



PINES AND CHINES

The magazine of the Branksome Park & Canford Cliffs Residents' Association

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Buried for 400 years

Fame of Hoorn revealed

AGM MEETING

11th APRIL 10.30am

Canford Cliffs
Village Hall



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A warm hello to you

There are certain moments in the year when our corner of Dorset seems to shine particularly brightly and spring is surely one of them. Early mornings by the sea, gardens coming alive, people returning to the beach, you get a real sense of the area waking up after winter.

At the time of writing we've just celebrated International Women's Day, which feels like a fitting moment to reflect on remarkable women past and present. In this edition we explore the extraordinary life of Mrs Louie Dingwall, racehorse trainer, transport pioneer and one of Poole's great characters. At the other end of the timeline is the inspiring story of the Poole and Bournemouth Blueetts, the cold water swimming community that began with one woman's love of the sea and now brings together thousands of swimmers for weekly dips filled with laughter, friendship and the occasional shiver. Who would have thought one swim could create such a following?

Living here it's easy to forget just how much history surrounds us. Familiar places often hide remarkable stories and this issue takes a fascinating look at the origins of Canford Cliffs and how it came to be known as the Dorset Riviera. Who needs Cannes?

Supporting our community remains central to the work of BPC CRA. We were delighted to play a part in the restoration of the Pinecliff Gardens shelter and look forward to seeing the mural take shape as the artist

begins work. Our AGM takes place on 11 April at Canford Cliffs village hall where we'll discuss membership changes and plans for the year ahead. It will also be an opportunity to thank our Chairman Peter Schroder, who is stepping down after three years, and to welcome Andrea Charman as the new Chair.

On a personal note I'd like to add my own thanks to John Gunton, stepping down from the committee after more than 30 years with BPC CRA. John edited this magazine for over a decade and was a wonderful mentor when I first took on the role.

Finally take a look at our back cover where a local resident has captured a stunning beach moment. If you're a keen photographer we'd love to see your images for the winter edition.

As always *Pines and Chines* is your magazine. Please share your thoughts via our reader survey below and I hope you enjoy this issue as much as we enjoyed putting it together.

Have a wonderful spring and summer ahead.

Annabel Stemp
Editor

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If you'd like to take advantage of our advertising opportunities please contact Annabel Stemp ed.pinesandchines@icloud.com

Front Cover picture: Our stunning sea front
Back Cover picture: Groyne Canford Cliffs Beach
courtesy Peter Reed

Design & Print:
Shadow Design Bournemouth
www.shadowdesignbournemouth.co.uk

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Chairman's Letter

This is my final Chairman's letter as I shall be stepping aside at the AGM in April. Age is relentless and I am slowing down!

While monitoring planning applications and registering objections when required remains at the heart of the association's activities, it's by no means all we are concerned with. Protecting and maintaining our built and natural environment is a critical cause where we can make a positive contribution. Road safety is another key area of activity and we have had real success in both.

Town councils

Despite overwhelming opposition from our association and neighbouring groups BCP Council is proceeding with the establishment of Poole Town Council. The first election will take place on 7 May with the council becoming fully operational from April 2027. The Canford Cliffs ward for town elections will be smaller than the BCP ward and will have one councillor.

We'll engage constructively with the new council wherever it impacts BPCRA's activities. Please follow our newsletters to stay informed.

Planning pressures

Despite a downturn in the housing market, planning activity, both acceptable and unacceptable, continues. The Haven Hotel saga rolls on with developers also trying to include Harbour Heights Hotel.

With BCP no longer routinely monitoring compliance once planning permission is granted it increasingly falls to vigilant residents to report concerns. Too often action comes too late. A recent case involving illegal damage to a Site of Special Scientific Interest on our

fragile cliffs resulted in Bayview Developments being fined though the damage itself cannot be undone.

CIL proposals

Under the indomitable leadership of Vicky Moss, road safety progress continues. The Western Road crossing is now in place and another is planned subject to CIL approval. Working closely with our supportive ward councillors, John Challinor and Gavin Wright, strengthens our 2026 CIL proposals.

We also celebrated CIL success this year with the superb rebuilding of the Pinecliff Gardens shelter. A local artist has now been commissioned to restore the murals (see page 22).

AGM 11 April

Our AGM will include formal agreement of the proposed subscription increase and plans to move to Direct Debit (see page 6).

We're pleased to welcome guests including the Mayor of Poole and the Leader of BCP Council. Please submit your questions in advance to andreacharman@equilearn.org.

If you're planning to attend the AGM please email Andrea Charman in advance to help us plan numbers and arrangements.

Finally my sincere thanks to the Executive Committee especially Andrea Charman who will take on the Chairman's role, to our street wardens, councillors and local MP.

I have enjoyed my time as Chairman and am confident the association will continue to flourish.

Peter Schroeder
Outgoing Chairman

Changes on the BPCRA Committee

This year brings a number of changes to the BPCRA Executive Committee. Several long standing members are stepping down from their roles and we're delighted to see a new face joining us. It gives us a welcome opportunity to thank those who have given so much of their time and energy to the association and to welcome those helping to move things forward.

Thank you to Peter Schroeder

At the AGM in April our Chairman **Peter Schroeder** will be stepping down after three years leading the association. During his time as Chairman Peter has overseen a wide range of issues affecting our area from responding to planning pressures and championing road safety improvements to supporting projects such as the restoration of the Pinecliff Gardens shelter.

Peter has always been a strong advocate for protecting the unique character of Branksome Park and Canford Cliffs while ensuring the association remains a constructive and respected voice with the council. Many members will also recognise Peter's methodical approach at meetings and his willingness to listen to residents' concerns.

We're extremely grateful for his leadership, dedication and good humour over the years. Peter will be succeeded as Chair by our current Vice Chair **Andrea Charman**. We're also pleased to announce that **Vicky Moss** will take on the role of Honorary Secretary following Andrea's move to Chair.

A fond thank you to several long serving contributors

We're also saying thank you to a number of other valued contributors to the association.

John Gunton who edited *Pines and Chines* for more than a decade and has been involved with BPCRA for over 30 years, is stepping down as Advertising Manager and from the committee. Under John's editorship the magazine became an important and much loved part of our community. Many readers will remember his steady guidance of the magazine over the years and his warm, welcoming editorials.

Annabel Stemp will continue as Editor and will also take on the advertising role.

Our Planning Officer **John Harkness** is now seeking a successor due to increasing work commitments. Scrutinising local planning applications and representing residents' concerns is a vital part of the association's work and John has carried this out with great diligence and attention to detail. He will continue to support us while we find the right person to take this on. If you're interested, or know someone who may be, please email planning.bpcra@gmail.com.

We're equally grateful to **Roy Pointer** our long standing senior committee adviser whose knowledge of the often labyrinthine workings of BCP Council has proved invaluable to the committee over many years.

Earlier this year **Pamela Carvell** stepped down as Membership

Secretary after helping to organise and bring structure to our membership processes. We're very grateful for the work she has done.

Welcome to John Pearce

We're delighted to welcome **John Pearce** to the BPCRA committee as our new Membership Secretary. John brings valuable experience and will help guide the next stage of our membership as we introduce online subscriptions and bring our processes up to date.

Born and bred in Poole John attended Lilliput and Baden Powell schools, with his family living in Branksome Park since 1999. John studied at Loughborough University and completed a master's at Bournemouth. At Loughborough he was talented spotted by UK Sport for Handball, training in Denmark and selected for Team GB at the London 2012 Olympics. John later founded the Dorset Handball Association and Poole Phoenix Handball Club and has organised the Beach Champs, the popular summer sports festival, at Branksome Chine for the past 15 years.



John Pearce

Getting involved

As these changes show BPCCRAs relies entirely on volunteers from within the community.

We're currently looking for members who may be interested in helping with roles such as planning and other committee responsibilities. Some roles can be shared and those stepping down will ensure a smooth handover. If you would like to find out

more about helping with the association's work please do get in touch we'd be very pleased to hear from you andreacharman@equilearn.org. Like the members stepping down you may find it's a rewarding way to support the community we all value.

Annabel Stemp
Editor



Important Membership Updates

You may recall from our February newsletter and recent Open Meeting that we've been reviewing membership subscriptions for the first time in over 25 years.

After careful consideration and subject to formal agreement at the AGM on 11 April subscriptions will change from 1 June 2026 to:

- £10 for individual members
- £7 per flat for block memberships

For more than two decades subscriptions have remained at £5 (individual) and £3 per flat, something quite rare today. Your membership enables BPCCRAs to protect and represent residents' interests. It supports our regular open meetings with councillors, local updates,

the AGM and delivery of *Pines and Chines*. Crucially it also allows us to maintain a reserve so we can obtain professional planning or legal advice when needed.

Like many organisations we're experiencing rising running costs and current subscription levels no longer fully meet our outgoings. This modest increase simply ensures the association remains on a secure footing and able to continue its work on behalf of the community.

What you need to do

- Individual members: As we move to a more modern, online membership system we'll be introducing Direct Debit to make everything simpler and easier to manage. The new subscription rate will apply from June 2026.

The Aim & Objectives of the Association

The aim of the association is to protect the interests of residents and to investigate on their behalf any aspects which could be detrimental to private properties or public services.

The association endeavours at all times to maintain good relationships with the Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Council (BCP) and to bring to their notice all matters which adversely affect the amenities of the whole of the district.

It also submits recommendations to the council concerning any plans, developments or financial matters which would improve the environment, community, safety, amenity and cost effectiveness of the area and residents' quality of life. The association is a member of the Campaign to Protect Rural England.

Find out more about BPCCRAs membership on page 16.

