

Messenger



St Mary Magdalene, Stoke Bishop

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Currently vacant

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The Messenger

St Mary's Messenger is published quarterly and distributed to 3,000 homes in the parish. Contact us by email: messenger@stmarysb.org.uk or by telephone:

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Uniformed Organisations

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Beavers	Jacquie Carn	7840 823 934
9th Guides	Lara Kirby	07961 013 097
9th Brownies	Wendy Hughes	962 4580

Sundays at St Mary's

9 am Holy Communion
with hymns and prayers

10.30 am Morning Worship

Communion alternate weeks
Band-led worship for everyone.

SHINE on Sundays groups for children aged 0-14 yrs take place during the service on alternate weeks

Explore@4

An informal service open to all and planned for families with pre/primary school children. It takes place on alternate Sundays at 4pm during term time.

Audio recordings of the Sunday sermons can be accessed at any time via the church website.

For full details of services visit the church website and do check before coming as there are occasional variations to this usual pattern.

Weekdays at St Mary's

Contact the church office for more information

Bright Sparks

Baby and Toddler Group
Mondays during term time 2-3.30 pm

Fuel

Fridays during term time 6-7.30 pm
for young people in school years 6-9

Connect on Tuesdays

Conversation, coffee, craft in church
10-11.15 am with Communion service to end

Thursday Lunch Club

A hot lunch in the church hall
Please book in advance

St Mary's Singers

Choir at 9am Sunday services
Rehearsals Tuesday evenings

Bellringing

Contact Simon Tomlinson 962 4020
for more information

Small Groups

Bible study and informal support
Daytime and evening groups

Alpha

An opportunity to explore the Christian faith in a small group or 1 to 1



@stmarymagsb



St Mary Magdalene Church
(@StMarySB)

Spring into Action

By Judith Sheather

Do you know that National Cycle Route 4 (Pembrokeshire to London) goes through Stoke Bishop? Coming from Blaise it turns into Ormerod Road and then up Hollybush Lane and across the Downs to Bristol. A chance encounter with Scott Whitby-Smith in full cycle gear (see front cover) led to me making this discovery and now I look out for the distinctive blue signs. Bristol based charity Sustrans created, and is custodian of, the National Cycle Network. The Bristol-Bath Railway Path was its first project.

'Cycling is such fun,' explains local enthusiast Alan Morris (pictured below). 'In town it's a great way to get about as timing can be precise; in countryside it's slow enough to enjoy nature. I work out my route on the OS map app and the blue signs confirm it. In towns Sustrans avoids busy roads using side streets and easily-missed back-alleys. Sometimes local councils, sometimes Sustrans volunteers are responsible for maintenance work and signage.'



Yet Sustrans is also concerned for walkers and access to safe paths, bringing improved quality of life for all.

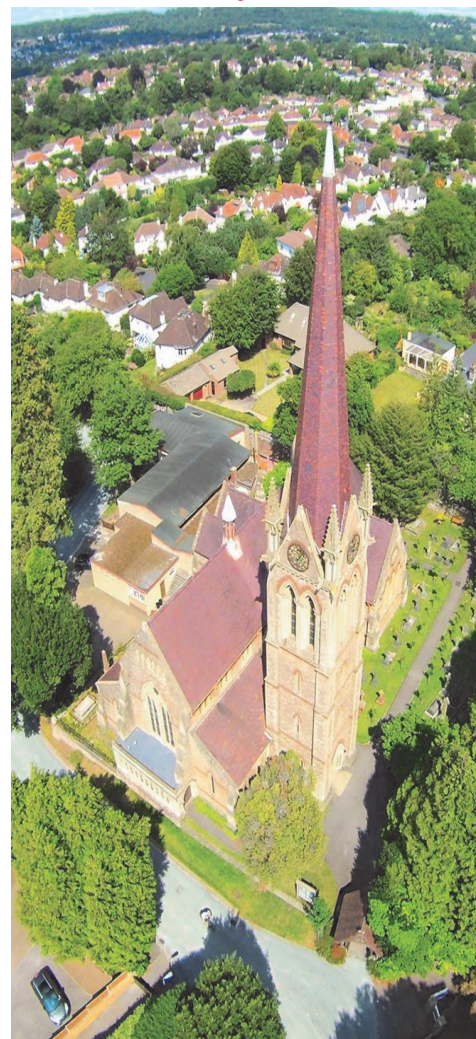
'Our vision is a society where the way we travel creates healthier places and happier lives for everyone. At Sustrans, we create places that connect us to each other and what we need, where everyone can thrive without having to use a car; sociable places where friends and facilities are a short walk away, and it's easy and pleasant to travel beyond our neighbourhood. Our goal for cities and towns is for them to be places that connect us to each other and what we need. We think that the best way to do this is to ensure that it is easy for people to meet most of their everyday needs by a short, convenient and pleasant 20-minute return walk - 10 minutes there, and 10 minutes back.

'We consider the following to be the minimum features of a 20-minute neighbourhood.

- **Food retailers and supermarkets**
- **Education, including early years, primary school and nearby secondary schools**
- **Health services, such as a pharmacy, GP and dentist**
- **Financial services, such as post office or bank**
- **Employment and jobs either within the neighbourhood or nearby**
- **Public open space, such as parks and recreation grounds**
- **Entertainment, such as leisure, culture and entertainment facilities.'**

Does Stoke Bishop spring to mind – its cycle shop, post office, primary school and supermarkets, and Stoke Lodge Adult learning centre, plus the nature reserves and Stoke Lodge Village Green, Village Hall and St Mary's church?

Let's show positive support for our neighbourhood this Spring!



From the CHURCH REGISTERS November '23 – January '24

Weddings

9 December Deborah Jenkins
and Angus Brown

Funerals

3 November Martin Freye
29 November Bill Redmond
20 December Aubrey Matthews
4 January Eileen Bailey

Thanksgiving Service

1 December Gillian Hoyle

Interment of Ashes

13 January Joseph Clee
26 January Martin Freye



Stoke Lodge: Now Heading to Court

Stoke Lodge was registered as a Village Green in June 2023, but unfortunately Cotham School is now challenging that decision in the courts.

By the time you read this, we'll have a lot more clarity about how this will play out. Essentially, if Cotham loses in court or withdraws because it can't afford the cost of a long court hearing, then that will be the end of the matter. That will also mean that the fence will have to come down fully, and we can all get

back to the peaceful shared use of the land that was the case for decades.

