

Serving the community - Keeping you informed

FOCUS

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On Warden Hill ward

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Have your say on key housing plan

Threats to our Green Belt and possible flooding risks for Warden Hill

A draft plan for future housing need has been published which will have a huge impact on Cheltenham and the surrounding area.

Published jointly by Gloucester, Tewkesbury and Cheltenham councils, the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) estimates up to 36,800 homes could be needed in the area covered by the three Councils by 2031, based on the County Council's high projections for population growth, and debatable assumptions about economic growth in the current climate.

The JCS proposes four different options: -

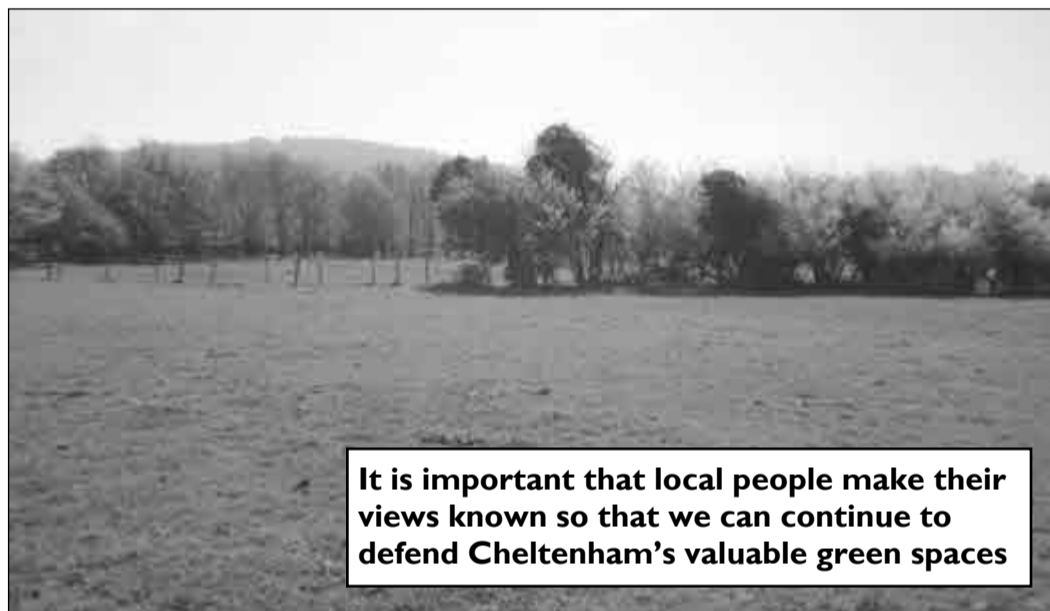
- **Scenario A** would see 16,200 homes being built by 2031. It would involve building on 'brownfield' (previously developed) sites which would mainly be in Gloucester and Cheltenham as well as building where planning permission has already been approved or where land has been allocated in current Local Plans; for example, the site at Farm Lane, Shurdington on the border with Leckhampton is included in Option A for 350 houses because it is already in Tewkesbury Borough Council's Local Plan.
- **Scenarios B, C and D** would include the housing proposed in Scenario A plus development on new areas of land, including fields in Leckhampton which are earmarked for 1,300 houses. Scenario C involves building 36,800 houses whereas Scenarios B and D are just below and above that figure.

Liberal Democrat councillor for Warden Hill, **Jo Teakle** said "Although we need new houses, especially affordable homes, we must consider the impact on our local environment. I am very concerned that scenarios B, C and D would all damage our greenbelt forever and involve building 1300 houses on the Leckhampton white land to the east of the A46 posing further risks of flooding for Warden Hill. Scenario A, however, focuses on using existing brownfield sites and protects the greenbelt and open countryside around the town including the Leckhampton white land.

Areas of Warden Hill were badly flooded in 2007 – some people's homes were flooded twice – and the floodwater flowed from Leckhampton on the other side of the A46. Since then, over £700,000K has been spent on flooding defences. What kinds of additional pressures would more houses at Leckhampton place on those defences?

And how would such a development affect home insurance? The arrangement whereby the insurance industry has to provide cover for homes at risk of flooding is due to end in June 2013 and no new agreement between government and industry is yet in sight. **Insurance is already a major problem for some homes in Warden Hill** despite the new flood defences. Beside the flooding issue, I am concerned about **increased traffic congestion, effects on the natural habitat, the loss of green space** and pressures on **schools and infrastructure**.

I would strongly urge all local residents to make their views known during the **consultation period which ends on the 12th February**. The more people make their feelings known, the more likely it is that we will be able to influence the decisions made."