- Block memberships: Managing agents will be notified in advance with the revised rate applying from the February 2027 invoice.

Thank you as always for your continued support.

Andrea Charman
Incoming Chair

Planning report

Winter planning activity and wider reflections

Planning in the ward: steady pressure

Since the last edition the winter months have brought a consistent stream of planning activity across the Canford Cliffs ward. There has not been a single defining proposal but rather a succession of applications, amendments and appeal decisions which, taken together, reveal the ongoing pressures shaping our area.

Several larger apartment schemes have either progressed or re-emerged in amended form. At 34 Buccleuch Road a previously approved three storey block of ten flats was replaced with a four storey scheme of 13 units and a relocated access. While such changes may be framed as refinements they represent a clear uplift in scale and intensity. The appeal decision at 9 Mountbatten Road permitting plot subdivision within The Avenue Conservation Area further illustrates how the gradual increase in density continues to test long established patterns of development.

Alongside these more prominent cases there has been a steady flow of householder proposals. Many have been modest in ambition and comfortably aligned with policy, particularly where extensions remain clearly subordinate to the host dwelling and established planting and boundary character are respected. Others however have pushed at the margins of acceptable height, roof form and massing, especially



within the Branksome Park and Chine Gardens, Chester Road and Canford Cliffs Village Conservation Areas.

What defines this period is not dramatic change but incremental adjustment. Additional storeys described as roof accommodation, enlarged footprints secured through condition variations and increased glazing or balcony projections rarely appear transformative in isolation. Yet over time these cumulative alterations subtly shift the scale, rhythm and visual balance of our streets.

Environmental considerations have also come into sharper focus. The attempt to secure exemption from Biodiversity Net Gain requirements at Corscombe on Brudenell Avenue raised important questions about how self-build provisions are interpreted and crucially how occupation conditions are enforced where exemptions are granted. As sustainability policy becomes more embedded its consistent application becomes ever more important.

The winter period therefore presents a mixed picture. There have been decisions that demonstrate the system's ability to resist excessive development alongside others that prompt debate about how firmly character and context are being protected. The direction of travel is not abrupt but it is steady.

Beyond permission: quality control, buildability and accountability

While individual decisions attract understandable attention a broader issue has increasingly come into view. The question is not only what receives permission but how reliably those permissions translate into well executed buildings on the ground.

Planning approval is often treated as the central milestone. In reality it's only one stage in a much longer process. For development to contribute positively to the area proposals must be technically coherent, realistically buildable and faithfully delivered.

Recent submissions have at times revealed a disconnect

between presentation and practicality. Designs have been advanced without sufficient regard to tree constraints, root protection zones, drainage realities or existing ground conditions. In other instances, visually ambitious roof forms and extensive glazing appear carefully composed in elevation yet leave unanswered questions about structural logic, fire safety strategy or safe construction sequencing.

This is not an argument against contemporary architecture or innovation. It's a call for professional rigour. Planning drawings should do more than illustrate intent. They should provide a robust and accurate foundation for construction. When approved information is incomplete or unclear the risk of amendment, reinterpretation or quiet deviation during the build process increases.

Procedural discipline is equally important. Applications have been validated despite unclear overlays between approved and proposed schemes or descriptions that understate the extent of change. Public consultation depends upon accurate information. Without clarity at the outset trust in the system inevitably weakens.

Enforcement must also be meaningful. If developments are not carried out in accordance with approved drawings and conditions, there should be proportionate and visible consequences. Policies safeguarding character, biodiversity, amenity and public safety exist for a reason. Their credibility depends upon consistent application.

Responsibility does not sit with one party alone. Planning authorities must insist on clarity and compliance at validation and decision stage. Consultants must prepare technically sound and contextually informed proposals.

Contractors must build precisely what has been approved. Clients must recognise that permission defines a framework to be delivered, not a starting point for negotiation on site.

The quality of our built environment is shaped as much by discipline in delivery as by aspiration in design. If standards slip at any stage the long term character of the area is affected.

Looking Ahead

Change will continue as it should in any evolving community. The challenge is to ensure that

renewal strengthens rather than erodes the qualities that define Branksome Park and Canford Cliffs.

Our role is not to oppose development in principle but to insist that it is thoughtful, policy compliant and properly delivered.

As we move through the summer months we'll continue to monitor applications, observe implementation on the ground and press for clarity, accountability and design integrity at every stage.

You can view full local planning lists on the BPCRA website.



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John Harkness
Planning Officer

A quick word about Beach Road car park.

We understand an offer on Beach Road car park has now been accepted. Stay tuned for more details. **Roy Pointer**



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Treasurer's Report

Branksome Park and Canford Cliffs Residents' Association Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ended 31 December 2025

	2025		2024	
	£	£	£	£
Income				
Subscriptions received during the year		6,536		7,397
Deposit interest		458		573
		<u>6,994</u>		<u>7,970</u>
Expenditure				
Magazine and circular expenses	7,914		6,666	
Less advertising revenue	(4,455)		(3,975)	
Net expenditure	—	3,459	—	2,691
Committee and secretarial expenses	-		2	
Committee and Association meetings	777		299	
Annual General Meeting	407		586	
Subscriptions	-		25	
Planning consultation	-		500	
Legal and insurance	104		2,100	
Accountancy	750		-	
Website	2,309		2,097	
Gardens	-		920	
Sundries	-		292	
	—	<u>4,347</u>	—	<u>6,821</u>
Donations and subscriptions				
Canford Cliffs Christmas lights		750		750
		<u>8,556</u>		<u>10,262</u>
Excess of income over expenditure		<u>(1,562)</u>		<u>(2,292)</u>
Balance sheet at 31 December 2025				
Accumulated fund				
At 1 January 2025		40,560		42,852
Excess of income over expenditure		(1,562)		(2,292)
		<u>38,998</u>		<u>40,560</u>
At 31 December 2025		<u>38,998</u>		<u>40,560</u>
Represented by:				
Cash at bank:				
Barclays Premium Account	35,295		34,837	
Barclays Current Account	4,218		5,723	
	—	39,513	—	40,560
Add: Accrued income		235		-
Less accrued expenses		(750)		-
		<u>38,998</u>		<u>40,560</u>

Approved by
Peter. Shroeder (President) & Stanley. Peters (Hon Treasurer)

Overall the association's finances remain in good shape. However over the past couple of years our regular running costs have gradually increased and we've made a small operating loss, something many households will recognise.

To ensure BPC CRA remains on a secure footing and able to continue its work on behalf of residents, the Executive Committee has proposed a modest increase in subscriptions.

You can read more about this and what it means for members on page 6.

I'm pleased to welcome Tony Kelly, a local resident with a finance background, who will support me as we review our financial processes

Stanley Peters
Treasurer

Our first resident photo takes the back page

In the last edition we invited residents to send in photographs of the local area for the chance to feature on our back cover. We're delighted to showcase our first reader image in this issue, a striking shot of a groyne marker on Canford Cliffs beach captured by local resident **Peter Reed**.

Peter's atmospheric photograph perfectly captures the quiet beauty of our coastline, with the weathered groyne standing against sea and sky, a simple but evocative reminder of the landscape we're lucky to enjoy every day.

"I took the picture because of the moody atmosphere on that particular morning and was keen to experiment with the long

exposure feature on my iPhone", Peter told us. "As an amateur photographer, I have been fascinated by the way the view towards Old Harry's continually changes with varying weather conditions".

Thank you Peter for sharing such a wonderful moment.

Would you like to see your photograph on the back cover of the winter edition?

We'd love to see the area through your eyes whether it's spring sunlight through the pines, a hidden corner of a landmark or a memorable moment along the beach. Don't be shy, even a quick snap on a morning walk can make a wonderful back cover.



How to share your picture

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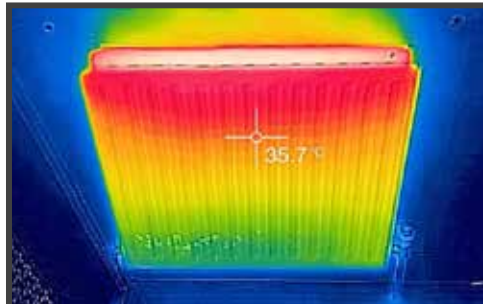








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Councillors Corner

Town council myth busting



As many of you may be aware, Poole is getting a new town council. So here's some of what you need to know.

The establishment of new town councils was an option given to BCP: to set up or not to set up. The Three Towns Alliance, led by the Lib Dems, out-voted councillors who were against these plans and decided to establish town councils across Poole and Bournemouth.

Expressions of interest for town and parish councils were sought. Seventy three suggestions were received but only individual councils for Poole, Broadstone and Bournemouth were selected to go forward for consultation to the public. You may have seen in the news and social media that the results of the consultation were overwhelmingly against setting up the three new town councils. However, the

consultation results were promptly and totally ignored. Therefore, the town councils will go ahead, with the first election being held on May 7th.

Some myths busted

1. *Poole Town Council does not resurrect the old pre-BCP Poole Borough Council*

It is another layer of government below BCP and can be seen as follows:

- Parliament
- Regional Mayors (coming soon)
- BCP Council
- Poole Town Council
- Neighbourhood Forums (if continued)

2. *Poole Town Council will take on services and events that are currently managed by BCP*

No, the only statutory responsibility of a town council is to provide allotments. All other services must be a

collaborative process. A town council cannot demand to take on a service and BCP cannot impose something on a town council.

3. *Poole Town Council won't cost anything*

Yes, it will. There will be a precept (extra tax) on your council tax bill. Unlike your council tax bill, which is capped, the precept is not. The precepts for many town councils are now four or five times their original charge after only a few short years.