In the meantime, we hope you're enjoying easier access to the parkland - it's wonderful to see hundreds of children enjoying their football there every weekend! This photo comes from one of our wonderful sunrise walkers, Shirley Brown. Every time of day is a good time to enjoy Stoke Lodge.

Helen Powell

Bristol Local Plan: what it means for Stoke Bishop

Bristol City Council has been busy writing a Local Plan for growth and change until 2040. What does this Plan say about the future for our part of Bristol and for the wider city area?

Much of the Bristol Local Plan (BLP) is taken up with well-known challenges; population growth, shortage of housing, carbon reduction, pressures on green space, flood prevention and so on. It is a strategic overview of what might be acceptable developments in different parts of Bristol; a zoning document giving guidance to developers and residents. The Plan was drafted on a cross-party basis.

We know that Bristol is a growing city. The Plan expects it to have a population of 550,000 by 2050 but we are not getting any more land beyond the current 42 square miles. Housing, transport, health, nature conservation, the economy and many other aspects have had to be balanced against each other. Disappointment has been expressed that comments made in consultations, including those on tall buildings and the need for a design vision for the city, have not been included in the final draft.

As regards Stoke Bishop, the BLP as drafted does not change much. Only about 20 homes are proposed locally, on a brownfield site on Church Road (part of the former prefab site at Sanctuary Gardens). Bristol University sought 2,000 additional units of student accommodation, but instead the BLP suggests a maximum of 500 units for Stoke Bishop, provided that the University can put forward a comprehensive plan for parking and the impact on local infrastructure. A positive point is the proposal to upgrade Stoke Lodge to 'Local Green Space' status. This would make any future development on this valuable area of parkland less likely.

**To find out more visit the Council website:
www.bristol.gov.uk**

Peter Weeks

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BRISTOL 1904 ARTS
Paintings Exhibition (2024)

Building Community for Over 100 Years: a fundraising update

By Charles Elderton and Carolyn Jenkins
Trustees of the 43rd Bristol Scout Group

The importance of replacing our dilapidated wooden Scout Hut with a new Scout Community Centre is about far more than just a new building.

The Past - Our history

It was in 1911 that the Curate of St Mary's Church, Canon Whytehead, formed the 43rd Bristol Scout Group, and since then the Scouts have been an integral part of the fabric of life in Stoke Bishop, Sneyd Park and beyond. The Group initially met in the basement of a house in Downleaze, moving to its current site off Kewstoke Road in the 1950s. The hut, which we still use today, is a second-hand wooden building, which was patched together in sections from war-era Stoke Bishop Primary School and, we believe, ex-military huts.

Since then, several generations of local children and parents have been involved with the Group in some way. We are so proud to hear the many stories of how being a part of the Group created friendships, gave confidence and provided much needed life skills.



The Present - Our Group today

Today the Group is thriving. We have around 80 to 100 local boys and girls attending Beaver, Cub and Scout sessions each week and we would like to expand. The Group is supported by over 40 adult volunteers, as well as young leaders and Duke of Edinburgh award participants. The Group is committed to providing these and future generations of young people with the chance to

become good citizens, to develop the skills they need for life and have fun.

Our dedicated Trustee Board, volunteer leaders and helpers are simply custodians of the Group. We want to pass it on in better shape and with solid foundations (excuse the pun!) to thrive and develop for the next 100+ years. Our existing hut is now beyond all reasonable repair, has no modern facilities and requires urgent replacement.

The Present – Fundraising past £300k

As a team we have been working towards this goal for nearly ten years. We have secured a 35 year lease and planning permission from Bristol City Council. We have recently reached a major fundraising milestone, having **now raised over £300,000 towards the project**. This has been the result of much (and ongoing) hard work and is in so many ways down to the amazing community support for the project. We are so very grateful to the many local residents, groups, businesses and grant funders who have supported our events, fundraised for and with us or provided grants.

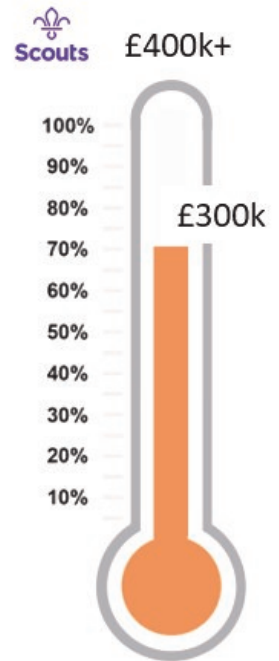
Many of you will have attended our annual Christmas tree sale, quiz night or plant sale, and our monthly Saturday morning café is very popular!

The Future - Getting the build completed

This is a significant local community project and everyone who has been involved so far, in whatever capacity, should feel proud. Our new Scout Community Centre will be a warm and welcoming space that can be used by our Group and many local community groups and organisations, and we are keen to start the build in the next 12 months or so. To make this happen we will need to accelerate the funding available – raising at least a further £100k through our own fundraising events, but also seeking donations, continuing to apply for grants, and/or with philanthropic loans.

To find out more about this community project or to donate, please visit www.43rdbristolscouts.org.uk or contact chairman@43rdbristolscouts.org.uk.

Thank you.



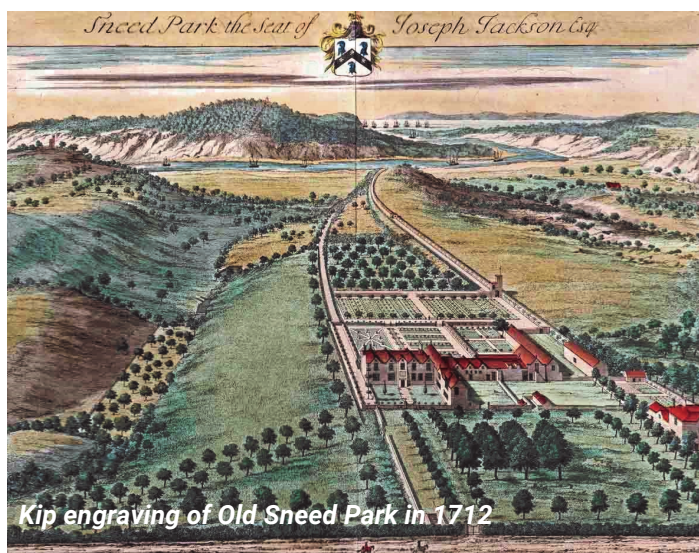
Stoke Bishop's Nature Reserves

By Peter Weeks

Between Stoke Bishop and the River Avon we are fortunate to have three adjacent nature reserves: Old Sneed Park Nature Reserve, Bennett's Patch and White's Paddock, and Bishops Knoll Wood. These areas have different owners and different histories and each in its own way contributes to the interest of living here.

