

Thanks, Brown Owl, for 40 years

JACQUIE Godden turned up for her weekly Brownie meeting in Hanham expecting that she would be helping the girls do some painting.

But her pack, its other leaders and some parents had other ideas – they gave their Brown Owl (as she is better known) a surprise party to mark her 40 years of volunteering with Girl Guiding.

Jacquie was a Brownie, Guide and Ranger while she was growing up in Bedminster, completing her Gold Duke of Edinburgh award. She began helping out and running Brownie packs in south Bristol then after moving to Hanham she became Tawny Owl for a pack at Holy Trinity.

She moved to her current pack, 20th Kingswood Brownies, based at Christ Church, Hanham, in 2003, when it was at risk of closure because of a lack of volunteers. It remains popular, with 26 members aged seven to ten, and a long waiting list.

“The badges and programme of activities has changed over the years but the girls still enjoy it,” said Jacquie, whose daughter Stacey is the pack’s Snowy Owl.

“One of my former Brownies, who’s now in her thirties, has joined us as a helper. We are always looking for more volunteers in Girl Guiding.

One parent said: “Over the



decades, Jacquie has supported hundreds of young girls through their Brownie journey, giving her time to plan weekly meetings, organise events and day trips, and create experiences they will remember for life.

“Her dedication goes far beyond her own Brownie pack. Jacquie also runs the Girl Guiding shop, has served as a pack holiday advisor at county

level, and has played a major role in organising many large-scale Brownie events over the years. Her commitment has had a lasting impact on the wider community, and we feel this milestone deserves to be celebrated.”

Jacquie was presented with an award for her long service by the Kingswood South divisional commissioner.

It's a library, not a rubbish tip

The three volunteers who run Oldland Phone Box Library say it might have to close if people don't stop dumping old magazines, books and toys in the kiosk.



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Home installs lifesaving device

A care home in Oldland Common has installed a defibrillator that is available to the community 24/7.

PAGE 3

Flicks in Sticks is for the kids too!

A ten-year-old girl led a move for Bitton’s Flicks in the Sticks to hold family film shows.

PAGE 5

Club's goal is to encourage girls

Longwell Green FC is preparing for its second annual Her Game Too event promoting girls' football later this month.

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Hanham & Longwell Green Voice contacts

Publisher

Emma Cooper

0117 908 2121 / 07715 770448

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Editor

Linda Tanner

0777 0700579

news@hanhamandlongwellgreenvoice.co.uk



Advertising Sales

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A member of the



If it's News Email: news@hanhamandlongwellgreenvoice.co.uk

■ NEWS



Store plan approved

PLANS for a Sainsbury's Local store at the new estate at the Chief Trading Post have been given the go-ahead.

It had been hoped that a GP surgery and farm shop would be part of the development at Barry Road on the A4175 at Oldland Common.

Once it became clear funding was not available for the medical centre, the developers Oldland Common LLP explored

alternatives such as a dental surgery or nursery before putting in an application to South Glos Council for a 400 sq m convenience store.

Now council planners have approved the planned store and 17 parking spaces, with conditions.

More than 60 people objected to the plan, citing traffic concerns and fears for the impact on local shops.

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■ NEWS

Care home has a heart for the community

PEOPLE in Oldland Common have access to another potentially lifesaving defibrillator thanks to a local nursing home and the parish council.

Edgemont View has installed the device outside its main entrance following a frightening experience that made staff aware how limited and distant options were.

Importantly, the defibrillator is registered with national database The Circuit. The Voice last month highlighted that this is not the case with all devices locally.

Edgemont View's manager Suzie Sandor-Taylor said that during the medical emergency staff were told the nearest registered defibrillators were at Abbotanians Football Club, approximately a four-minute walk away, with another at Oldland Village Club. However, they discovered the latter was only available in the evenings when the club is open, as the device is stored inside.

"This experience made us realise how vital it is to have a defibrillator that's easily accessible at all times. In a



The team at Edgemont View with the community defibrillator

cardiac emergency, every second counts. We wanted to make sure that our residents, staff and the wider community have immediate access to life-saving equipment if ever needed," Suzie said.

The incident prompted Suzie and office manager Evie-Elizabeth Fream to research automated external defibrillator

(AED) AED coverage and successfully applied for a grant from Bitton Parish Council.

The community-accessible device at Edgemont View will not only safeguard the lives of the home's 20 residents, many of whom are older adults with higher health risks, but will also provide protection for staff, visitors, and the wider community.

The intention is to provide basic training to staff, volunteers, and interested community members in its use.

Suzie said: "Edgemont View would like to say a massive thank you to Bitton Parish Council for their generous funding, and to London Hearts for supplying the defibrillator and helping bring this project to life. The defibrillator is now fully operational and available for



A team from University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust has been teaching cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and how to use a defibrillator. Raising awareness could help prevent some of the annual 34,000 deaths from cardiac arrests outside hospital

Have a heart and save a life

THE Circuit is calling on residents to make sure they have a defibrillator in their home or workplace. Our defibrillators have already been installed in homes and businesses across the country. For example, at Gallagher Retail Park, Longwell Green, the service is available to the public and can be used 24 hours a day and are maintained by a team of volunteers. Report Page 1



December's Voice article

public use at any time. It has also been registered with the national database, The Circuit (British Heart Foundation), to ensure that emergency services can direct the public to its location when needed."

The home's director Cath McCarthy said: "We are incredibly proud of our staff for raising this issue and taking action. Their commitment to safety and care truly reflects the spirit of Edgemont View and the community we're part of."

Last month the Voice reported that even when defibrillators have been installed they are not always available around the clock.

For example, at Gallagher Retail Park, Longwell Green, the devices at Marks & Spencer, Screwfix, Wickes and B&Q can only be reached during shop hours. = A defibrillator in the foyer at Asda is not even registered with the service that informs the emergency services.

Our investigation followed an emergency in which a caller at Marsham Way was directed to a device at Aspects Leisure Centre on the other side of the ring road.

South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust, says it is "absolutely essential" that defibrillators are registered and "emergency ready".

More devices accessible 24 hours a day and are maintained and registered are needed.