4. *Poole Town Council will take control of planning*

No, Poole Town Council has an advisory role in planning but can be ignored by BCP just as much as an individual complainant.

I and all other Conservative councillors were against imposing town councils on the residents of Poole. We voted against them in committees and in full council as we saw them for what they are, as a not so stealthy stealth tax. But, unfortunately, the Three Town Alliance forced it through.

Maybe this clears things up or maybe this is more confusing. Whichever it is, feel free to talk to me at the next BPCRA meeting.

Cllr Gavin Wright



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Councillors Corner

A peak behind the council chamber door



The role and responsibilities of a councillor are wide and varied. From formal council and resident group meetings to spontaneous emails, phone calls and requests to attend and view issues within the ward, no two weeks are quite the same.

We're contacted throughout the week for advice and support on a number of matters: planning applications and objections, parking problems, nuisance neighbours, poorly maintained roads and infrastructure, speeding motorists and financial difficulties such as council tax, housing and benefits. Some of these we can help with or provide immediate guidance for; sometimes we're able to signpost residents to the appropriate services or resources; and

sometimes all we can offer is a willing ear.

In terms of formal council meetings, this week (24 February) we attended Full Council where councillors debated BCP Council's 2026/27 budget. This included increasing Council Tax by 6.74% (before the additional precept of the newly imposed town councils). The meeting began at 7pm and finished just before midnight, insomniacs among you may still be able to watch it on YouTube!

This was a meeting focused solely on the budget and related matters. Whilst I and others spoke against the increase, the Lib Dems and their Three Town Alliance partners had the numbers to ensure their plans

were approved. There had also been a Full Council meeting two weeks earlier with a wider agenda to debate. Prior to each meeting there are detailed papers to read, research to undertake and often political group discussions to explore different views, so it's not just time in the Council Chamber or Civic Centre.

I also sit on the Western BCP Planning Committee, which meets around a dozen times a year to vote on planning applications. This involves reading substantial reports, being familiar with the sites in question and receiving regular training to keep up to date with planning process as well as updates on national and local planning policies.

Beyond formal council duties we attend meetings with community groups such as BPCRA, a valuable way to hear about ward issues, engage with residents and act as a conduit for council information and policies. Gavin and I also volunteer occasionally with the local SpeedWatch, hold a monthly drop-in surgery at Canford Cliffs Library, visit schools and community groups and often discuss council matters informally when out and about in the ward.

It is a varied and interesting role and a privilege to serve our community, though it does sometimes have its challenges!

Cllr John Challinor



Full Council February 24th



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Join the BPCCCRA today

For more than 65 years BPCCCRA has helped protect the unique character of Branksome Park and Canford Cliffs, giving residents a strong independent voice on local issues. We're run entirely by local volunteers from committee members to the wardens who deliver *Pines and Chines*. If you care about our area and would like to support what we do or even get involved we'd love to hear from you.

Why join?

As a member you can:

-  Attend our open meetings (every two months) and speak directly with local councillors
-  Stay informed about planning applications, road safety and local developments
-  Help protect our trees, wildlife and beauty of our neighbourhood
-  Receive regular updates from our Chairman and *Pines and Chines* magazine delivered twice a year to your door
-  Support a dedicated team working closely with BCP Council on matters affecting our area
-  Meet other local residents and volunteers at our gatherings and events

How to join

The quickest way is online at: www.pinesandchines.co.uk/become-a-member/



alternatively scan this QR Code

Membership is £10 per household per year*

You'll find full details there on how to join. If you need assistance, please contact our Membership Secretary **John Pearce** at memberships@pinesandchines.co.uk

**to be agreed at the AGM 11 April*

We take your privacy seriously. Full details of how we use and protect your data can be found on our website.



The more residents who join the more effective we can be in helping ensure our area remains a wonderful place to live.



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Renters' Rights

Andrew Carswell is a solicitor specialising in civil litigation. He provides a brief guide on the changes to Housing law arising from the Renters' Rights Act 2025.



Major changes are being made to housing law which has implications for landlords and tenants alike. The Renters' Rights Act 2025 comes into force on 1 May 2026. There are a number of changes including the abolition of 'no fault' evictions, as well as a streamlining of the general terms of occupation for tenants.

Assured shorthold tenancies typically are fixed term occupancies and are now being replaced with periodic tenancies. The tenant can walk away for any reason at any time on giving the appropriate notice. However to terminate the tenancy the landlord has to be able to identify a specific ground for termination which is similar but different to existing legislation.

Gone are "section 21" notices which enabled a landlord to serve a tenant with a two month no fault notice. This had been one of the bonuses for landlords under the Housing Act 1988

which enabled them to force a tenant to leave without having to establish fault and which often served a dual purpose where the landlord just wanted a change of tenant, to sell the property or didn't want the problem of having to prove fault where the court had a discretion. Whilst there were checks against arbitrary decisions most tenants felt there was an imbalance of power and section 21 notices were often resented.

Under the new law tenants receive a rolling/periodic tenancy. Landlords can still deal with problematic tenancies. The Act makes changes to the existing law which aims to strike a balance between the interests of both parties.

With regard to rent arrears there remains a mandatory ground for possession but the minimum period has increased from two to three months' rent (with a few exceptions). The notice period before the landlord can start

court proceedings is increased from 2 weeks to 4 weeks.

So far as other breaches are concerned there remain a number of other grounds for terminating the tenancy, notably where the tenant is in breach of his or her obligations. These typically involve the court having a discretion on whether to grant possession or not.

There is also a raft of other provisions including a prohibition on discrimination against tenants on benefits or with children, greater rights to keep pets, improvement on the standard of accommodation (including Awaab's Law) and changes to deposits.

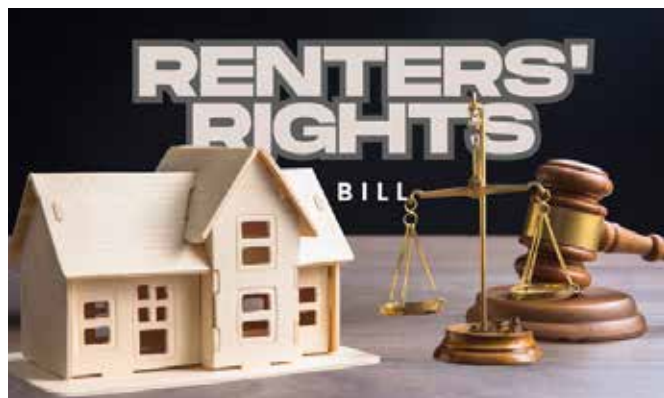
The new law will also outlaw so called rent 'bidding wars'. Any advert to let a property on an assured periodic tenancy must specify the proposed rent. Thereafter landlords and agents must not invite, encourage or accept offers of rent higher than the advertised sum.

This is quite a sea change for residential accommodation. As ever it will take time to bed in and will be interesting to see how landlords and tenants deal with matters going forward.

Andrew Carswell
Partner

Aldridge Brownlee LLP
Bournemouth

*Ed. Andrew acts as honorary
Solicitor to the BPCCR*



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Gardening Matters

A garden from harmony: learning from Knoll

Last October the Pinecliff Gardeners visited Knoll Gardens, the UK's leading ornamental grass specialist, located 1.5 miles north of Haskins Garden Centre near Ferndown. We went seeking inspiration for more sustainable gardening approaches - particularly to reduce watering and ongoing maintenance but discovered there was much more to learn.

Run by internationally acclaimed gardener Neil Lucas since 1994 Knoll is a wonderfully naturalistic garden and a haven for both people and wildlife.

What was once a carrot field on the edge of a market garden in the 1970s the gardens have gradually evolved into an internationally admired example of naturalistic planting, competing at the Chelsea Flower Show for nearly a decade from 2002.

Covering several acres Knoll Gardens has evolved in harmony with soil, climate and careful observation. The blends of ornamental grasses, long



Knoll Gardens visit

flowering perennials, shrubs and ornamental trees in layered, flowing combinations, are striking in summer and particularly in autumn.

Knoll's philosophy centres on "right plant, right place," with seasonal structure, and planting that supports pollinators, birds and other wildlife. In 2008, the Knoll Gardens Foundation was established to study the relationship between naturalistic

planting, wildlife and the wider environment. Staff and volunteers monitor plants and wildlife to better understand the principles that create a healthy, biodiverse garden and share their findings with the Dorset Wildlife Trust, Amphibian & Reptile Conservation and the Bournemouth Natural Science Society.

Across Dorset the encouraging success of wildlife charities such as The Dorset Wildlife Trust, Birds of Poole Harbour, RSPB Arne and The National Trust are superbly demonstrating how thoughtful land management restores habitats, strengthens biodiversity and supports the ecosystems on which all life depends. With the growth of eco-tourism in the Poole area this movement is proving good for people, good for communities and good for the local economy.



Back at Pinecliff Gardens

Our dedicated team of 10 valuable gardeners are crucial to maintain the beds and rockeries that remain central to the Pinecliff Gardens charm. Whilst some of the plants struggled over the long summer drought last year they have bounced back with all this winter rainfall.

In November The Good Gym kindly came to help us again lead by **Lea Baker**. Four volunteers who combine running and physical activities by helping the community pulled up two huge New Zealand flax plants, it was something like 'The Giant Turnip' story and showed what team work and perseverance can do!

In the gaps left by the removal of the New Zealand flax you may notice gentle experiments in the months ahead, maybe some grasses to add movement amongst the verbena and longer flowering perennials and seed heads left for birds.