Old Sneed Park Nature Reserve

For centuries this piece of land, of about 6.6 hectares, was part of the estate of Old Sneed House which stood where Cedar Court and Westonian Court flats in Glenavon Park are today.



In 1972 the House was demolished for housing, but planning permission was granted for the Nature Reserve; these grasslands are ecologically valuable having never been ploughed or fertilised. The rare orchids that flower in the top meadow in early summer are one result of this.

In 1995 the Friends of Old Sneed Park Nature Reserve (FOSPNR) was set up to maintain and improve the meadows, woodland and lake. Much has been done to improve access and biodiversity and to promote the Reserve as an amenity for everyone. This year FOSPNR is raising funds to improve paths through the woods and to clean out the important silt trap at the head of the lake. They are contributing to research via a butterfly monitoring transect and preparing a new 5-year management plan. The lake is a popular spot to view and feed waterfowl; ducks, moorhens and coots (see picture right.) It is thought that at least one family of deer has made its home in the Nature Reserve, emerging from time to time to browse on plants in neighbouring gardens!

Bennett's Patch and White's Paddock

This is the newest of our three reserves, on the far side of the railway line. It was created in 2015 by

Avon Wildlife Trust and is part of an wildlife corridor that runs along the Avon Gorge. In Victorian times, the land was the site of a brickworks; post-war it was a dump for rubble from bombed buildings and later, a company sports field. The land was acquired by generous benefactors and made into a wildlife haven by planting wildflower meadows and over 4,000 trees providing habitats for a wide range of local flora and fauna.

The Reserve can be reached on foot down the lane from Bramble Drive and over the railway bridge. There is also a gate onto the Portway. The paths are accessible by wheelchair and pushchair, but it can be muddy at times!

Plans are under way with SPRA to raise money to restore the two threadbare wicker whales on the Reserve.

Bishops Knoll Wood

This area formed the gardens of a large 19th century mansion, The Knoll, which stood where the flats of the same name are today. Vegetable gardens, greenhouses, an arboretum, beehives and orchards were established on an extensive series of terraces below the house. Native and rare exotic trees grow along the bottom path and elsewhere in Bishops Knoll including a London Plane, a huge Monterey Cypress over 7m in girth, the largest oak in the city, and several species of pine.

The mansion was bought by Robert Bush in 1908 and used as a hospital for wounded Australian soldiers in WW1. It was demolished in 1972, and the gardens were acquired by the Woodland Trust which created the reserve in 1986.

Bishops Knoll Wood has something of a maze about it; hidden and overgrown, an exciting place to explore. Interpretation boards give the history and many of the specimen trees are labelled. Although it is called a Wood, I can't help thinking that this is a neglected secret garden calling out for sensitive clearing of trees and undergrowth to reveal the wonderful views that the gardens enjoyed over the Avon Gorge.



The Sisters of the Church

By Judith Sheather

Prominently located in St Paul's at the apex of Ashley Road and City Road is the Bristol house of the Community of the Sisters of the Church (one of St Mary's Mission Partners).

Founded in 1870 'to pray and work to the honour and glory of God, for the coming of God's reign on earth', the Community's Bristol work is currently run by Sister Teresa Mary and Sister Rosie. Always smiling and dressed unstuffily in 'normal' clothes, they have created a welcoming, supportive base 'to work alongside and befriend those who are living at the margins of society'.



One aspect of this work is the Loaves and Fishes Project which we at St Mary's particularly support through gifts of tins and dried foodstuffs in the church hampers. Unlike other food banks operating referral systems, the Sisters 'offer a food parcel to anyone who calls asking for one. We judge no one, we ask no questions except their name. Anyone and everyone is welcome; no justification is needed. Our only restriction is that one parcel is given per person, per week.

'The food bag usually contains tinned meat or fish,

vegetables, baked beans, soup, custard and fruit. We also include a carton of milk, cereal, tea bags and a packet of pasta or rice. We stress 'usually', as there are times we run out of specific items.' Life is a daily struggle for many in St Paul's and 250-300 parcels are given out each week on Monday to Wednesday mornings.

'When possible, we also offer sandwiches and drinks at the door. Through this we get to know people in many kinds of need and are often able to provide other kinds of help.' Form filling and visiting, giving help writing letters, engaging with issues of justice and peace in the neighbourhood and generally offering a place away from the 'hustle and bustle' for rest; prayer and friendship fill other days.

'All this depends on the support of churches, schools, local businesses and many others in the Bristol area. We are always in need of food donations. We are also grateful for any financial donations so that we can top up the food to meet demand.' In winter help with heating is also given.

'Joy comes to us in our being open to a costly yet fulfilling way of serving through our work, whatever it may be.'

The Sisters' smiles surmount any challenges they face.



Sister Rosie



Sister Teresa Mary

Journeying Towards Life

Travelling with Jesus in Mark's Gospel



Do join us for our Holy Week and Easter Services

Ash Wednesday: 14 February

7.15 pm at St Mary's Shirehampton
with refreshments from 6.45 pm.

Palm Sunday: 24 March

9 am: Palm Sunday Holy Communion

10.30 am: Palm Sunday Communion for Everyone

4 pm Easter-themed Explore@4

Holy Week: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 25-27 March

7.30 pm: Short Reflective Services for Holy Week
with readings from Mark's gospel and prayers.

Maundy Thursday: 28 March

7.30 pm: A service of Holy Communion in church
reflecting on the events of the night before Jesus
died.

Good Friday: 29 March

10.30 am: An accessible, creative presentation of
the events of Good Friday,
including songs and hymns.

2 pm: 'An hour at the cross', a time of reflection on
the sacrifice of Jesus, including hymns and prayer.

Easter Sunday: 31 March

6 am: A dawn service including a simple
celebration of Communion, starting outside the
church around a small fire!

9am and 10:30am: Easter Day Communion
Services. An opportunity to worship God and
celebrate the resurrection of Jesus.

Lent: What it is and how it can be useful

Lent is the 40 days running up to Easter Sunday. Christians remember the testing of Jesus in the wilderness, often through testing their own resistance to temptations. Historically people gave up luxury foods: meat, fish, eggs, dairy and wine.