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■ NEWS

'Stop dumping junk in phone box library' plea

SEVEN years ago, thanks to Bitton Parish Council sponsorship and 3 keen volunteers who transformed a dilapidated red phone box on Westcourt Drive, our 'Oldland Phone Box Library' was born.

On July 29, 2018 a local author, Susan Lewis cut the red ribbon, it was a great success and proved very popular with the community as a book swap. We kept a constant eye on the shelves making sure we had books in fairly good condition; that were mostly fiction with a few up-to-date non-fiction books, and a shelf of various children's books which proved very popular.

Sadly, early in 2019 we had a fire, but undeterred we replaced all the shelving and restocked the shelves with books kindly donated by the public. Susan Lewis cut the ribbon again, and the community were able to borrow and share books more.

The Phone Box Library came into its own during the Pandemic, and we were presented with an award in

2022 for services to the community..

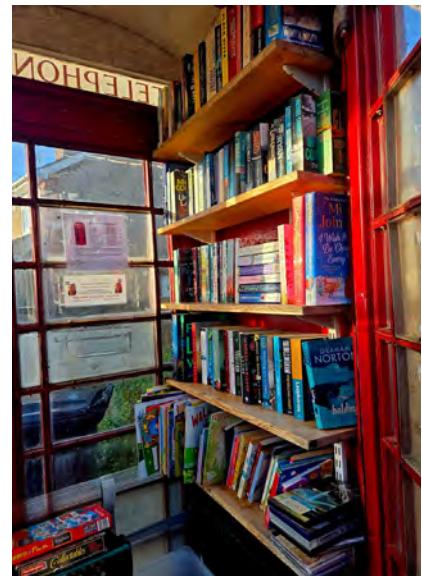
The Oldland Phone Box Library has lots of happy users and a constant supply of great book stock. Unfortunately, for the past six months or so, the phone box seems to be used as a fly tip: it is run by just the three of us who every week are having to clear the phone box floor of unsuitable books, games, broken toys and sometimes clothing etc. and using our own time and petrol to take these items to the tip.

The original idea was to borrow or take a book and replace it with a book, but sadly this is not always happening, despite posters on the door and on the inside, requesting that no items be placed on the floor as visitors need to be able to stand there in this very small space, and not to overfill the shelves.

As a result of this selfish behaviour by just a few people, we are sadly considering closing the Phone Box Library until further notice. If we do, posters will be displayed in the Phone



How the box should look, right, and, above, how it often looks



Box to explain why. All we ask is everyone takes responsibility:

- Only leave books if there's shelf space.
- Keep the bottom shelf for children's books so they can reach them easily.
- Place heavy hard back books below eye level so don't fall on someone's head and hurt them.

• Do not use us as a dumping ground- if your jigsaw puzzle is broken, your coat torn and unwanted or your pamphlets and books from the 60s,70s,80s,90s are out of date, recycle them or take to the tip.

Please **DO NOT** leave them in our book swap.

The phone box team

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■ NEWS

Kate takes action to bring family films to village

WHEN Kate Comley went along to the annual meeting of Bitton Village Residents Association with her mum Gemma, she was inspired by the range of activities but envious that they all seemed to be for grown-ups.

So the 10-year-old decided to do something



about it, organising a showing of the family film The Grinch for the regular Flicks in the Sticks session in the church hall.

Now she hopes the child-friendly movies will be a regular feature. Visitors to the Dr Seuss show before Christmas voted on three possible films and chose Matilda the Musical, which will be shown on January 9.

Kate, a Year 6 pupil at St Anne's CofE Primary, said: "I thought it would be good if there were things for me and my friends to do. I designed a poster for the family film night and gave a speech at the opening event."

Gemma added: "I am very proud of Kate. She was quite furious that the activities seemed to all be for older people so she decided to take action.

"We are grateful for the support she has received and would love to hear from any other people interested in developing more events for children and families."

The Grinch film night, left

Kate Comley, above right

A family film night poster, right



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■ NEWS

Report highlights 'bullying and discrimination'

A COUNCIL report has found lesbian, gay and transgender people in South Gloucestershire are facing the "worst discrimination in decades".

The 88-page study, led by the council and partner organisation the Diversity Trust, includes a total of 43 recommendations for improving the lives of LGBTQ+ people in the area.

Advocates hailed it as "potentially groundbreaking

and life-changing" for many marginalised people, both in the district and across the country.

The research report, called Living Proud in South Gloucestershire: Understanding and improving the lives of LGBTQ+ communities, was adopted by South Gloucestershire Council's cabinet in December.

Officers will now work on an action plan to implement the

findings, starting with convening a meeting with MPs, police, health chiefs and other groups.

The report said: "LGBTQ+ people report poorer mental health and anticipate or experience homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and heterosexism, with particularly strong links to feelings of stress, isolation, anxiety and depression.

"There is evidence of an increased rate of self-harm, suicide and suicidal thoughts.

"LGBTQ+ young people often face bullying and discrimination and report feeling under-represented in school environments, often feeling isolated and without anybody to seek support from.

"Hate crimes against LGBTQ+ individuals, which are rooted in homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia, cause lasting psychological harm and often contribute to social withdrawal.

"Despite their prevalence, many incidents go unreported due to fear of discrimination, lack of trust in police, and limited access to support, which leave patterns of hate and abuse unchallenged."

The report said the UK had fallen from first place to 22nd in a table ranking European countries' LGBTQ+ human rights over the last ten years.

Its recommendations include rapidly expanding tailored mental health services, including crisis intervention and community befriending schemes for older people.

It recommends safe, anonymous channels for employees in all workplaces to report bullying, discrimination and harassment, after finding one in eight trans had been "physically attacked by customers or colleagues in the last year".

Council co-leader and South Gloucestershire LGBT+ Equality Network chair Ian Boulton (Lab, Staple Hill & Mangotsfield) said: "We know national rhetoric has become increasingly negative and we're seeing the real world consequences locally through rising hate crime and worsening health and well-being.

"These outcomes have been documented for decades but what is encouraging is the strength and ambition of the recommendations within this work."

