

# The BRISTOLIAN

"Smiter of the High and Mighty"

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## BLACKLIST BAN!

*Council finally calls time on sickening anti-safety bosses - but will Mayor Fergo take notice?*

After a long fight led by determined construction workers, Bristol City Council in early September voted to **END THE GRAVY TRAIN** of juicy local authority contracts for firms that profit out of 'blacklists'.

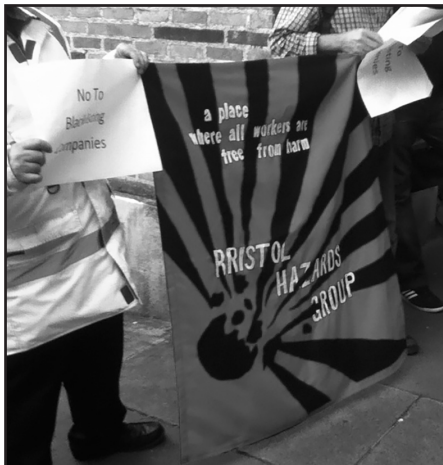
With blacklisting, construction giants like McAlpine secretly trade **ILLEGAL FILES** on 'troublesome workers' - the ones that kick up a fuss over inadequate safety - and keep them out of a job.

Whilst the new council policy won't affect private sector projects - such as the building of Cabot Circus, where building boss **CULLUM MCALPINE** admits his company blacklisted brickies and sparks from the site due to whistleblowing on safety issues - it could help workers running council services.

As we revealed in *The Bristolian* #4.4 back in June, **KIER GROUP** - now responsible for Bristol's household waste collections after it bought up May Gurney - has a proven record as a

key contributor to the blacklisting database.

Thanks to the **LONG-RUNNING PICKET** of May Gurney's depots by blacklisted workers, union activists and local campaign Bristol



Hazards Group that put the blacklist issue onto the table, Kier may yet lose that lucrative council rubbish collection contract...

Focus now shifts to McAlpine's fellow Merchant Venturer, millionaire mayor George Ferguson and his own **CAVALIER APPROACH TO HEALTH AND SAFETY**.

It was Mayor Fergo's outspoken disregard for safety that helped cost cyclist Sean Phillips his life in March (see *The Bristolian* #4.3), and in 2009 his deathtrap 'Millennium Mast' in the Centre had to be dismantled over fears pieces could fall off and cause fatalities.

And did we mention his fast-becoming-legendary **CONTEMPT** for ordinary bar workers at his image-over-substance hipster venues like The Tobacco Factory, #1 Harbourside and Canteen?

*So whether Gorgeous George actually honours the blacklist ban, or throws his weight behind his corner-cutting rich building boss pals, is still not entirely clear...*

## FRESH HORSE FLESH SCANDAL AT 'POST' AWARDS

For **TROUBLED CHARITY** HorseWorld (see *The Bristolian* #4.3) the race to the bottom is not yet over if whispers emanating from within the equine charity's Whitchurch Führerbunker are anything to go by...

Shortlisted for an almost-coveted *Bristol Post* Business Award, the Horseworld management team forgot about their financial troubles and cut loose at the Awards dinner earlier this Summer. Hey, who wouldn't jump at the **CHANCE TO HOBNOB** with red-blooded red trouser fetishist Mayor Fergo and other high-falutin', self-regarding members of the Bristol business community?

So off trotted HorseWorld managing director Mark 'Not That One' Owen - plus the whole senior management team and even the chair of trustees - to bask in the recognition of their particular brand of business genius.

Like others attending they made copious use of the microblogging service Twitter to report on events - and as the vino flowed, the messages got raunchier. At a **SURPRISINGLY EARLY** 9:45pm came a particularly eye-catching tweet from the official Horseworld Trust account: "Nikki has promised to streak if we get 10 RTs [retweets] or a donation on table 18"...

The 'Nikki' in question is none other than Nikki Bridges, the charity's high-earning Finance Director - the woman in charge of accounts in an organisation **HAEMORRHAGING MONEY** ever since Owen took up the reins. Possibly not the most becoming behaviour for a charity bean-counter.

