1 for the benefit of our pupils and the wider Keynsham community."

Among the passengers who

value the K1 service are the Gale family. Amber Gale said: "The K1 bus is good because it's far to school, especially on rainy days and when it's dark in the winter."

Ethan Gale said: "I use it to get a connecting bus to college. We need more buses, not to lose the ones we have."

And Lucy Gale said: "It's been brilliant because walking with the family shopping from town can be really difficult."

It is understood that Keynsham Town Council will continue to run the K1 service until March 31, the end of the financial year.

Its bus operator, The Big Lemon, and other operators have had to submit tenders for the running of community bus services like the K1 from April to July 2026 so that WECA can gather data and monitor services and passenger numbers.

The Big Lemon has confirmed it has already submitted its tender and is waiting to hear the outcome.

Dawn Drury, town clerk for Keynsham Town Council, said: "I believe that by August/September, WECA will be in a position to notify the town council whether the K1 has proved successful and that they will be funding the same in the future.

"At this stage, I am not sure whether the overseeing of the service will be passed back to the council or whether WECA will retain the running of the service.

Relief as cut in recycling centre hours rejected

PLANS to cut opening hours at two recycling centres have been scrapped, amid concerns that this would cause more traffic at Keynsham Recycling Hub.

Bath and North East Somerset Council had proposed saving £200,000 a year by reducing hours at Bath Recycling Centre and Old Welton Recycling Centre in Midsomer Norton.

Councillor Andy Wait (Keynsham East, Liberal Democrat) told the council's corporate scrutiny committee he was "very pleased" the proposals had been dropped.

The idea had sparked concern when it was considered by the council's climate scrutiny panel, which Mr Wait chairs.

He said: "That was number one on our list of moans about the budget because we felt that there was a risk that there would be a lot of extra mileage to the Keynsham site if those cuts went ahead - so thank you for listening to the panel."

Ahead of its annual budget for 2026-27, the council also proposed a "small charge" for its Discovery Card, which grants free admission to residents for some local attractions. That proposal, which would have raised an estimated £50,000 a year, has also been dropped.

Cllr Mark Elliott (Lansdown, Liberal Democrat), the council cabinet member for resources, said the council had proposed a

host of cuts and new income to close a £7.4 million budget gap.

He said that, on top of increasing costs for adult and children's social care, the government's "fair funding review" of local government finance meant the council would lose out on £12.6m over the next three years.

Cllr Elliott said: "The council is committed to listening to residents, and I want to thank everyone who took part in the budget consultation. As a result of your feedback, we will keep the same opening hours for our waste and recycling centres and won't be changing the terms of the residents' Discovery Card."

The idea of introducing a Discovery Card charge generated

about a third of all responses to the budget consultation.

Council tax is once again proposed to increase by the maximum 4.99%, two percentage points of which will be ringfenced for spending on adult social care. That will be another £90.97 a year for an average band D household, or £1.75 a week.

Cllr Elliott said the council would have to spend an additional £6.4m on adult and children's social care, after savings were taken into account.

The budget was due to go to a vote at a meeting of the full council on February 24.

John Wimperis, Local Democracy Reporting Service

■ BACK TO NATURE

Grey sentinels from the mists of time



Heron flying in to join its mate on the nest at Prior Park heronry (left)

Photo: Steve Kimmins

Grey heron standing guard (right)

Photo: Martin Farrell



AS March breathes life into the Avon Valley, bringing the first signs of spring to Keynsham, a silent, ancient observer takes up its position along the riverbanks.

The Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*) is a year-round resident, but in March, this enigmatic bird becomes a focal point of our local ecosystem,

Heron's are over a meter tall with a wingspan that can exceed six feet and can often be seen standing statue-still along the Rivers Avon and Chew.

Unlike some species that hide from human activity, herons have adapted well. They can often be seen by the weir in Keynsham Park, a surprisingly bold, yet silent, presence in the heart of town.

The Grey Heron's plumage blends perfectly with the mist of early spring mornings. They are likely to be spotted in shallow water, legs firmly rooted, neck curved into an 'S' shape, waiting for an unsuspecting fish, frog, or even a small mammal.

They are solitary hunters, but nest in groups. March is the

Come along to our next wildlife talk, *Messing About on the River*, on Friday March 13 with Peter Coleman-Smith, from Bristol Avon Rivers Trust.

Our rivers have been in the headlines recently - they are in a bad way - but despite real issues there is progress too. Good work is being done by grassroots groups delivering projects across the catchment, including the River Chew. There is also still plenty of wildlife in our rivers (some of it quite exciting) and the projects will support this. The evening's talk will bring some of these projects to life, focusing on our local area.

The talk starts at 7.30pm in the Keynsham Baptist Church Hall, BS31 1DS, entrance £3.50 for wildlife trust members, £5 for non-members, to include refreshments served at 7.15pm. No booking required.

For more information on our group, visit our website www.keynshamawt.org.uk, email info@keynshamawt.org.uk or phone Kathy on 07850 508702.

peak time for nesting. As early as January, they gather to renovate their large messy platforms of twigs in trees known as heronries.

Despite the size of these structures, once the trees are in full leaf, they can be difficult to spot. However, keen-eyed wildlife observers might see them carrying sticks to treetops in Conham Vale, along the wooded banks of the River Avon towards Saltford, in the grounds of Bath Spa University

or even near the Honda garage in Bath, where there are known heronries.

Whilst some sites have existed for a few years, there are records of the heronry in the grounds of Bath Spa University for over 50 years.

The female lays three to five blue-green eggs, usually around late March. The eggs are surprisingly small for such a large bird - about 60mm long by 43mm wide - not much bigger than a

chicken's egg. Both parents share incubation duties, which last about 25 to 27 days. Chicks are covered in blackish-brown down and are fed regurgitated fish by both parents. They fledge at around seven to eight weeks.

Only about one third of the chicks survive their first winter but if they do, then they usually live for about five years, with the oldest bird recorded reaching 23 years old.

Watching them fly over Keynsham town centre, their long legs trailing behind and massive wings beating slowly, is a reminder of the wild, prehistoric nature that survives right on our doorstep. Their presence signals that despite the urban expansion of Keynsham, the aquatic food chain remains robust.

As we enjoy the warmer, brighter days of March, take a moment to look for this beautiful bird. The Grey Heron is not just a bird, but a vital part of Keynsham's natural character, a prehistoric survivor watching over our waters.

Julia Shahin

Aem

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NEWS

Residents oppose bid for 200 homes

OPPOSITION is growing to plans up to 200 new homes to the west of Charlton Road in Keynsham.

Persimmon Homes Severn Valley is seeking outline permission from Bath & North East Somerset Council for the development.

A number of residents have registered their objections and Keynsham Town Council is also opposed.

Councillor Alan Hale (Independent, Keynsham South) wrote to B&NES Council expressing his objection to the proposals when they were revealed last autumn.

He said Charlton Road was already over-burdened with traffic and that the extra vehicles generated by the proposed development would make matters worse.

He recently said on Facebook: "The other district councillors, like me, are well aware of the need for social housing and that is being strongly addressed in the new local plan that is being brought forward.

"The plan is looking to place developments in the correct place and not overload an already very busy road."

B&NES Council's draft local plan sets out where new developments could go, in response to the government's directive that the council needs to find space for 27,000 new homes to be built by 2043.

It earmarks potential sites for more than 4,000 new homes in the town, including between 300 and 400 on green fields to the west of Charlton Road.

The planning application had attracted 53 objections and four comments in support before the deadline for comments through the B&NES Council planning portal passed on February 21.

Keynsham Town Council objected to the plans following a meeting of its planning committee.

In its consultation response to B&NES Council, it said: "The council considers the proposal to be inappropriate, excessive in scale, and entirely out of keeping with the character of the area."

The town council said extra traffic



generated on Charlton Road would create the risk of 'rat-running' through nearby streets. It was also concerned about the lack of pedestrian crossings near the site, poor public transport, and the loss of wildlife habitat.

The town council added that the site currently acted as a natural soakaway for rainwater. Building homes, roads and hardstanding would increase surface water run-off, placing extra pressure on an already inadequate drainage network.

"This creates a very real and unacceptable risk of flooding to nearby homes, land, and highways, particularly during periods of heavy rainfall," it said.

The town council also noted that sewage and wastewater systems serving adjacent developments had yet to be adopted due to "sub-standard construction." It said a full assessment of foul sewer capacity was needed to ensure the network could cope with the proposed development.

It added that the site should only be assessed in conjunction with other potential housing sites under the B&NES local plan, so that the full impact of development within Keynsham South could be properly considered as a whole.

The main concerns residents cited have been about extra traffic and the

pressure on the town's already struggling infrastructure.

One objector stated: "While I acknowledge the need to build houses, it simply cannot be at the expense of other key services in the town. The infrastructure is already creaking, including GPs, dentists, police presence and schools.

"Charlton Road is already a death trap and the traffic currently using it is already not fit for purpose. It also supposedly has a weight limit that's being ignore and will be bypassed to build these houses over the course of years."

Another added: "There have been electrical outages in the existing new developments already and two burst water mains on Charlton Road recently. The new development would put further strain to the electricity and water infrastructure and disruption to residence of vital supplies."

There are also worries about the loss of green space and the threat to wildlife such as bats, badgers, foxes, and birds.

Another concern raised was about drainage and surface water management.

One person said: "These fields currently absorb rainwater naturally. Replacing them with hard surfaces such as roads, roofs, and pavements will significantly increase surface water runoff, with no clear indication of where this excess water would go."

Two people supporting the application cited Keynsham's need for extra properties, with many families desperate for housing.

Although there are no detailed proposals at this stage, it is envisaged that 45% of the new homes would be "affordable".

Two access roads are proposed - one from the existing three-arm Charlton Road/Linnet Way roundabout and another about 25 metres north of the Aesop Drive junction. The development would have open green spaces, allotments, a community orchard, equipped play areas and an informal kick-about area.

Construction would take between one to two years.