By Adam Postans, Local Democracy Reporting Service



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■ NEWS

Churches welcome their new vicar

THE three churches that make up the Benefice of Warmley, Syston and Bitton welcomed their new vicar, Ness Brunner-Ellis, at an installation ceremony by Neil Warwick, the acting Bishop of Bristol at St Barnabas Church in Warmley on November 25.

For Ness, it was something of a return to an area she sees as her spiritual home and a move from a previous role as a vicar in Oxfordshire.

Ness said: "Having studied in Bristol as a psychiatric nurse and worked here for the best part of 20 years (but always commuting from Wiltshire where I raised my children), it's wonderful to be living here finally and in an area I know well. I was ordained in Bristol in 2014, serving my curacy in Marshfield benefice and then ministering in Oxford Diocese for eight years. I'm thrilled to be back here, taking up the role of Vicar in Warmley, Syston and Bitton."

Ness brings many experiences to her work, not only from her time working in the NHS (where she specialised in eating disorders) but



also as a professional musician.

Arriving in the benefice just before Advent and Christmas, Ness has spent her first few weeks getting to know the churches and parishioners and looks forward to journeying with them in the years to come.

Christingle date

A BRIGHT orange awaits you if you come to the Christingle Service at St Mary's Church in Bitton on Sunday January 11 at 10.30am.

The Christingle Service raises money for the Children's Society and is a celebration of the light and love of Christ in the gloom of January. The idea of Christingles came from the Moravian Church in Germany, when in 1747, the minister gave children at the service a lighted candle with a red ribbon around it.



Today, Christingles are oranges wrapped in red tape, decorated with dried fruit or sweets, with a candle on the top. Each element of the Christingle has a meaning. During the service, each person takes a Christingle, and the candles are lit, creating a warm glow that symbolises the light of Christ.

You can eat the sweets afterwards!

All are welcome and all St Mary's services are open to all. All proceeds to the Children's Society.

Support for charities

KEYNSHAM Town walking football club raised £815 for Keynsham Dial-a-Ride and South West Air Ambulance at its Christmas lunch. The latter organisation helped save a member's life last year.

One of the largest such clubs in the area with over 150 members, it has raised about £40,000 for local and national charities over the years. It has eight teams playing in three local leagues, where it is regularly successful in bringing home some trophies.

More importantly, it has a very active social side and even those who are unable to play join us for a chat about football and a coffee.

It runs Turn Up and Play sessions regularly at the AJN Stadium, the home of Keynsham Town FC, on Tuesdays and Fridays (see <https://keynshamtownfc.co.uk/walking-football-home/>) but it needs players to join in its Thursday evening over-50s sessions. These run from 7.30 to 8.30 pm. vAnyone interested in playing in these should contact Alan Williams on 07771 603965.

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NEWS

Gianina Turner joins a team effort to bring joy to 2,000 homes

OPERATION Community Hamper (OCH) transformed a building at UWE Bristol into a hive of festive activity for their busiest time of the year: Hamper Weekend. Between December 12 and 15, more than 2,000 hampers were lovingly packed and prepared, each one brimming with donations from local people, businesses, and charity events.

Charlotte Churchill, the charity's founder, said: "They say Christmas is a time for giving, and the OCH hamper weekend embodies that perfectly. It's wonderful to see so many people and businesses giving up their time, pulling together, and supporting us over the course of four days. All to spread a bit of Christmas cheer to those who need it most. It never fails to amaze us how the community comes together and proves that the Christmas spirit is alive and well."



The Voice was invited to step behind the scenes and lend a hand. What we found was more than just an operation. It was a celebration of community: volunteers of all ages worked side by side over the weekend, ensuring every family that had been referred would receive a hamper.

Joyful Christmas tunes filled the rooms as hampers began their journey:

- Step 1: An empty box, carefully labelled with a number.
- Step 2: Stations where treats and essentials were added.
- Step 3: A quality check, ticking off every item.
- Step 4: Wrapping, sealing, and finally joining the growing mountain of finished hampers awaiting delivery.

Each hamper was designed to be a 'hug in a box' containing everything a family could need to make Christmas special. Seasonal favourites like chocolates, mince pies, biscuits, and crisps sit alongside crackers, tea, hot chocolate, and even a blanket for cosy winter evenings.

At the heart of the Operation was Charlotte Churchill, overseeing every detail with warmth and encouragement. She checked lists, guided volunteers, and reminded everyone why their efforts mattered.

Charlotte said: "Beneath all of it—every box, every list, every

late night—lies the reason we do this. To give people hope. To say 'we care about you'."

Hamper Weekend was more than just hampers. Volunteers also prepared and organised for delivery gift bags, each carefully labelled (e.g. 'girl age 6', 'boy age 3', 'Mum') to ensure no one was forgotten. Despite the sheer scale of the task, the atmosphere remained calm, cheerful, and full of goodwill. Seasonal decorations and a joyful playlist kept spirits high as stacks of empty boxes slowly transformed into gifts of kindness.

The stats from their efforts were:

- Number of hampers: 1,280
- Number of gift bags: 1,100
- Number of people helped: Adults 4,000+ and children 2,540

To learn more about OCH or get involved, visit: <https://www.operationcommunityhamper.co.uk/>

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■ NEWS

Choir boosts charities

UNITY Community Choir held two sellout concerts at Unity Oldland Methodist Church in November in aid of charity.

The choir has raised £2,300 for good causes over the past three years.

The November events raised £1810, which was shared equally between Children's Hospice South West and Paul's Place.

A representative from Children's Hospice South West visited the choir rehearsal in December to thank members for their efforts.



Black Sheep Harmony
Harmony singing in Hanham Community Centre at their Christmas concert 'Deck the Halls with Harmony'
Photo: Martin Farrell

We're Black Sheep Harmony - flock to join us!