Today we often give up our modern luxuries, particularly the ones we find most attractive! They might be sugary treats, alcohol or social media. The feelings of temptation can act as reminders to focus on the spiritual side of life and to live more simply. We can also give the money saved to those in need – giving up to give to others. Time on social media apps can be replaced by time on prayer apps such as lectio 365.

The aim is a time of spiritual preparation and reflection to set us up for real celebration of the resurrection of Jesus at Easter, and the freedom that enables us in all aspects of our lives.

This Lent, the five ASMA churches (St Mary's Stoke Bishop, St Mary's Shirehampton, St Peter's Lawrence Weston, St Edyth's Sea Mills and St Andrew's Avonmouth) will be gathering on Wednesday evenings to discuss how we can express the love of God in practical ways in our communities.

We will share refreshments, watch short videos, sing and discuss the topics in small groups. The chosen topics will aim to help those attending with their personal holistic growth and with community transformation via social action.

You are very welcome to join us – email the St Mary's Stoke Bishop office office@stmarysb.org.uk for details:

Whatever you decide to give up, or take up, may it lead you towards freedom and flourishing.

Sonia Home, ASMA curate

Just to update you...

Thanks to all those who gave to the autumn appeal towards the running costs of St Mary's - there was an encouraging response and the PCC feel confident to move forwards with plans to recruit a part-time Youth Minister who will help us to continue to support young people in this area and beyond.

Thank you too for your patience with regards the Church Rooms Development Project; we are still trying to sell a property in order to partially fund this work, and it's proving to be harder than expected!

Setting limits

Back in October I was caught doing 26mph in a 20 zone, which resulted in me taking part in a Speed Awareness Course just before Christmas. It was actually very helpful, and I learnt some new things



about the Highway Code, despite having been a driver for 23 years! Since then, I have taken to using my car's speed limiter, which means that now in a 20 zone, however hard I press the accelerator I can't exceed the limit.

I've also been thinking about staying within limits in other areas of my life. At the end of last year, I was off work for a couple of months and I am currently doing a phased return, gradually increasing my hours back to full-time. This is proving to be challenging – observing strict boundaries doesn't come naturally to me – but I am also finding it to be necessary and helpful.

I wonder how many of us exceed our limits in terms of what we take on and how much we try to fit in? Having time to reflect, and now being held accountable to accepting my limitations, I am more convinced than ever that this counter-cultural way of living is integral as we seek the fullness of life which God intends for us.

We are now in the season of Lent, a time when many Christians recalibrate their lives, recognising the need to give attention to what we are doing, and why. You might want to give some thought to whether there is an area of life that you could be more limited in, or boundaried about. Doing less doesn't automatically mean that life will be easier, or we will feel more peaceful, but I certainly find that when my life is rushed and over-full, I begin to lose sight of what is truly important.

During the weeks of enforced rest when I was off work, and now in a season of limited activity, I am finding that being externally slower (as a driver and a pedestrian!) is gradually helping me to become internally slower, and therefore more aware of God's presence within me. Clearly this will be a lifelong journey (for us all) but it's one I would encourage you to pursue, because, Jesus tells us, it is the way to *life in all its fullness* (John 10:10).

Revd Jema Ball,
Vicar of St Mary's



Adrian Sawyer Retires

Adrian Sawyer is not quite sure how long he has been playing the organ for us at St Mary's but hazards a guess at fifteen years. On arrival, he and the then vicar, David Ritchie, quickly formed a strong bond sharing a love of music and love of Morris Minors; each owned three! Adrian juggled his role with that as organist at Christ Church, Clifton. Adrian says 'playing the organ at St Mary's became a very important and rewarding part of my life.'

'The fine, historic and well-maintained three manual organ is complemented by a capable and long-established choir. The choir has been faithful and supportive, each member and their leader, becoming a valued friend. During my time at St Mary's, I have accompanied them as they have sung at Morning Services and Choral Evensong on several occasions at Bristol Cathedral.'

'Just before leaving St Mary's, I achieved my ambition of persuading the choir to sing two of the finest and most demanding anthems in the repertoire - 'Blessed be the God and Father' by Samuel Wesley and 'O Thou the Central Orb', by Charles Wood. Each was included in morning worship just weeks before my retirement.'

'My final service was on 26th November, when, with the 'clandestine' help of David Ritchie - now living on the borders of Gloucester and Hereford - the choir presented me with a 'Morris Motors' book which they were confident I did not already own! The church membership presented me with a generous gift voucher, some of which I have used to buy a long-desired and very 'up-market' Anglepoise lamp!'

Most importantly, after 57 years, Adrian is now able to attend church on a Sunday with Gay, his wife. She is delighted! Adrian says: 'Thank you, Jema, your fellow clergy and the congregations at St Mary's, for a rewarding and extremely happy time with you—it could not have been better. Memories will never fade.'

Hazel Trapnell with Adrian Sawyer



Advocacy at Stoke Bishop Primary

By year 5 pupils Jori, Cara and S

What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? Micah 6:8

Advocacy is a big word and not one you might expect children to understand, but at Stoke Bishop Primary pupils have a growing sense of what it means to be a force for good in the world. I asked children and staff what it meant to them:

We believe that advocacy starts with individuals finding their own voice. With that comes a recognition of the responsibility to use their voice for the support and benefit of others in need.
(Mr Forrester, Head teacher)

- *About doing something for other people or the planet (pupil aged 11)*
- *Helping people and saving the planet for future generations (pupil aged 11)*
- *Standing up for others (pupil aged 10)*
- *Love, care and peace in the world (pupil aged 10)*
- *Putting others before yourself (pupil aged 8)*
- *Speaking out to make the world a better place (pupil aged 9)*
- *Our school values ~ Grace, Passion, Courage and Integrity, rolled into one (pupil aged 10)*

How does the school help you to learn about Advocacy?

We talk about it in class and think of ways we can help others. We have our school values, and posters around the school remind us too. In our Celebration Assembly, we nominate people who have done something to help others, and they are given a certificate. And in Advocacy Collective Worship, we find out what the Bible has to say about it.



How are you being Advocates in school?

We do things as a whole school, such as holding special days to raise money for different charities or opportunities to bring food in for the Foodbank. Other times, individuals and groups do different things.

shop Primary School

Saachi, and Rachel Powlesland



I spoke to some children to find out what sort of things they have been up to:

The School Choir have been singing in Care homes nearby.