SlimmingWorld

Thursdays
7:30am, 9am, 10:30am,
5:30 and 7pm

Keynsham Baptist Church,
High Street, Keynsham, Bristol
Contact: Trina 07538 309708

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By Lisa

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LETTERS

Letters for publication can be sent to news@keynshamvoice.co.uk or by post to Letters, Keynsham Voice, 16 Ashmead Business Centre, Ashmead Road, Keynsham, BS31 1SX. The editor reserves the right to edit your letter.

Climate crisis is hitting home

The climate and nature crisis is a multi-pronged emergency impacting all aspects of British life, from national security to the food supply.

In our area, this currently manifests itself in high-intensity rainfall with localised flooding, prolonged periods of drought risking our water supplies, wild fires and people overheating, farmers struggling to produce food crops and feed for their animals.

On November 27, ten of the UK's leading experts briefed an invited audience of over 1,200 politicians and leaders from business, culture, faith, sport and the media with the latest implications for health, food, national security and the economy.

Our constituency (North East Somerset and Hanham) was under-represented, as both WECA Mayor and our MP (for different reasons) were unable to attend, although both B&NES and MP Watch were there to represent us.

This national emergency briefing was commissioned to report the latest evidence, make clear what is at stake, and outline actionable solutions. It's time the public were presented with facts, not the spin and denial of those in the pay of the fossil fuel lobby.

Please join MP Watch in demanding that the Government deliver a prime-time, multi-channel televised national emergency briefing to the nation, launching a major public engagement plan to cut through disinformation. Please sign the letter at <https://www.nbriefing.org/open-letter-keir>

Later in the year, we plan (with others) to hold a public viewing of a new film on the subject. Our local politicians will be invited to attend and participate in a debate about what we, locally, can do to address these critical issues and the impact they will have on our communities, both now and in the generations to come.

David Leverton, MP Watch

Party politics play no part

Mike Barrow has got the wrong end of the stick in his letter in your February edition. The B&NES planning committee only deals with planning applications, such as the application for an Aldi supermarket. It is not a policy development body.

The planning committee has



Flooding around the bandstand in Keynsham Memorial Park in December 2024 Photo: Colin Rayner

absolutely nothing to do with the development of a Local Plan.

The planning committee is like a jury. Every member of the planning committee must act individually in considering any planning application and apply existing planning policies, local and national. There can be no pre-determination by law. Party politics play no part.

The reason why options sites for future housing are being considered in our area by the planning department is simply that the Government has doubled the target for housing and local landowners have offered their land for housing. That's it. No political conspiracy.

B&NES planning department is developing a Local Plan at arm's length from councillors as required by law. The only way of preventing unsuitable development is by putting forward sound planning reasons to object on a site-by-site basis.

We all await the working draft of the Local Plan in the coming months, and a further public consultation will follow ahead of hearings to be held by an independent planning inspector, who has to determine if the draft Local Plan is "sound" in that it meets the needs of our area.

I am delighted that Mike holds his Lib Dem councillors in Keynsham East in the highest regard.

Clr Duncan Hounsell
(B&NES, Lib Dem, Saltford ward)

Bath homes won't damage tourism

I agree that an explanation is needed at a public meeting in Keynsham and Saltford of why Bath is not taking its fair share of planned housing over the next 20 years.

Re-reading the B&NES Local

Plan Document 2025, it nowhere discusses that the Government suggested that 13,000 of the planned 27,000 house total should be around the city and 14,000 in NE Somerset, while the document merely proposes between 6,000 and 7,000 for Bath.

This is in spite of the acknowledged need to provide some 25,000 new jobs in the area, with 70-75% of the planned new office space accommodated in Bath, and that "the need for affordable housing is particularly acute in the city".

The land put forward around Bath is sufficient for the full 13,000 as shown on the HELAA map in Section 4, Table 1, and virtually all of that land, if used for housing, would not be seen from the Georgian centre of the city.

Such housing would be easily accessible by bus to the city and the new jobs, but diverting to plentiful jobs in Keynsham, Saltford, Farrington Gurney etc obviously takes precedence, and hence will add greatly to the traffic chaos on the A4 as thousands of extra commuters drive to Bath and Bristol.

The one site put forward for consideration to the west of the city and south of the A4 dual carriageway is unlikely to be chosen as "evidence shows that development here would cause substantial damage to the World Heritage Sites (WHS)".

We all want to see Bath grow as a visitor attraction, but how many people come to Bath only because it is a double WHS, as opposed to those who come and enjoy a lovely city with many attractions?

Is there visitor survey data to show how many would NOT visit in the event that UNESCO withdraw the status because of new houses which cannot be seen from the Georgian city centre?

Ray Buchanan, Saltford

Showing contempt for local residents

I would like to thank *Keynsham Voice* for publishing the views of local residents concerning future housing and the single-minded pursuit of environmental issues.

When one group has enjoyed a protracted time in power, one can start to see the warped, single-track mindset shining through.

It is obscene how additional housing is being pushed out in the villages and towns around Bath. It's utter nonsense to avoid building closer to the city, as the areas that are regarded as of historic value are already protected.

If the local authority is so concerned about Bath, why have so many blocks of flats been built?

The ever-increasing building of properties around Keynsham and Saltford shows contempt for residents and their way of life. Travelling along the A4 is a considerable challenge, yet all the local authority can do is meddle with what is already there. The real culprits for the increased congestion are the authority themselves due to their one-sided decisions.

WECA will waste millions of pounds, yet I have not heard or read anywhere that, with their meddling, we will get any additional buses on the road.

Until there is a substantial change in the thought process, the residents and travelling public will remain ignored.

The type of "consultation" we get is that the group with power does the talking and the residents do the listening, and the decisions in thought will still be implemented. Their wording in press releases clearly shows that the proposals will still be actioned.

It is not the strength of the ruling group which is important, it is the strength of a group in opposition, as it is those that will mainly hold the controllers to account.

Kevin Shep

We're still waiting for a K2 bus

IT'S been some time since I last wrote about the possibility of a K2 bus service to serve Keynsham East.

Having studied the town council's website where records of meetings are available, I am aware that the town council has devoted time and effort to progressing this subject and that a potential

LETTERS

timetable and route have been proposed. However, finding any details on this and how this service is likely to be funded is not readily available.

At one stage there was a view that WECA could be approached to fund this as they do for the K1 service. Alternatively, funding from the Minsmere Green development was an option, but, as we know, building work has only just started, so there is no certainty as to when or to what extent this will become available.

In the meantime, the residents of Keynsham East continue to be served less favourably than the rest of Keynsham and the momentum behind this appears to be waning.

I think the town council should come clean as to what is happening in the hope that this important issue for the residents of Keynsham East is not forgotten. I note that the agenda for the last bus committee meeting held on February 5 had no mention of the K2 service, unless it was discussed under AOB.

Cynthia Withyman

Editor's note: Keynsham Town Council has told us that the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) will not comment as to whether there will be any funding available for the launch of a K2 service.

Congratulations on your new home

So pleased to read in your latest edition that Keynsham Mencap will soon be moving into the recently vacated pre-school nursery at Queens Road Methodist Church.

I know that they have been working for years for better facilities.

This is a prime example of how difficult it is to find community space where good things can happen, but persistence pays off as their neighbours across the road at the Community Hub would agree. The hard-working team at Mencap is highly valued by its clients and their families but maybe are unsung in the wider community.

I am sure they are looking forward to the move, which gives them more scope to realise their ambitions. Congratulations to them all for their vital input to our community and very good wishes for the future.

Sheila Croombe



KEYNSHAM IN BLOOM

We're digging in, rain or shine



Daffodils at Holmoak shops

If you're visiting Keynsham Spring Show later this month, don't forget to visit the Keynsham In Bloom stall.

We will be selling plants, entertaining the children with Easter hats, holding a raffle, name the lamb and having fun during the event on Saturday March 28, which runs from 12pm to 4pm. Hope to see you there wearing your prettiest Easter bonnets.

Valentine's Day was dry and sunny, a rarity these days, and I noticed that although the alpine containers at Holmoak Shops need some updating, the crocus and daffodils are looking lovely. The same applies to our other containers at Chandag Road and Queens Road. Replacement plants are on order and when these arrive work will commence.

The High Street troughs are shortly to receive grasses and polyanthus for spring colour, and more roses are to be planted in the Triangle flowerbed outside the Deli. Hopefully, if strategically placed, they will stop folks using the flowerbed as a shortcut. Fingers crossed.

Work at the station continues, and when the weather improves, we will upgrade the Dee James memorial train with a fresh coat of paint and other changes to the engine and planting for



Volunteers Mary, Keith, Matt, Sally, Alan and Mary Woodman at the railway station

Left, Phil, Barbara and Sally planting at the Triangle in pouring rain

summertime. Tidying the Pocket Park continues and more bulbs are popping up through the soil. If Mother Nature is kind this summer we will have a lovely display of flowering shrubs, herbaceous plants and roses.

The crown in the Memorial Park is also bursting into life and will be beautiful as usual.

Wishing all lovely volunteers and Keynsham folk happy gardening. Keep safe and well.

Mary Woodman

Lighting the way with hope

ONE of the oldest services, originating from the 4th century AD in Jerusalem, was celebrated on Sunday February 1 in St John's Church, Keynsham.

Candles lined the approach paths to the church and welcomed over 130 people, including those from Churches Together in Keynsham and Saltford, to the Candlemas service.

Flower arrangements containing snowdrops complemented the hundreds of candles as the robed choir processed around the church.

People were encouraged to take their candles home and place them in their windows, symbolising the hope, love and light of Christ shining into the world.



BOOKS OF THE MONTH

Adult Fiction

Mere

Danielle Giles

Set in 990AD in Norfolk, this story revolves around a convent situated in the fens and surrounded by a vast and treacherous bog (a large, boggy lake).

The holy sisters quietly tend to their duties, which extend to the village nearby. Sister Hilda offers an infirmary and provides what care she can, using local herbs and knowledge from the "old" pagan ways.

This peace is shattered when a local boy disappears into the mere. The abbess, Sister Sigeburg, fears her grip on the convent is waning. And when Sister Wulfrun arrives, she has a vision and says a curse is about to befall the convent.

Hilda is drawn to Wulfrun and her mysterious past – it is rumoured that she was once married to a rich lord and that to stop the curse they will both have to enter the mere!