It is important that local people make their views known so that we can continue to defend Cheltenham's valuable green spaces

A series of local public exhibitions and events have been arranged where you can meet with council officers to discuss the proposals. Cheltenham dates are:-

Have Your Say

Friday, 20 January 10 am-5pm Regent Arcade, Cheltenham
Saturday, 21 January 10 am-5pm Regent Arcade, Cheltenham
Friday, 3 February 5pm-7pm Morrisons, Up Hatherley

Unmanned exhibitions can also be viewed:-

Until Sunday, 15 January, at **Cheltenham Library**, from Monday, 16 January, to Saturday, 28 January at the **Leisure Centre**, Tommy Taylor's Lane and from Monday, 30 January to Friday, 10 February at the **Municipal Offices**.

Apart from these official events, there is also going to be a public meeting at **Leckhampton Primary School**, Hall Road on 20 January at 7.30 pm, with speakers **Martin Horwood MP** and **Sir Jonathan Porritt**.

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. The 19 question questionnaire (question 16 concerns flooding issues specifically) and consultation document is available on the website www.gct-jcs.org and this may also be accessed at **Up Hatherley Library**. But you do not have to use the questionnaire, you can just write or email your views if you wish.

Weavers Field Allotment plan

A scheme for allotments on part of **Weavers Field** (near the junction of **Caernarvon Road** and **Salisbury Avenue**) is nearer fruition. Up to 88 allotments could be provided.

This is good news as there are around 750 people wanting an allotment in south Cheltenham, leading to waits of between three and five years.

Only 3.1 acres of the 8.1 acre field would be turned into allotments – the rest will remain open green space for dog-walking and recreation.

Public consultation must take place before a planning application is done and we will keep residents informed on progress.



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.

Councilor Jo Teakle 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.



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 household per month, and this is saving local government some £500,000 per year in land fill tax.

The garden waste scheme is popular with over 11,000 sign ups so far. Although this is less than expected and may result in a shortfall in anticipated budget, the scheme is not losing money – on the contrary, it pays for itself plus some surplus.

It is also good value for money. £36 a year is less than £1.50 per collection (now subject to a discount – see below), and less than the cost of a tank-full of fuel in an average car. The garden waste collected goes to Stoke Orchard where it is composted to produce a soil conditioner. You can buy the compost at Stoke Orchard for £2.50 a bag.

Icelandic bank investments

We are 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.



Have you signed up for your brown garden waste bin yet? If not, now is a great time to do so as the Borough Council's Cabinet recently agreed for a discount for new users and for those renewing their membership to the scheme within a certain timescale.

If you are a new customer, or if you renew before your renewal date, you will be able to use the scheme for a year for the price of £34 instead of £36. New sign ups and renewals to the scheme can be done via the council's website, by telephone or by visiting the Municipal Officers.

If you are an existing customer, the Council will contact you around 4 weeks before your renewal date. You will need your customer reference number which will be sent to you by post or email. If you don't have this please contact the Council and they will be able to help.

For more information please visit Cheltenham Borough Council website <http://www.cheltenham.gov.uk> or telephone them on **01242 262626**.

Many people have found the brown wheeled garden waste bins very convenient, but please note if yours is too difficult to move because of age or disability, you can ask the Council to do this for you through the 'assisted lift' scheme. Also for those living in areas where there is limited storage for the brown bins, a new bagged scheme is being launched a bit later in the New Year and more details on that will be available nearer the time.

Results of Parish Council boundary survey – Hatherley area

National guidance advises that councils undertake a community governance review in respect of parish boundaries every 10-15 years. Cheltenham Borough Council last did this in 2002 and so is going to conduct another review in 2012. Up Hatherley was one of the parish councils which expressed an interest in a review as it considers it has boundary anomalies.

Some areas of **Warden Hill ward** are within the **Up Hatherley Parish Council area**, others might go in if its boundaries changed.

Your local Liberal Democrat Team has conducted a survey across Up Hatherley Parish and in the unparished area between **Warden Hill Road, Hatherley Road** and **Alma Road** to ascertain people's views.

Many people said they want the Parish Council to retain its present boundaries and not expand or reduce them. Those already in the parish overwhelmingly approved of remaining within the parished area by 8 to 1.

Those in the unparished area between **Windermere Road, Hatherley Road** and **Alma Road** said they preferred to remain outside of the parished areas by a margin of 4 to 1. People were against expanding the parish boundaries by about 5 to 3.

We would like to thank everyone who took the time to reply. We had a large response.

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