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Issue 31

Dusk in the gardens



HESTERCOMBE

Hestercombe Gardens announce their 'Summer Lates', allowing visitors to explore the gardens throughout the summer. Read more on page 3.



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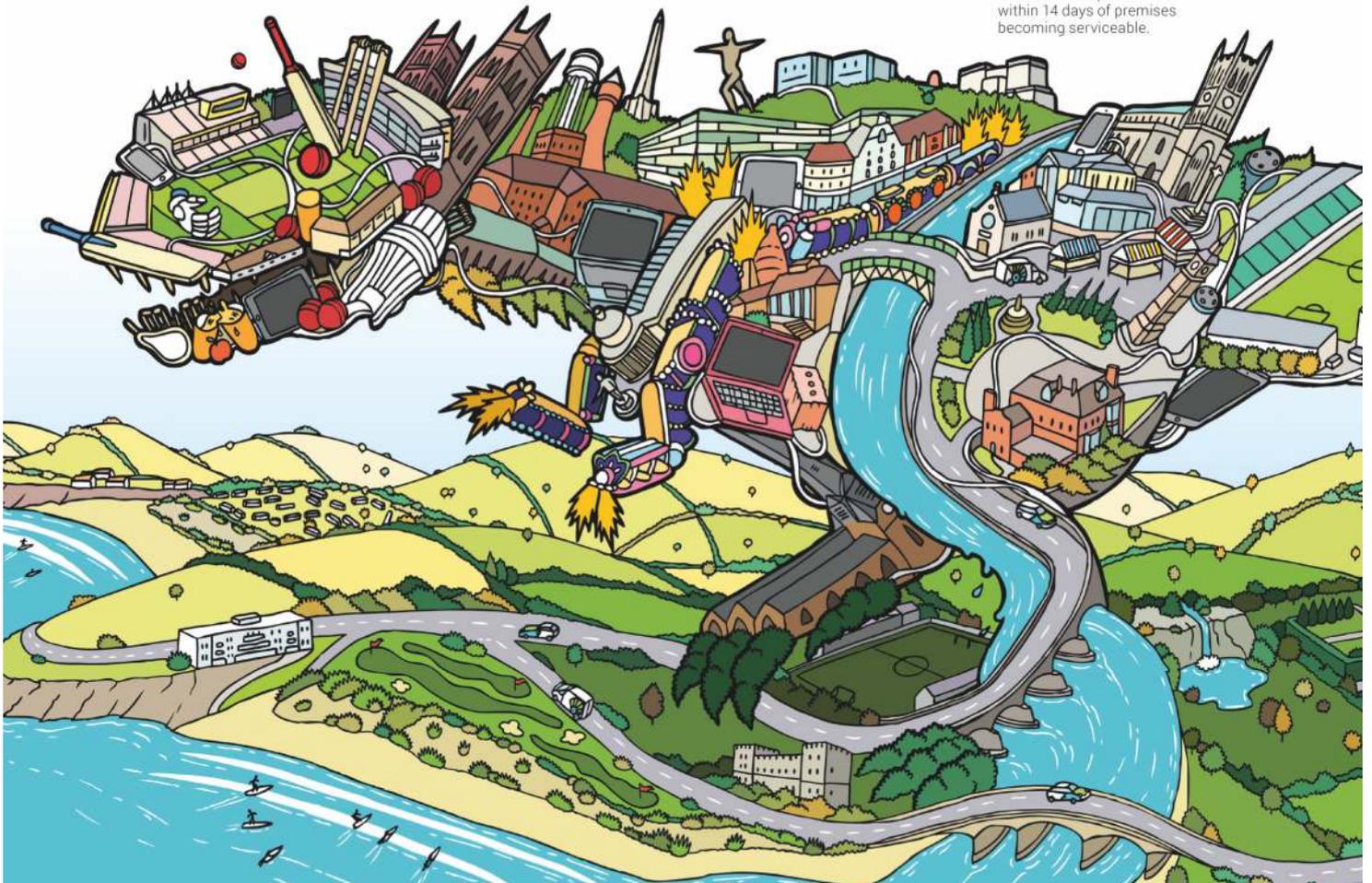


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By the time you settle down with a nice cup of tea to read this, we will be close to some kind of normality! Fingers crossed it stays that way as we head into the summer :) By the way, in case you are wondering, the good looking bloke in the photo is me and the ugly one is our sales chap - Brian Lee!

Happy reading...



