

April 2013



ABOUT TOWN

www.stroudtown.gov.uk

Picture: Thousand Word Media



Protesters against a proposed housing development in Baxter's fields in Summer Street

We're fighting to protect our fields

Stroud Town Council is campaigning to protect green fields from development.

It has objected to an application for a development on 15.5 acres of land off Summer Street. Goldman Developments wants to build up to 140 homes in Baxter's Fields.

The town council is objecting to the application for outline permission on the grounds of: the impact on the character and appearance of the area, highway and stability issues and the principle of development outside the Stroud settlement boundary.

"The town council does not believe that this site is needed to make good any shortfall in housing land," its letter of objection states.

"The proposal would cause harm both to the character and appearance of the area and to the Area of Natural Beauty."

Town councillor Kevin Cranston, chairman of the consultations committee, said other sites should be considered for development before this one and that there were concerns the proposal was not environmentally sustainable, in particular there was a grave risk

of increasing the likelihood of flooding in the Slad Valley and further downstream.

"Stroud Town Council believes that our green field sites are vital for the well-being of our community," said Mr Cranston.

"We strongly oppose the creep of housing up the Slad Valley and the other green fingers of land coming into Stroud - this development would devastate the outstanding beauty of the Slad Valley."

The town council is concerned about a proposal to build more than 100 homes in Rodborough Fields. Though this site is not within the town council boundary, the town council will object when an application is filed.

Councillor Simon Arundel said the town council must be vigilant against predatory developers. "They are considered predatory because they are targeting areas not designated for housing by the district council.

"If an application such as Baxter's Fields is approved it could increase the optimism of the developers and put more pressure on cherished Valleys landscape."

Appeal to call in plan for incinerator

Stroud Town Council called for the Government to have the final say on the proposed massive incinerator at Javelin Park.

The application, the town council says, should not be decided by Gloucestershire County Council.

Town councillors have written to Eric Pickles, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, to call in the application.

Councillors object to the incinerator being built in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, calling it "hugely intrusive".

The county council was due to make a decision in March.

Flower meadow is due to return

The meadow flowers are due to return to Brewery Bridge this summer.

There will be more than ever as the Green Spaces team plant a larger area with the support of volunteers from the Cotswold Canal Trust.

The pictorial meadow attracts bees and insects. There will also be a pictorial flower meadow in Park Gardens.



Stroud Town Council offices are at Thanet House in London Road

Opening hours: Mon-Thurs 10am-1.30pm, Fri 9.30am-12.30pm

Phone: 01453 762817

Fax number: 01453 753390

email: council@stroudtown.gov.uk

web: www.stroudtown.gov.uk

Gallery has a great new look

Community venue Lansdown Hall has officially launched its revamped gallery.

It is the second phase of major work since Stroud Town Council bought the hall and saved it from closure.

This phase was funded by a £45,000 contribution from the town council and a £30,000 grant from the Gloucestershire Environmental Trust with donations from the Cory Landfill Trust.

The improvements included reopening the hall's original entrance from Lansdown which had been blocked off for almost 100 years, with the addition of a ramp to provide accessibility for all directly from the street.



Stroud mayor Amanda Moriarty and Lansdown Hall Trust Chair Jeremy Collingwood

News in brief Community groups backed

Stroud Town Council has awarded £7,056 in grants to community groups.

Three organisations received Community Support Fund grants.

They included: Age Concern, the Acorn Day Centre (£3,000), Stroud Christian Fellowship for debt counselling (£1,250) and Gloucestershire Print-making Co-operative (£1,000).

Small grants were awarded to: Friends of Daisy Bank (£384), Stroud Valley School PTFA (£500), Centre for the Spoken Word (£455), Stroud Preservation Trust (£467).

The next deadline for grant applications is May 13, 2013. For details please see the town council website.

Grant awarded

The town council has awarded a £1,500 grant to YES! (Youth Exploring Sustainability). YES! works with five schools and hopes to include five more this year. Young people are encouraged to develop and manage their projects to support sustainability.

Nominate Stroud's community heroes

People in Stroud are being asked to help find the town's environmental and community heroes.

There are seven categories in Stroud Town Council's Annual Awards. There will be a presentation at the Town Meeting at the Subscription Rooms, Stroud, on May 9.

The Environmental Champion Awards, one for under 25s and one for 25s and over, are for action to enhance the environment or improve awareness of sustainability issues. Groups or individuals can be nominated for each category.

The Trader of the Year award is open to people who work in any shop, café or restaurant in the town, not just the town centre.

There are two Sports and Culture awards, one for under 25s and one for over 25s, for a significant contribution to the development of community sporting or cultural activities.

"This is a chance to celebrate the many unsung heroes who go out of their way to make Stroud such a strong and vibrant community," said town mayor Amanda Moriarty.

"We are especially keen to hear about local young people who are getting involved in positive projects and doing something to change our town for the better."

A nomination form can be picked up from the Town Council office in London Road, which is open Mon-Thurs 10am-1.30pm and Friday from 9.30am-12.30pm. Forms can also be requested by phoning 01453 762817 or are downloadable from the council's website.

The deadline for nominations is Monday April 15.

Award categories

Environmental Champion

Two categories - Under 25s and 25s and over.

For an individual or group for actions to enhance the environment or improve awareness of sustainability issues.

Trader of the Year

For a shop, business or individual that has gone out of their way to provide excellent customer service.

Sports and Culture

Two categories - Under 25s and 25s and over.