This is a beautiful and atmospheric historical novel that really captures the nuns' isolated lives and their fear of the unknown. It is also a tender love story.

A Mind to Murder

PD James

PD James, for me, is one of the greatest crime writers. Her forensic detail is brilliant and her main detective, Adam Dalgliesh, a great character.

This story is set in a private psychiatric clinic. One quiet

evening, a piercing scream is heard from the basement and the administrative officer is found murdered. Superintendent Adam Dalgliesh is sent to the scene.

It appears the murder took place while the clinic was open and several therapy sessions, art classes and meetings were taking place.

The victim was not popular, and ambitious psychiatrists, a suspicious director of medicine, porters and admin assistants all had motives. PD James is very good at describing the politics of offices and medicine, as well as the therapeutic techniques of the time (the book was published in 1963). A great read.

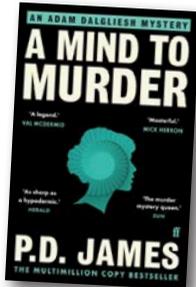
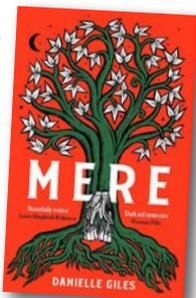
Is She Really Going Out With Him?

Sophie Cousens

B&NES virtual library

This is a bright, bubbly modern romance story, based in Bath, with great descriptions of local landmarks. With the 250th anniversary of Jane Austen's birth last year, the story concludes with everyone dressed in Regency finery in the ballroom of the Guildhall.

Anna, divorced, is trying to



navigate her single life with her two children and the family cat. She works for a local magazine and is told to find a new direction for her back-cover column.

Enter her office nemesis Will, who seems quick to suggest a joint enterprise. Is he trying to push her out of the business with his dapper clothes, good looks and enviable swagger?

In a fun twist, Anna's children pick seven potential suitors for her to go on dates with, all in the name of research for her new column. Could she find love amongst this eclectic mix of single men?

This light-hearted read is perfect for Austen fans and anyone who loves a happy ending.

Graphic Novel

Hamlet – Manga Shakespeare

illustrated by Emma Vieceli

There are several manga and graphic novels in Keynsham Library. This book is an imaginative interpretation of the classic tale. In a war-torn cyberworld, Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, sees the ghost of his late father, who reveals that his murderer was his own brother. This news devastates Hamlet and he spirals into paranoia and treachery.

This format is a great way, particularly for 15 to 16-year-olds, to read Shakespeare as the book uses his original text along with Japanese manga-style drawing.

Children's Fiction

The Tales of Olga da Polga

Michael Bond

A real children's classic from the author of the Paddington stories – I used to read this as a child. Olga is no ordinary guinea pig. When she arrives at her new hutch in the home of Mr and Mrs Sawdust (the name Olga gives her new family),

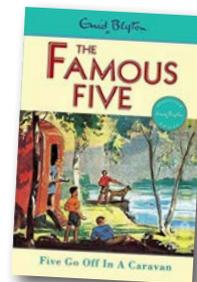
she knows that everything is fine. And Olga loves telling everyone her stories, from the cat to all the other animals she meets in her adventures.

All the Olga stories are delightful, especially if you have your very own Olga da Polga!

The Famous Five: Five Go Off in a Caravan

Enid Blyton

Julian, Dick, Anne, George and Timmy the dog are always getting up to adventures. The long summer holidays are starting, and the gang usually go to George's house in Kirran. But her scientist father is knee deep in experiments, so they vote to go on a caravan holiday. They come across a circus, but two of the performers are acting very oddly. There is treasure and caves, and poor Timmy is put in danger. Can they get help in time?



Library news

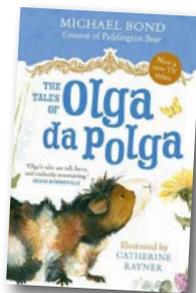
Look out for BookTrust storytimes this month for our younger readers. We will be showcasing a selection of books in our Storytime sessions, along with crafts, and you will get a chance to vote on your favourite, from *Five Enormous Dinosaurs* to *The Jellyfish Jiggle*.

As always, there is so much going on in all our libraries, and it's all free. So drop in and see what's on offer.

Tuesday 9.30-10am and 10.30-11.00am term time only, 0-5 years, for families with children, sing along at Baby Bounce and Rhyme, or get comfy whilst listening to our ever-popular Storytime, Thursday 10.30am at Keynsham Library, term time for 0-4 years.

For adults, we've got book clubs, writing classes, and much more throughout the year. Joining the library costs nothing, so pop in or visit www.librarieswest.org.uk to also access thousands of eBooks, eMagazines, Audiobooks, and a wealth of other resources.

Our 'Virtual Library' has loads going on, including competitions, book reviews and, all our digital offers. Search 'Bath and North East Somerset Libraries' on social media or visit <https://baneslibraries.co.uk/>



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NEWS

Petition calls for lighting in alleyway

MORE than 100 people have signed a petition calling for lighting to be installed on a well-used alleyway off Keynsham High Street.

It is frequently used as a pedestrian route linking the High Street to the Memorial Park and for people who live in Back Lane to access the High Street.

It has been flagged by the police and women as intimidating after dark due to its lack of lighting.

The petition has been organised by local resident Richard Watkins, who said: "After dark you are unable to see where dog owners have let their animals defecate, or on occasions where drunks have vomited, or how to avoid the broken tarmac surface.

"This alleyway offers the potential as a muggers' paradise. There are plenty of escape routes, if muggings were to take place.

"My first concern is for the elderly residents that live in Back Lane and lastly for myself, who is registered blind with limited vision."

Mr Watkins has contacted councillors about the issue, one of whom, George Leach, said that lighting for the alleyway had been included as an "aspirational" part of the Keynsham Town Centre Regeneration Action Plan as it was the only way to secure funding for works required.

The regeneration project, which is in the



This alleyway leading from the High Street has been described by resident Richard Watkins as a potential muggers' paradise

consultation stage and not finalised, will not proceed until the Bath & North East Somerset local plan is agreed, which is scheduled for around late 2026. Cllr Leach said he did not envisage any work happening on the regeneration before 2027 at the earliest.

Mr Watkins said he lacked confidence that

lighting for the alleyway would be installed under the regeneration project because residents had been let down before by B&NES Council during their previous improvement scheme for the High Street.

In 2022, Mr Watkins had been told by a B&NES Council officer that the town centre public realm scheme would include improvement to lighting in the passageways from the High Street to Ashton Way and Back Lane. But it later emerged this information was incorrect.

The council said there were obstacles to improving these passageways, notably land ownership, but that it would continue to look for ways to resolve these issues.

Meanwhile, Cllr Andy Wait, chair of Keynsham Town Council and a B&NES councillor, has told Mr Watkins he will ask the police if they can help to secure any funding from other agencies for lighting, giving that they are aware of the potential for crime in the alleyway.

Cllr Wait said: "There is no doubt that the lighting in the Back Lane alleyway is inadequate. I support Richard Watkins' campaign to highlight the potential danger of an accident there. Councillor Alex Beaumont and I have been in contact with the businesses on either side of the path to look for a solution to the problem."

Hospital charity celebrates 20 years of sponsored walk

RUHX, official charity of the Royal United Hospitals Bath, is hosting its 20th annual sponsored Walk of Life on Saturday 23 May 2026.

The Walk of Life started in 2006 thanks to sisters Nic and Ness who were both determined to raise funds to improve cancer facilities at the RUH.

Vanessa, known by her friends and family as 'Ness', was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2000. She received her treatment from a fantastic team at the RUH, but during this time was aware that the facilities were out of date and in desperate need of replacing. Ness sadly passed away after the cancer progressed in 2007, but she made Nic promise to carry on their passion for fundraising.

Nic has kept her promise by leading the Walk of Life every year since in memory of her sister, finding comfort in meeting other walkers who have been through similar journeys.

Since the event began, walkers have raised over £875,000 for the hospital. This year, the charity is calling on more local people to get

involved and hopes to raise over £125,000 to make the total raised at the Walk of Life more than £1 million.

The Walk of Life follows the Kennet & Avon canal from Bishops Cannings (near Devizes) to Bath, with walkers able to choose between walking the full 26.2 mile marathon distance or a 16 or 10 mile distance.

Entry is £20 for adults or £8 for children, which includes a t-shirt, refreshments along the route, and a lunchtime BBQ kindly provided by Rapid Relief Team UK.

To celebrate 20 years, RUHX also hopes more people will get involved by signing up to the free 'do it at home' option, that allows supporters to choose their own distance, route and date any time in May.

By taking part, people will be giving back to their local hospital for care received by them and their loved ones, helping to make healthcare extra extraordinary for everyone in Bath, Wiltshire and beyond.

Walkers can sign up by visiting ruhx.org.uk/walk.



Bandstand in the Park



Join us for live music on the
Memorial Park Bandstand from
April to September.

Scan the QR code
for full programme



All residents welcome

JOIN US FOR THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Thursday 23rd April, 7:30pm
The Space, Above the Library



An opportunity for
Keynsham residents
to have their say
about the work of
the Town Council
and the issues
affecting Keynsham.



Apply for our Grant Awards

KEYNSHAM Town Council's Annual Grant Awards for 2026/2027 will be open to applications from 1st April 2026.

The Town Council is prepared to consider applications for financial assistance from properly constituted:

- Clubs and Societies
- Voluntary Bodies and Associations
- Non-profit making Organisations
- Charitable Bodies

To qualify for a grant, applicants must demonstrate a direct benefit to the Keynsham Town area, or any part of it, or all or some of its residents. In addition, the direct benefit must be proportionate to the expenditure to be incurred. Local groups affiliated to regional or national organisations are eligible, provided the local group operates substantially as an independent financial unit.

The primary intention of the Town Council's grant scheme is to support new events, projects or items within the town.

Funding Timetable and Key Dates

1st April to 30th April 2026 - Application packs available.

Friday 8th May 2026 - Closing date for applications.

Wednesday 10th June 2026 - Applications considered by Grants Committee.

Thursday 11th June 2026: Applicants notified of the Town Council's decisions.

The Grants Presentation Evening will be held in July, with further details to be announced.