Darren Daley
Editor

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Dusk in the gardens - come and see Hestercombe in a new light

Hestercombe Gardens will for the first time be opening its doors until 8pm every Wednesday throughout the summer. Their 'Summer Lates', which start on Wednesday 2nd June along with a traditional charcoal burn and BBQ, give visitors a chance to explore the 50 acres of stunning gardens late into the balmy summer evenings. Come and watch as Hestercombe's gardens are transformed by dusk and the secrets of the plant world come to life.

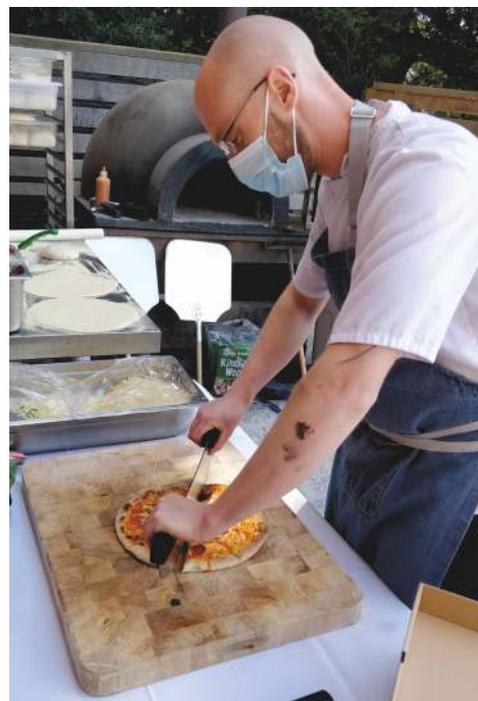
It's the perfect time to visit the gardens in full bloom and see them from a completely new perspective. With entertainment, food and drink and a brand new play area, it's an ideal time to visit after work and school.

Plus, on selected dates, Hestercombe's Edwardian punt will also be out on the Pear Pond for visitors to sail back in time.

Following a major refurbishment, the Stables Restaurant is now open daily for fresh, locally sourced food and drink, and the Carriage House café serves light bites, hot and cold drinks, homemade cakes and ice cream.

Summer Late openings at Hestercombe take place every Wednesday, from 2nd June until 29th September*, 5pm - 8pm, with half-price gardens admission. From as little as £3.46 a month, join as a Hestercombe member to enjoy free entry to all of the Summer Lates, family garden trails, and of course unlimited daily access to the beautiful gardens and exhibitions at Hestercombe Gallery.

For more information visit www.hestercombe.com or call 01823 413923. Don't forget to follow Hestercombe on social media for more updates!



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NEWS

Taunton dad takes on 'Coast to Coast' challenge for Deaf Academy



Sam and Robert.

Taunton dad, Robert Harris, knows all too well about the specialised education and support that Deaf children and young people need to thrive. Working abroad at the time, his son Sam was only three months old when he was diagnosed with meningitis, and Robert received a phone call that would change the families lives.

Robert tells Tone News: "I was working away at sea at the time and losing the phone signal I spent the hardest few days of my life, unable to fly home and not knowing whether my son was alive or dead. Thankfully Sam was a fighter and pulled through but when we got him home we realised that he didn't respond to sound."

Sam had survived meningitis but was diagnosed with being profoundly Deaf. He received cochlear implants in both ears in 2010 at Southampton children's hospital, at just six years old.

Sam started at the Deaf Academy (then The Royal Academy for Deaf Education) in 2009, a year before his implants. The Deaf Academy provides specialist education and residential care for Deaf children and young people, aged 5-25, from across the UK.

The 2021 Devon Coast to Coast Challenge will take place on Saturday 24th July. The route will see Robert leaving Minehead in Somerset at 7am and taking on the ups and downs of Exmoor and the meandering Exe Valley before arriving in Dawlish between 10 and 11pm.

You can support Robert by visiting his fundraising page at www.justgiving.com/fundraising/robert-harris36 or to donate directly to the Deaf Academy or find out about ways to get involved visit www.thedeafacademy.ac.uk

Taunton Carnival cancelled again Taunton Carnival Committee Statement

Taunton Carnival 2021 - Taunton Carnival Committee has decided, after consultation with the Carnival Clubs, there will be no Annual Procession on Saturday 16th October.

We have not taken this decision lightly, but neither the Committee nor the Clubs have been able to hold any major fundraising activities for more than a year and the Clubs are not able to build to their usual high standards.

We will look to put on some daytime entertainment instead in the town centre, depending on any Covid restrictions in place at that time.

We very much hope we can return with a Procession on the 15th October 2022 and look forward to seeing everyone then.