FOLLOWING an exciting year of sing-outs and competitions in 2025 culminating in a well attended fun Christmas concert in Hanham Community Centre, local a cappella singing group Black Sheep Harmony are reprising their "Sing-Appella!" workshop with the opportunity to learn to sing a song in a day. Each year we choose a different song in four part harmony to pass on to interested local women. Our MD Pete Nugent has lots of hints and tips to improve the voice, including his famous five part basics of singing: 1. Posture & Breathing, 2. Vocal mechanics, 3. Creating resonance, 4. Using vowels and consonants, and number 5. - well, you'll just have to attend to find out! We'll learn the song in sections and finish off by performing the song to an invited audience of your friends and family (if you wish).

The workshop takes place at Hanham Community Centre on Saturday January 31 from 9.30am to 4pm. Booking is required so visit our website www.blacksheepharmacy.com and reserve your place today, just £10.

Singing is good for you in lots of simple, powerful ways - physically, mentally, and emotionally and January is a great time to take up this brilliant hobby. Come along and enjoy the company of a great band of women for the day (and beyond, if you like us), and cake!

Kathy Farrell

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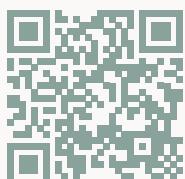
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■ NEWS

Girls – football is your game too!

LONGWELL Green Sports are preparing for their second annual Her Game Too weekend this month.

Building on the success of last year, the event on January 24 and 25 promises to be even bigger and better as the club continues to promote fairness and equality for females in football. The lineup includes more matches, junior teams, and the addition of the club's women's walking football team.

Lucy Ford, head of grassroots sport at Her Game Too, said: "We aspire to work with clubs at all levels that champion gender inclusivity and provide opportunities for women and girls to play football across all age groups. We are proud that Longwell Green FC is one of our 300+

grassroots partner clubs. We look forward to welcoming you all to Longwell Green FC at the end of January."

The Her Game Too initiative is all about challenging stereotypes and creating a welcoming environment for women and girls in football. Longwell Green Sports is committed to making this weekend a highlight for players, supporters, and the local community.

Organisers are inviting people to come along to the event and show support. For more details and updates, visit Longwell Green Sports Football Club's website: <http://www.longwellgreensportsfc.co.uk>. For details about Her Game Too visit: <https://www.hergametoo.co.uk>



Girls enjoying the inaugural Longwell Green Her Game Too event in 2025

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WHAT'S ON

REGULAR EVENTS

MONDAY

LONGWELL GREEN ART CLUB, no tutors. Would you like to do your own thing in the company of a small, friendly group that meet Mondays 9.30 to 12.30, arrive and leave as you please. URC Wesley room. Contact Jackie on 01179600273 or email colown@blueyonder.co.uk

YOGA CLASSES AT HANHAM COMMUNITY CENTRE

- Monday evenings 7-8 pm. To book your place or for further information please email yogashula@hotmail.com or Text/ Tel 0794933548.

TUESDAY

LIP READING CLASS, 1.30-3pm at North Common Village Hall, Millers Drive, BS30 8YH. Contact Mary Hall 07790 283939, lipreadingmary@yahoo.com

TUESDAY CLUB a social group meet every Tuesday 1.45-3.45pm at Longwell Green Community Centre

EXERCISE AND FRIENDSHIP GROUP at The Community Project in Cadbury Heath (BS30 8EL) every Tuesday, 11:00 – 12:30. Join our over 65s. Improve strength, balance, and more in a fun, inclusive environment. Just £5/session includes tea/coffee and chat. Don't miss out on boosting your well-being! For more information contact Adam - 07875503586

HANHAM TENNIS CLUB

Adult Play - Tuesday & Thursday evenings and Sunday afternoons. Monday, Wednesday & Friday mornings, 9.30am - 11 am. . Beginners' session coaching - Wednesday 7-8pm. Junior coaching - most early evenings. New players welcome. Fully qualified LTA coaching. See website for details www.hanhamtennisclub.co.uk

LONGWELL GREEN LADIES GROUP

meet at 2pm on the first and third Tuesday of each month at the United Church, Bath Road, Longwell Green BS30 9DU (opp. Aldi). Please phone Maureen on 0117 9322341

LONGWELL GREEN SHORT MAT BOWLS CLUB, We meet Wednesday and Fridays 1.30 to 3.30 at the Longwell Green community centre , Shellards road, in the California suite. All equipment provided. Beginners very welcome. We are a friendly group who need additional members. Email. Michael8bence@

gmail.com. Tel 07800869837

WELSH CONVERSATION GROUP

The Old Manor House, Keynsham 7pm-830pm 3rd Tuesday of the month 15th July (Aug holidays) Free. Organiser Catherine Dhanjal Call Catherine on 07941669925 or follow <https://www.facebook.com/CymraegBrysteCaerfaddon>

OVER 30s DANCE PARTY at the superb BAWA Club, Filton

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WEDNESDAY

BARRS COURT PROBUS CLUB

Retired and semi-retired Professional and Businessmen: Meet 2nd and 4th Wednesdays 10-12 at Longwell Green Community Centre. Please contact our Membership Secretary, Mick Funnell: 0117 932 4104 or email bcprobusclub@gmail.com to arrange a visit. Website: <http://barrscourtprobus.org/>

BARRS COURT LADIES CLUB:

Wives and partners of the Probus club members meet 10-12 on the second Wednesday of each month at the United Church, Bath Road, Longwell Green. Website: <http://barrscourtprobus.org/>

FILTON COMMUNITY BRASS BAND:

We are a community brass band with a huge emphasis on being friendly and playing at community fetes and a few concerts. We practise on Wednesday evenings in Kingswood and would love to encourage developing players and those who may not have played for a few years to join us. To find out more, find us on Facebook or email filtoncommunitybrass@gmail.com

ZEST CHOIR is an inclusive happy singing group for all adults who love to sing - even if you think you can't or might be Tone Deaf! We meet Term Time Wednesdays at Longwell Green Community Centre from 10.15am-11.45am and from 7-8.30pm. Contact Mary on 07954 170532 www.zestchoirs.com.

LONGWELL GREEN PROBUS CLUB meets at Warmley Community Centre on the first and third Wednesday of each month.. New members welcome- for details contact Mike on

07817094147

HANHAM BRIDGE CLUB

Every Weds 7-10pm at Hanham Community Centre, new members welcome. See www.hanhambridgeclub.co.uk or call Graham 07790 491564.