Her boss Owen didn't even have the common sense to delete the **OFFENDING TWEET** afterwards. Much, it appears, to the annoyance

of several trustees and donors who now suspect their money is being used less to support needy steeds and all too often in funding boozy gala dinner nosh-ups for Horseworld's MD and his underperforming pals.

It is also notable that while the Finance Director seems **WILLING TO STRIP** for cash, the day job has been suffering. The Charity Commission reveals that three-quarters of the way through 2013, Horseworld has yet to submit its annual accounts for the previous year. In 2012 they filed by May - and reported a staggering £647,000 loss. Could the current reporting delay be in any way connected to an even deeper **FINANCIAL BLACKHOLE**?

*Oh, and by the way, Horseworld won in its award category - for (yes, you've guessed it) 'Communicator of the Year'.*

Visit **TheBRISTOLIAN.net** for the latest news!

## BRISTOLIANBITES

### LOCKDOWN ON PORTWAY

Not content with trying to evict people for being too poor under Bedroom Tax provisions, now the council is placing elderly tenants with disabilities under **HOUSE ARREST** – and charging them full rent for the privilege.

The shocking situation has unfolded in Shirehampton's **VALERIAN CLOSE**, where Bovis Homes Ltd has been building new council homes to replace old prefabs. Typically everything has not run to schedule.

Whilst all 21 properties have now been completed, the road and pathways remain untarmaced – **TRAPPING RESIDENTS**, several of whom cannot walk unaided, in their homes, and preventing carers from being able to properly access the houses.

*Is this any way to treat our Bristolian elders?*

### JAMA DRAMA DING-DONG

It seems that the memo explaining how Mayor Fergo is a great feminist activist has not reached every corner of Shitty Hall, if one recent public falling out is anything to go by.

Labour's Lawrence Hill councillor Hibaq Jama ended up in a toe-to-toe barney with the millionaire mayor – noted for his passionate interest in 'women's issues' – after a discussion over female genital mutilation (FGM) turned notably sour.

"I can't stand that man!" declared Jama to anyone within earshot after an argument with His Redtrouserness, whom she accused of being a **"PATRONISING SEXIST"**.

The situation is further complicated by Gorgeous George's closeness to energetic FGM campaigner Nimko Ali, who has rarely been shy about her **CONTEMPT** for Jama and Bristol Labour.

Meanwhile, with very real concerns about Cllr Jama's time as a manager at the Beacon Centre still swirling around, it seems some ham-fisted political hacks have been touting round an implausible Romeo and Juliet-style fiction linking her to a **FAILED** mayoral candidate.

*Is that the greenfingering hand of a certain Fergo cabinet sidekick we detect there?*

### MUD, SWEAT & TEARS..?

As the October deadline looms for public submissions on the 'Central Area Action Plan' (which will seal the fate of Castle Park and decide just how much of the city centre green space will be covered in **CONCRETE**) the forthcoming Tokyo Dub music festival will be an interesting test of the council's resolve.

Having won a reprieve for its turn-it-into-a-shopping-mall strategy with the knocking back of the Town Green application in 2009, Bristol City Council has since tried to tread softly with the passionate Park Users' Group.

But how wise is renting out the popular urban park – despite all the public rights of access involved – to a £30-a-head commercial event **LESS THAN A MONTH** before the CAAP consultation closes?

Given infamous local unwillingness to spend money to get into public spaces, and with just sixty security (85% of them from that well-known Bristol neighbourhood **BRIGHTON**) to watch over a licensed crowd of 5,000 with only rickety Heras fencing to contain them, it could get rather messy.

*And not just if it rains...*

# BEDROOM TAX BRASSNECK

## Council in evictions brewery/piss-up non-shocker

Chaos reigns at Bristol City Council over its policy on the **HATED BEDROOM TAX**...

After councillors across the board **REJECTED** their own cross-party report produced by the Greens' Sir Gus Hoyty-Toyty, esteemed Cabinet Member for Big Promises & Sharp U-Turns.

