

After the floods

A BIG thank you to those who helped....

- The council officers who set up an emergency control centre and a refuge for flooded-out and stranded people on the first terrible night of the floods
- The police cadets who cooked breakfast for people taking refuge at Pittville Pump Room on the night of the floods
- The taxi drivers who took stranded drivers home, often for long distances in difficult conditions, the day after the heavy rain
- The supermarkets that allowed water to be distributed from their car parks
- The kind volunteers who gave up their time to distribute water and ensure that housebound and vulnerable people were not left without water
- The volunteer drivers who took kidney patients to hospitals out of the area for dialysis, often during the night
- The emergency services and the armed force who worked round the clock to manage the crisis and stop it getting worse
- The businesses, organisations and individuals who have given so generously to the Gloucestershire Flood Relief Fund...

...And many others too numerous to mention!

As Cllr John Rawson wrote in the Echo: 'The terrible events of July have brought great difficulty to all of our people here in Cheltenham and hardship to many. But I believe they have also changed people's view of themselves and their fellow citizens in positive ways. We have seen people doing extraordinary things to help their neighbours and their community.'

...and the lessons that must be learned for the future

Cheltenham MP Martin Horwood has criticised Severn Trent Water for their lack of preparedness for the July floods and demanded that lessons should be learned for the future.

Martin said:

'The strong impression is that Severn Trent did not have well worked-out plans for how to source bowsers or where to deliver them in the event of a critical interruption to supply.

'It is true that the flooding of the Mythe pumping station was unexpected but its operation could have been interrupted by other unexpected events and I would have expected better contingency plans to be in place.'

'I hope that plans to permanently flood-proof the Mythe station will now be put in place as a matter of urgency, along with the Walham electricity sub-station.'



- Hundreds of houses were flooded in Cheltenham during the recent floods - what can we do to prevent it in the future?

“Don't axe our Emergency centre”

Local Liberal Democrats have launched a petition on the 10 Downing Street website to save the County's Tri-Service Emergency Services Control Centre at Waterwells.

The appeal follows the highly professional response of Gloucestershire's emergency services to the recent flooding catastrophe, when close working of Police and Fire Service Staff in the Tri-Service Control Centre proved vital.

The Centre was at the heart of the operation to secure the Walham switching centre, without which the county may have faced disastrous consequences.

Current Government plans would isolate Fire Service staff from the Control Centre in Gloucestershire and move them as far away as Taunton. But local Liberal Democrats are appealing to the Prime Minister to review these plans.



- Lib Dem Leader Sir Ming Campbell visited the Tri-service centre in August

St Peter's ward councillor Pat Thornton says: 'The response to the recent flooding emergency shows the folly of moving Fire and Rescue Service control room staff out of the county. Why make the job of the emergency services more difficult?'

To support the petition online, go to:
<http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/TriService/>

See overleaf for more news

Action at last on P.E. Way traffic dangers

County highways officers are at last heeding the pleas of councillors and residents to improve the safety of Princess Elizabeth Way between Orchard Way and Tewkesbury Road. This follows an increase in the severity of accidents over the past few years.

Three serious and seven less serious accidents were recorded on this section of road in 2005 and 2006, making this the fifth worst accident hotspot in the county.

After studying the accident data, county officers are now proposing to install a road safety scheme with the following aims:

- Improving crossing facilities for pedestrians
- Raising driver awareness
- Improving safety for motorcycles, especially at junctions
- Installing high friction surfacing on the approach to crossing points
- Reduce lane widths and introduce a central hatching area.

At the moment a draft scheme is being prepared, with a view to installing the improvements by the middle of 2008. Residents of properties fronting onto the road will be consulted about the changes.

Cllr John Rawson says: 'I am delighted that we are now seeing some progress towards making Princess Elizabeth Way safer. If the new traffic scheme being installed at the Tewkesbury Road/Kingsditch roundabout creates more gaps in the traffic, this will also help to make the road safer and reduce dangers at junctions.'

Road funds are not enough

Councillors and residents are increasingly frustrated by the failure of the Conservative-controlled County Council to repair and maintain roads in Cheltenham.

In the 2005 county council elections the Conservatives promised to double the amount of money spent on road maintenance, but in reality it has increased only slightly more than inflation. Recently a Conservative county councillor admitted in the Echo: 'The entire county highways budget is little more than £30 million. Even if we spent it all on repairing the roads it wouldn't make a dent.'

The Liberal Democrats will be pressing the Conservatives to keep their election promise when they set the next County Council budget early next year.

Your Lib Dem team is here to help

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How you can help our campaigns

Martin Horwood and the Lib Dems work hard all year round for our area.
If you would like to help our campaigns, please complete and return this form.

- I will vote Lib Dem at the next election
 - I would like to vote by post in future
 - I can display a poster at election time
 - I can deliver leaflets in my area
 - I can make a donation to the Lib Dems
£50 £20 £9 Other £
- Please make cheques payable to the Liberal Democrats. A donation of £9 or more entitles you to become a member of the Lib Dems. Please tick here if you do not wish to be enrolled

Your name-

Your address-

Postcode-

Email-

Return to: Liberal Democrats, FREEPOST
SWC0744, Cheltenham, GL52 6ZZ

Local St Peter's news

Gloucester Road traffic fears

Cllr John Rawson has raised concerns about a possible large increase in traffic on Gloucester Road if the Borough Council presses on with its plans to close Boots Corner to cars.

The current proposal is to re-route much of the cross-town traffic along St George's Road and Honeybourne Way, and then along Gloucester Road and into the Lower High Street.

John says: 'The section of Gloucester Road between Honeybourne Way and the High Street is already very busy and often congested at peak times. I am deeply concerned about the possibility that there could be a lot more traffic using it.'

In response to his concerns, council officers have promised to include Gloucester Road in its traffic modelling so that we can see what the impact could be before any decisions are made.

New school planned for Kingsmead site

The County Council has decided to close Kingsmead School from 1st September 2009, though current pupils will continue to receive their education at the Kingsmead site until they reach 16.

St. Benedict's School, due to change its name to Christ College in September 2007 because of its partnership with the Church of England, will shortly be consulting with our community whether it should move onto the Kingsmead site to form a new academy. An academy would provide education from 11-18, bringing back sixth form education into this area.

Your councillors believe it is very important that good quality education should continue to be provided on the Kingsmead site and we want to ensure that any new school takes children from the local area who want to go there, regardless of their religious background.

Kingsditch/Tewkesbury Road roundabout

Major improvement work is now well under way on the Kingsditch/Tewkesbury Road roundabout.

The long term aim of this project is to ease the flow of traffic and to provide safe pedestrian routes at all points. The downside is that we have a long period of traffic hold-ups ahead of us. Work is scheduled to continue until about mid-November.

Centrum Park, Tewkesbury Road

Your councillors have opposed plans to extend the opening hours of the proposed KFC restaurant on Centrum Park from 11 p.m. (as laid down in the original planning permission) to 1 o'clock in the morning. We fear this would lead to considerable late-night nuisance to residents, including people living in Brook Road and Yarnold Terrace.

Tell us what you think

Use this space to tell us of any local issues or problems

Title: _____ Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Tel: _____

Email: _____

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