HANHAM AND KINGSWOOD PHOTO CLUB.

A friendly club welcoming photographers of all abilities to share our hobby. Meeting 7.15pm for a 7.30pm start on most Wednesdays, St Barnabas Church Hall, Warmley, BS30 5JJ. See the website for where meetings will be held (some on Zoom & some evenings out). For details visit [https://www.handkphoto.club](http://www.handkphoto.club) or contact Geoff Mallin at email address, geoffmemsechps@gmail.com

RWP BADMINTON CLUB

play at Hanham Woods Academy 6.30-7.30 social club, 7.30-9.30 league club. Visitors welcome, please look at the website for more details

LIP READING CLASS, 10am-noon, Warmley Community Centre. Termtime only. Contact Mary Hall 07790 283939, lipreadingmary@yahoo.com

FRENCH CONVERSATION GROUP

The Old Manor House Hotel, Keynsham 7pm-830pm 4th Wednesday of the month 23 July (Aug hols) Free. Organisers Steve James & Catherine Dhanjal Call Catherine on 0794 1669925 or join L'Amicale Francaise de Keynsham [https://www.facebook.com/groups/429989176573347/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/429989176573347/)

OLDLAND VILLAGE CLUB

Wednesday Weekly Bingo. Books on sale 7:15pm with Eyes Down 8pm. Open to Members and Non-Members. Over 18s only.

OLDLAND VILLAGE CLUB

Monthly Coffee Morning take place every 3rd Wednesday of the month, 10:30am start; open to all, cake donations for the table greatly appreciated.

THURSDAY

AVON SCALE MODEL SOCIETY

We are a small friendly club, all subjects are included, aircraft, cars, armoured vehicles, fantasy, etc we meet on the 3rd Thursday of the month, at St. Anne's Hall, Barry Road, Oldland Common. at 8pm. Please contact Ian on 0117 9603435

BLACK SHEEP HARMONY

We welcome new singers to any of our weekly rehearsals, to join in or just to listen. 7:30pm on Thursdays in Hanham Community Centre. Contact Noey: 07899 088180

or check out our website www.blacksheepsharmony.com

Join our SEATED FITNESS CLASS

at Longwell Green Community Centre, perfect for beginners, older adults and anyone needing gentle, low-impact exercise. Thursday 9:15-9:45am, first class free. Contact Sarah today to book your free trial class. on 07975 943589 or sarah@realfitnesswithsarah.com

WALKING FOOTBALL FOR AGE 50 PLUS

19.15-20.30 Keynsham Town Walking Football for age 50 plus. Play football at a slower pace for fun and fitness. New members welcome contact keynshamtownwf@gmail.com for details

WALKING NETBALL Broadlands School, Keynsham, 7pm -8pm £5 per session, ex players or new to netball welcome, for more info email lindab2023@gmail.com

'STAND UP REACH OUT' A social group meet every Thursday 2-4pm at Longwell Green Community Centre for different activities.

FRIDAY

LONGWELL GREEN WI meet on the third Friday of the month at 7.30pm at Longwell Green Community Centre. New members are always welcome. Email longwellwi@gmail.com or tel. 0117 9864782.

TAI CHI FOR PARKINSON'S:

Weekly beginners Tai Chi & Qi Gong class for people with Parkinson's disease, their families and carers. Lincombe Barn, Downend. BS16 2RW. Fridays (term times) 10.15 – 12.15 including tea / coffee break. Contact: Claire - Claire@Taichibodyandmind.co.uk (07769 857672) or Sarah - buqjworks@gmail.com (07815 662844)

LONGWELL GREEN COMMUNITY CENTRE QUIZ NIGHT

meets normally first Friday of each month at 8 pm. Bar available. For details please contact Marian.r.summerill@gmail.com, or ring 07503 989880.

CROFT END SILVER BAND

Hanham Tabernacle, Tabernacle Road, practice 7.15pm - 8.45pm. Players needed on all sections , all ages welcome and training given. We are a happy Band with a good atmosphere. More details contact Rob (Chairman) on 07788 473404

■ PHARMACY COLUMN

Want a healthier body and mind in 2026? Your pharmacy can help you

DID you know that around 30% of UK adults are living with obesity or excess weight? It's a challenge many people face, and it's certainly not for lack of trying. Weight loss can be tough, and everyone's journey is different, often times lonely and disappointing.

At Ellacombe Pharmacy, we're here to make that journey a little easier for you in 2026. We offer affordable, innovative weight-management therapies that have helped many people achieve safe, steady, and meaningful results—with the right guidance and support.

We understand how difficult it can be to make and maintain healthy changes. Small steps, like adjusting what you eat or drink, can really help—but building habits that last takes

time and support.

Treatments such as Mounjaro and Wegovy have given many people in the UK a real boost in their weight-loss efforts. These medicines work with your body's natural appetite signals to help reduce hunger and cravings, and many patients experience significant weight loss when used correctly.

And remember—losing weight isn't just about how you look. It can also lower your risk of conditions like high blood pressure, heart disease, and type 2 diabetes, helping you feel healthier and more confident overall.

Long-lasting success comes from the right support. Free tools like the NHS Weight

Loss Plan can help you build healthier habits over 12 weeks, and simple activities—such as adding a daily walk to your routine—can make a huge difference to your physical and mental wellbeing.

Getting up and choosing to make a change can be daunting but with the right advice and support, it pays off.

Our friendly team at Ellacombe Pharmacy offers a face-to-face weight-loss service based on NHS guidance. Your safety and wellbeing always come first, and we'll take the time to understand your goals and help you find the best options for you.

If you're ready to take the



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next step, why not book a free private consultation with us? We'll chat through your journey so far and explore whether these newer therapies could be suitable and safe for you.

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■ ANTIQUES

The rose that never fades

FROM the rostrum, I watch trends come and go like the tide. But there is one sight that greets me almost every week, a pattern so familiar it feels like a member of the staff: Royal Albert's famous Old Country Roses pattern porcelain. In fourteen years, I don't think we've held an auction that didn't include some!