Hoyty-Toyty's report proposed **SCRAPPING** the 'no eviction' policy the city has had since the introduction of the tax because "it is not easy to distinguish between an inability to pay as a result of the introduction of the bedroom tax and inability to pay as a result of other circumstances" – though it would seem like a simple matter of arithmetic to most people.

He was also concerned a 'no eviction' policy would be "unfair and would affect the services of those tenants, often on low incomes, who do pay". An interesting argument, this: 'We need to be unfair to people in order to be fair!'

He further argued such a policy "could be unlawful" – though he provided **NO LEGAL OPINION** to back this up. Perhaps he heard it down the (organic craft ale) pub?

And finally, for his pièce-de-résistance, Hoyty-Toyty decided "a clear statement" needed to be made to the poor "to ensure the importance of paying rent is understood by all tenants".

Excellent. We're all for clear statements at *The Bristolian* so here's one for Hoyty-Toyty: **FUCK OFF and STOP PATRONISING US you OVERPRIVILEGED LITTLE TWAT.**

Hoyty-Toyty was then supposed to present this steaming pile of moralising bullshit to a council meeting last Tuesday. But alas, he had to go to "an important engagement on behalf of the mayor", or **'JOLLY TO NORWAY'**, depending on your point of view.

Cue **UPROAR** in the council chamber as the Lib Dems demanded that the report was brought back in December so Hoyty-Toyty could explain himself.

The Labour Party demanded a vote to continue

the 'no eviction' policy – slightly odd as their party colleagues in Leeds voted to scrap their own 'no eviction' policy the very next day; Hoyty-Toyty's Green colleague Tess Green, despite being on the committee with him and agreeing the report, reputedly backed Labour; while independently-minded Mayor Fergo independently mused out loud that he was minded to independently scrap 'no evictions' as no other core city was doing it so why should we? The Tories, meanwhile, were presumably just pissing themselves laughing...

And the result? Er, nobody's quite sure. Although a non-binding vote was passed by councillors to return to the report in December while Mayor Fergo indicated he would take a decision sometime, possibly after consulting with his cabinet colleagues... Assuming he can find a time when they're not all gallivanting around Europe **AT PUBLIC EXPENSE.**

*What a total shambles.*



### SORRY, CHUMS!

I'm away on a super all-expenses paid holiday terrifically important fact-finding mission for George at the moment, so I can't file my usual musings on life in the engine-room of modern local democracy.

It's all a bit hush-hush, but George assures me that once my suntan has faded and all that business about the Bedroom Tax fiasco has been forgotten he'll let me come back and share with you all the exciting things I've learned about solar-powered cyclo-juggling.

Toodle pip!

# EASTON'S COMMUNITY CENTRE COUP

What do Easton Community Centre, Burma and Colombia all have in common? None of them like trade unions and all use **THREATS** to stop people organising for better conditions.

A number of ECC staff are members of the IWW trade union. For some time the union has been trying to negotiate with ECC's charity board of management – in particular on the issue of health and safety at the centre, which workers say is **"FRANKLY APPALLING"**.

At one meeting of the ECC board they promised to recognise the union as per the law. However, they quickly changed their minds, saying they would talk again after an asset transfer from Bristol City Council was complete...

Meanwhile the board has not managed to implement any of the proposed health and safety improvements. Instead they have **SACKED** a worker (a union member) for not being able to turn off a fire alarm while working on his own – which itself is a breach of the most basic of

health and safety regulations!

The union, in desperation, put a post on the Bristol IndyMedia website to highlight the situation workers there find themselves in, only for the community centre's management to react quicker than they ever have done before – with a threat of an **EXPENSIVE LEGAL ACTION**...

Great! Meet the charity that's prepared to use its grant monies and public funding to gag a trade union and its own employees rather than spend money on complying with basic health and safety legislation. What the board possibly hadn't taken into consideration is that locals concerned by these worrying developments can easily join Easton Community Association (membership forms available at the centre or on the ECC website) and put a stop to them.