With the Haskins Garden Centre voucher kindly donated by **Warren Haskins** last year and the budget from the BPCCRRA we're planning to buy more of the long flowering plants that have thrived like the salvias and we'll experiment with asters, gaura and achillea which will help the insects and give long lasting colour and survive the extremes of heat and rainfall we've been getting over the year.

Our gardener **Val Lamb** has been working to establish wildflower patches in various corners of Pinecliff Garden and around All Saints Church with the help of the Beavers and Cubs from All Saints' Church using 'Naturescape' annual and long season meadow seed mixes provided by the BPCCRRA.

Unfortunately the wildflower area this year didn't really get going despite watering during the drought and removing the vigorous quaking grass which has come back with a vengeance.

Wildflower area being created to left of wall



This year we're hoping to explore ways of getting the public to help get the wildflower seeds going. The methods we try along with our observations will be featured in the winter edition of *Pines and Chines* and with any luck you'll see the results for yourselves in full bloom this summer.

The well oiled benches in the gardens, courtesy of two of our wonderful new volunteers, have meant they withstood the continuous rain this winter.

Thanks to our amazing gardening team Pinecliff Gardens are ready for you to come and enjoy this Spring and Summer.

We're always looking for new volunteers whether you can offer two hours once a year to oil a bench or two hours once a week. Come and see us down at the gardens (fair weather only) Thursdays mornings 10-12am!

Vicky Moss
Special Projects BPCCRRA

A fresh start for Pinecliff Gardens shelter

There was plenty of reason to celebrate in December when the new Pinecliff Gardens shelter was officially opened replacing the much loved but sadly worn out original that had seen better days.



After considerable resident support (and a fair bit of persistence) the new shelter now stands proudly in its place, built from locally sourced oak and funded through the neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

The spot has always proved popular with everyone from dog walkers catching their breath to our dedicated gardening volunteers tending Pinecliff Gardens or as it's known to many, the Sunken Garden.

Adding to the excitement local artist **Stuart Roberts** of the Poole

Leisure Painters has begun work on a mural design for the back wall of the shelter, with painting due to start in April. We look forward to sharing photographs once it's complete.

As Chairman I was delighted to cut the ribbon at the opening ceremony joined by local councillor **Gavin Wright** and the

Seascope team, who constructed the shelter. Seascope told us they expect the new structure to last "well beyond 40 years", reassuring news the view can be enjoyed for decades to come.

Andrea Charman our Vice Chair and Secretary, reflected on the achievement:

"There was strong resident support for rebuilding the shelter. It simply wouldn't have happened without that community backing and the successful bid for CIL funding."

Gavin added that the project shows what can be achieved when residents, councillors and skilled craftsmen work together. And indeed the cliff top view can now be enjoyed in comfort once again.

Have you visited the new shelter yet? Do let us know what you think.

Peter Schroeder
Chairman



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More tea vicar?

I'm Reverend Nigel and I'm absolutely thrilled to be the new priest at St Aldhelm's! I join you from Luton in Bedfordshire where for the last six years I enjoyed the dual role of parish priest and chaplain at Keech Hospice.

I'm married to Rosie and we're a fun loving family of five with a Border Terrier, Ozzy. When I was very young my family lived in Branksome and I was baptised at St Aldhelm's, so coming here truly feels like coming home. Who would have thought the little boy christened in your church all those years ago would one day return as its new priest? An interesting thought for any new christenings in the years to come.

After Branksome, my family moved to Ascot, Berkshire where I later met Rosie. We began our married life in London before settling in various parts of Berkshire, a place we still hold great affection for.

I've been a Christian since taking myself off as a curious eight year old, to the church across the road and finding God there. I believe that's where my calling to ministry truly began. Years later I returned as an adult, became churchwarden and it was there that God called me to ordained ministry, something that surprised my wife quite as much as it did me!



It was also during this time that I became involved with a homeless charity in Reading which shaped my curacy in Binfield whilst I trained at Ripon College, Cuddesdon. I established a winter night shelter in our church in Bracknell, still running today, year round providing hot meals, overnight shelter in winter and above all conversation, friendship and love. We took this model to Windsor after ordination, where the shelter continues too.

Through this work Rosie and I learnt so much about how quickly life can change and how vital human connection truly is.

We have always wanted to lead a church where everyone feels they belong and are loved by God whatever their background, which is what drew me to St Aldhelm's.

Rosie has a background in art and design but discovered her passion for supporting children who find the world a little tricky to navigate. She has worked for many years in primary education helping SEND children and hopes to do the same locally in Poole.

In my leisure time I enjoy reading, watching Wales play rugby (my family are Welsh) and seeing live music. On my interview day I was delighted to be entertained by a lunchtime concert at St Aldhelm's, 'Heart of Gold' felt like a definite sign from above!

We very much look forward to moving in the coming weeks, exploring Dorset and becoming part of your wonderful church family and wider community.

In faith, love and hope
Revd Nigel & Rosie



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Lord of the Chines: How J.R.R. Tolkien escaped unwanted fame on the Bournemouth coast

January 2026 marked the 134th birthday of J.R.R. Tolkien, the creator of Middle-earth and for a time, a resident of Branksome Park.

By the late 1960s, Tolkien had become a literary phenomenon. Yet the quiet Oxford don found fame deeply unsettling. Hippy admirers would appear at his door to have their books signed, smelling of incense and clutching dog-eared copies of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. Tolkien, a scholar of Anglo-Saxon who could happily debate ancient languages for hours, felt he had little in common with this new generation of fans.

In 1968, weary of the attention, he and his wife Edith decided to retire to Bournemouth, a place they had long loved. The Tolkiens had holidayed in Dorset for years, often staying at the Hotel Miramar on the East Cliff, a fine arts and crafts style Edwardian building that had once



been the home of the Austrian Ambassador, providing a solidly respectable country house style retreat. Their arrangement was reassuringly familiar: Room 37 for Ronald, Room 39 for Edith, both overlooking the sea.

Today the Miramar celebrates its Tolkien connection with a blue plaque and memorabilia, even knocking both their rooms into a new room 205 but in the 1950s and 60s it was a quietly respectable establishment. Tolkien, though fond of the sea

views, reportedly found the polite chatter of retired colonels and society wives somewhat tedious. He missed the lively conversations of Oxford and his friend C.S. Lewis. Still, Edith adored Bournemouth, and that counted for much.

Despite the astonishing success of his books, Tolkien never sought celebrity. *The Hobbit* had begun as a story for his children; *The Lord of the Rings* grew naturally from it. He could scarcely have imagined the cult following that

would follow. By the 1960s he was one of the world's best-selling authors, financially secure and bemused by it all. The idea that he would eventually go on to become the world's second best selling author of fiction, closely behind Charles Dickens, would have astounded him.

He was particularly alarmed when The Beatles reportedly sought permission to film *The Lord of the Rings*, with John Lennon as Gollum and Paul McCartney as Frodo, Ringo Starr as Sam and George Harrison as Gandalf. Tolkien declined. One wonders what would have emerged and the music it might have inspired!

Tolkien would have likely been equally bewildered by Peter Jackson's later blockbuster films, even though he had sold the film rights in 1969 for £100,000, a deal later dubbed "Hollywood's deal of the century". It is said he signed the agreement in Dorset one afternoon while Edith was playing cards at the Miramar. The subsequent success of the films 40 long years later would elevate Tolkien to the position of fifth highest earning dead celebrity,



right up there with Elvis. How bizarre is that?

The Tolkiens settled in 1968 at 19 Lakeside Road, Branksome Park, a modest bungalow backing onto the pine-clad slopes of Branksome Chine. It needed to be on one level, as Edith's health was failing. Society photographer Lord Snowdon later took a now-famous portrait of Tolkien seated among the tangled tree roots of the chine, as close to Middle-earth as this corner of Dorset could offer. Snowdon reportedly described the bungalow as "curiously characterless", though Tolkien himself seemed content enough.

Edith died in 1971, prompting Tolkien's return to Oxford, though he continued to visit Bournemouth and friends locally. In August 1973, while staying in Meyrick Park, he was taken ill with a gastric ulcer and died shortly afterwards, aged 81.

Since the the scale of Tolkien's posthumous fame would likely have astonished him. The Lakeside Road bungalow, sold years earlier for £23,000, later made headlines when redeveloped. Items salvaged from the house have fetched remarkable sums including an Adam-style fireplace sold for more than £50,000. A signed first edition of *The Hobbit* recently achieved £137,000.

The books, films and spin-offs have generated billions worldwide. Yet one suspects Tolkien himself would have found such figures faintly absurd, another fantasy beyond even Middle-earth.

And here in Branksome Park and Bournemouth, a small part of that remarkable story quietly endures.

Reproduced from the Dorset Magazine January 2017, author unknown.



The Origins of Canford: From Domesday to Canford Cliffs

When we think of Canford Cliffs today we might picture elegant houses, the village atmosphere of Haven Road and sweeping sea views. Yet the story of Canford reaches far further back than the 19th century development most of us associate with the area.

Canford appears in the Domesday Book (1) of 1086 as Canford Magna, a substantial manor in the Hundred of Cogdean, held by Edward of Salisbury, one of the most powerful landowners in Norman England. With 87 households it ranked among the larger settlements in the survey and in the 11th century stretched from Wareham to Christchurch covering much of what we now know as Poole and Bournemouth.

The name likely has Saxon origins probably meaning “Cana’s ford”, a crossing of the River Stour (2). By 1198 the manor had passed through marriage to William Longspee, born out of wedlock to King Henry II and half brother to both Richard the Lionheart and King John.