New defibrillator could save lives

KEYNSHAM Town Council has reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring strong public access to defibrillators across the town, helping to protect residents in the event of a cardiac emergency.

A brand-new defibrillator has recently been installed at The Talbot Inn, providing a fully accessible, 24-hours-a-day location in the heart of the community. The Council is also actively exploring two further sites in East and South Keynsham to continue strengthening coverage across the town.

In a generous show of community spirit, three defibrillators and their protective cabinets have been kindly donated by a local company which wishes to remain anonymous. The business shared the Council's understanding of the vital importance of these life-saving machines and the difference they can make in those critical first minutes before emergency services arrive.

Residents are encouraged to follow the Town Council's Facebook and Instagram pages for updates on new installations and details of upcoming public training sessions, designed to build confidence and ensure that people feel prepared should they ever need to use a defibrillator.

It is worth checking out where your nearest defibrillator is by visiting www.defibfinder.co.uk

Visitors to last year's Keynsham Spring Show Photo: Mike May

Colours of spring at show's return

THE much-loved Keynsham Spring Show returns on Saturday 28th March 2026, bringing a celebration of creativity, community spirit and a splash of spring colour to Keynsham Scout HQ and Girlguiding Keynsham HQ from 12 noon to 4.30pm.

Organised by Keynsham Town Council, this popular annual event invites residents of all ages to "Grow It, Bake It, Make It" - with trophies to be won, an Easter Bonnet competition, stalls, refreshments, free face painting and even a pet corner.

New for 2026 – Floral Art Category

This year introduces an exciting NEW Floral Art category, giving creative flower arrangers the chance to showcase their talents. A new trophy, kindly sponsored by Rose Holistic Therapies, will be awarded to the winning entry. Whether traditional or contemporary in style, organisers are looking forward to seeing a wonderful array of imaginative floral displays.

Entries close on Wednesday 25th March, and full schedules and entry details are available online or from the Town Council office and the Library.

The Spring Show is made possible thanks to the generous support of local businesses. Sincere thanks go to Redfern Osteopaths, Savour Kitchen and Farm Shop, Rose Holistic Therapies, Smart Computers, Keynsham Photo Centre, Muse Dental, The Old Bank, Wild About Flowers, Bargain Booze, WW Memorials, FDC Law, Perfect Fit and Meryton Place.

Their continued support helps ensure this much-anticipated community event remains a highlight of Keynsham's spring calendar.

For all Show information, including how to enter and what's happening on the day, go to our website www.keynsham-tc.gov.uk or follow us on Instagram or Facebook. Residents are warmly encouraged to get involved and support this blooming marvellous local tradition.



Keynsham Spring Show
28th March 2026

KEYNSHAM SCOUT HQ & GIRLGUIDING KEYNSHAM HQ

Saturday 28th March 2026
12noon to 4.30pm

Enter Now to Exhibit!
Closing date Wednesday 25th March

- Trophies to be Won
- Food & Refreshments
- Free Face Painting
- Stalls
- Easter Bonnet Competition
- Pet Corner

Grow It, Bake It, Make It

Paper entry forms available
Keynsham Town Council Office, 15-17 Temple Street
or call 0117 986 8683

Keynsham Town Council keynsham_town_council

SALTFORD SCOUTS

Beavers discover poster power at gallery

YOUNG members of 1st Saltford Beavers enjoyed an inspiring and creative outing this month after being invited to the Victoria Art Gallery, Bath, to explore its latest exhibition, *Poster Power!*

During their visit to the show, which celebrates more than 200 years of poster design, the Beavers learned how to view artwork safely and respectfully, while discovering how poster styles have evolved across different historical periods. They were encouraged to take a closer look at the displays, identifying subjects and recognising key design features in the vibrant works on show.

The group also had time to enjoy the gallery's interactive train installation, where they listened to the atmospheric sounds of old steam trains before exploring a farmyard-themed area.

Upstairs in the gallery's education space, the Beavers' creativity truly came to life. Inspired by the animals they had spotted in the posters downstairs, they designed and crafted their



own animal masks. Using an array of colours, feathers and sparkles, each Beaver created a unique and eye-catching design.

The visit concluded with a trip to the gallery's permanent



collection, where the children proudly posed in front of animal paintings while wearing their handmade masks - a perfect way to celebrate their artistic efforts.

The group expressed their

thanks to the gallery's community engagement officer for delivering such an engaging session. The Beavers are now looking forward to putting their newly developed art appreciation skills into practice.





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APPROVED OPERATOR

NEWS

110 homes bid on site next to woodland

PROPOSALS are taking shape for up to 110 new homes at a site off Manor Road in Keynsham.

Taylor Wimpey wants to build the properties to the south of its previously approved development off Minsmere Road.

The developer held a community drop-in event about the Manor Road scheme at Keynsham Masonic Hall on February 12.

Taylor Wimpey said it would assess public feedback from the event before it submits its planning application to Bath & North East Somerset Council.

The developer says the scheme is purely at the outline stage but is likely to include properties of between one and four bedrooms, 45% of which will be “affordable”. It would also include a new children’s play area and public open space.

David Smart, strategic land and planning manager at Taylor Wimpey, said: “The design is shaped by the site’s natural connectivity to the already approved Minsmere Road site directly to the north, whilst also responding sensitively to the nearby Manor Road Community Woodland.

“We’re committed to working closely with the community in Keynsham to ensure the development reflects local needs and aspirations.”



Land next to Manor Road Community Woodland that Taylor Wimpey wants to develop. Right, the area outlined in red marks the application boundary

Taylor Wimpey won approval for detailed plans for 70 homes on land off Minsmere Road in April last year.

B&NES Council granted outline permission for the scheme in 2022 but refused permission for its subsequent detailed proposals, after which Taylor Wimpey revised its scheme.

A council report said: “The issues which formed reasons for refusal in the previous application, including design, ecology and sustainable construction, are now considered to be overcome.”





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NEWS

Appeal to preserve part of mill history



The cog found under floorboards

A FUNDRAISING appeal has been launched to allow part of an old mill's historic past to go on display.

Albert Mill, a Grade II listed building at Dapps Hill in Keynsham, was originally constructed around 1733-34 by the Bristol Brass Company and later used as a cotton mill, grist mill, and logwood mill.

It was rebuilt following a fire in 1873, ceased production in 1964 and was converted to flats in 1992.

It still retains its historic mill room, water wheels, and grinding stones, which can be visited by the public during the annual Heritage Open Days weekend.

But a new piece of its history came to light during last September's open days.

Jill Coles, a resident of Albert Mill, said: "I noticed that the floorboards were a bit loose. So we lifted them, and underneath were the original workings of the mill."

The hidden components consisted of cog wheels that connect the mill wheel to the grind stones.

Now the mill's management committee has decided that the best way to display the cogs is to replace the floorboards with toughened glass, similar to the way Roman mosaics can be seen in the town's library.

A dedicated heritage fund has now been set up to finance the project, following months of the necessary checks and financial arrangements. The initial target is £3,900 to pay for illuminated glass flooring.



The fund directors are planning to apply to Keynsham Town Council for a grant, as well as seeking support from donors, but they have also set up a JustGiving page inviting donations from the public. Details can be found by visiting the albertmill.co.uk website.

Any funds raised beyond the £3,900 target will be used for future heritage projects at the mill, such as repairing rotting wood between the grindstones.

As well as its historic mill room, Albert Mill still has its water wheel in its garden, which overlooks the River Chew with its three weirs, mill leat and sluice gate.

The mill is scheduled to open to the public again on Heritage Open Days on September 12 and 13 this year.

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NEWS

Paul's marathon effort for cancer campaign

A LOCAL businessman who raised more than £20,000 following his first London Marathon last year is tackling the challenge again in 2026.

Paul Collings, from Willsbridge, will again be running in support of Cancer Research UK and the Bowelbabe charity.

This year he will be accompanied at the London Marathon on April 26 by his brother Mark, who completed the event in 2024.

Paul's wife Abbie received a stage 4 terminal bowel cancer diagnosis in May 2024, following 12 months of chemotherapy and surgery. She continues to undergo fortnightly treatment, which, thankfully, is still holding the tumour sites stable.

He said: "A stark and hopeful reality is that the treatment Abbie is receiving today simply did not exist two years ago. Funding from CRUK - made possible entirely through public generosity - directly drives advancements in screening, diagnosis, treatment, and ultimately

better outcomes for people like Abbie."

Paul, 46, who runs a building services consultancy, says Abbie's courage in facing her diagnosis is his inspiration. Last year she completed the Bath Half Marathon just four days after having chemotherapy. The couple have two children, Millie, 17, and Ben, 14.

Bowelbabe was started by the late Dame Deborah James and is "fuelled by the spirit of rebellious hope – of choosing to remain hopeful in the face of overwhelming odds". Its aim is to give more people with cancer more time with the people they love.

The family are holding a fundraising coffee morning at Keynsham Cricket Club on Friday April 17 at 10am and would welcome donations for the raffle and silent auction. To support Paul and Mark's marathon effort, go to fundraise.cancerresearchuk.org and search for 'Paul & Marks London Marathon 2026'



Paul Collings will run in the London Marathon once again



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NEWS

£700k set aside for resurfacing

WORK to resurface Woollard Lane, Whitchurch, has been included in highway maintenance plans for 2026-27.

The scheme, costing £700,000, has approved by Bath & North East Somerset Council, and samples of the current road surface were due to be taken last month.

Drainage improvements costing £30,000 have also been approved in Woollard Lane for the next financial year.

Councillor Duncan Hounsell (B&NES, Lib Dem, Salford), whose ward includes Woollard Lane, said: "I am very pleased that this busy road is being resurfaced. A big thank-you to B&NES for making Woollard Lane a priority. This will benefit all who live and work in the area."

● The area to be resurfaced is marked above in red.



Speed limit cut to 20mph

A NEW 20mph speed limit is being imposed along Durley Lane in Keynsham, despite opposition from residents.

The new limit starts from the lane's junction with Durley Hill and extends north for about 530 metres, beyond the Keynsham Bypass. The previous limit was 60mph.

The traffic order proposed by Bath & North East Somerset Council received eight objections and no comments in support.