The Blackdown Hills Repair Cafe By Stéphan Lehner

Don't bin it - repair it! The Blackdown Hills Repair Café continues to provide a valuable repair service for the community of the Blackdown Hills and beyond. Currently based at a hub in Blagdon Hill, the organisation has now started to offer a tool share facility. The aim to commence holding the Blackdown Hills Repair Café's once again from Hemyock Parish Hall from 24th July 2021. For more information contact Stéphan Lehner on 07715460783 or email: sfelehner@aol.com



Raise a cuppa for the NHS

In a year like no other, we all have our own reason for saying thanks to our NHS heroes. On 5th July, the NHS's birthday, we'll be coming together for the NHS Big Tea. And we want you to get involved!

On 5th July at 3pm (or whenever works for you) Love Musgrove wants you to raise a cuppa to help support hardworking NHS staff. You can pop the kettle on at home. Share a pot of tea with your colleagues. Take a flask outside with friends and family. Or rally the whole street with brews, biscuits and bunting. Large or small, your outpouring of love will help care for those who cared for us.

Every penny raised could champion wellbeing, respite, counselling and more for our NHS heroes. This could be someone to talk to after a difficult shift, or a calm space to take off PPE and take five. So let's get this NHS Big Tea brewing. Maybe even ask a few friends to help out. Together let's say the biggest, warmest thank you.



Register at www.lovemusgrove.org.uk/nhsbigtea and once you are, we'll send over some Big Tea advice, as well as some materials to help you host your very own event and raise funds, including poster templates, bunting designs and sponsorship forms.

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Look forward to seeing you soon

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SWT begins roll-out of vehicle charging points

The Council's Climate Change team is excited to announce a collaboration with InstaVolt, an electric vehicle charge point supplier, to facilitate electric vehicle charging in its car parks.

The team has been working with InstaVolt to negotiate leases for the planned installation of four electric vehicle charging stations located at Deane House and Blackbrook Sports Centre in Taunton; Exmoor House in Dulverton; and Alexandra Road in Minehead.

The charging stations are scheduled to be completed and switched on later in the spring. This project marks the start of a ten-year plan to roll-out electric vehicle charging infrastructure for the Somerset West and Taunton area. It supports the transition away from fossil-fuelled vehicles with the potential to

significantly reduce carbon emissions, thereby helping the District towards meeting its carbon neutrality target by 2030.

Each charging station will comprise one or two 50kw DC rapid charge points, available for public use 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Users will be able to locate the stations easily using apps such as Zap-Map, the newly launched InstaVolt app or via the InstaVolt website. Payment will be contactless using a debit or credit card and on a no subscription, pay-as-you-go basis.



New CEO appointed at UKHO

The UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO) is pleased to announce the appointment of Rear Admiral Peter Sparkes as its new Chief Executive and Accounting Officer. Peter will be leaving the Royal Navy to take up the role. As Chief Executive, Peter will continue to lead the organisation's important work in supporting safe, secure and thriving oceans. This includes UKHO's vital work in support of Defence and merchant shipping. Working in close collaboration with national and international partners, the organisation will also continue to develop ADMIRALTY Maritime Data Solutions to support the responsible and sustainable use of our marine environment.

Commenting on his appointment, Peter has told Tone News: "It is an enormous privilege to have been selected to be the UK Hydrographic Office's permanent Chief Executive. I am delighted to be able to continue working with UKHO's fantastic team, Defence and our allies, and our marine partners, to help safeguard our sea lanes and



Rear Admiral Peter Sparkes

those operating in the maritime sector."

Peter served in a wide variety of appointments in the Royal Navy, both at sea on operations and ashore. Notably, he commanded the frigate HMS CUMBERLAND on counter-piracy patrol off Somalia and the UK's Ice Patrol Ship, HMS PROTECTOR, in Antarctica. In addition, he commanded the 46 units (aircraft carriers, destroyers, frigates, mine-hunters, patrol vessels, and the maritime explosive ordnance disposal teams) of the Portsmouth Flotilla.



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Excitement at Queen's over new appointments

Queen's College, Taunton, has announced two exciting appointments. England Women cricketer Katie George has joined the coaching staff while Ian Trafford is joining the Performing Arts department as Artistic Director.

Katie is pictured below with Year 11 student Millie Lusk, who made history recently by becoming the first girl to play cricket for Queen's 1st XI.

Katie is a left-arm seam-bowling all-rounder who also plays for Western Storm and Welsh Fire.

Queen's Head of Cricket, Jake Lintott - who recently signed a three-year contract with Warwickshire has told Tone News:

"For Queen's to have an international player coming to work with our cricketers is fantastic and I know our girls will relish the opportunity of working with her."