A prominent figure in medieval England Longspee was present at the sealing of Magna Carta (3) and later granted Poole’s burgesses greater independence from the manor. His death in 1226, possibly by poisoning, adds a touch of drama to Canford’s early history.

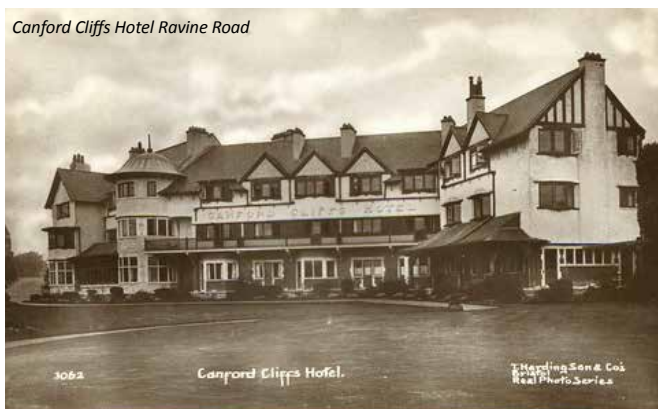


Over the centuries the manor changed hands many times. In 1611 Henry, Earl of Huntingdon, sold Canford to the Webb family, from whom it passed eventually to WFS Ponsonby, later Lord de Mauley, a name still recognised today in De Mauley Road Canford Cliffs and in the current holder of the title, Rupert de Mauley, who sits in the House of Lords.

By the 18th and early 19th centuries it had evolved from a medieval manor into a large landed estate. In 1805 the Great Canford Enclosure Act transferred more than 9,000 acres of common

land into private ownership, reshaping the landscape.

When Lady de Mauley died in 1844 the Canford estate was sold to Welsh ironmaster Sir Josiah John Guest for the then vast sum of £335,000 (£40m in today’s money). His wife Charlotte played a pivotal role in transforming the estate. She commissioned Sir Charles Barry, architect of the Houses of Parliament, to remodel Canford Manor into a dramatic Gothic mansion. Barry also designed the distinctive Lady Wimborne Cottages, many of which still grace the area. By 1874



the estate extended to 17,000 acres, one of the largest in Dorset. Today it’s much reduced and the manor itself has been home to Canford School since 1923.

While the manor flourished inland, Canford Cliffs remained largely wild and undeveloped until the 1880s. Its rugged coastline and heathland had deterred building and provided convenient cover for smugglers. The round Martello tower once stood above Canford Cliffs Chine, possibly to guard against French fleet or perhaps to keep an eye on illicit activity.

Everything changed around 1880 when a consortium of businessmen acquired the land and laid out the Canford Cliffs Estate as a planned development (4). Roads such as Cliff Road and The Esplanade were carefully designed, utilities installed and plots offered for sale. Special trains were even laid on from London Waterloo to bring prospective buyers who were greeted with lunch in a marquee before bidding on their future homes.



Within two decades the village was firmly established. Haven Road developed into a small but lively parade of shops serving a growing community of well heeled residents. By the early 20th century the area had earned the nickname “the Dorset Riviera”.

Among its more colourful residents was Lady Docker, the glamorous 1950s socialite, whose gold plated Daimler and yacht Shemara were familiar sights. She once said she always felt happy here, a sentiment many residents would echo today.

The area has inevitably evolved. Some grand houses have been replaced, the old Martello tower lost to cliff erosion and the Canford Cliffs Hotel destroyed during the Second World War.

One or two of the original houses survived, including Carkeel, which became the Norfolk Lodge Hotel and more recently The Anchorage on Haven Road. Yet the essential character remains: a desirable coastal village with a distinctive character of its own.

From Domesday manor to Dorset Riviera, Canford’s story is one of constant change yet enduring charm and fascination.

And that is surely part of its appeal.

Peter Schroeder
Chairman

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The Remarkable Mrs Louie Dingwall

In April 2023 a blue plaque was unveiled on the wall of the Beach Office at Sandbanks. It honours Louie Dingwall, racehorse trainer, transport pioneer and one of Poole's true characters.

Louie, who died in 1982 aged 89, spent much of her life on the Sandbanks peninsula. Long before it became associated with some of the country's highest property values, it was a quieter stretch of dunes, scattered villas, boatyards and basic beach huts. Between the harbour and the sea, Louie built her businesses and her reputation.

Her story begins during the First World War. As men went to the front, women stepped into roles previously closed to them. Louie served as a driver, earning a reputation for mechanical skill as well as nerve behind the wheel. She was among the early women to hold a PSV (public service vehicle) licence, no small achievement at the time and it's widely believed her Model

T Ford was gifted in recognition of her wartime service. After the war she settled in Sandbanks, initially living in one of the modest huts that lined the shore. Across the Haven at Bramblebush Bay, disabled veterans ran a boatyard; houseboats lay along the foreshore. It was a community rebuilding after conflict.

Louie quickly turned experience into opportunity. Starting with her Model T she developed a passenger service between Poole and County Gates, carrying visitors towards Westbourne and collecting holidaymakers from Bournemouth West, Branksome and Parkstone stations for local hotels. As tourism grew through the 1920s and 30s, so did her enterprise.

She later established what



became the only independent bus service operating within Poole, running between Upper Parkstone and Rossmore alongside the trams and Hants & Dorset buses. Louie's vehicles became a familiar sight. From property she acquired on Panorama Road she built stables behind her home and opened a garage with a petrol pump, a practical business as motoring increased locally. Most recently the site became the Panorama Bay Motor Company.

The Second World War brought restrictions to Sandbanks, but again Louie adapted. She provided taxi services for military officers stationed locally, calling at Salterns and sites connected with RAF Hamworthy, BOAC and RAF Transport Command. She and her husband also ran the Sandbanks Hotel which accommodated Marine officers

during the war years. Yet it was horse racing that would define her later life.

Louie bought her first racehorse in 1938 but after the war she fully committed to buying, breeding and training. With larger estates requisitioned, Sandbanks became an unlikely base for racehorses. There were no grass gallops so she exercised them along the beach at low tide, a sight some residents still recall: Louie riding across the sands in the early morning light.

Despite wartime shortages and staff being called up, her stables prospered. In 1941 she took on an 11 year old stable lad Gordon Richards, paying for his education while he learned his craft. He would go on to become Sir Gordon W Richards, one of Britain's most successful trainers and always credited Mrs Dingwall with giving him his start.

Over her career Louie trained 76 winners. One of her most successful horses Pink Stripes won five races on the flat and was placed twenty times. Leading jockeys including Lester Piggott, Willie Carson and Scobie Beasley rode for her and when the Jockey



The identity pass card which was required for Sandbanks when it was under strict military control. It shows Mrs Dingwall's Christian names as Louisa, Eileen and her distinguishing features as 5'7", grey hair, slight build. Interestingly by September 1940 she was 47 year of age meaning she was born in the Victorian times (1893)



Throughout her significant years in Sandbanks Mrs Louie Dingwall was a notable winner, both in her businesses and in racing circles



"Key character of Poole" who trained horses on beach recognised with blue plaque

Club granted women training licences in 1966, Louie was among the first in the country to hold one.

At the unveiling of her plaque in 2023 members of The Society for Poole described her as a "key

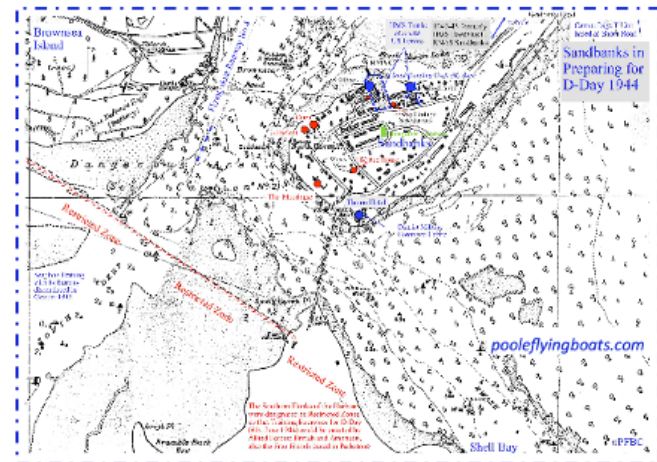
character". Timed to coincide with the Grand National at Aintree, the ceremony was an appropriate tribute for a woman who brought racing to the shores of Sandbanks.

Today as walkers cross the beach at low tide or pass the Beach Office bearing her plaque, it's worth remembering the remarkable Mrs Dingwall, entrepreneur, horsewoman and pioneer whose energy and determination left an indelible mark on our corner of Poole.

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With acknowledgement to local historian/author Andrew Hawkes also Tom Moore and June Topham.

View across Panorama Road to the Coastguard Coages and the RMYC boatshed from Mrs Dingwall's née Foott's bungalow with her garage forecourt and petrol pumps with her racing stables situated at the rear



Sandbanks preparing for D-Day 1944

An extraordinary life: pioneer Charles Rolls

On 12 July 1910, crowds gathered at Hengistbury Head for what was billed as the First International Aviation Meeting in the British Isles, a highlight of Bournemouth’s centenary celebrations. Among the daring aviators taking to the skies was the Hon. Charles Stewart Rolls and spectators watched in awe as he flew his Wright Flyer above them.

Then, without warning, the tailplane broke away. The aircraft crumpled and plunged to the ground. Soon after, Charles Rolls lay dead. He was just 32.