Several people commented that the proposal did not address the real problems in the lane. These included numerous potholes, the use of a passing place for residents' private parking, and overgrown verges that narrowed the lane by up to 4ft in some places.

They also complained that the speed limit map produced by B&NES Council included areas of private land that could not be subject to speed regulation.

A council officer responded that the map had since been corrected to cover only the public highway. Concerns about vegetation and potholes had been reported to the relevant council departments. The request for 'no waiting at any time' parking restriction at passing places would be included in a future review of parking restrictions in the area.

The officer said: "Whilst it is recognised that the benefits of a 20mph speed limit on Durley Lane might not be immediately



apparent, it is important to remember that many rural areas and roads of this nature have the potential to be attractive for pedestrians and cyclists, particularly for leisure activities.

"It is not unreasonable, therefore, for pedestrians and cyclists to have greater confidence that vehicle speeds will be appropriate for the road on which they are walking, wheeling, or cycling.

"In the event of a collision, a lower speed limit is also likely to lessen the severity of any potential injuries to those who are involved, which aligns with the council's road safety policies."

Although the new 20mph speed limit was due to come into operation on February 2, speed limit signs had not been installed at the junction with Durley Hill shortly before the *Voice* went to press. B&NES Council said its contractor would install signage as soon as possible.

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NEWS

Have your say on giving play area some TLC



Town councillors Martin Burton and Dave Biddleston at the Park Road play area



RESIDENTS are being asked what they would like to see in the refurbishment of the Park Road play area.

Keynsham Town Council says it wants to give the play area some “much-needed TLC” and would like local people to fill in an online survey to help shape the improvements.

The survey can be found at <https://forms.office.com/e/REy4cA8WeV>.

The link is also available on the Keynsham Town Council website or through its Facebook page (see its post dated February 14).

The deadline is Saturday February 28,

but it is understood that this deadline may be extended for further feedback. The town council hopes the Park Road scheme will “ignite conversations” around the Memorial Park refurbishment, a project being overseen by Bath & North East Somerset Council that is due to be completed in July.

Local Labour councillors have backed the town council’s decision to upgrade the Park Road play area but say they are concerned over the delay at the Memorial Park.

Labour town councillor Martin Burton said: “We welcome the decision to invest in the Park Road play area, which is good news

for local children and families and shows the importance of continuing to invest in our community spaces.

“However, residents have been waiting several years to see improvements at the Memorial Park, and it is disappointing that work will not begin until July. After such a long wait, it is important that the project now moves forward without any further delay.”

The Labour group say they are continuing to campaign for high-quality public spaces due to the number of young families now in Keynsham, especially those who live in flats or have limited access to play space.



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KEYNSHAM METHODISM

'Unruly mob of ungodly folk' transformed

AS demolition of Tintagel Court continues and the building of the new properties starts to become a reality, consideration is being given to the names of the new roads.

Ideas being considered include Bethesda, Zion and Victoria in recognition of the different strands of Methodism that once existed in Keynsham – a town that featured regularly in the travels of John Wesley when he was preaching.

Premises that were once Methodist chapels include the new banking hub in the High Street and Simply Carpets in Temple Street. During his time on the road on horseback, it is estimated that he rode over 250,000 miles, and a few years ago in celebration of this, my wife Jenny co-wrote and directed at Victoria Methodist Church a production called *Wesley in Keynsham*.

The younger John was played by Mark Topping, who at the time was the warden at the New Room – the oldest Methodist building in the world – in Bristol; the middle-aged John was the late John Cawley; and the elderly John was Derek Bayliss.

One of my responsibilities was publicity and I approached HorseWorld at Whitchurch, who kindly arranged one Saturday to bring one of their horses to Keynsham for Derek to sit on, in front of the church, dressed as Wesley. To comply with health and safety regulations, Derek was obliged to wear a hard hat under his wig.

During his travels, Mr Wesley kept a daily



Portrait of John Wesley by William Hamilton, 1788 National Portrait Gallery, London

journal, which makes for fascinating reading. The following are Wesley's own words, taken from the journal, as used in the script of *Wesley in Keynsham*.

In 1771, a middle-aged Wesley wrote: "I well remember preaching in Keynsham - an unruly mob of ungodly folk, no better - no worse - than many I had met before, who put their trust in the alehouse and their own mob rule. About noon I preached in Keynsham and not without hope of doing some good even there!"

Some 16 years later, now aged 84, Wesley wrote on visiting Keynsham again: "Sixteen years ago I first saw the seed, long



Demolition under way at Tintagel Court

planted here, start to spring up. It was a further five years before I saw the fruits of our labours. Another five years before I saw we would do good, even here! And now six years on, I see that God has a mighty plan for this place. This Nazareth ... this place from which men might ask – Can anything good come out of here? But I have seen the Spirit of God at work in Keynsham and it is a work that shall blaze up – it shall not be put out!"

One has to wonder what John Wesley's journal entry would be if he was to walk along Keynsham High Street in March 2026.

Mike Barrow



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WHAT'S ON

Friday March 6

■ Keynsham RUHX Fundraising Group meets at Keynsham Library (ground floor by Pam's Pantry) on the first Friday of the month, 10am-2pm. Free refreshments, chat and a chance to discuss future events and plans. Please drop in, everyone is welcome. All help gratefully received. No financial or time obligations/commitments necessary. Next month's meeting will be on Friday April 10, 10am-2pm, due to the Easter weekend.

Monday March 9

■ Messy Church at Keynsham Methodist Church, Queens Road, BS31 2NN, 3.15pm-5.15pm, with our usual mix of craft activities, Bible story, songs, food and fun. All are welcome, book your place with the church office on 0117 9149408 or email bookings@keynshammethodistchurch.co.uk.

Friday March 13

■ Wildlife talk "Messing About on the River", Keynsham Baptist Church, BS31 1DS, starting at 7.30pm. Entrance, Avon Wildlife Trust members £3.50, non-members £5, to include refreshments served at 7.15pm. All welcome, no booking required.

Saturday March 14

■ Keynsham Orchestra concert featuring music from The Planets, Star Wars, Star Trek and E.T. St John's Parish Church, 7.30pm. Tickets £10 or £8.50 for concessions, available on the door.

Sunday March 22

■ Keynsham Royal British Legion Women's Section spring fundraising event, flea market, 12pm-4pm. Upstairs function room (stair access only), Royal British Legion Club, Charlton Road, Keynsham, BS31 2JA. Refreshments available. Tea, coffee, squash, ham or cheese rolls, cakes. Charity no. 219279. Our proceeds to the RBLWS benevolent fund supporting serving personnel's families.

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We would love to publicise your event

Send details of your events and activities in the following format:

WHAT IT IS WHERE IT IS WHEN IT IS

Email us at:
news@keynshamvoice.co.uk
or call us on 0117 908 2121/
07715 770448

Tuesday March 24

■ Saltford and Keynsham Flower Club will demonstrate hand tie, and wrapping techniques for flowers, 2pm, Saltford Hall. Also, items for the club's stall at Keynsham Spring Show can be prepared. Visitors are very welcome, £8.

Friday April 17

■ Coffee morning in aid of Bowelbabe, Keynsham Cricket Club, Wellsway, Keynsham, BS31 1HU, 10am-12.30pm. All welcome.

REGULAR EVENTS

Mondays

■ The Royal British Legion Women's Section Keynsham Branch meets on the first Monday of each month upstairs at the RBL Club, Charlton Road, Keynsham, BS31 2JA, 7.30pm. Occasional speakers, social events and outings.

■ Keynsham Bridge Club can now welcome new experienced players to our Monday evening sessions. Contact Pat 07442 160553 or Diane 0117 9861267.

■ Key Voices Community Choir meets Mondays at 7.30pm at St. Dunstan's Church Hall, BS31 2BQ (or third Monday of month at Royal British Legion). We sing a wide range of music, with occasional performances and social events. Friendly non-auditioned choir, all are welcome. First session free.

■ Key Ring, second Monday of the month, Key Centre, Charlton Road, Keynsham, 2.30pm to 4pm.

■ Saltford Whist Club, Saltford Hall. Monday afternoons 1.30pm-4pm. Contact Malcolm 01225 872555.

■ Keynsham Brass Band, Broadlands School, St Francis Road, Keynsham, 7.30pm to 9.30pm term time. Trombonists particularly needed for traditional brass band. Friendly, relaxed group who play at summer fetes in Keynsham Memorial Park and a few concerts. Call Sarah Medley on 0117 4625626 or email sarah.medley1@btinternet.com, or see the Facebook page or webpage (Keynsham Brass Band).

■ Children's Code Club (Years 4-6), Keynsham Community Hub, 67 Queens Road. Create games and animations, 4.30pm-5.30pm.

■ Foodbank, Key Centre, Charlton Road, Keynsham, 10am-12pm (not bank holidays).

Mondays/Tuesdays

■ Seated Pilates Class

Mondays and Tuesdays 11-11.30 am, Saltford Hall (Avon Room), Wedmore Road, Saltford. Seated Pilates includes all the benefits of a general class but the exercises are adapted for a seated or standing position. Ideal for those with a long-term health condition (e.g. arthritis or Parkinson's), loss of confidence, or those wanting to get fitter but have difficulty attending a floor-based session. 6-week block of classes £54. You are welcome to do a trial class first, £10. Please book your place by contacting Kate 07454 047536 www.corerehab-physio.co.uk

■ Beginners Pilates

Keynsham High Street. Friendly classes, helping to improve balance, strength and increasing flexibility. Mondays 5.45pm, Tuesday 9.30am (older adults). Call or message Sandhya 07565 976 129.

Mondays/Weds/Thursdays

■ The Victoria Centre of the Methodist Church in Keynsham High Street is open from 10am to 12 noon for coffee, biscuits and a chat. A great place to meet people. We have a children's area for play, and a book and card sale table. Come and join us, all are welcome.