Meanwhile, Ian Trafford is a highly experienced figure in the theatrical world. The newly-created, full-time position of Artistic Director is described by Queen's

Head Teacher, Dr Lorraine Earps, as 'something quite unique to a school environment'.

As well as overseeing all school productions, Mr Trafford has been charged with launching Queen's On Tour – the school's own travelling theatre company. He said:

"Having visited Queen's and met some of the amazing students, my mind is already racing with dozens of exciting ideas for diverse performance opportunities. I look forward to a huge explosion of creativity and fun!"



Ian Trafford



Millie Lusk and Katie George

A358 resurfacing work scheduled

A crucial scheme to resurface part of a key road between Taunton and Minehead is planned to take place next month.

Somerset County Council's Highways team will be resurfacing a stretch of the A358 near Combe Florey, between Williton Road and Coggins Lane, as the carriageway is in need of urgent repair. A temporary road closure will be needed to ensure the safety of road users and the workforce alike. It will be in place from 9.30am to 3.30pm, week days only, between Monday 14 June and Friday, 25 June. The road will be open to traffic outside of these hours and during the weekend.

"We've carried out a significant number of works during lockdown, including major repairs to the roadside embankment and improvements to the highway drainage system on the stretch of A358 near to this location," said Cllr John Woodman, Somerset County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport. He added:

"Resurfacing works have still had to be prioritised in order of urgency and it's inevitable this work will need to continue as we move out of lockdown – fortunately this particular work will have been completed before the summer holidays.

"We are aware there will be an impact for businesses and residents, so every effort will be made to keep the duration of the works to a minimum."

The Highways team has been working closely with local businesses to take account of feedback on appropriate temporary signage and the delivery of the scheme. The team will work to ensure access to households and businesses for essential deliveries, as convenient as possible during the works.

During the road closure a suggested diversion route will be clearly signposted on site or can be found at www.travelsomerset.co.uk/roadworks. Stay up to date with this and other roadworks schemes by following @TravelSomerset on Twitter.



Taunton care home celebrates the return of live entertainment for residents

There were smiles all round at The Manor care home in Bishops Hull, Taunton as live entertainers were allowed to perform in the garden once again.

Damien Cheung performed the resident's favourite songs and demonstrated his amazing guitar ability to staff and residents who really enjoyed the show. Just like the rest of the country, Government guidelines for care homes are starting to relax and performers can now entertain residents again safely in outdoor spaces.



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The Monthly Alternative with Giles Cosgrove

Spotlight On:

It's fair to say the last twelve months have been a challenge for all of us in one way or another, and chances are if you're reading this, you've made it through, and **Drag Me Down** have got the perfect anthem to celebrate.

Based in Swindon and made up of Oscar Manners, James Bowles, and Tristan Gorman, their sound is a timely and welcome return to the classic Pop Punk era of Yellowcard, Simple Plan, Blink-182, Good Charlotte, Fall Out Boy, and every other band on your iPod in 2005. Now with Machine Gun Kelly and Yungblud topping the charts with their own nostalgia fuelled sonic therapy, there hasn't been a better time for a Pop Punk revival.

But it's not just the soundtrack to Tony Hawk's Pro Skater that the Drag Me Down boys have taken their inspiration from on their latest release "Survive", there's hardcore influence as well from scene legends Descendents, bringing a frantic pace to the drum grooves that propels the three-minute single from the speakers and straight into your head. On paper the band are retreading old ground but Drag Me Down manage to bring a freshness to a classic sound with unique production, angsty vocals, and lyrics that couldn't be more apt.

It's a song about triumph and overcoming difficult times, whether that's a pandemic or a bad relationship, a true anthem for the light at



the end of the tunnel. They're a band that are timeless and of the moment, they're Drag Me Down and the brand new single "Survive" is out now.

Find Them: "Survive" is out now on all good streaming services!

Sounds like: You've seen it through and made it to the other side. **Time to mosh!**

Acts to watch out for this month:

- Fluff**
 With his latest single "LL Tom" blasting out on the heels of NHS anthem "Tea & Toast", this one-man punk explosion is one to watch.
- Coldplay**
 With new single "Higher Power" out now, we're pretty sure we'll see a new album from Coldplay before the year is out.
- Jackson Blues**
 This Welsh singer songwriter has arrived on the scene with a glorious hard rocking acoustic blues number "Text Back Blues" out now.
- Longcoats**
 The Bath trio are on a roll with their latest single "Nothing Good" arguably their best release to date.



