

Serving the community - Keeping you informed

# FOCUS

On Battledown

Edited by  
Paul McCloskey



www.cheltlibdems.org.uk

# Have your say on key housing plan

A draft housing plan has been published which will have an impact on the whole of Cheltenham.

The plan, called the Joint Core Strategy (JCS), says that up to 36,800 homes will be needed by 2031 in the area covered by Cheltenham, Tewkesbury and Gloucester City. This figure is based on County Council projections for population growth.

The JCS proposes four different options:

- Scenario A would see 16,200 homes being built by 2031. It would involve building on "brownfield" (previously developed) sites which would mainly be in Cheltenham and Gloucester as well as building where planning permission has already been approved.
- Scenarios B, C & D would include development on new areas of land, including greenbelt land, as well as the land earmarked under Scenario A. Scenario C involves building 36,800 homes whereas Scenarios B & D are just below and above that figure.

It is inevitable that a rise in population increases the need for more housing. In particular, the younger generation need homes they can afford to live in and elderly residents need good quality accommodation suitable to their needs.

However, we must think of the environment and the impact of such a large proposed development on our existing communities as well as the local roads and infrastructure. Where are the school places, hospital beds and doctors' surgeries going to be found?

The detailed plans can be viewed at Charlton Kings library and in the parish council office.

The following local public exhibitions and events have been arranged where you can meet with council officers to discuss the proposals:-



Friday 27 January 5-7pm Sainsbury's, Oakley  
Saturday 4 February 10am-5pm Sainsbury's, Oakley

You must submit any comments on the JCS by 12 February 2012.

You can make your comments through the JCS website at [www.gct-jcs.org](http://www.gct-jcs.org) or by email to [info@gct-jcs.org](mailto:info@gct-jcs.org) or in writing to the JCS Team, Municipal Offices, Promenade, Cheltenham, GL50 9SA. You can also contact the JCS team on 0800 073 1441.

## Liberal Democrats step up calls for National Defence Medal

The Liberal Democrats have stepped up calls for a National Defence Medal to be available for all veterans who have served in the Armed Forces.

Cheltenham's Member of Parliament, Martin Horwood, is pressing for changes to the way medals are awarded and how those awarded by other nations can be worn.

Martin is calling for the Honours and Decorations Committee, which controls the awarding of medals, to meet in public and to be reconstituted under an independent chair, with a membership recognised by veterans as being truly independent.

Martin said: "A National Defence Medal would be a **small token of appreciation** for the **huge debt** that everyone in Britain owes to the brave members of our Armed Services, past and present.

**"For too long decisions about medals have been made behind closed doors.** We need to bring the debate and consideration into the public gaze, so that veterans and current service personnel can express their views and see how decisions are reached."

It is hoped that, as part of the review, a National Defence Medal can be instituted which can be applied for by all those who **have served in the armed forces since 1945.**

**Working for Battledown all year round - not just at election time**

# All Change at Charlton Kings Post Office

Our local Post Office in Lyefield Road West is changing hands on 2 February. Along with a new range of goods, there will be extended opening hours. The shop will no longer close for lunch and will be open all day on Saturdays.

Focus editor, Paul McCloskey, said "I welcome the extended opening hours for this very popular Post Office and wish the new owner, Jude Watts, every success. Brian Shaw has served this community for many years and I am sure that local residents would want to wish him and his wife a very happy retirement".

# Green Waste Scheme is NOT losing money

Contrary to what you may have read recently, the new green waste scheme is paying for itself. Whilst it is true that the borough council had hoped for a higher initial take-up which would have produced a financial benefit to be ploughed back into the overall budget to alleviate the inevitable financial cuts, the income and **savings are £5,000 more** than the costs involved.

Further good news is that any resident signing up or renewing during the next six months will pay £34 a year, a £2 reduction.

Focus editor Paul McCloskey says "Any incentive to increase recycling must be a good thing. The nationally imposed landfill charges are set to rise year on year and this charge will come straight out of our council tax making less money available for local services. If you don't have the room to compost garden waste, this scheme is the next best alternative."

# P & Q bus service

We continue to hear concerns about the new **P & Q bus timetable**, mainly the delays in town caused by the short turn-round time.

Discussions with Stagecoach are ongoing. Any additional feedback from users would be very helpful, particularly those in **Ryeworth** and **Glenfall** who use the service to come to the village to use the library and Post Office.



Charlton Kings Post Office is changing hands from 2nd February and we wish Brian Shaw all the best for his retirement

# Borough Council Draft Budget for 2012/13

Following last year's successful consultation on the draft budget, local residents can again have their say on the 2012/13 budget by visiting [www.cheltenham.gov.uk](http://www.cheltenham.gov.uk) or calling in at the Municipal Office.

This year the government will cut its grant to the council by a further £534k which cumulatively equates to a 23.23% cut over the last two years. As a result the council has had to make savings to meet this funding gap but at the same time introducing new initiatives to enhance the economic viability of the town. The draft proposals include:

- A council tax freeze in line with the Government's request – funded by one off grant
- Frontline services protected wherever possible
- Use of income from New Homes Bonus to protect services
- No growth in levels of service, except for Taxi Marshalls, Tree Maintenance
- Creation of a local authority company to provide waste services for Cotswold and Cheltenham councils
- Investing in the town's infrastructure supporting GCC in repaving of the promenade and funding works to St Mary's churchyard and Grosvenor Terrace car park
- Actively managing vacancies and staffing levels
- Reduction in grant funding (Everyman, Performing Arts Society)
- Review of allotment service

Charlton Kings councillor **Helena McCloskey** said: "I am pleased that we have been able to freeze Council Tax for a second year, I know only too well that many people are struggling to make ends meet in the current economic climate. It is right that we should avoid adding to their burdens."

# How to get in touch



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# We want to hear from you

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to know more about joining the Lib Dems

**Return to: Liberal Democrats, FREEPOST SWC 0744, 16 Hewlett Road, Cheltenham, GL52 6ZZ**