As one person close to the shenanigans advised *The Bristolian*:

*"Get stuck in and don't let them transfer our community centre."*



# REVEALED: COUNCIL BOSSES' SECRET PLAN TO BACK TORIES!

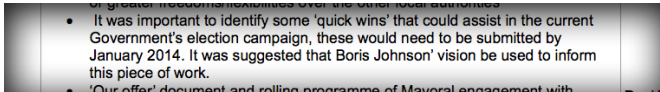
*Senior BCC officers implicated in sick election plot*

More illuminating news about the gang of over-paid **RIGHT-WING DEADBEATS** Bristol City Council calls its Senior Leadership Team...

Bristol City Council employees have contacted *The Bristolian* to express anger and amazement after discovering that the council's most senior and well-paid managers have been plotting to use council taxpayer cash and resources to **SUPPORT THE TORY PARTY** come the general election!

was suggested that Boris Johnson' [sic] vision be used to inform this piece of work."

Just what relevance London's Tory mayor Boris Johnson has for people in Bristol isn't made clear - after all we have our own privately-educated **MAYORAL BUFFOON** to contend with. But what is clear is that these management muppets are brazenly breaking the law by promoting their own personal allegiances whilst in what are meant to be politically neutral roles.



At a recent meeting, members of the council's Senior Leadership Team openly discussed how they could help to get the Conservative-LibDem coalition government re-elected.

In their own words they think it's "important to identify some 'quick wins' that could assist in the current Government's election campaign, these would need to be submitted by January 2014. It

Matters are made worse by the fact that the government these unelected managers **SECRETLY CONSPIRE** to support is wrecking local government and the safety net of the welfare state.

The very things you'd think Bristol's council officers should be protecting for its citizens.

*There's only one solution for this kind of shameless behaviour - sack these barmy bosses NOW!*

# RUBBISH JOBS: CITIZEN ZERO HAS ZERO CLUE ON ZERO HOURS

*Ferguson flannel can't hide the truth on crap contracts*

Our blue skies imagineering property magnate, hipster entrepreneur, millionaire mayor George Ferguson is at it again.

In a recent reply to questions on Bristol City Council's use of **ZERO-HOURS CONTRACTS** - where employers offer you a job but don't actually guarantee any work - he half-heartedly explained: "in respect of contractors, I cannot give you a definitive assurance that zero hours contracts are never used."

Perhaps Mayor Fergo - or rather the lackey that writes his answers for him to read out - should be a little more inquisitive about the conduct of his

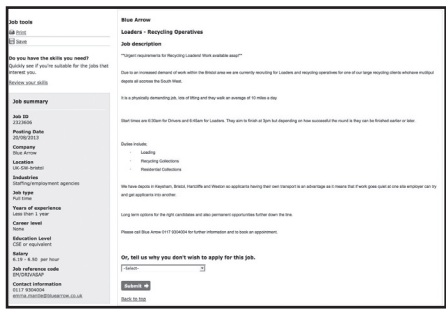
council's contractors. Because *The Bristolian* is happy to give our readers a 'definitive assurance' that they do use zero-hour contracts.

In fact at the exact time George published his pathetically weak answer, **NOTORIOUS** employment agency Blue Arrow was advertising on the government's Universal Jobmatch website for "Recycling Operatives in the "Bristol area" for "one of our large recycling clients who have mutilipal depots all across the South West" (sic).

A brief phone call to Blue Arrow reveals that this particular 'large recycling client' is none other than **MAY GURNEY** - operating waste services for the city council - and confirms that it's a zero hour contract on offer. Blue Arrow even helpfully add: "own transport is an advantage as it means that if work goes quiet at one site employer can try and get applicants into another."

How nice. An employer running public services that might find you some work - somewhere - if you can get there - if not, you don't get paid! Great for **MISERLY BOSSES**, but not such a great offer for someone trying to sign off, though...

*Yet another feather in the cap for Fergo's supposed international city of cool, don't you think?*



# BRISTOLIAN BITES

## BCC BLOCKS BRISTOLIAN!

Word reaches us that council staff are now denied access to their favourite super soaraway scandal-sheet after Shitty Hall bosses **BLOCKED** access to *The Bristolian* website.