The accident cut short an extraordinary life. By the time of his death, Rolls’ achievements were outstanding, giving him recognition as both a motoring and aviation pioneer with a passion for adventure. Born in Berkeley Square, London, the third son of the 1st Baron Llangattock, Rolls showed an early fascination with engineering. At Eton College

he developed a keen interest in mechanical engineering, later studying mechanical and applied science at Cambridge. At just 18 he bought a 3.75 horsepower Peugeot Phaeton, the first car in Cambridge and made a name for himself.

With financial backing from his father and endless enthusiasm for motoring, Charles founded one of Britain’s earliest car dealerships, CS Rolls & Co in Fulham. In 1904 he was introduced to Henry Royce. It was an inspired partnership: Rolls brought charisma, connections and marketing flair; Royce



Charles Rolls motor racer

brought engineering brilliance and perfectionism. Together they created Rolls-Royce.

The first Rolls-Royce motorcar, the 10 horsepower model, was launched in December 1904. Just a few years later the Silver Ghost AX 201 established the company’s reputation for reliability. In 1907 one example famously completed a 15,000 mile endurance run with only a minor petrol pump fault and was soon hailed “the best car in the world.” Over a century later a Silver Ghost was described as “the most expensive car in the world,” selling for a reported \$75 million for a vehicle originally sold for £750.

But soon, with success behind him, Rolls needed a new project and lost interest in the company eventually resigning in 1909. Flying had captured his imagination.

At first Rolls took to the skies as a balloonist making more than 170 ascents.

In 1907 he tried to get Royce to design an aero engine but Royce

Fatal accident at Hengistbury Head



was more interested in cars. Rolls, a self-taught pilot, was determined to master powered flight and bought a Wright Bros Flyer. In June 1910 he achieved the first non-stop double crossing of the English Channel, taking only 95 minutes.

Which brings us back to that July day over Hengistbury Head. Rolls had recently modified the tail of his aircraft and when it

failed at around 80 feet, there was no chance of recovery. The photograph shows a policeman holding back the stunned crowd while friends stand weeping nearby. Rolls himself had expressed doubts about the course, remarking to the Daily Telegraph, “If I fall, I shall fall badly.”

For his family, the loss was devastating. Within a few

short years his broken hearted father died followed by two brothers in WWI and his sister, bringing an abrupt end to the family line.

More than a century later, Rolls’ connection with Bournemouth is not forgotten. In 2022 a commemorative display was unveiled near the Hiker Café at Hengistbury Head, marking the spot where this pioneering life ended. At the ceremony, a Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost, driven from Beaulieu, had the original timber wheels, produced before Rolls persuaded the company that spokes would be much better.

Though his life was brief Charles Rolls’ legacy, on road and in the sky, continues.

William A Hoodless



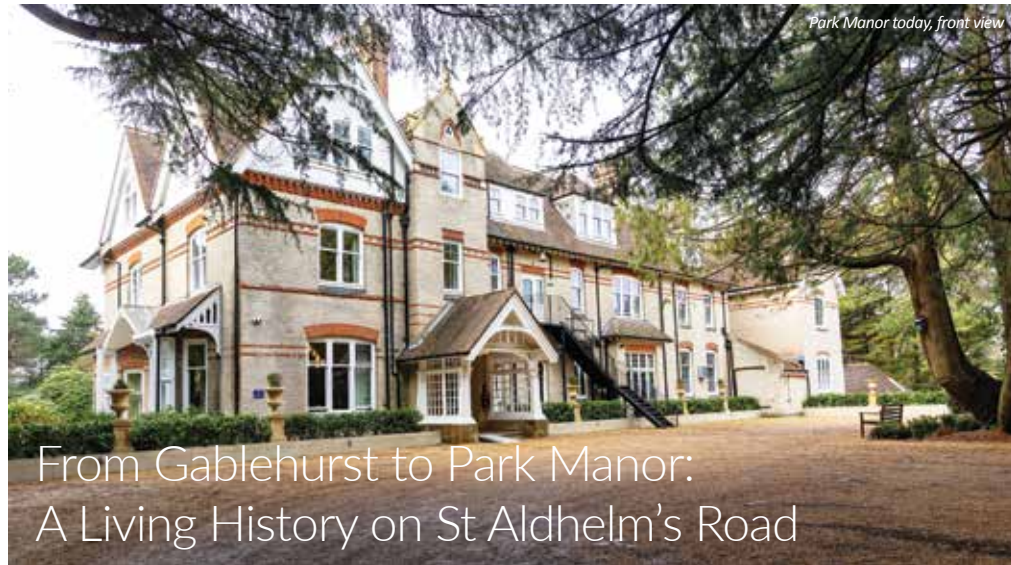
The Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost AX 201 at the time, considered to be the best car in the world



Charles Rolls and family (Charles top row)



Commemorative display



From Gablehurst to Park Manor: A Living History on St Aldhelm's Road

Park Manor at 8 St Aldhelm's Road is a prominent Victorian villa built around 1884 that has transitioned from private residence to convent and now operates as a care home.

Retaining original features including a Victorian conservatory and William Morris decor, it reflects the historical evolution of Branksome Park's large residential plots.

Set within leafy surroundings, Park Manor occupies a building whose history spans more than 140 years. It stands opposite

Claremont (Carmel House), formerly a Carmelite monastery and now part of Victoria School, a proximity that underlines the area's long association with faith, community life and care.

Built in the early 1880s as a private family residence, the house was originally known as Gablehurst. While its exterior

was relatively restrained, the interior was exceptionally rich, reputedly designed by William Morris. Features included marble fireplaces, Spanish mahogany panelling, fresco plasterwork, dentil carved oak and a striking mosaic entrance porch floor in a floral and leaf design, much of which can still be seen today.

Ownership records suggest the house was constructed between 1879 and 1882, possibly for Nancy Weeks Marsden-Smedley, a wealthy widow. Census records from 1891 show her living there with family and full domestic staff, offering a vivid snapshot of late Victorian life.

For around 60 years Gablehurst was associated with the Marsden-Smedley family, connected to the Derbyshire firm John Smedley Limited, founded in



St Mary's Convent, front view



St Mary's Convent, rear view



Gablehurst oak staircase

1784 and widely regarded as one of the world's finest producers of luxury knitwear, holding a Royal Warrant and still based at Lea Mills. Arthur Stanley Marsden-Smedley, a mill owner and director occupied Gablehurst from the early 20th century until the late 1930s. Listed in Who's Who in Dorset (1934) and a Justice of the Peace for Derbyshire, his residence here firmly links Branksome Park to a wider industrial and social history beyond Dorset.

After the Second World War the house became St Mary's Convent, used by a Catholic religious order

as a home for sisters, including those who were elderly or in poor health. Local memories and photographs still refer to the property by its convent name. The former chapel, largely unchanged, has since been sensitively repurposed as a cinema room in the care home.

In the early 1980s after the Order left, the building was converted into a residential care home, becoming Park Manor. Despite the later addition of a new wing, the main historic building remains largely unchanged and in good order.

Following extensive refurbishment in late 2023 and early 2024, the building reopened under new ownership, combining contemporary facilities with its Victorian architectural character.

From its beginnings as a family home, convent and care home, the building stands as a quiet but enduring witness to the social history of Branksome Park, a place shaped by domestic life, faith and care for well over a century.

Sharon Rayner



Window detail



Cinema room and stained glass windows

17th Century shipwreck excavated from Studland beach in race against the tide

Archaeologists from Bournemouth University have safely recovered a section of a 17th century shipwreck unexpectedly uncovered on Studland beach after winter storms exposed the historic timbers.

The team of maritime archaeologists, assisted by the National Trust's youth group made up of students from local schools, excavated the vessel on Thursday 19 February 2026, rescuing it from being destroyed by the sea.

The discovery was made at Knoll Beach at the end of January following Storm Chandra, which revealed remains believed to be a missing section of the Swash Channel wreck, an armed Dutch merchant vessel called the Fame of Hoorn that sank in 1631.

Further weeks of stormy weather left the timbers, hidden for 400 years, in danger of being broken

apart by heavy waves. This prompted archaeologists to speed up the recovery of the six metres of timber, thought to be from a midship hull section.

A race against the waves began shortly after 10 am as the sea started to go out. Large quantities of sand had to be cleared, along with dozens of sandbags, before the timbers could be prepared for lifting.

Curious half term holidaymakers looked on, as BBC cameras recorded the operation and drones were flown to document the rescue.

The structure was carefully separated into individual timbers before two tonnes of wood were logged, wrapped and removed from the beach on trailers. The remains have been transported to Bournemouth University's conservation laboratories where they will be preserved and eventually reassembled.



Model shows what the Fame would have looked like: red outline indicates the section of hull at Studland

Maritime archaeologist **Tom Cousins**, who led the dig, said:

"It is really exciting to find and save this piece of historical ship. During our excavation of the Swash Channel wreck in 2013, there were pieces missing and we believe a section of the hull has now been revealed at Studland. Tests on the timber will confirm that.

"In the early 17th century, the Dutch travelled to the Caribbean



in search of salt, which was central to their economy. Around 1620 they built a fort off Venezuela and shipped tonnes of salt back to the Netherlands. The Fame of Hoorn was sailing to collect it.

"It must have been caught in a storm and anchored out in Studland Bay near Old Harry, but the anchor couldn't hold. The ship was pulled into the bay, went aground and probably broke in half."

The Fame was about 40 metres long and capable of carrying up to 40 guns, although only five were found on the seabed when the main wreck was explored. She had a crew of 45 and remarkably everyone survived.

"When the ship started dragging her anchor, they likely got into small boats and came ashore and went to the Bankes Arms to wait



The timbers just showed up on the beach at low tide

for the storm to pass," added Tom Cousins.