Year 4 have been thinking about what's important to them in school, picking up litter during their lunchtimes (see picture bottom left) and encouraging fellow pupils to be thoughtful about how they use the resources provided for them.

Someone in Year 3 was inspired to help her teacher every lunchtime, as her teacher has always been kind and helpful to her.

Years 5 and 6 have been working together in groups on a variety of projects that they are passionate about. Some have written to our local MP, Darren Jones and Bristol City Council, with their ideas of how to look after and protect the local area, whilst others have written to local shops and cafes to encourage them to reduce food waste by using Fare Share or Too Good to Go.

Another group has made a recording to raise awareness of the health risks linked to vaping and smoking. And others have made posters reminding people to conserve energy in school.



Children have organised competitions to raise money for people affected by natural disasters around the world and for the Children's Hospital here in Bristol.

A lot of the children give up their own time too - helping at the Foodbank (see picture above), litter picking along the river, making and selling biscuits or Christmas decorations to raise money, (see picture left) and undertaking sponsored challenges to

name just a few of their creative ideas.

To find out more about what the children are doing, visit the Advocacy page on the school website.

- **Advocacy changes you (pupil aged 10)**
- **It helps me think about others (pupil aged 11)**
- **...makes me feel happy (pupil aged 7)**
- **It makes us appreciate things, like our school and how hard our teachers work (pupil aged 10)**
- **I want the world to be a loving and peaceful place (pupil aged 10)**

Jesus said, "I give you a new command: love each other as I have loved you". John 13:34

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Mr B, client's son

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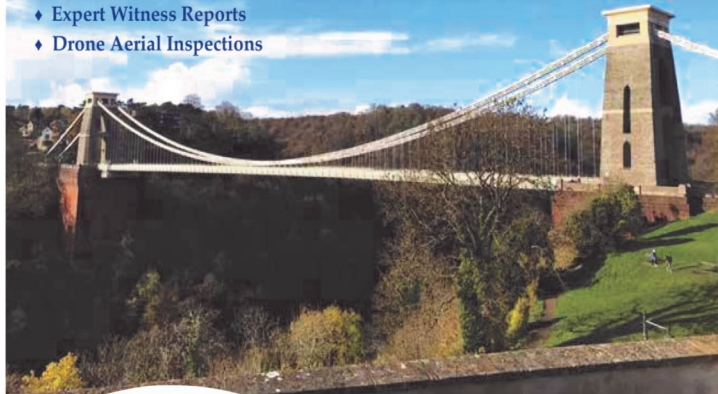
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Sea Mills Garden Club

We are a small, friendly club meeting each month to enjoy an interesting talk on subjects ranging from Hedgehogs to Hedgerows, local gardens to exotic locations, from a variety of speakers who sometimes bring plants for sale; all followed by a cup of tea and time for a chat. We hold a Christmas Party and each summer we have an evening outing and an all-day coach trip.

We meet at 7.30 on the 2nd Thursday of the month at Sea Mills Methodist Rooms, Sea Mills Square. New members always welcome or come as a visitor at £5 per meeting.

Forthcoming Meetings:-

14 March: Vanessa Berridge: The NGS

11 April: Ray Barnett: Insects in the Changing World

9 May: Nikki Jones: Saving Water to Save the Trym

Contact Pat on 07779 203626
or Gail on 0117 9685350
Facebook @SeaMillsGardeningClub



BRISTOL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

invite you to a concert at St Mary's

Saturday 23rd MARCH @ 7.30

£15 on the door, £12 in advance

Dag Wiren - Serenade

John Ireland - Downland Suite

Marcello - Oboe Concerto



If you would like to contribute to the production costs of *The Messenger*, or to the work of St Mary's, please use this QR code.

We are grateful for all donations.

Community Diary Spring 2024

Friends of Old Sneed Park Nature Reserve

Saturdays 16 Mar, 13 April, 11 May 10 am-noon

Working parties: Glenavon Park entrance.

Please register in advance and bring gloves, secateurs, loppers etc. No experience needed. Hot drinks and biscuits provided.

www.oldsneedparknaturereserve.org

To join the Friends, register for a working party or contact a committee member: fospnr@gmail.com

Stoke Bishop and Sneyd Park Local History Group

Fri 22 March: The Women Who Built Bristol by Jane Duffus.

Fri 17 May: Kings Weston Garden City by David Martyn

All talks in Village Hall at 7.30 pm.

Visitors welcome £3. Membership £6 pa.

Please email sblocalhistory@gmail.com,

or phone 0117 9686010 for news and membership.

University Botanic Garden

Open every day: 10 am-4.30 pm Adults £9

Fri 29 Mar-Mon 1 April Easter Sculpture Festival

(Friends, children, students, staff, alumni free).

Wed is DAISY day (donate as it suits you).

Chandos Road Deli refreshments 11 am-4 pm

See website for up-to-date information

www.bristol.ac.uk/botanic-garden

Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project

Weekly on Mondays 19 Feb-25 Mar, 10 - 11.45 am

'Little Kids on the Downs' pre-school nature club.

£30 for 6 sessions

Fri 12 April, 10 am - 12 : 'What Floats Your Goat'

Holiday Fun for ages 6-10 with adult. £10 per child

Varied programme of events and courses.

For full details and booking arrangements visit

<https://avongorge.org.uk/whatson>

phone 0117 903 0609 or

email avongorgewildlife@bzsociety.org.uk

Stoke Bishop and Sea Mills Ward Forum

Fri 8 March: 7 pm-9 pm

at Sea Mills Methodist Church, Sea Mill Square

To join the mailing list, email

stokebishopforum@aol.com

Cubbaccinos

1st Saturday of month 10 am - 12.30 pm

Coffee, cakes, books etc in aid of the Scout Hut.
Kewstoke Road

Stoke Bishop Townswomen's Guild

1st Thursday of each month 2.15 pm

Hulbert Room, St Mary's Church Rooms

Friendly tea, chat and social outings

For details, contact Sheila 914 7159

or Angela 968 6473

Make Fun Easter Cards

With Sarah Harris



We used 160gm A4 card for the chick and frog with a slightly heavier card for the outside.

To make the chick, Lucia folded the inner card in half and made a 3cm cut about half-way along the fold. Then she folded back the edges to form triangles and squashed them flat. See diagram 1. Very gently she unfolded the card and turned it over, poking the beak through to the other side.