Launched in 1962, it is *technically* a "mid-century" creation, yet it harks back to a Victorian style. Designed by Harold Holdcroft, who famously drew inspiration from an English garden in full bloom. It features distinct red and yellow roses on the fluted 'Montrose' shape, all finished with a 22-carat gold stipple trim.

It is a global phenomenon, and is widely cited as the best-selling dinnerware pattern in history, with over 150 million pieces sold, and it is still made today.

Tea and dinner services are certainly not as popular as they once were. Gone are the days of big family gatherings around the dinner table, and modern life doesn't favour saving something 'for best'. The art of the traditional English tea party is becoming a rare sight. Yet, Old Country Roses is the great survivor. It doesn't fetch the astronomical sums of fine antique porcelain, but there is always a bidder. Every lot we've ever had, has always found a new home. Someone always needs a replacement saucer, or is finally starting the collection they admired on their mother's dresser.

When I bring the gavel down on a lot of Royal Albert, I'm not just selling porcelain. I'm selling a slice of British identity, a memory of a Sunday afternoon, and a floral arrangement that never needs watering!

Andy Stowe, Auctioneum




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■ ADVERTORIAL

Celebrating John & Pauline

This March, John and Pauline - a married couple in their 70s - walked into Izzy's Slimming World group in Hanham with one shared goal: to improve their health and quality of life. In those early weeks, John wasn't always comfortable speaking up in a group setting, but as the weeks passed and the warm Hanham community wrapped around them, he gradually found his confidence. Now, he joins in just as much as everyone else—often with a smile, a story, or a word of encouragement.

Both were determined to make a change. John was undergoing tests for Parkinson's, and together they knew that losing weight and adopting healthier habits could make a meaningful difference. Week after week, they stayed committed. They became a huge part of the group, embracing the community feel that makes Izzy's sessions so special. Very quickly, they weren't just members—they were family.

Their efforts have truly paid off. Between them, John and Pauline have reached their personal targets, losing an incredible 5 stone. They've transformed their daily routines, tried new recipes,



and built habits that have given them more energy and confidence. Pauline proudly earned Woman of the Year, while John was named Man of the Year—titles that reflect not only their achievements on the scales but their positivity, humour, and determination.

One of the most touching milestones came when John shared that, thanks to his improved flexibility and fitness, he can now bend down to tie his own shoelaces again—something he hadn't been able to do for a long time. Although John has since been diagnosed with Parkinson's and his symptoms have changed dramatically, his strength, courage, and commitment continue to inspire everyone around him.

Group Consultant Izzy says it best: "I'm so proud of them both. We are like one big family, and everyone loves John and Pauline."

John and Pauline's journey reminds us all that it's never too late to take control of your health, lean on a supportive community, and celebrate every victory—big or small.



Hanham Community Centre.

118-124 High Street.

Hanham BS15 3EJ.

Saturday: 9.00am

Tel: Izzy 07824 365101

AEK Boco FC,

Greenbank Road,

Hanham BS15 3RZ

Thursday: 4.00pm & 5.30pm

Tel: Izzy 07824 365101

Longwell Green Community

Centre, Shellards Road

Longwell Green BS30 9DU

Monday: 6.00pm & 7.30pm

Tuesday: 9.30am

Tel: Karen 07889 408969

AEK Boco FC,

Greenbank Road,

Hanham BS15 3RZ

Thursday: 9.15am & 11.00am

Tel: Kate 07979 494964

North Common Village Hall,

16 Millers Dr, North Common

BS30 8XX

Tuesday: 6.00pm & 7.30pm

Tel: Emma 07773 689229

Email: sales@hanhamandlongwellgreenvoice.co.uk

■ LOCAL HISTORY

Stand up, sister suffragette!

Outside London, Bristol saw the highest amount of suffrage activity anywhere in the UK. JANE DUFFUS, author of The Women Who Built Bristol book series, takes a look at some of the suffrage activity that took place in the Hanham area

MORE than 100 years ago, people all over the UK were campaigning for votes for women. It would be 1918 before the first Representation of the People Act was passed, which granted the vote to some women provided they met certain criteria (ie being property owners, and being aged 30 or above). And it was 1928 before the second Act was passed, which removed the property restriction and granted the vote to all women aged 21 or above.

Stories of both peaceful suffrage and militant suffragette activity filled the newspapers and the topic of whether or not women



should be granted a vote was on everyone's lips. And Hanham was definitely not left out of that debate.

While a lot of the local suffrage activity took place in central Bristol, the women leading those campaigns didn't forget about the women living a little further outside the city. For instance, in May 1912 there were two meetings held at the Netham Chemical Works and the Waggon Works, both of which were aimed at recruiting the men who worked in those places to the cause.

Meanwhile meetings aimed at

women were held at Goulter Street Guild and at Moorfields close to Barton Hills, and a large open-air meeting was held at Hanham.

After those five events, all of which were organised by the peaceful National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS), more than 100 new supporters had signed up to show their support of votes for women. And they collectively signed a petition and wrote to their MP demanding change.

Buoyed by this new swell of suffrage supporters, Mrs Senington and Miss Kempthorne of the East Bristol NUWSS Committee opened a brand new shop at 1 Barrow Road, Lawrence Hill. They were selling pamphlets, jewellery, clothing and books, all in aid of the NUWSS, with money made going to help support the campaign locally. Mabel Tothill at the Barton Hill University Settlement had already made it clear that she supported the cause and had made the settlement's space available for public meetings and events.

The year after, in March 1913, Miss Priestman chaired a public meeting at the Women's Adult School in Hanham and, the following month, Mr WCH Cross -

who was a member of the men's division of the NUWSS - chaired a public meeting at the Hanham Adult School.

Miss Priestman was either Anna Maria or Mary Priestman of Clifton, who were both very active in the peaceful campaign for votes for women and had been so since the 1860s. Both sisters died in 1914, shortly after the outbreak of World War One and within five days of each other, but they had lived very full lives.