"If the timbers were left on the beach, they would be covered by sand and destroyed by waves. By taking them to one of the largest conservation labs on the South Coast we can preserve them and learn more about how she wrecked and how ships were salvaged in the 1630s."

National Trust community volunteering coordinator **Jill Bailey** said young people from The Swanage School, The Purbeck School, Lytchett Minster and Parkstone Grammar had been invited to help.

"It's lovely that they have been able to take part in this important conservation project. It is on a different level to say you have helped uncover a 17th century ship after 400 years in the sand," she said.

It's hoped the excavated timbers will eventually go on display at Poole Museum in Dorset, which already houses artefacts recovered when divers explored the main wreck in 2013, including the carved wooden figurehead of the Fame.

Watch National Trust drone footage of rescue



Scan QR Code

Further information

You can read more about the shipwreck on Bournemouth University's website:



Scan QR Code

Article by Andrew Smith, first published in Swanage News, 20 February 2026.



Figurehead recovered in 2013 now in Poole Museum



The timbers fully revealed before being removed

The Bluetits

From one chilly dip to 3,700 Poole & Bournemouth Bluetits: how a sea swim became something so much more



Come and join us for a swim!

What all started with one slightly nervous woman (me), one October morning, just before COVID turned the world upside down.

Before I started swimming with the Bluetits, I swam on my own. There's something about standing on the shoreline, taking that deep breath and deciding to go for it, a personal challenge, a quiet moment, a cold water reset.

Before long a couple of friends from work asked to join me. Then a few more. And gradually, a little group of 12 of us were meeting regularly along the Poole and Bournemouth coastline. There was laughter. There were flasks. There was the occasional shriek when the water was particularly cold.

And then came the suggestion that changed everything.

That little group encouraged me to start a local branch of the Bluetits Chill Swimmers. I didn't want the responsibility at first but after some Zoom training evenings I decided to take the plunge. What happened next was beyond anything I imagined.

Today our Facebook group has grown to over 3,700 members, locals, holidaymakers and plenty of people building up the courage to come to their first swim. Around 100 of us form the regular core who turn up week in, week out, whatever the weather.

We mainly meet at Canford Cliffs or Alum Chine, brilliant spots for access and community but we're open to swims anywhere along the coastline. There's absolutely no pressure. No set distance, no set time, no dress code. It's your swim, you do what feels right for you, whether that's dipping a toe



for the first time or building up to longer swims and organised events.

Doing things we never thought possible

One of the most powerful things about the Bluetits has been confidence. So many of us are now doing things we would never have dreamed of before joining.

This summer six of us will be swimming the English Channel as part of a relay team and fundraising for cold water safety training along the way with the aim of having qualified coaches within our community. If you'd like to support us visit our GoFundMe page



Scan QR Code

In March several of our members headed to Finland to compete at the World Ice Swimming Championships. From nervous dippers to world championship competitors, we're so proud of every one of them!

Our energy hasn't gone unnoticed. We've featured in Dorset Life, appeared on local radio and went live on Lorraine for a feature on women and positive body image, and recently filmed by BBC South on cold water swimming. It still feels surreal. We just went for a swim!

Where it all began

The wider Bluetits movement started in Wales with **Sian Richardson** who began sea swimming as training for an ice mile- a mile in water of only 4-5°C. People saw her and wanted to join in, holidaymakers took the idea home and new groups formed across the country. The name "Bluetits" suits a community that swims all year round, including through winter... and yes we do get very chilly!

Cold water swimming brings real physical benefits, helping achy limbs, easing menopausal symptoms, improving circulation. But most of us will tell you the same thing: it makes us feel good. The post-swim high, the sense of achievement, the laughter. And most of all, the friendships.



People join after moving to the area knowing nobody or going through big life changes. Some say it's been life changing. I know it has been for me.

And the fun doesn't stop at the shoreline. We also have Tits Tots (our book lovers), Fit Tits (for the sporty ones), Crafty Tits (creative get togethers), Tits who Camp and brilliant bakers because there is very often cake.

Our group is inclusive and welcoming, mainly women but

we welcome men too. If you're nervous you don't even have to get in the water.

Just come down, say hello, and see how one chilly dip can become something truly special.



Find us on Facebook- search *Poole and Bournemouth Bluetits*

Our website www.thebluetits.co

Sarah Cleal
Poole and Bournemouth Bluetits



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Stairway to Heaven

This story starts some three decades ago, on our arrival in Dorset. We were seeking a small property with a large garden, considering several southern cities and towns. We found our bijou bungalow in Branksome Park (2 bed, in 0.75 acre). It was our ideal.

Warned it needed substantial building work around £30,000, we asked for and got the corresponding reduction; this was then 20% of the asking price. By the time we and the builder were looking at remedial work needed, it was clear that the assessment had been hugely overstated. Consequently we felt sorry for the 'old couple' (we were mere kids of 50 at the time).

So when they offered to sell us various items they no longer needed, we said yes to everything. Included was a wooden ladder, so riddled with woodworm that it would be unwise to put any weight on the first rung, never mind climb it.

What do you do with a wooden ladder you cannot climb? Various options spring to mind, of which "firewood" is favourite. But no. I sawed two pairs of 45° angles along its length, joining the three pieces. I then had a freestanding ladder which zigzagged heavenwards. A 'cloud' atop, shaped from sheet material. A



'Stairway to Heaven'. Perched on a stand by one of the woodland paths I was creating, it was a conversation piece. (Conversations such as, 'What the devil's that doing there?').

The ladder's title is inspired by the Led Zeppelin number, since I'm an old rocker (well, alright, 'old rock gardener'). It lasted a surprisingly long time, toppling occasionally and having various different stands, ultimately a cement block plinth. Crumbling away, I then constructed a replacement by acquiring another ladder. This brings me to the second half of my story . . .

My creation of named gardens at Coy Pond featured in the Winter 2025 edition. Last year, the latest steeply sloping site was cleared. It needed terracing to be able to plant on it. Centrally, I created a series of log steps, which led upwards, to nowhere in particular . . . perhaps heavenward? Challenged to 'name this garden', I recycled the title 'Stairway to Heaven'.

One of the volunteer gardeners was downsizing. Treasured objects kept 'in case they come in handy' were parted with, mostly destined for the dump. Once again there was a ladder on offer. Two in fact and each 12 feet long. Whilst I no longer aspire to such giddy heights, they knew my enthusiasm for misusing ladders. Once offered



to me, I very soon had four 6ft ladders. One as a replacement in my woodland and one for my new named garden.

As I write, I await the cessation of interminable January rains to instal this at the Coy Pond garden. Since this is on council land, I got BCP clearance under 'Elf and Safety' as it has been designed to minimise the enthusiasm of small boys to climb anything.

Both sites have the same inscription, a variation on the traditional saying . . .

You can take a horse anywhere but a Zeppelin should be led

David Reeves

Editor: come and meet David at the Friends of Coy Pond Plant Show and Art Sale May 4th at Coy Pond Garden 2pm – 4.30pm. All proceeds go towards maintaining and improving the gardens.

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The importance of Poole Harbour: Birds and Wildlife



Glossy Ibis

What's so special about that wide stretch of water a couple of miles down the hill from Branksome Park and Canford Cliffs? Yes, it's the second largest natural harbour in the world, covering 2,439 hectares but it's true importance goes far beyond size.

Poole Harbour supports livelihoods, leisure and an astonishing array of wildlife. Many people earn their living on or around the harbour: fishermen and shellfish growers, ferry crews, boat builders, marina staff, military personnel and the dedicated teams at the RNLI headquarters and lifeboat facility. Add to that the sailors, paddle boarders, kayakers and kite surfers and it's clear the harbour is central to local life.

But have you ever wondered why the north shore, from Sandbanks to Hamworthy, is developed, while the south side remains largely untouched? The answer lies in conservation. The harbour and surrounding heathlands are protected because of their exceptional importance for wildlife, particularly birds. Poole Harbour is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), a Special Protection Area (SPA) and a Ramsar-listed wetland of international importance. Each winter up to 35,000 birds migrate here. Some arrive from elsewhere

in the UK and Europe; others travel extraordinary distances from Iceland, Siberia and even Russia. In just the first few weeks of this year 151 different bird species were recorded in and around the harbour and that's before our summer visitors such as swallows and ospreys return.

Numbers of species vary dramatically. There may be just one or two, like Siberian Chiffchaffs spotted near Holes Bay, while flocks of Avocets gather in their hundreds. This winter an astonishing 3,453 Black Tailed Godwits from Iceland were individually counted at Holes Bay North by a very patient and experienced recorder. I was there a few days earlier and managed only "There are lots!"

On any given day you might find Glossy Ibis (most of which overwinter in Africa) feeding in the same area as White Fronted and Brent Geese from Russia. Occasionally even North American birds make an appearance. It's

an extraordinary meeting place of continents right on our doorstep.

And it's not just birds. Children aboard the popular Birds of Poole Harbour school boats are often thrilled to spot seals, up to five are regularly seen, and the distinctive Sika. You may have glimpsed these elegant deer around the harbour or on the Isle of Purbeck.

Sika are originally from Japan, in fact "Sika" simply means "deer", so technically we're saying "deer deer"! They were introduced to Brownsea Island in the 19th century.

One popular tale, and my favourite, suggests that their owners woke one morning to discover they had vanished- no one had told them that Sika can swim! Today there are thousands, many of which can be seen in the harbour's reed beds and saltings. Poole Harbour is far more than a scenic backdrop. It is a working landscape, a wildlife sanctuary and a place of quiet wonder.

If this inspires you to explore, please do but tread gently, especially in spring when many birds are nesting and raising young.

We're fortunate to have such richness so close to home.