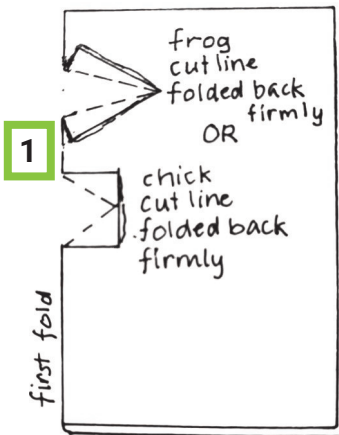
She drew the chick onto the inner card around the beak, then traced the drawing

onto yellow felt, cut it out and stuck it onto the card. Then she added Easter eggs from coloured foil.

Once the inside was complete, she stuck the outside card onto the back of it.

Tristan made his **surprise frog** the same way, but made a 5cm cut for a wide frog's mouth. He squashed his triangles flat, (fig 1) turned it over and gently poked the mouth through squeezing along the central crease to make it point forward.

He drew his frog around its mouth and painted it. Finally, he stuck on the outer card, and decorated the front with a water-lily cut from a catalogue.



A traditional Easter card with the flowers in the basket cut from magazines.

Or draw and colour your own and cut them out.

We used A5 card next, one piece for the outside of the card and one for the inner lining with its **basket of flowers**.

We folded the card in half first, and then folded the diagonals starting 1cm from the corner and ending on the mid-line but 1/2 cm up from the bottom as in diagram 2.

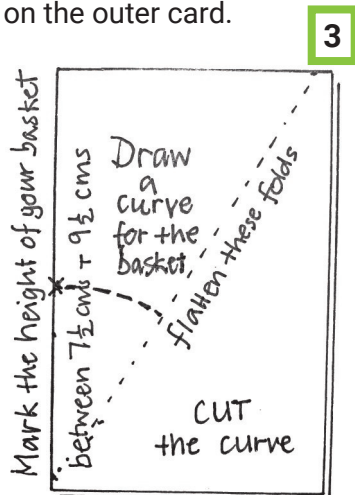
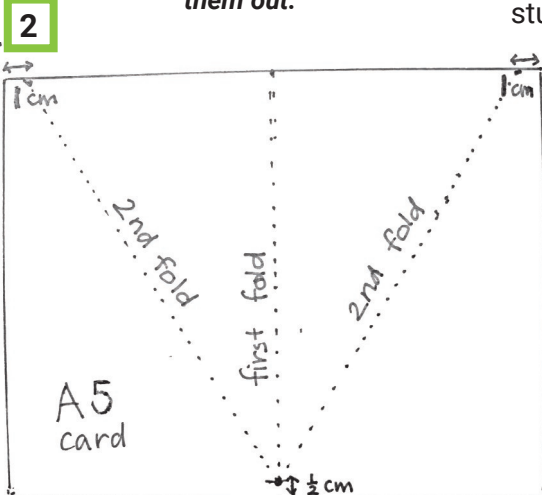
Next we folded the card back in half and cut a curve for the top of our basket, as in diagram 3.

Then we pushed the basket carefully forwards as we opened up, added flowers and finally stuck on the outer card.



We also used pictures from old greeting cards (above) and Easter egg wrappers to decorate little cardboard eggs (below).

Be creative and have fun!



Mothering Sunday

From Heather Jackson's family memoir

My earliest childhood memories centre around flowers. I do not know whether it was on just one occasion or over several years but I have a very vivid memory of going with my sisters, Ce and Monica, to a field next to the woods in the Dingle. We picked primroses and violets, made them into posies and took them back to our mother as a gift for Mothering Sunday.

This was the custom that had been followed by generations of children. No extravagant bouquets and presents, but simple, beautiful spring flowers picked from the fields and hedgerows. Later I was to learn – and teach in Sunday School – that this particular day in the church year was the day when young people who were “in service” and living away from home were given the day off to go home to see their families, and in particular their mothers, for the first time since the autumn quarter day of Michaelmas. They would gather a posy of spring flowers from the hedgerows on the way to give to their mothers.

It was a special family day and mother would have a meal prepared, the crowning glory being the simnel cake. A delicious fruit cake cooked with a layer of marzipan in the centre and decorated with it also on the top. I do not remember simnel cake before the war but I do recall having Mothering Sunday buns – possibly a local tradition – perhaps from Gloucestershire. They were yeast buns, soft and sticky with crystals of multi-coloured sugar all over the top.

This must be a pre-war memory as I am sure they would not have been available in wartime and I do not recall them when I was in my teenage years. Gradually after the war simnel cake became the speciality for Mothering Sunday: an old tradition revived. The war disrupted so many areas of life, so it is possible that for a few years Mothering Sunday was hardly kept. My diary of 1947 makes no mention of it.

Sometime in the late 1940s Stoke Bishop church started to make the occasion more special by having a family service centred on thanksgiving for mothers. It developed a lovely tradition of all the mothers in the church being given a small posy of flowers. My mother and I were very involved in the preparation for the service. We were by then both Sunday School teachers. The teachers would meet at St Mary's on the Saturday afternoon prior to Mothering Sunday. A church member – possibly my father – would have been to Bristol flower market early in the morning and bought trays of spring flowers: primroses, violets or daffodils, depending on the state of the season.

We spent the afternoon bunching them up into little posies, putting them attractively back into the trays which we then covered with damp paper and put in a cool vestry until the next day. It was always a delightful service and sometimes quite emotional. Children of all ages – tiny ones led by older ones – all



moving up the aisle of the church to collect a posy, and then taking them back to their mothers. Some would be shy, some smiling happily. Some almost running back clutching their flowers, such a happy commotion, some mums being quite overcome by the whole scene.

Mothering Sunday, the 4th Sunday in Lent, falls on 10 March this year. St Mary's still keeps to the tradition of handing out posies of spring flowers at the morning service. Why not join us?