You can listen to *The Sunday Alternative with Giles Cosgrove* every Sunday from 4 – 6 pm on Tone FM featuring great local artists, an Album of the Week, Vinyl Revival, Gig Guide and Music News.



GAMING with Stuart Coward

It's a Monster Mash

Dungeons and Dragons has released a new sourcebook to the world. In it this book it explores the spookier side of DnD as we are headed to the Domains of Dread, in Van Richten's Guide to Ravenloft.

In this new book you will be given the details of 30 different domains. Each specialising in a different type of horror. They all will have a dark lord in control, some even have multiple dark lords fighting it out for dominance. Here are a few examples, Dementieu is a twisted fairy tale based realm, Kalakeri is rooted in Indian folklore, Valachan's dark lord has a love of hunting players and Lamordia has a Doctor who creates all sorts of monstrous creations. Plus there is a guide to

creating your own dark realm, or horror story based on a particular genre from cosmic horror to slasher stories.

Players aren't left out with two new subclasses the College of Spirits for Bards and the Undead Pact for Warlocks. You can choose to have a dark gift with both benefits and negatives, like a sentient shadow. Finally you won't be alone out there as you will be given new allies to fight beside you like the master detective Alanik Ray.

So if you dare to enter, Van Richten's Guide to Ravenloft is available from the 18th of May.



Image: Wizards of the Coast

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Another GB call up for Hannah Taunton

Local running star Hannah Taunton has been selected once again to compete for Great Britain at the World Para Athletics European Championships in Bydgoszcz, Poland between 1-5 June.

In September last year, Hannah became a world record holder at the British Athletics Championships in Manchester in the 5000m where she ran at her own race pace, and came home in a time of 17.17.30... breaking the world record for a female T20 runner in a 5,000m event!

Hannah's mum, Gill, has told Tone News:

"Such an honour and we are so proud of her. The very best T20 runners in the World are Europeans so it will be a tough race. She is currently ranked 5th in the World.

Hannah has trained right through Lock Down. For many months she trained on her own, supported by her Dad, guided by her coach's instructions, not able to use a track. Hannah is now back training with her coach and teammates and is excited about representing her country again."



The Stoke Stampede returns in 2022

By Alfred van Pelt

We can make it a big story or just make it short but sweet news for you all we hope. There WILL be a Stoke Stampede again! We had to cancel the 2021 one as you all know and hoped to organise the race later in the year but have decided to stick to the tradition of a proper Stampede early January. So please put 9th January 2022 in your calendar and keep your eyes out for updates on registration announcements

around September/October time this year. In the meantime enjoy your running, and keep safe. Keep healthy. Keep at safe distance. But stay connected!

Alfred van Pelt on behalf of the Stoke Stampede organising committee.

www.stokestampede.co.uk
www.facebook.com/stokestampede



Taunton Muskets kick off the new season

The Taunton Muskets braved the rain to start the 2021 South West and Wales Baseball League season on the road in Newquay against the Cornish Claycutters.

Across two slightly damp games the teams shared the opening day spoils; the Claycutters winning the first game 17-16 with a walk off win, after which the Muskets took the second game 18-13.

Covid restrictions meant there was less time for teams to prepare for the upcoming season, but both sides quickly got back into the swing of things in two closely contested games. For the Taunton side there were lots of positives to take from the day.

In Game 1 Al Troake made his first start as a pitcher and completing the entire game – pitching with great side-arm accuracy despite the 50mph gusts.

Despite some good plays in the field from Steve Coles and a great debut performance from Bobby Porter, the game ended in defeat with the Claycutters hitting centre field with the game tied to get a walk-off win.

In Game two, the Muskets remained aggressive with their base running with the game ebbing and flowing.

The game remained close until the final inning when, with bases



The Taunton Muskets

loaded, debut player Chris Cranmer hit an enormous Grand Slam Home Run – driving the ball out beyond left field and against the continuing wind.

The final play of the game saw Jake Palmer catch a straight drive back to home in the mound to record his first win as pitcher.

"Everyone played so well today," Nicky Hewitt, club secretary and scorer explained, to Tone News "It's so good to be back on the field and the vibe was lovely even though it was soggy at times!"

The Muskets will look to keep the positive vibe going as they host their first games at Victoria Park next Sunday (May 23rd).

With Covid restrictions easing there is the opportunity for spectators to come and watch the Muskets settle into their town centre diamond.

Do you enjoy the game of baseball? The Muskets are on the look out for new players!

If you are interested, contact Chris Chantry: chris.chantry@googlemail.com.

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