Mondays/Fridays

■ Butterflies Haven, charity for families of children with autism, sessions Monday 6.30pm-8.30pm

for our older 11-18 year olds and Friday 5.30pm-7.30pm for our 4-11 year olds. Sessions are held at St Francis Church, Keynsham. A safe space for children to be themselves supported by volunteers. To join Butterflies Haven and get two taster sessions, complete the application form on www.butterflies-haven.com

Mondays/Thursdays

■ Yoga For Men

Monday 7-8pm and Thursday 7.30-8.30pm. Mixed ability. Two Rivers School, Hygge Park, BS31 1GE. Free 1st class, £9 thereafter. Loyalty card. Book online. Pay on the night - cash or contactless. See www.yogadad.co.uk for further details.

Tuesdays

■ Keynsham Mencap Football Team has spaces more people to join. They meet 7pm-8.30pm on Tuesdays at Broadlands School. Open to people aged 16 and over with a learning disability and autism. Contact us by emailing Laura@keynshammencap.org.uk.

■ Welsh conversation group, The Old Manor House, Bristol Road, Keynsham, 7pm-8.30pm, third Tuesday of the month - February 17, March 17, April 21, May 19, June 16, July 21, (August no meeting), September 15, October 20, November 17, December 15. Free to attend. Organiser Catherine Dhanjal. Call Catherine on 07941669925 or follow <https://www.facebook.com/CymraegBrysteCaerfaddon>.

■ Badminton - friendly, beginners and improvers, mixed, adult (18 - 80) group play every Tuesday 10am-12 noon at Keynsham Leisure Centre. Ring Clive 0117 9866793 or just turn up.

■ Keynsham Orchestra rehearsals, Queen's Road Methodist Church Hall, 7.30pm-9.30pm. For more information, visit www.keynshamorchestra.org.uk/

■ Keynsham Girls' Brigade for girls aged 4 to 15 meet during term time, 6pm-7pm, at the Key Centre, Charlton Road, Keynsham. For more details, contact Linda on lindachrisp@hotmail.com.

■ St Keyna Townswomen's Guild meets at the Fear Hall, Keynsham, from 10am to 12pm on the second Tuesday of each month. Contact Jill on 07446915414.

WHAT'S ON

■ Keynsham Sequence Dance Club, 7.30pm-10pm, Fear Hall, Keynsham, every Tuesday. Contact Brian and Jo, Keynsham Sequence Dance Club, on 0117 9868540, or just turn up. Everyone welcome.

■ Scrabble Club, Keynsham Community Hub, 67 Queens Road, 2pm-4pm.

■ Saltford Village Choir continues to prepare for its summer concert from 7.30pm in the Wansdyke Room behind the main hall at Saltford Hall. Come along and try it out.

■ Public Living Room, Keynsham Community Hub, 67 Queens Road. An open space to relax, keep warm, have a lunch, and meet other people. 12.30pm-4pm.

■ Ladies group meets on alternative Tuesdays - March 3, 17 and 31 - at Keynsham Methodist Church, Queens Road, BS31 2N, 2.30pm-4pm.

■ Craft group meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month in the Fellowship Room, Key Centre, Charlton Road, Keynsham, 2pm-4pm. All welcome.

Tuesdays/Weds/Saturdays

■ The Somerdale Shed and Community Garden is open Tuesday 6.30pm-9pm, Wednesday 9.30am to midday, and Saturday 9.30am to midday.

Tuesdays/Thursday

■ Play & Shine - new stay & play for children with SEN (with or without a diagnosis) 9.30am-11.30am, Queen's Road Methodist Church, Keynsham, BS31 2NN, Tuesday and Thursdays (term time only) for children aged 0-5 years. Free entry. Children can enjoy activities including sensory play, messy play, construction play, outdoor activities, music, role play, and a quiet area when they need calm time. Parents and carers stay during the session, with friendly volunteers on hand to support activities - giving you the chance to relax with a tea or coffee while your child plays. To register your interest, please email molly@keynshammencap.org.uk.

Tuesdays/Sundays

■ Indoor rowing classes Tues 7pm & Sun 10.15am, Saltford Rowing Centre, Bath Road, Saltford, BS31 3JS. Go Row Indoor exercise class caters for people of all ages and levels of fitness. Classes

last 45-60 minutes using rowing machines. First class free, then £5 (or £18 pm). Email gorowindoor@avoncountyrowingclub.org to book. More details <http://avoncountyrowingclub.org.uk/>

Wednesdays

■ German conversation group, Old Manor House Hotel, Keynsham, 7pm-9pm, second Wednesday of the month - February 11, March 11, April 8, May 13, June 10, July 8, (August no meeting), September 9, October 14, November 11, December 9. Free to attend. Organiser Steve James. Join Keynsham Stammtisch on Facebook.

■ French conversation group, Old Manor House Hotel, Keynsham, 7pm-8.30pm, fourth Wednesday of the month - February 25, March 25, April 22, May 27, June 24, 22nd July 22, (August no meeting), September 23, October 28, November 25, December 23 (TBC). Free to attend. Organisers Steve James and Catherine Dhanjal. Call Catherine on 0794 1669925 or join L'Amicale Francaise de Keynsham on Facebook.

■ Hanham Bridge Club meets every Wednesday 7pm-10pm at Hanham Community Centre. New members and visitors welcome. See www.hanhambridgeclub.co.uk or call Graham 07790 491564.

■ Coffee and Craft, Keynsham Community Hub, 67 Queens Road, 10am-12 noon. For anyone who enjoys crafting with like-minded people.

■ Buggy walk, meet outside Keynsham Methodist Church, Victoria Centre, High Street, for coffee and play, every Wednesday in March.

■ Keynsham's popular Good Afternoon Community Choir from 2pm-4pm at Keynsham Methodist Church / Victoria Centre. NO auditions and NO charge to attend your first 'meet us' rehearsal. Everyone welcome www.goodafternoonchoir.org

■ Oldland Ukulele Club is a mixed-ability group who meet every Wednesday at 1.30pm at Oldland Common United Reformed Church (the blue church), High Street, Oldland Common, BS30 9QN. Call/text 'Ukulele' Ben on 07910 668258.

■ Discipleship group meets on the first and third Wednesday of the month at Keynsham Methodist Church, Victoria Centre, High Street, 10.30am-11.30am.

■ Hanham Bridge Club meets each Wednesday 7-10pm at Hanham Community Centre, new members welcome. See www.hanhambridgeclub.co.uk or call Graham 07790 491564.

Wednesdays/Thurs/Friday

■ TimeOut Youth Centre, 16 Bath Hill, Keynsham, holds open drop-in sessions on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. The free sessions include cooking, baking, music studio recording, pool, table tennis, computers for internet use, gaming, arts & crafts, and other activities during half term and summer holidays. Wednesdays 6-8pm 14-19 years Thursdays 6-8pm 14-19 years Fridays 4-6pm 11-14 years For more information or queries, phone 0117 9868683 or email youthleader@keynsham-tc.gov.uk. Spaces available.

Thursdays

■ Saltford Bridge Club is a friendly group that meets to play duplicate bridge on Thursday evenings at Saltford Golf Club. New members welcome. If you don't have a partner, the club can often find one for you. For details, contact Val on 07989775780.

Pilates Classes

Taught by Chartered Physiotherapist Kate
Thurs 7-7.55pm (Intermediate)
Thurs 8-8.55pm (Beginners)
St Francis Church, Warwick Rd, Keynsham.
6-week block of classes £60.
You are welcome to do a trial class first, £10
1:1 sessions also available at my studio in Saltford
Book online or by contacting Kate 07454 047536
www.corerehab-physio.co.uk

■ Keynsham & Saltford Dementia Action Alliance runs Music for the Mind sessions for people living with dementia and their carers. St Dunstan's Church Hall, Keynsham, 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month, 10.30am-12.15pm. Singing and gentle exercises from 11am. No charge. www.keynshamdaa.co.uk, ksdaa22@gmail.com or 07392442966.

■ ASP Poetry Circle, free entry, every third Thursday of each month, 11am-12pm, Keynsham Library, upstairs balcony, diagonally across from table in corner, by the window. Bring

two or three poems, own or another poet's, to share. <https://asppoetrycircle.wordpress.com/>

■ Spanish class, Keynsham Community Hub, 67 Queens Road, 7pm-8.30pm.

■ Longwell Green Orchestra meet each Thursday at Longwell Green Community Centre, 7.30pm to 9.40pm. We have players of all abilities. Email Contact@longwellgreenorchestra.org beforehand to tell us what instrument and what level.

■ Midweek worship at the Keynsham Methodist Church coffee morning (Victoria Centre, BS31 2JA). Join us for a relaxed short service at 11am. All welcome.

■ Art class, Keynsham Community Hub, 67 Queens Road, 10am-12 noon (term time only). Run by Bath City College. Learn and develop your artistic skills.

■ Dorothy House Coffee Connection, Keynsham Community Hub, 67 Queens Road, 10am-12 noon. A social group for anyone affected by cancer or life-limiting illness.

■ Get fit in 2026! Try social badminton for fun and fitness - only £3.20. No experience? No racket? No problem! Play at your own pace. Join friendly, mixed adult group (18-80+) drop-in session in Keynsham, Thursdays 10am-12noon. Ring Clive 01179866793.

■ Keynsham Town walking football for the over-50s, 7.15pm-8.30pm. Play football at a slower pace for fun and fitness. New members welcome. Contact keynshamtownwf@gmail.com.

Fridays

Pilates Classes

Taught by Chartered Physiotherapist Kate
Fri 10.30 - 11.25 am (mixed ability level), St Francis Church, Warwick Rd, Keynsham.
6-week block of classes £60.
You are welcome to do a trial class first, £10.
1:1 sessions also available at my studio in Saltford
Book online or by contacting Kate 07454 047536
www.corerehab-physio.co.uk

■ What's On continues on Page 36

WHAT'S ON

Fridays

■ Baby Comes Too toddler group meet every Friday in term time at Keynsham Methodist Church, Victoria Centre, High Street, 10am-12pm. All welcome. For more information email bookings@keynshammethodistchurch.co.uk

■ Babes and Breakfast, Keynsham Community Hub, 67 Queens Road, 10am-12 noon. For all mums with babies (up to 6 months). Meet other mums and share experiences.

■ CAMEO, Keynsham Methodist Church group for people living alone, coffee morning at the Key Centre, Charlton Road, Keynsham, 2pm-3pm, first Friday of the month. All welcome.