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The Matthew Of Bristol

By Clive Burlton

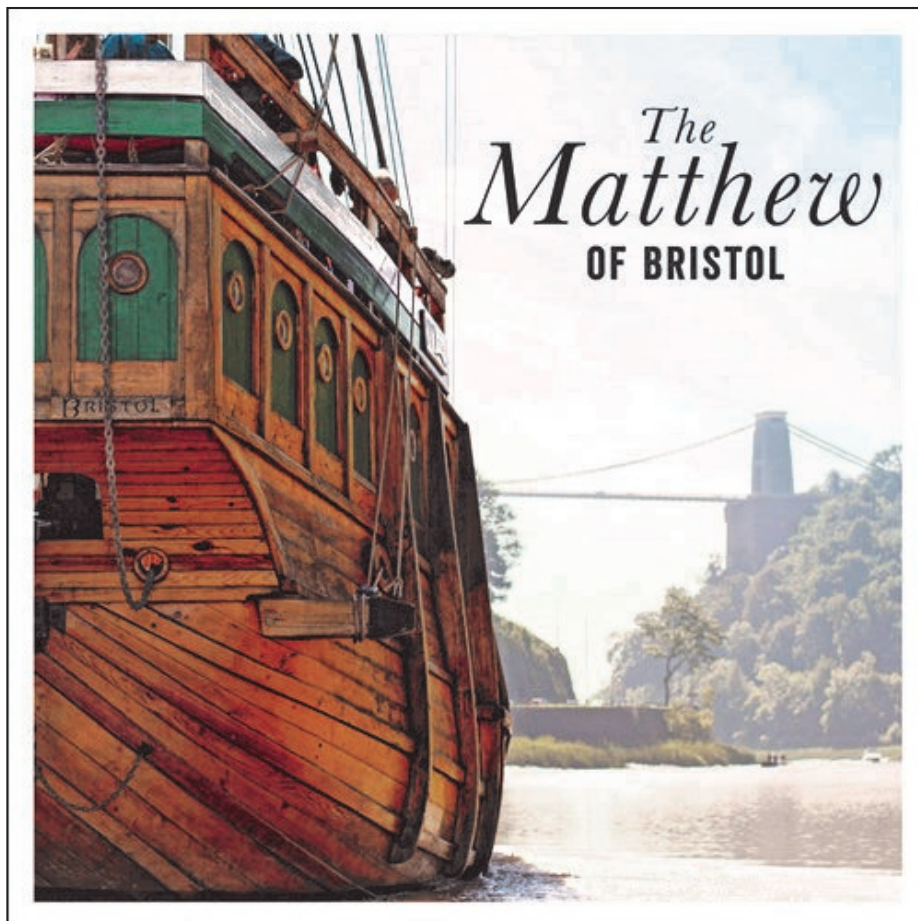
Reviewed by Peter Weeks

Along with the Suspension Bridge and the SS Great Britain, the modern Matthew is an unmistakable icon of Bristol. Built to commemorate the 500th anniversary of John Cabot's voyage to North America in 1497, she can be seen in the Harbour or, if you are lucky, you might catch her sailing on the River Avon. A local historian Clive Burlton tells her story in his book "The Matthew of Bristol".

Who was John Cabot? Born in Genoa and after a colourful career in Venice and Spain, Cabot arrived in England in 1495 and quickly persuaded King Henry VII to support a voyage to establish a new route to the Orient. This expedition would leave from Bristol which stood to benefit from any subsequent trade. His first voyage in 1496 was unsuccessful. But in his ship *Mathew* on June 24, 1497 Cabot landed, probably in Newfoundland, explored and returned to Bristol in August having found large shoals of cod and with a map of what is now the east coast of Canada. Further transatlantic voyages from Bristol followed, but by around 1510 it was clear that the continent of America blocked the way and Bristol lost interest in trade routes to the Orient. Another century would pass before an expedition from Bristol established the first colony in Newfoundland.

In the late 1980s ideas of a modern *Matthew* began to emerge in Bristol as a way to mark the anniversary of Cabot's great voyage of discovery. Such a ship, built in Bristol and sailed across the Atlantic, would be a superb focus for the 1997 celebrations being planned in Newfoundland and Labrador as well as an attraction for the city of Bristol. Clive Burlton's book describes how the City Council gave the project its initial impetus, how the Government of Canada lent support and how the money (initially around £3m) was raised.

Because no illustration of the original *Mathew* exists, the designer of the ship Colin Mudie had to use early models and pictures of 15th century ships to come up



with plans. The modern *Matthew* is a replica of a Portuguese caravel displacing about 50 tons, 60ft in length and with a beam of 20ft.

Starting in February 1994, the ship was built on Redcliffe Wharf in the shadow of St Mary Redcliffe Church and launched in September 1995 to great fanfare; a Lord Mayor's dinner, gun salutes and a ball in Queen Square. After fitting-out and sea trials, the *Matthew* left Cumberland Basin in May 1997 for her commemoration voyage that ended with a spectacular reception in Newfoundland, arriving exactly 500 years to the day after Cabot. She circumnavigated Newfoundland and visited ports in the United States before returning to Bristol the following year. Since then, she has explored the seas around Britain, attended dozens of maritime festivals, starred in film and television productions and become a much-loved attraction in Bristol and Canada.

Clive's book tells the story of the modern *Matthew* against the background of Cabot's voyage and weaves Bristol history into an inspiring tale of what it took to build and sail a unique ship. Readable and well-illustrated with maps and photographs, this is a book to savour.

*"The Matthew of Bristol" by Clive Burlton.
Published by Bristol Books. See cover above.*

The Case for Easter

By Lee Strobel

Reviewed by Llewelyn Lawton

Do you have doubts about the death and resurrection of Jesus? Is it true – can we believe? Disciple Thomas initially had doubts, but Jesus quashed them by meeting his demands for proof. Others have more recently had their doubts allayed. One such is Lee Strobel. If you don't have doubts, but would like to know more and to be able to give a better account of your faith, then read on.

Lee Strobel was an investigative journalist for the Chicago Tribune with a Master's from Yale's Law School; he was also an atheist, until his wife's sudden conversion to Christianity led him to examine the evidence...

The first chapter is a conversation with medical expert, Dr Alexander Metherell MD PhD (his PhD from Bristol University!) It is a gruesome yet compelling chapter, dealing with the medical evidence found in the Gospel accounts. The conversation touches upon the sweating blood, the flogging, the impact of crucifixion on a human body, and the piercing of Jesus' heart by the Centurion. This chapter is worth reading if you think it is possible that Jesus faked his own death. However, it is probably worth a miss if you struggle with vivid descriptions of violence and injuries!