The Priestman family were originally from Newcastle but Anna Maria and Mary followed older sister Margaret to Bristol when she got married and moved here in 1855. The three sisters combined were a force to be reckoned with and were collectively involved with setting up some of the leading suffrage societies in Bristol, Bath and London.

In contemporary Hanham, we can see the echoes of the suffrage movement in the wide range of groups here now. From the community-led We are BS15 group to Women's Institute organisations at the Hanham Community Centre or in Longwell Green, the movement lives on. Indeed, the Women's Institute itself was formed in 1915 in response to women's suddenly changed roles as a result of World War One. In the 110 years since, Hanham and Longwell Green have seen no shortage of outstanding women emerge from their streets.

• *Voice readers can buy any of the books in The Women Who Built Bristol series with free postage, via Jane's website. Just visit www.janeduffus.com/shop and use the code 'Mary' for free P&P. The books can also be signed and dedicated.*

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■ NEWS FROM THE METRO MAYOR

Kids make the most of their freedom

HAPPY New Year! I hope you are having a restful festive period.

Over the school holidays, Kids Go Free is back on the West's buses.

This means under-16s can travel for nothing once again throughout Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset, and South Gloucestershire between December 20 and January 4.

No registration or bus pass is required - just hop on board.

This follows on from the success of our scheme over the summer, in partnership with local councils and bus operators.

More than 910,000 free journeys were taken by kids across our region, putting almost £1 million back into the pockets of families and opening up our region for more young people.

The summer scheme saw 32% more children travel by bus than did in summer 2024.

We saw more footfall at local visitor attractions and retail centres, and got new people onto our brand-new green buses, inspiring the passengers of the future.

Almost half of the people in our sample survey said Kids Go Free had helped them visit new places they had not been to before, which would have otherwise been too costly.

December brought more good news on transport in the West. We secured over £40

million for buses as we plan longer-term on how to invest in things like Kids Go Free in the future. This was another real vote of confidence in the West Country, as we continue working together on a bus network that works.

Since May, we've secured the best part of £1 billion for transport in our region – better buses, more trains, and mass transit plans – soon we will spell out our vision for how to get the West moving.

The end of the year also saw the West start to catch up with other regions.

Active Travel England now rates the West of England alongside Greater Manchester and the West Midlands for better walking, wheeling, and cycling routes. We all know that active travel is good for our health and our planet, so it makes sense to make sustainable choices easier for people.

Our upgraded rating comes with £12 million for us to add to the green cycle lanes in South Gloucestershire, safe crossings like the one opened by Ralph Allen School in Bath in October and work progressing to improve Victoria Street in Bristol, linking town to Temple Meads.

December also saw the publication of the child poverty action plan for the region I mentioned in last month's column, after a welcome national strategy and November's Budget decision to scrap the two-child benefit cap.



Metro Mayor Helen Godwin
writes for the Voice

The majority of children affected are in working households, and our area is expected to be more than £20 million better off as a result.

Lifting kids out of poverty is a key part of our new Growth Strategy, which aims to secure the investment needed to create 72,000 new jobs in the region.

Together, we've turned the page and are writing a new chapter for the West of England.

I'm optimistic for what 2026 can bring, and determined to make a difference local people can see and feel, including on child poverty, economic investment, and transport.

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PANTO SEASON

The New Year is upon us, and as every year we are now well into the pantomime season. This month we are featuring photographs illustrating scenes from pantomimes performed across our area in the 1980's.

The first photograph (above), from 1980, shows the cast of the Christmas Pantomime performed at Grange School for Girls in Tower Road North, Warmley.

The second photograph (below) features some

of the cast of the Panto performed at Hanham Folk Centre in 1988.

If you would like to share your memories of these events, please let Kingswood Heritage Museum know by email at kingswoodmuseum@gmail.com, or by phone on **0117 9605664**.

Kingswood Heritage Museum wishes a "Happy New Year" to all its visitors and supporters, and to all readers of the Voice.



End of the season

Kingswood Heritage Museum has closed for its annual winter break, and will reopen for the new season in April next year.

Whilst the Museum is closed volunteers will be working hard to prepare next year's exhibitions, which will include a photographic display illustrating the changes that have taken place at the Museum over its first thirty years.

Community events a festive success!

Kingswood Heritage Museum rounded off its 2025 season with two successful community events: the Windmill Winter Craft Fair and a festive Candle-Making Workshop.

The Craft Fair was a resounding success, attracting hundreds of visitors from across the area and beyond who enjoyed a lively mix of indoor and outdoor stalls, delicious treats from the Windmill Café,



fresh doughnuts, face painting and carol singing. Traders reported a warm, friendly atmosphere throughout the day, and the Museum was delighted by the generous support from local residents, some of whom are shown in the picture.

The Museum also hosted a festive Candle-Making Workshop led by Alyson Hurst, known as "The Bee Lady". Participants learned to roll and decorate beeswax candles while enjoying unlimited hot drinks and festive nibbles.

Funds raised at events are vital to the Museum's future, as it relies on grants, entry fees, and donations to continue preserving local heritage. A huge thank you to everyone who came along, supported the traders, and made these events so special!

Keep an eye on this page and the Museum's social media pages for updates and future events.

Volunteer with us

Kingswood Heritage Museum is run entirely by volunteers. Would you like to help us to conserve and display the history of our area, and to pass our knowledge on to future generations?

Whatever skills you can offer, Kingswood Heritage Museum would like to hear from you. If you would like to join our enthusiastic and friendly group of volunteers do get in touch by emailing us at kingswoodmuseum@gmail.com, or simply call us on **0117 9605664**. We would love to hear from you!