Trevor Meacock



Avocet



Sika






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Gimme Gimme Gimme

Looking back on the Marshmallow Experiment

Imagine a four year old alone in a room with a single, sugary marshmallow and a simple unbearable choice: eat it now or wait 15 minutes to get two. This iconic late 1960s Stanford experiment by Walter Mischel became a cornerstone of psychology, demonstrating that the ability to delay gratification, ignoring immediate temptation for future gain, is a powerful predictor of success and better life outcomes.

Known as the Marshmallow Experiment this self-control test was on groups of four and five year olds. The deal was to take one sweet whilst Mischel was out of the room.

But the children were not told how long he would be out of the room. Nor were they aware the experiment was being filmed. Several children covered their eyes or kicked the table hoping Mischel would return quickly. A few succumbed, swiftly grabbing the treat.

Most held out for about three minutes. Nearly a third managed to last the full test of 10-15 minutes duration that varied slightly according to the group.

The aim was to identify the mental processes that enable some children to delay gratification whilst others capitulate. In follow up studies between 1968 and 1974 Mischel concluded that most who held out experienced greater positive self-esteem and wellbeing with better attainment at school and in life generally.

Those caving in were prone to behavioural problems at home and school and tended not to have lasting friendships. Stressful situations were more difficult

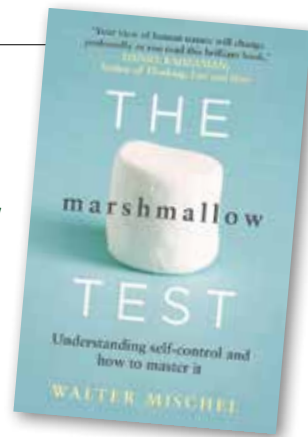
and so was concentration. Higher susceptibility to obesity was also mentioned.

The key to understanding the test lies in what Mischel refers to as two systems of the brain similar to Daniel Kahneman's book, *Thinking Fast and Slow*. Mischel described this as 'hot' thinking which is simple, quick, reflexive and emotional, in contrast to 'cool' thinking that is rational and reflective. The latter prefer to mull over options and consider the context and consequences.

Research findings can be applied to today, such as doing homework with little if any prompting, avoiding a minimalist approach, being punctual, keeping within budget and thinking ahead. There is also something here about goal setting, determination and suppressing any impulse of 'I want it and I want it now.'

Years ago, friends tried this on their three. A team approach sounded impressive. So did resisting for 15 minutes. Fatal flaws were an age range of 4-10, Belgian chocs as an incentive and a pliable Dad, thought likely to opt for a shortish duration.

"Double or quits," the group chorused. "Do it three times Dad. Let's see if we can hold out for two hours at least." In prospect were



16 mouthwatering chocolates each! An expensive experiment was rapidly abandoned and not repeated.

The Mischel study came in for criticism as other factors might be involved, such as home upbringing and group dynamics. Firm conclusions are often difficult to draw in social research. Correlation can be deceptive and even misleading. Yet Mischel's study appears compelling, highlighting the importance of mental resilience.

More recent research published in 2018 in *Psychological Science* suggests the picture is more nuanced. In an updated version of the Marshmallow Experiment studying around 900 children researchers found that although there were modest benefits for those who waited the long term effects were far smaller than first reported and largely faded by adolescence.

The studies above do make one thing clear: success in nearly every field requires you to ignore doing something easier (delaying gratification) in favour of doing something harder (doing the work and putting in your "reps").

Stuart Sherring

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Turning over many a new leaf

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council provides an efficient website for reporting blocked drains, damaged roads and obstructed rights of way. Many residents have found that when a drain is clogged or a footpath blocked, action usually follows in due course.

Yet each autumn another issue quietly creeps up the agenda: pavements thick with fallen leaves.

This is not confined to our leafier lanes. Even main thoroughfares, once smartly presented with neat verges and welcoming daffodils, can look tired and litter-strewn after a blustery week. The main approaches into Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole are sometimes less of the attractive welcome we would wish for and more an accidental collection point for windblown debris.

In residential areas the large road sweepers still make their rounds, much to the alarm of local dogs who recognise the flashing lights long before we do. Whilst these machines are effective on the roads the pavements are another matter. Thick layers of damp leaves and mulch often sit beyond their reach, particularly during

peak leaf fall. Smaller pavement sweepers do exist though they're more commonly seen in busy shopping areas than in suburban streets.

The result? Sections of pavement that feel awkward, even treacherous, to negotiate. Parents with pushchairs, those using walking aids, runners and dog walkers can all find themselves edging into the road. It's no surprise that at this time of year, conversations turn to responsibility. After all, while councils cannot control the seasons, they do have a duty to ensure public spaces remain reasonably safe.

Our local councillors are well aware of the issue. One even offered, broom in hand, to tackle a troublesome stretch personally. Elsewhere in the country there have been suggestions that home owners should clear the



pavement adjoining their property either themselves or using a gardening service.

That proposal raises interesting questions about practicality, fairness and neighbourliness.

Then there is the modern phenomenon of the leaf blower. Used wisely it's a helpful tool; clearing a chine path by blowing leaves safely into the undergrowth or keeping steps and driveways from becoming slippery. Used less thoughtfully it can simply relocate the problem from garden to driveway and from driveway to ▼



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It's the care that counts...

road. It's difficult not to notice how often leaves appear to have been "redistributed" rather than collected. There are environmental considerations too. Scientists have pointed out that frequent use of powerful fuel driven blowers can disturb or harm small creatures at a time when we are all more aware of biodiversity in our gardens. In parts of the United States regulations govern the use of such equipment, encouraging quieter electric alternatives that are less intrusive.

scatter them over borders to enrich the soil or leave a modest pile in a corner for wildlife. Many residents already do this - a quiet, practical contribution to both safety and sustainability.

So when the leaves drift down again and the sweepers hum, perhaps the answer lies somewhere between council machinery and neighbourly common sense, with a compost heap quietly doing its work at the bottom of the garden.

Perhaps the simplest solution remains the oldest: gather leaves into compost heaps,

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Smile a while

William Shakespeare walks into a pub. Landlord says "Get out you bard!"

Man went to the doctors with a steering wheel down his underpants, "what happened?". He said- "I don't know but it's driving me nuts".

I recently stayed in the YMCA. It was OK but I wouldn't make a song and dance about it.

My torch broke so I took it to a repair shop run by four German brothers, all called Hans . . . Many Hans make light work!

Went to the doctors today, he said "what's the problem?". I said "I keep feeling like I'm an ocean". He replied "can you be more Pacific?"

Accidentally paid for dinner with my organ card. It cost me an arm and a leg.

I was bidding for a wigwam on Ebay but I didn't get it. Someone put in a Hiawatha.



I've just invented a bird proof lid for milk bottles . . . it's impeccable

I met her when she worked at a zoo. I looked at her longingly in her uniform and thought. She's a keeper.

If laziness was an Olympic sport I'd come in fourth so I wouldn't have to walk up to the podium.

How do you stop bacon from curling in your pan? You take away their little brooms

I can cut a piece of wood in half just by looking at it. You might not believe me but I saw it with my own eyes.



I asked the guy at the sweet shop why I could hear crying coming from one of the shelves . . . he said "that's a sensitive Topic".

Ever since I drew a wristwatch on my arm with a ballpoint pen, I've been living on biroed time.

Just sitting here, eating a bag of crisps, and on the back of it said not to be sold separately. I thought - who would buy one crisp?

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Canford Cliffs Ave	Martello Road
Canford Cliffs Road (Even Nos)	Martello Road South
Canford Cliffs Road (Odd Nos. 3-67)	Maxwell Road
Canford Cliffs Road (Odd Nos. 69-99)	Moorfields Road
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Chaddesley Glen	Nairn Road
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Chaddesley Wood Road	Oratory Gardens
Chaucer Road	Ormonde Road
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Chesterfield Close	Pine Drive
Cliff Drive	Pinewood Road
Clifton Road	Ravine Road
Compton Avenue	Sandbourne Road
Compton Drive	Spencer Road
Compton Gardens	Spur Hill Ave
Dalkeith Road	St Aldhelms Close
De Mauley Road	St Aldhelms Road
Dover Road/Close	St Clair Road
Eaton Road	The Avenue
Elgin Road	Tower Road
Elmstead Road	Tower Road West
Ettrick Road	Ventry Close
Flaghead Road	Western Avenue
Forest Road	Western Road
Frankland Cres	Westminster Road
Haig Avenue	Westminster Road East
Haven Road	Widdicombe Ave
Haydon Road	Wilderton Road
Lakeside Road	Wilderton Road West

Councillors

CANFORD CLIFFS WARD GAVIN WRIGHT

Party: Conservative
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MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR POOLE

NEIL DUNCAN-JORDAN (INDEPENDENT)

(He,Him,His)
Foundry, 10 The Dolphin Centre,
Poole BH15 1SR
Tel: 07547 777735
Email: neil.duncanjordan.mp@parliament.uk

POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR DORSET

David Sidwick
www.dorset.pcc.police.uk

Answers for: How well do you know your local area? (Page ??)

- 1 Sign on Berkeleys estate agency, Canford Cliffs
- 2 Poole Quay
- 3 Branksome Chine just behind All Saint's Church
- 4 Packe family mausoleum, Branksome Dene Chine
- 5 Baden-Powell statue, Poole Quay
- 6 Parkestone golf course (from the top of a bus!)
- 7 Part of the Sea Music sculpture on Poole Quay

Aldridge Brownlee Solicitors



At the Heart of the Community

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Highcliffe
Christchurch
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