

Have your say on key housing plan

Joint Core Strategy could affect our green belt

A draft plan for future housing has been published which will have an impact on Cheltenham and the surrounding area. This plan has been published jointly by Gloucester, Tewkesbury and Cheltenham councils.

The plan, called the Joint Core Strategy (JCS), says that up to 36,800 homes will be needed in the area covered by the three Councils by 2031, based on the County Council's 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 Gloucester and Cheltenham as well as building where planning permission has already been approved.
- Scenarios B,C and 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 houses whereas Scenarios B and D are just below and above that figure.

Liberal Democrat Councillor for Benhall and The Reddings, Nigel Britter said "I recognise that with a rising local population we do need new homes, especially affordable homes for the younger generation. However we also need to think about the impact on our local environment and I am concerned that scenarios B,C and D would damage our greenbelt forever whereas Scenario A, focuses on using existing brownfield sites, and protects the greenbelt and open countryside around the town.

We also have to work co-operatively with neighbouring local authorities especially Tewkesbury whose council boundary is adjacent to The Reddings. The impact of housing developments near our boundary would be immense through increased traffic and reduced access to places at local schools as well as a loss of wildlife habitat and opportunities for local agriculture and horticulture. I would strongly urge all local residents to make their views known during the consultation period which ends on the 12th February."

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

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|----------------------|-----------|---------------------------|
| Friday, 20 January | 10 am-5pm | Regent Arcade, Cheltenham |
| Saturday, 21 January | 10 am-5pm | Regent Arcade, Cheltenham |

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 or by email to 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.

Support grows for 20 MPH speed limit

In our last Focus we asked what people thought about an experimental 20 mph scheme in **The Reddings area between Hatherley Lane and Grovefield Way.**



On reading this, one local resident decided to launch a petition in support of the idea. She collected 200 signatures in favour and only 4 against, showing clear support for the idea. As a result, your local Lib Dem councillors are calling on the Council to back a 20 mph zone in the Reddings.

Councillor Chris Pallet said "A number of towns have introduced "Twenty's Plenty" schemes where all residential streets have a 20 mph speed limit. Only arterial streets, so called because they carry a larger amount of through traffic, retain the 30 mph limit.

Supporters of "Twenty's Plenty" believe that such schemes reduce accidents and provide a more cycle and pedestrian friendly environment. They also say limiting speeds to 20 mph on residential streets has very little impact on journey times (only slowing journeys by an average of 40 seconds) and leads to a 10% reduction in petrol consumption.

We would like to know whether you would support a "Twenty's Plenty" scheme in Benhall and The Reddings. Please contact Chris on 01242 523202 and let him know what you think.

Bus routes changes

Councillor Nigel Britter reports that Gloucestershire County Council has recently reviewed its subsidised bus services across the county. As a result a new Sunday and Public Holidays timetable has come into force for the 97 / 98 services This has been a long time coming. For many years residents in The Reddings have had no bus service on a Sunday.



The J service has also been revised and linked with the **K route**. Joining these two services in a circular loop pattern provides a 90 minute buses on Monday to Friday in each direction, with improved access using public transport to both **Asda** and **Morrisons**.

Nigel added "Having 10 buses going into town will give passengers greater choice but many Benhall residents are disappointed that there is now no direct service to the doctor's surgeries in St George's Road and we will continue to campaign for a route change on this vital link.

Waste & Recycling

The new recycling scheme, which introduced weekly food recycling and alternate weekly collections of refuse and dry-recycling materials in April 2011, has boosted Cheltenham's recycling and composting figures from 35% in the first quarter of 2010, to 50% in the same period this year. Landfill tonnage is consequently down from 52kg to 37kg per month

Icelandic bank investments

Councillor Nigel Britter is pleased to confirm that the Icelandic Supreme Court has found in favour of UK local authorities and other UK wholesale depositors. This means that Cheltenham Borough Council should get back money which was deposited with Icelandic banks, Landsbanki and Glitnir. This decision comes more than three years after the banks failed.

Part night lighting

Gloucestershire County Council is looking to switch off 20%- 30 % of street lights between the hours of midnight to 5.30am in urban areas in Cheltenham and is hoping that The Reddings area is part of this trial.

All residents will have an opportunity to discuss the proposals as part of the consultation process If you have any questions or queries please phone Gloucestershire Highways on **08000 514514** or email highways@gloucestershire.gov.uk

How to contact us



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Gloucestershire Warm and Well

- Keep your home warm and stay well

Gloucestershire Warm and Well offers the opportunity to improve the energy efficiency of your home, reduce the cost of your fuel bills and to reduce associated health problems caused by the cold, meaning you are more comfortable in your home this winter and can stay warm during the cold winter months.

Councillor Nigel Britter said "The Warm and Well scheme offers free advice on saving energy and can help you claim a grant towards the cost of insulation.

If you are in receipt of a qualifying benefit, on a low income or aged over 70, it may be FREE.

If you do not fall into these categories, cavity wall insulation can now be installed from £99 and loft insulation from £149.

The total cost of a job for a typical 3 bed semi is £400-£450, so it represents a 75% reduction through grant funding"

For free, impartial advice about this and other energy saving grants and offers call on **0800 512 012**.

The Gloucestershire Warm and Well scheme is funded and managed separately from the Energy Saving Trust Advice Service by the Severn Wye Energy Agency. To apply online visit: www.warmandwell.co.uk.

Tories keep their incinerator plans burning

Lib Dem Councillors from Cheltenham are stepping up opposition to the County Tories ill thought out and expensive plans to build a **£500M** (yes half a billion) incinerator.

At a recent meeting Cheltenham Borough Council agreed a Lib Dem motion asking the county to pause and reconsider the proposals.

The motion asked the County Council to pause and **reconsider their mass waste incinerator proposals**.

We understand the importance of getting the economics of any waste strategy

correct, but there is also a need to protect public health and the environment.

There are alternative, smarter UK technologies available. **Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT)** is a fraction of the cost and is now operating at four plants across the South West. Use of MBT technology would push our recycling rates to **over 80%** and more importantly avoid the health risks of increased 5-8% cancer rates caused by waste incineration within 7.5km of the plant at Javelin Park - as reported by the **British Society for Ecological Medicine**.

Keeping you informed

During last winter's bad weather many residents asked to be kept informed of refuse collection and gritting arrangements. You can now receive Nigel's and Chris's e-news update every month. The Councillors will be able to keep you informed of any important information quickly. If you'd like to receive monthly email updates please contact Nigel on nigel.britter@btopenworld.com or Chris on chrispallet@btopenworld.com

We are also planning to hold an "open morning" in the near future where residents will have chance to chat with your Local Lib Dem team over a cup of tea or coffee. More details to follow.

Just a quick reminder that Cheltenham's Member of Parliament, **Martin Horwood** holds regular advice surgeries at his constituency office and at other locations around the town. Please call **01242 224889** or email: martin@martinhorwood.net if you wish to make an appointment.

We want to hear from you

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Tel: _____

Email: _____

Return to: Liberal Democrats, 16 Hewlett Road,
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