For an individual or group for a significant contribution to the development of commu-

nity sporting or cultural activities.

Community Awards

For an individual or group giving up their own time to bring a significant benefit to the community.

Local Enterprise

For innovative activity such as fundraising, charity work, social enterprise or business, that has brought benefits to Stroud.

Mayor's Special Award

Chosen by the mayor

Design Award

Chosen by the Stroud Civic Society

Threat to council independence

Stroud town councillors have protested to Eric Pickles, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government over the impact of changes implemented in the name of localism.

The government has withdrawn its council tax benefit scheme. The administration of council tax support will now fall on the district council - but with only 90% of funding passed on from government.

The complexity and lateness of this arrangement caused chaos for district councils as they tried to understand how to manage this new task with cuts in resources.

It also threw into turmoil the carefully laid financial plans of town and parish councils, such as Stroud.

Due to these changes, many town and parish councils are now partially dependent on a grant from government.

But this money is only a stop-gap measure. It may or not be available in future years.

Stroud town councillors called on Mr Pickles to do more to support the town and parish councils - seen as the grassroots for democracy - rather than introduce measures which makes it difficult for them to best serve their communities.

Picture: Thousand Word Media



Right of way: Andy Read and Stroud mayor Amanda Moriarty with public footpath markers

We're looking after our paths

The town council commissioned Stroud Community Land Trust to inspect each of Stroud's 63 Public Rights of Way.

This is the third survey organised by the town council. The last one was carried out in 2008. The recent report found most footpaths were in a reasonable condition but many of them were missing waymark signs, had dangerous stiles or had poor or missing signposting.

Two footpaths - at Wades' Farm and Hazel Mill - are partially blocked by undergrowth and the stiles were in poor condition. A third footpath, at Archway hockey field, is completely blocked.

The report calls for work to be carried out on the paths in the Heavens area to make paths more accessible and to improve their condition.

The town council has discussed the report with the Footpath team at Gloucestershire County Council who have already started to

carry out the work.

The county council team has already replaced or repaired 15 footpath signs and 27 way mark signs and repaired one stile.

"Footpaths are an important issue to residents in the town," said town mayor Amanda Moriarty. "In a recent residents' survey carried out by the town council, footpaths were the third most important issue.

"The footpath audit was comprehensive and has highlighted a number of concerns which the county council footpath team have already begun to tackle."

Andy Read, Stroud Community Land Trust project manager, who led the survey said the footpaths were in a better condition now than they had been in 2007.

"By carrying out regular surveys, the town council is able to ensure that Stroud's footpaths are being kept up to scratch and that issues are spotted and sorted far sooner."

News in brief

Council tax precept set

Stroud Town Council has set its council tax precept for 2013-2014.

The precept is the proportion of the council tax bill that pays for local services provided by the town council. It makes up only around 6% of the overall council tax bill.

An average Band D council tax payer will pay £106.28 for town council services in 2013/14, an increase of £9.60 over the whole year.

All abloom

The Green Spaces team and volunteers from Friends of Daisybank planted hundreds of spring bulbs at Daisybank.

Encouraging our wildlife

The Green Spaces team are working to encourage more wildlife at Stroud Cemetery.

The old Stroud Cemetery is a local nature reserve and now the team is hoping to do the same in the new cemetery.

Some areas are left as meadow and cut only once a year.

This is around older memorials and the team can cut paths if families so wish.

Well done Martin

Volunteer Martin Weeks, who helps the Green Spaces team, was honoured by Stroud in Bloom for his efforts to make sure Stroud always looks its best.

Meet your town councillors

Simon Arundel, Uplands Ward

What one thing would you like to have an influence on in Stroud in your new role?

Encouraging more people to take an interest and get involved in their community.

What are the three most important issues facing Stroud?

- 1) The Stroud Valleys landscapes are under threat like never before. Without a coherent strategy every settlement risks being the next victim of predatory development in place of a democratically determined plan.
- 2) Stroud town can be proud of its farmers' market and independent businesses. We need to encourage them through our patronage.
- 3) We have a valuable hospital and great care agencies. We have to do all we can to protect them in this climate of cost-cutting.



Eva Ward, Farmhill & Paganhill Ward

What one thing would you like to have an influence on in Stroud in your new role?

I hope I can be supportively active in town centre activities and innovations.

What are the three most important issues facing Stroud?

- 1) Preserving our green spaces, particularly against proposed housing developments on green field sites – this is a vital battle not only for us now but in terms of our legacy for future generations.
- 2) The changing face of the town centre and how we can continue to maintain the special atmosphere that is Stroud.
- 3) Attracting more businesses/employers to Stroud to reduce unemployment particularly for our young people



Paul Mapplebeck, Farmhill & Paganhill Ward

What one thing would you like to have an influence on in Stroud in your new role?

I would like to see improvements in resources for families and children, particularly in my area, Paganhill.

What are the three most important issues facing Stroud?

- 1) Employment opportunities particularly for young people and those in areas of poverty which exist in my ward as in others..
- 2) Ensuring prosperity in the town centre. Stroud should continue to be a place people want to visit.
- 3) The incinerator.No one wants it for all the reasons that have been well rehearsed by individuals and groups.



Read their full interviews on www.stroutown.gov.uk

Central Ward



Kevin Cranston
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Rachel Lyons
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Ben Spencer
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Steve Hurrell
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John Marjoram
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Amanda Moriarty
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Uplands Ward



Julian Carlyon
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Lucas Schoemaker
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