■ Golden Oldies singing group, Key Centre, Charlton Road, Keynsham, 2pm-3pm, with Sue Crick, on the last Friday of the month. All welcome. For more information, visit . <https://www.goldenoldies.org.uk>

Saturday

■ Keynsham Sequence Dance Club Monthly Dance, 7.30pm to 10.30pm, Fear Hall, Keynsham, third Saturday of the month. Contact Brian and Jo, Keynsham Sequence Dance Club, on 01179868540 or just turn up. Refreshments (coffee/tea and biscuits), £5 each.

■ Volunteers at Keynsham Repair Cafe – a free monthly event, with a café, at Keynsham Baptist Church, High Street – fix everyday household items like toasters and lamps, sew a button onto a jacket, glue a handle back onto a mug, as well as more unusual items. Every second Saturday (same as Keynsham Farmers Market), 10am–12pm. keynshamrepaircafe.wixsite.com/home.

■ Bible group, Keynsham Community Hub, 67 Queens Road, 12.30am-4pm, alternate Saturdays.

■ Cllr George Leach and Cllr Alex Beaumont surgery at Keynsham Library, 10.30am-11.30am, on Market Saturday (second Saturday of the month) to help residents with issues or advice, No appointment necessary.

Sundays

■ Keynsham Kings Flag American Football. Do you fancy trying out a new sport? Do you love the NFL? Flag American football is taking the UK by storm as a fast-paced, non-contact version of American football. Training: Sundays 10.30am-1pm, Manor Road Playing Fields. Mixed sport - anyone 16 years-plus welcome. No previous experience needed. Contact us for more info on the Keynsham Kings Facebook or Instagram pages.

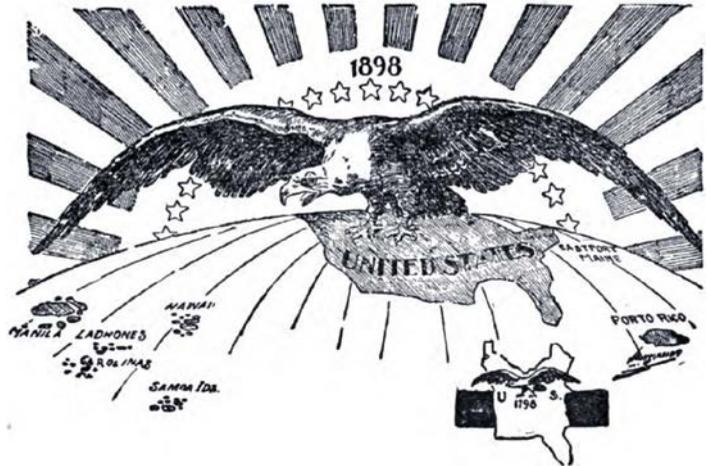
WORLD EVENTS

The demise of Pax Americana

1898 political cartoon: "Ten Thousand Miles From Tip to Tip" meaning the extension of US domination (symbolised by a bald eagle) from Puerto Rico to the Philippines



Donald Trump photo: Daniel Torok, Library of Congress



Ten thousand miles from tip to tip.—Philadelphia Press.

by Simon Parsons, Keynsham resident and teaching fellow in law, Bath Spa University

PAX Americana refers to the period of relative world peace and stability since World War II, driven by the economic, military, and cultural pre-eminence of the USA. But it is beginning to break down as in its place there is reemergence of the dominance of the nation state.

The United States, by attacking Venezuela and abducting its president Nicolas Maduro, is reasserting the US Monroe Doctrine of 'we are in charge of all the Americas'.

There is a loss of US interest of what happens in Ukraine, as President Trump wants the Ukrainians to give up one fifth of their land mass to the Russians to achieve a peace.

Trump suggested he would attack Iran if innocent civilians were killed. Tens of thousands have now died, and only now is Trump sabre-rattling, but he does not care about the Iranian people and democracy. What Trump wants is for the Iranians to give up their nuclear weapons ambitions.

Trump is more interested in the Americas, and he is currently trying to assert control of Greenland on the basis that it 'ought to belong to the USA' because of its strategic position.

There is a breakdown of rules-based international law. The United Nations Charter prohibits the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity of politically independence of states. Force may be used by states only for self-defence against an armed attack or pursuant to a UN Security Council decision giving appropriate authorisation.

The United States was not acting in self-defence when it attacked Venezuela and did not even argue that defence before the UN Security Council. Instead it was argued the attack was to prevent Venezuela oil reserves being controlled by adversaries. It's all about might is right with Trump – he was not embarrassed about breaking the UN Charter as he maintains he is not bound by international law, only his own morality.

The attack on Venezuela, although unlawful under international law, would be worthwhile if it led to a democratically elected government. Nicolas Maduro headed up a government of gangsters



Greenland image courtesy of Barni1 on pixabay

which refused to accept the landslide victory of the Venezuelan opposition headed by María Parisca in the 2024 general election. Yet Trump maintains she does not have support of the Venezuelan people. And the gangsters are still in charge in Venezuela.

And what of the trial of Nicolas Maduro in a US Federal Court in New York? He has been charged with running a "corrupt, illegitimate government" which has an extensive drug-trafficking operation that flooded the US with cocaine. That is going to be difficult to prove beyond reasonable doubt as most drugs come into the US via Mexican organised crime groups, with cocaine originating in Columbia not Venezuela.

Maduro will argue that he has personal head-of-state immunity for all acts - the principle of international law that one state cannot put on trial a serving head of state of another state.

He could also argue his abduction was unlawful under US law because, under the US written constitution, only Congress can authorise the use of force and not the President, unless there is an armed attack on the US. Congress did not authorise the use of force against Venezuela and there was no attack on the US.

Since 2008, world living standards have been stagnant, leading to a rise in populism involving strong leaders. There is a loss of confidence in democracy so that only strong leaders can get things done. International law is supposed to stop what occurred in Venezuela, but does that action encourage other states to act, such as China taking Taiwan or Turkey taking Greek islands? Smaller states must fight for rule-based international law.

NEWS

Plan for bungalows cul-de-sac refused

PLANS to knock down a Saltford bungalow and build a “cramped” cul-de-sac on its garden have been unanimously rejected.

Every councillor on Bath and North East Somerset Council’s planning committee voted to turn down a planning application to demolish 22 Tynning Road and build a cul-de-sac with five bungalows in its place and across its “rather large” rear garden.

Speaking for applicant Sandy Veer at the committee meeting on January 21, the scheme’s architect John Blake said: “Her mum and dad loved their large garden, and large amounts of vegetables, fruit, and even grapes in the greenhouses were grown up until 10 years ago, when the garden became too much for them. They are now in retirement living accommodation.”

He said: “The site itself is nearly a quarter of a hectare in area. The existing bungalow is over 70 years old and is tired and has been extended many times in its life. This is an inefficient use of space.”

But next-door neighbour Ruth Presswood urged councillors to turn down the plans, or at least require major changes.

She said: “The proposal places new dwellings and gardens immediately alongside existing homes. This results in a significant loss of privacy and a sense of enclosure.”

The plan also faced opposition from both of Saltford’s local councillors.

An artist’s impression of the plan



Duncan Hounsell (Liberal Democrat) warned: “The layout proposed appears unnatural and cramped.”

Chris Warren (Independents for B&NES) added: “Five properties on this plot is overdevelopment of the site.”

Planning committee member Paul Crossley (Southdown, Liberal Democrat) said: “This is one of the most overdeveloped schemes I have seen for a long time.”

He said the development was “completely inappropriate” in Saltford and might even be turned down in Bath.

Several councillors also raised concerns about the size of the proposed bungalow’s gardens - particularly the small gardens proposed at the end of the cul-de-sac.

Only Tim Warren (Midsomer Norton

Redfield, Conservative) said he was not concerned about the size of the gardens, commenting: “If you don’t want a small garden, you don’t buy it.”

The development was rejected on the grounds of the “cramped layout and lack of green and amenity space” having a negative impact on the area’s character, and the harm to neighbours’ “residential amenity.”

Councillors made their decision despite the council being behind on its housing supply. In 2024, the government doubled B&NES Council’s housing target. As a result, the council is no longer able to demonstrate a five-year housing supply, which means councillors are required to weigh up planning applications with a “tilted balance” in favour of development.

Councillors were reminded that the “tilted balance” meant that the harms of a development would have to demonstrably outweigh the benefits to a significant degree if the council wanted to be able to defend the decision.

Council officers warned councillors: “We haven’t had much experience with that in B&NES before but, looking nationwide and looking at the trend for appeal decisions, it is a very significant consideration that you should weigh heavily in your minds.”

*John Wimperis,
Local Democracy Reporting Service*

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Morgan, Bath

POETRY CORNER

March Weather

Cold frosty mornings are coming our way,
For the weather it changes, day after day.
Dark clouds may loom, a damp misty dawn.
Suitable clothes will need to be worn.

Decisions to make, to go out, or stay in?
But taking a walk soon lifts up the chin.
Fighting the wind with red rosy cheeks,
When the clouds start to part, sunshine through peeks.

Meeting friends on the way, stop for a while,
A chat, a shared joke, will shorten the mile.
Take time for a cuppa, or even a snack,
Then happy and warm, make the way back.

Walking briskly or slowly is sure to relax,
Leaving all worries behind, at our backs.
And God will walk with us, wherever we go,
His love, and His blessings, around us will flow.

Sylvia Kirby

PEN TO PAPER

Rain

Rain, rain go away,
We've had enough of you today,
And yesterday, the day before,
We just can't take it anymore.

'Unsettled weather' is the term,
That they use – it makes me squirm,
Why 'unsettled' I can't see,
Seems the opposite to me.

Rain keeps raining every day,
Little sunshine, skies are grey,
Streams and rivers overflowing,
Flood plains flooded, cold winds blowing.

We've had a record Jan and Feb,
So it tells us on the web,
The situation is now dire,
Please let March be somewhat drier.

George Liddell

Keynsham Creative Writers welcome new members – call George Liddell on 0117 914 8654

NEWS

War veteran Stan dies, 100



Right, D-Day veteran Stan Ford celebrating his 100th birthday with Councillor Kevin Guy and Councillor Karen Walker at Keynsham Masonic Hall last year



TRIBUTES have been paid to war veteran Stan Ford, who survived the D-Day landings and has died at the age of 100.