In the second chapter, Strobel goes on to quiz leading apologist, Dr William Lane Craig PhD ThD, on the challenges of the empty tomb. In this chapter Craig compellingly answers doubts about:

- Whether Jesus really was buried in a tomb (rather than left for the animals).
- Whether Joseph of Arimathea, the owner of the tomb, really existed.
- Whether the tomb was secure and guarded.
- Whether the discrepancies between the empty tomb accounts found in the four gospels discredit the story.
- Whether the witnesses of the empty tomb could be relied upon.
- And other questions about the empty tomb!

This is a key chapter to answer any questions you may have about the tomb.

In chapter three, Strobel goes on to interview Dr Gary Habermas PhD DD, described by sceptic Dr Michael Martin as the creator of the "most sophisticated defence of the resurrection." This chapter is mostly concerned with addressing whether Jesus was really seen walking and talking after his death. Habermas outlines the reliability of the early eyewitness account found in Paul's letter to the Corinthians. He then addresses the reliability of the accounts of a post-resurrection Jesus found in the four Gospels and the



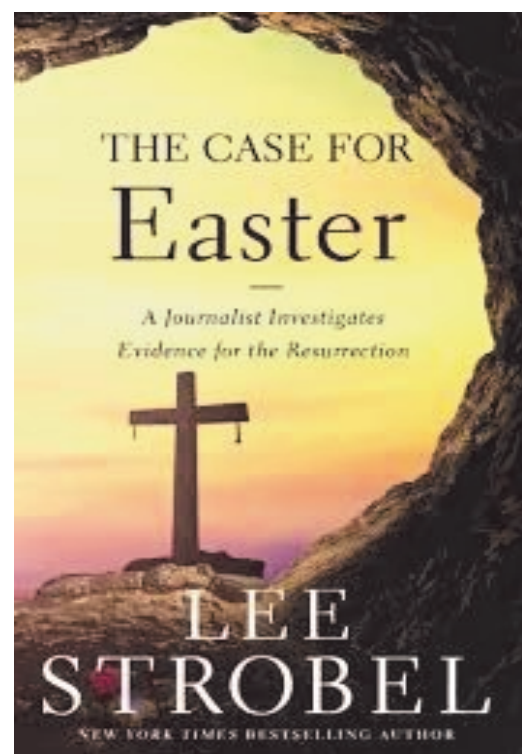
Caravaggio – Doubting Thomas

Book of Acts. He also answers the possibility that the appearances are simply legends rather than historical happenings and the theory that the appearances were hallucinations.

In Strobel's Conclusion he shares a final argument for the resurrection from Dr J.P. Moreland PhD based on the testimony and life of the Disciples.

Each chapter of the book opens with a link to his life as an investigative journalist. At the close of each chapter there are questions perfect for personal reflection or group discussion.

Extremely readable and only clocking in at ninety pages, the Case for Easter is the perfect book for you if you want to explore the evidence for the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Jesus in the run up for Easter. If you would rather sink your teeth into a longer more in-depth exploration, then Lee's other book 'The Case for Christ' would be a good choice. Another similar book that I would recommend in this season is 'Who moved the Stone' by Frank Morrison.





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Adapting to Climate Change

By Eileen Stonebridge

People are gradually beginning to realise that climate change is happening now. There is plenty of evidence that changes have already taken place. The Committee for Climate Change has said that we have not taken enough measures to deflect the climate from the trajectory upon which it is set. It is now more than 40 years since scientists predicted changes and time has shown that the modelling was correct.

Attitudes to the subject vary from those of the outright deniers, sceptics who grab at any bit of half-understood (on their part) science to argue that the earth's climate has changed before so we should not worry about it, to those who accept that it is happening, but see no reason to change lifestyles, to those who realise what is happening and want to help mitigate the effects. The subject is so vast that the scale and implications of climate change defy complete understanding, but it is likely that every aspect of our lives will be affected. Efforts to reduce carbon and methane emission must continue but adaptation is also necessary. Many organisations have produced documents as to ways in which this can take place.

The United Nations reminds us that the "fallout varies depending on where you live. It might mean fires or floods, droughts, hotter or cooler days or sea level rise." Here in England we can expect more storminess with its associated flooding, wider variation in temperature with hotter days in summer and spells of cold in winter. Coastal erosion and more landslips are two physical manifestations of storminess, sea levels rise and rainfall increases.

At the national level many countries, including our own have produced National Adaptation Plans. Our government has issued plans and published revisions, the most recent being in July 2023. In it, sections deal with the following: infrastructure, natural environment, health, communities and the built environment, business and industry and international dimensions. Above all there must be cooperation between nations, business organisations and individuals.

The UK government's vision for adaptations is for a country that plans effectively for, and is fully adapted to, the changing climate, with resilience against each of the identified climate risks. Space does not permit elaboration of the content, but the document is worth reading and is available on the internet. (HM Government *The Third National Adaptation Programme (NAP3) and the Fourth Strategy for Climate Adaptation Reporting*. July 2023.)

The plans are there but the critical point is implementation. The costs are enormous but will be greater if they are not carried out. Mitigation of



Before and after...

Adaptation to climate change in coastal areas may be achieved by creating wetlands.

The WWT site at Steart Marshes near Burnham-on-Sea.

Photo: Google Earth

climate change depends on international cooperation, but adaptation is much more dependent on action at home. The Climate Change Committee report published in June 2023 states "Policy development continues to be too slow and our confidence in the UK meeting its targets has decreased." The committee, which is an independent advisory body, makes 300 recommendations to the government on the actions which should be taken.

Individuals can play their part in helping to mitigate climate change and can act to adapt to it. Imperial College London, is one of the many bodies which provides a list of suggestions for individuals to follow:

- *The first is to make your voice heard. This does not mean protests which disrupt other people, but writing to your MP, councillors and any other organisation which has authority.*
- *Eat less meat and dairy*
- *Cut back on flying*
- *Leave the car at home*
- *Reduce your energy bills*
- *Respect and protect green spaces*
- *Bank and invest money responsibly*
- *Cut consumption and waste*
- *Talk about the changes you make.*

It's quite a demanding list but it will be our children and grandchildren who will benefit from the consequences of our actions.

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W-o-T Primary Care Ctr 962 3406

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(Blackboy Hill)

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(Stoke Lane)

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(Sea Mills Surgery, 2 Riverleaze)

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Darren Jones

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Helping Hand

is compiled by Paul Lewis-Smith.
If you have changes, additions or updates to suggest please contact him on 968 4221 or e-mail: plewissmith@blueyonder.co.uk

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Cover picture:
Scott Whitby-Smith on
National Cycle Route 4
taken by Keith Sheather