BITTON PARISH HISTORY GROUP

Oldland Common British School – Redfield Edge

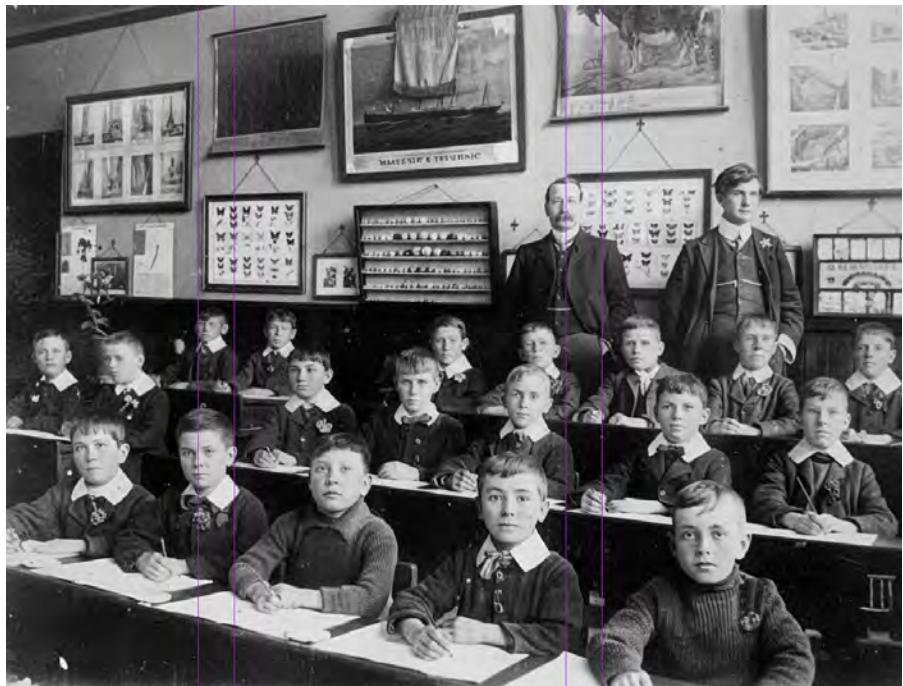
Extracted from an article by William Evans

REDFIELD Edge School, a well-loved and successful primary school, was founded in 1843 and started as a 'British School', which relied for its funding on the charity of two local industrialists Handel Coss sham and Robert Charleton.

Coss sham, the coal magnate who left money to fund the building of the hospital whose tower dominates the Kingswood skyline, engaged in several philanthropic activities came from a family who attended an independent chapel (later congregationalist, later United Reformed Church) in Thornbury. The schools Coss sham supported were British schools, for pupils from nonconformist families, disinclined to send their children to National Schools where they would be indoctrinated in the tenets of the Church of England. Coss sham is known to have been involved in several British schools: at Thornbury, Yate, Pucklechurch, Parkfield, Mangotsfield, Staple Hill and Oldland Common.

Whilst Coss sham's support for British schools will have been motivated primarily by religious considerations, he was selective in which schools he supported, tending to fund schools in the areas with mines. There were two mines close to the Oldland Common school: Bull Hall, which closed in 1881; and Hole Lane, which operated from 1820 to 1875.

The financing of British schools was simple but precarious. Income came from the fees – a few pence per week – paid by pupils' parents, from supporters' subscriptions and donations,



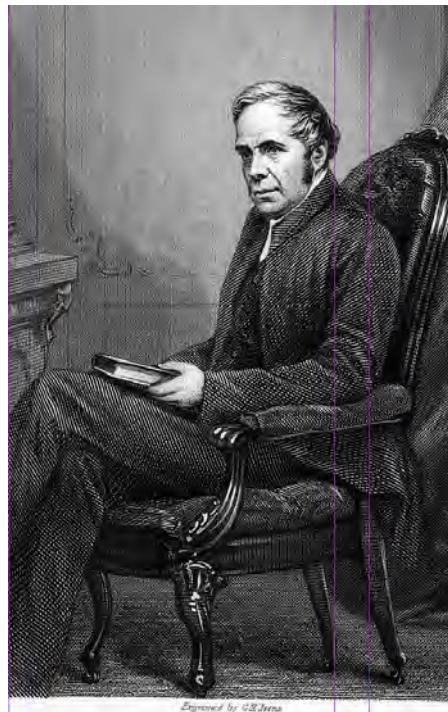
Oldland Common Council School, 1905

and from the occasional legacy. Expenditure went on the teacher's salary; heating, lighting, cleaning and maintaining the school building; interest on any debt incurred to erect the building; and consumables such as writing and teaching materials. Any deficit, which could vary from year to year, had to be made good by donations from subscribers or philanthropists. In the case of the Oldland Common school that philanthropist was Robert Charleton. Charleton was a Kingswood pin manufacturer. His factory in Two Mile Hill operated from 1831 to 1852. In 1841 he employed about 100 women and girls and 50 men and boys, and had about 500 outworkers, some of whom may well have been in Bitton and Oldland Common. A Quaker, Charleton supported British schools, particularly the ones at Redcross Street in Bristol, at Kingswood, and at Oldland Common. When Charleton died in 1872, those schools received bequests in his will.

After Charleton's death the school at Oldland Common continued until 1891, only one year after Coss sham's death. It is difficult not to guess that the Oldland Common school then became financially unviable. In 1895 the school was rebuilt at a cost of £3,000 and the average attendance was 106 boys, 83 girls and 130 infants; Frederik Pope, master and Rosena Wiltshire, mistress. By that time, board schools had been established under the Education Act 1870 (Forster's Act) to deliver elementary education in areas insufficiently served (e.g. by the Church of England's National schools), so if

the Oldland Common school was to survive it was essential for it to become a board school. Under the Education Act 1902 (the Balfour Act) school boards were abolished and their schools transferred to county and county borough councils.

So Oldland Common school became a county school maintained by Gloucestershire County Council, later by Avon County Council, and then by South Gloucestershire Council. It is now Redfield Edge Primary.



Engraving by C Jeens, published in 1876, in Memoir of Robert Charleton by his sister-in-law

Next meeting

29th January 7:00 for 7:30pm –
Sandi Cole

The Anarchy - a civil war in England and Normandy, which resulted in a widespread breakdown in law and order.

Teresa (Sandi) Cole is a well-respected author from Bitton, a teacher for many years before turning to writing and the author of many books on Medieval royalty, including Henry V, The Norman Conquest, After the Conquest, The Anarchy, Harry of England and Formidable Females of the Medieval World.

Venue: St Mary's Church Hall (not the church), Church Lane, Bitton, BS30 6LH

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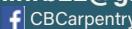
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