Stan, of Bath, celebrated his 100th birthday at a party with family and friends in Keynsham Masonic Hall last May. He was also a member of a war veterans' club that meets in Saltford.

Stan served with the Royal Navy during the Second World War and was aboard HMS Fratton when it was torpedoed off the coast of Normandy in August 1944.

He suffered a fractured spine and injuries to both legs when the stricken vessel sank. Although 38 crew members were rescued, 31 lost their lives.

Stan later became an ambassador for the British Normandy Memorial and regularly returned to France to honour fallen soldiers by keeping their memory alive.

Stan was also the oldest member of the City of Bath Armed Forces & Veterans Breakfast Club (AFVBC), which meets at the Riverside Inn at Saltford every month.

It was a talk that Stan gave to the club about his experiences on the Normandy beaches that inspired Dave Westall, who helps to run the club, to embark on a sponsored walk that raised thousands of

pounds for the Spirt of Normandy Trust in 2024.

Councillor Kevin Guy, leader of Bath & North East Somerset Council, said: "I was deeply saddened to hear of the passing of Stan Ford. On behalf of Bath & North East Somerset Council, I extend heartfelt condolences to Stan's family, friends and all who knew him.

"Stan was an extraordinary member of our community. Only last year, I was proud to join him, his family and friends to celebrate his 100th birthday, marking not just a remarkable milestone in years, but a life defined by service, resilience and dedication to remembering those who did not return from war.

"Many residents will also remember Stan with great pride when he carried the Commonwealth Baton through the streets of Bath as part of the Queen's Baton Relay, a moment that symbolised both his personal courage and his contribution to public life.

"Stan's service to his country, and his commitment to sharing his experiences with future generations, will not be forgotten. He will be remembered with deep respect and gratitude by our city and wider community. Our thoughts are with his loved ones at this difficult time."

Choirs joins forces for concert

TWO of the Good Afternoon Choirs founded by Grenville Jones will come together for a concert at St John's Church, Keynsham, next month.

They will also welcome special guests Keynsham Show Choir to the event on Wednesday April 1, starting at 7.30pm.

Keynsham Good Afternoon Choir, led by John Hare, and South Gloucestershire Good Afternoon Choir, led by Matt Finch, will perform a variety of songs as a massed choir of more than 100 voices.

The choirs are part of a Good Afternoon Choir family of more than

30 mixed-voice community choirs with 1,400 singers who "sing in the afternoon" around the South West, Wales and London. Keynsham Show Choir, led by Fran Jones, will perform songs from West End musicals as well as lesser-known off-Broadway gems, all sung in a-capella.

Tickets for the concert are £12 (under-16s free) on the door from 7pm or available from gac.ticketlight.co.uk or by calling 0844 888 9991.

For more information, visit the Good Afternoon Choir website – www.goodafternoonchoir.org



Keynsham Good Afternoon Choir

PROPERTY

SALTFORD offers over £625,000

Nestled in the charming village of Saltford, this exquisite three-bedroom semi-detached house offers a perfect blend of period elegance and modern convenience.

Located in the High Street, it offers easy access to local shops, essential amenities, and excellent transport links, while being just a stone's throw away from delightful riverside pubs and scenic walks.

This property has been meticulously renovated to a very high standard by the current owners. The extensive upgrades include a new heating system, updated electrics, and uPVC double-glazed windows.

Inside, the home retains its charming period features, such as elegant alcoves, high ceilings, and distinctive period radiators. The layout is practical and inviting, making it ideal for families or those seeking a serene retreat.

The property boasts off-street parking, a valuable asset in this desirable location. The rear garden offers a private outdoor space, while current planning permission



for a rear extension linking the main property to the garage (plans are available to view) presents an exciting opportunity to further enhance the property.

This semi-detached gem in Saltford is not just a house; it is a home that combines historical charm with modern living, making it a must-see for anyone looking to settle in this vibrant community.

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■ FRY'S BOWLING CLUB

Fun indoors as the new season looms

THE winter period may be quieter on the green, but Fry's members have still had plenty to do during these cold months.

Throughout the autumn and winter seasons, the club has run popular short-mat sessions since they were introduced a few years ago.

The club now hosts six sessions throughout the week, on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons. With over 30 members playing, the short mat has proven a great way to keep the club together regularly throughout the winter.

The final social event of 2025 was the Christmas coffee morning, attended by over 50 members and guests. Along with the coffee and mince pies, Chris Davies provided the entertainment with musical quizzes which included a Christmas carol bingo game.

Winter activities took a break through January as the clubhouse interior was refurbished, courtesy of a grant from St Monica Trust. An event is planned for April to celebrate the new look.



With the redecoration done, short-mat sessions resumed, and the first social event of 2026 was a Valentine's Day celebration which featured a love songs and Catchphrase quiz, as well as a singalong from Chris Davies, to go with the ploughman's supper provided by a team of club members.

Preparations have started for the outdoor season, only a month away, with the fixture list

nearly complete and the green team working hard getting the green ready.

For more information about the club, or to give bowls a try, please visit our website frysbowlingclub.wixsite.com/frys, search Fry's Bowling Club on Facebook, follow us on X (formerly Twitter) @FrysBowls, or contact our secretary, Stephen Day – email frysbowlsclub@gmail.com, phone 01225 872959.

■ SALT FORD LAWN TENNIS CLUB

Record turnout at quiz night

A packed Saltford Hall during the quiz night hosted by Saltford Lawn Tennis Club and Saltford Community Association

Below, quizmaster John Sweet in action



HOW many tennis balls are used at the Wimbledon championships each year? The answer is at the end of this article.

Saltford Hall was packed out with 150 keen quizzers on Saturday February 7 for a joint quiz night hosted by Saltford Lawn Tennis Club and Saltford Community Association (SCA).

The quizmaster was John Sweet, a formidable tennis player, who has come up with almost 2,000 questions over the years.

There was a record attendance at the fundraising event and the battle for first place was fierce. In the end, 'Answering Machine' won with 197 points out of 207, which is thought to be a new record.

The fundraising continues on April 18 with



the tennis club's open day. We have been lucky enough to get several former Davis Club and Wimbledon players to help us on the day by providing coaching clinics, taster sessions, fastest serve, and an exhibition match between the professionals and club members.

It's a rare chance to see top-level tennis up

close - more details will be available on our website soon and in next month's article.

The money raised will go towards improving facilities and providing tennis for all ages and abilities, from toddlers to the over 80s.

You can find out more by emailing sec.saltfordtennis@gmail.com or visiting our website at www.saltfordtennisclub.co.uk.

We are also pleased to serve up a new logo to replace the old one, produced by John Sweet, that has served us well. We can now produce branded clothing and signs for our clubhouse.

Answer: 55,000.



KEYNSHAM HOCKEY CLUB



Right, Daniel Money, who died last September



Players' friendly rivalry in Daniel's memory

Joe Money with Rosa Brannen – Daniel's friend, team mate and last year's chair of MedSoc Hockey

KEYNSHAM Hockey Club are used to battling local rivals week in week out across their leagues, but on Sunday February 1 they played a match with a very different purpose.

The club's mixed team travelled to Birmingham to take part in a friendly fixture held in memory of former player Daniel Money.

Daniel came through the Keynsham Hockey Club academy and went on to play in the club's men's teams before leaving for Birmingham University to study medicine. While there, he joined Birmingham MedSoc Hockey Club in 2016 and became their club chair in his fourth year.

After qualifying as a doctor in 2021, Daniel stayed in Birmingham to work as a junior doctor at Heartlands Hospital.

In November 2022, he was diagnosed with stage 4 bowel cancer. Daniel lost his brave battle in September 2025.

The friendly match was organised to honour his life, his love of the sport, and the impact he had on everyone around him.

The day was filled with warmth and togetherness, as Keynsham players were welcomed by Daniel's university friends and teammates, with a large crowd gathering to support both sides.

The Medics ran out 4-1 winners, but the result was secondary to the spirit of the occasion.

Daniel's family travelled to support Keynsham from the sidelines, including his brother Joe Money, also a keen hockey player, who played for Keynsham

on the day. After a fantastic performance, Joe was rightly named player of the match in a fitting tribute to his brother.

Speaking after the match, Katherine Sears, chair of Keynsham Hockey Club, said: "Daniel was a huge part of our club and left a lasting impression on everyone who played with or coached him.

"This day was about celebrating who he was, bringing together two teams that meant so much to him, and showing his family that he will always be part of the Keynsham Hockey Club family. We are incredibly grateful to Birmingham Medics for the warmth and generosity they showed us."

After the game, players and supporters came together to enjoy homemade cakes and refreshments, sharing memories of Daniel while raising funds for Birmingham Hospice.

Through cake sales, a raffle and donations, over £1,800 was raised on the day.

To further honour Daniel's legacy, Keynsham Hockey Club have retired his club number, 15, and presented Birmingham Medics with a framed Keynsham shirt to be displayed in the University of Birmingham Medical School.

Keynsham Hockey Club would like to thank the current and alumni members of University of Birmingham MedSoc Hockey Club for their hospitality and hope this trip will become an annual event, ensuring Daniel's memory, spirit and love of hockey continue to bring people together for years to come.

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KEYNSHAM TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB

Young mascots fly the flag for the Ks



YOUNGSTERS from Keynsham Town Football Club took centre stage when the under-7s team proudly stepped out as mascots for the senior side against Welton Rovers at the AJN Stadium.

They had the chance to meet members of the first-team squad, ask questions and soak up the pre-match atmosphere on Saturday February 7.

Before kick-off, they lined up at the changing-room entrance to welcome the senior team onto the pitch, waving flags and greeting the players.

At half-time, the youngsters

took to the pitch themselves for a six-a-side match, playing two five-minute halves in front of the crowd, with pop-up goals and pitch markers set out especially for them.

After cheering on the senior side during the second half, the day rounded off with food in the clubhouse before the final whistle at 4.45pm.

Under-7s player Luka said: "It was fun and I loved waving the flags."

Team-mate Owen said: "It was amazing and I liked meeting the players."



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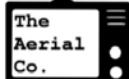
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