It seems that due to the constant stream of revelations about acts of incompetence, corruption and idiocy committed under Mayor Fergo's '**REIGN OF ERROR**', embarrassed senior BCC managers decided to pull the plug on the 'Smiter's site - effectively banning council workers from reading *The Bristolian*.

*In the words of a whistleblower: "Ridiculous!"*

## NAZILIST SHAME OF 'POST'

Oh my aching sides... *Post* editor Mike 'No Balls Goebbels' Norton and his crack news team (three interns plus his nephew on work experience) are backing an Avon & Somerset Constabulary campaign against 'anarchists'.

It follows the £16 million-worth of 'little local difficulties' recently experienced at the PFI police gun shack near Portishead - currently just a smouldering heap - which led Gollum-like Chief Constable Nick Gargan and former pastie-dealing Police & Crime Commissioner Sue Mountstevens to announce a big crack-down on "**DOMESTIC EXTREMISTS**".

The low-key announcement by the cops that they were about to wage war against "DE criminals" was just the green light Goebbels - who fancies himself as a sort of local version of Jeremy Clarkson by way of General Pinochet - needed to work up a good frothy rant.

Anarchists now join NIMBYS, cyclists, anti-supermarket campaigners, crusties, socialists, feminists, environmentalists, vegetarians, young people, drug users, clubbers, hippies, students, the jobless, the poor, the elderly, those with disabilities and anyone off a council estate on Goebbels' growing **LIST OF HATE**.

It's starting to look like his enthusiasm for football stadiums extends beyond an interest in sporting prowess.

*It might be easier for Goebbels to state simply what he's in favour of - or should he save himself the bother and just stick a swastika on the front of his newsletter?*

## SCHEME GONE BANANAS

A reader has got in touch to tell us about the **LUNACY** surrounding the 'Healthy Start' programme, which is meant to ensure that less well-off mums can buy fruit, veg and milk.

To qualify you have to prove you're not rich, that you claim certain benefits, and that you are either pregnant or have a young child. To do the last bit you need to get a signed note from your GP or health visitor.

Except thanks to creeping privatisation in the NHS, local surgeries can now charge you for this 'service', as our informant found out.

The cost of a doctor's note to claim £3.10 weekly vouchers? A whopping £30-40.

*"Outrageous!" is the polite way she put it...*

# The BRISTOLIAN

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# THE BIG B.I.D. CON?

## Tory rat's personal 'fiefdom' paid for by YOU - thanks to lax council management

Bristol's city councillors voted en masse in early September to reject a retail levy on large supermarkets "preferring instead to support Business Improvement Districts" (BIDs).

Well, how about our councillors get their collective head out of their collective arse before taking these decisions?

For all has not been well in leafy and affluent Clifton Village - and the source of this trouble? None other than the Clifton Business Improvement District, where traders have been charged an extra 1.5% on top of their business rates by Bristol City Council for "improvements".

The man originally selected to run this flagship BID was one Carl Francis 'Uncle' Pester, a North Somerset Conservative councillor and election agent for Liam Fox - though he has had quite a few 'issues' with his Party...

Having been appointed to run the BID in January, Uncle Pester was never seen by traders and there was little evidence of 'improvements'

around Clifton Village to show for the money. However, cash was handed over to the famously impoverished Catholic Church to fund Clifton Cathedral's forthcoming 40th anniversary celebration. Traders were said to be "not happy".

Further research on Uncle Pester reveals that just two years ago, while a North Somerset Councillor, he was subject to a liability order granted by North Somerset Magistrates for £904.69 in unpaid council tax to, err ...North Somerset Council. Not only that, he was also taken to court by Wessex Water and ordered to pay £825!

Meanwhile, as both President and Chair of North Somerset Conservative Association, Pester was the subject of a disciplinary process after locals raised concerns about his management. A disciplinary report from Tory HQ noted that Uncle Pester had awarded himself free office space at the Association's HQ, and held him responsible for

a dodgy minibus purchase. As the redfaced report authors put it:

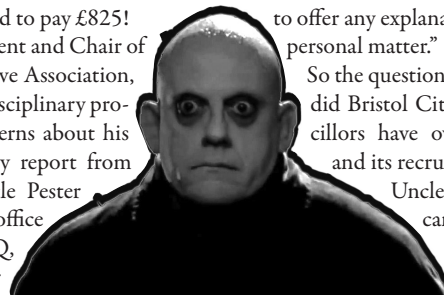
"The Association has lost considerable money as a result."

