**Welsh bamboo** *by Mike Pullman*

or pea shooters, that were never worth the effort.

But still they grow like buggery on rubbished banks

amongst the dog shit and rose bay by train tracks,

next to cleaned-up waters, and through chapels

that godforsaken and sheepish, cower low

until restored by the faithless few with money.

Deep down flooded and drowned, walkways swirl

up to the face and back in a warm breath whispered out

in a car park above next to Asda’s. Shafts and paths two miles

below creak and pierce sharp with smashed glass,

rat bones and tins left from the last.

Laughter, swearing, and fears emerge forty years on from

streets now free of miners and God. Plastic windows,

coloured gardens, a new hospital and new river

submerge a past of dust and wagon, slag and steam

and Dad stuck suffocating on the hill.

*Welsh bamboo aka Japanese Knotweed*