The report also says Pester ran the Association "in an inappropriate way treating it as his personal fiefdom" and barred him from holding office in the Tory Party for three years.

Pester dramatically quit the BID post in June and the Clifton BID Board offered the explanation that "it would be inappropriate for the board to offer any explanation as it is a private and personal matter."

So the question that needs to be asked is did Bristol City Council and its councillors have oversight over this BID and its recruitment process - and was Uncle Pester really the best candidate for the job?

*We think we deserve to be told...*



# THE X BOSS FILES



**#1: PAIDWELL: "SO LONG AND THANKS FOR ALL THE CASH!"**

**ZERO LOSS** *The Bristolian* learns that **ANGIE 'PAIDWELL' RIDGWELL** - the former KPMG consultant who in the space of just nine months notched up three senior job titles at Bristol City Council (Corporate Services Director, City Director and now Organisational Development Director) and pocketed a tasty **SIX FIGURE SALARY** off the council tax payer - is quitting at the start of November, 'to spend more time with her money'.

Riding into town in her top-of-the-range BMW, the dazzling redhead turned many a head, not least that of Mayor 'Gorgeous' George Ferguson - especially when she whispered into his ear how 'very effective in delivery transformation in challenging and heavily unionised environments' she was. But alas, the relationship has soured and a permanent separation now seems inevitable.

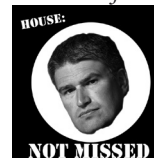
Ms Paidwell appears to be taking her ball home after not getting the permanent City Director top job that's gone to Hull's Nicola 'Lady Gaga' Yates, and so is heading off for the glamour of central government in That There London as she becomes Director General for Finance and

Corporate Services at the Department of Energy. This leaves Gorgeous George and our council rather redfaced and in the lurch.

For Ms Paidwell is the person running George's "zero-based budget process" that's been shrouded in the utmost secrecy (see *The Bristolian* #4.4), quite possibly because it's **COMPLETE TOSH**.

So isn't it nice to know that when this corporate accountant claptrap eventually sees the light of day in November and is introduced to George's unbelieving staff and public, its chief architect will be gone - along with £100k of our money!

*So much for accountability in public office...*



**#2: 'MAD' HOUSE IN PRIVATE SECTOR!**

**NOT MISSED** News comes in that our old friend ex-copper **JON 'MAD' HOUSE** has fucked up again. House, you might recall, briefly pitched up in Bristol at the height of the profligate Council House reign of Bradford Sun Queen Jan Ormondroyd, when she annointed him as her Deputy Chief Exec on a ridiculous six-figure salary to play a **DAFT TOUGH GUY** enforcer role.

Alas, all Mad House ever enforced was his own speedy exit after the application of his copper's intellect resulted in a series of blunders and

embarrassments - and at least one mini-riot in Queen Square during the 2010 World Cup - too enormous for even the half-blind and braindead Sun Queen to ignore.

Arriving in Bristol in 2009, House was off again in 2010 to Cardiff where the local political idiots gave him the job of Chief Executive of their city council. Now House is making yet another fast exit after yet more **COSTLY BLUNDERS** - it appears his elegant new local authority staff structure, designed to save lots of money for the citizens of Cardiff, resulted in £1m extra a year to council tax payers - while his senior management team have all pocketed 20% pay rises!

Just days after House was forced to throw in the towel, further ignominy for the hapless copper came when a report by the Welsh Local Government Association into his basketcase council identified "**SIGNIFICANT FAILINGS**" dating back over years.

So where's Mad House off to next then? Notorious consultants PricewaterhouseCoopers, of course, to advise senior local authority managers, foolish enough to pay large sums of cash for the expert advice of an officially-designated idiot on how to, err... Save money!!

*The simplest way to save money might be not to employ the likes of House?*