



Community rangers will green up town

Three new community rangers will soon be working with Stroud residents to make the town a greener place to live.

Each will focus on a different area: biodiversity, maintenance and horticulture. They will be part of the Green Spaces Team.

An important part of their role will be to encourage people to take an active interest in the town's environment and to work with local groups and residents.

Green Spaces Manager Mike Dando said: "The Rangers will be out and about looking after the green spaces that the Town Council manages, ensuring they benefit both people and wildlife.

"Another aspect of the role is to work with local communities and volunteer groups and to form partnerships with other groups and organisations who share our wish to make Stroud a green, pleasant and wonderful place to live and work."

Let's work together to save Sub Rooms

Stroud Town Council is calling on people interested in keeping the Subscription Rooms open to get in touch.

More than 50 people turned out to a public meeting to discuss what they think should happen to the venue.

Stroud District Council, which owns and runs the venue, revealed that the Sub Rooms' future is under review following cuts in government funding.

Those attending the meeting were overwhelming in favour of either the district council or town council holding the freehold of the venue and offering the leasehold to a community interest group or trust.

Town Councillor Lucas Schoemaker said the Town Council didn't have the resources or the expertise to take over the venue.

"The Town Council is trying to facilitate a solution where the Sub Rooms fits into the range of venues in the town centre. But the Town Council has neither the resources or the expertise to do this on its own.

"We want to get those people together who have the expertise and find a way to move forward."

Town Mayor Kevin Cranston said they had a lot of interest from people following the meeting.

"We had positive feedback from this meeting but we need to find more people willing to explore the financial options, including establishing a community trust," he said.

People interested in being a part of the Sub Rooms' future can contact the Town Council at council@stroudtown.gov.uk

Stroud District Council's three options for the Sub Rooms:

- Retain the property and services within Stroud District Council
- Dispose of the freehold or offer a leasehold interest in the property
- Cease delivery of the service and dispose of the building

Timeline

- April 12: Deadline for groups to file an Expression of interest in taking over the Sub Rooms
- August 31: Deadline for detailed bids to be submitted to Stroud District Council
- Sept/Oct: Bids considered and consultation event held
- Nov/Dec: Possible decision on future of Sub Rooms

Find out about your town

Annual Town Meeting Wednesday May 24, Lansdown Hall

Drop-In sessions, 2.30pm-7pm: Find out about the projects that the Town Council is involved with. Look at the exhibitions, talk to councillors and town council staff

Enjoy a FREE cream tea

7.30PM Formal Annual Meeting and Awards presentation. Refreshments will be available. The bar will also be open.



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: 01453 753390

email: council@stroudtown.gov.uk web: www.stroudtown.gov.uk

Briefs

Chance to give Mother Nature a bit of support

Volunteers are needed to help preserve Stroud's unique nature reserve.

The town's old cemetery in Old Bisley Road is one of only a handful in the country that is classified as a nature reserve.

It is home to slow worms, glow worms and many wildflowers and butterflies.

The Town Council has launched a Friends of nature group to give nature a helping hand. Volunteers will help with scrub clearance and other conservation work..

No experience is necessary and it will involve gentle physical exercise in the fresh air plus the opportunity to meet new people.

For more information about the nature reserve voluntary work please email council@strouttown.gov.uk with your contact details.

Blooming marvellous

The town is ablaze with spring colour thanks to the Green Spaces team who planted more than 4,000 spring bulbs.

The planter on the traffic island at Merrywalks is also getting a spruce-up. Included in the plans are nectar-rich plants to encourage wildlife, teasels to represent the town's woollen history and a homemade insect 'hotel'.

In the swing

The Town Council's Green Spaces Team is working with the Friends of Daisy Bank to improve the play area.

The plans include installing new play equipment, including a cradle swing and an accessible roundabout.

All-weather surfaces have also been installed at the play area at the top of the High Street.

It's your hall

Lansdown Hall, which is owned by the Town Council, offers great events and a gallery and is the town's own community hall.

You can rent out the hall for as little as £22.50 an hour for events and from £12.50 an hour for rehearsals, classes or workshops. Find out more on www.lansdownhall.org.

Festival gets financial support

Stroud Festival of Nature 2017 received £1,600 from the Town Council.

It is one of several community organisations which has received support from the Town Council's three grants schemes.

Others include: Ignition Gloucestershire (£500) for a family fun day and Sladebank Woods CIC (£500) for a biodegradable sculpture trail.

The Town Council awards grants between £50 and £5,000. Decisions are made three times a year.

The grant programmes favour applications for support for activities that build the capacity of community groups to support themselves. In addition the Council is keen to support projects that fight and prevent racism and xenophobia.

The next deadline for applications is 15th May. Application forms are available from the town council offices or from www.strouttown.gov.uk.

We can help with your garden

People struggling to maintain their gardens can get a helping hand, thanks to the Town Council.

It has approved an agreement worth up to £3,000 with Down to Earth Stroud for a gardening assistance scheme.

People who are unable to look after their garden due to age or illness are eligible for subsidised gardening support.

Amanda Godber, who runs Down to Earth Stroud, said: "Having the garden tidied up can make such a difference. This scheme is about supporting the vulnerable in our community."

It is open to people living in the Stroud parish and who are in receipt of housing benefit, PIP or higher level disability living allowance and have no able-bodied person living with them who could do the gardening.

Further details on www.downtoearthstroud.co.uk

Council set to take over important landmarks



The Town Council will take over the ownership of three of Stroud's most important landmarks.

Bank Gardens, Sims Clock and Bisley Road Cemetery will be transferred from Stroud District Council to the Town Council.

These are due to be transferred in the next month, subject to surveys and marks the end of months of negotiations between the two authorities.

"They are all important amenities to our town and we, as town councillors, are committed to caring for them as custodians for future generations," said Town Mayor Kevin Cranston.

"It was important that the Town Council negotiated a package which would not be an excessive burden on our residents.

"But we also believe that it is important that these properties

remain assets for our town," said he said.

The district council agreed a total funding package of £130,000 for the Town Council.

The transfers also marks the return of the properties back to the residents of Stroud.

Once the property of Stroud Urban District Council, the town's assets were transferred to the district council in 1974.



Historic chapel too expensive to repair

The Town Council has decided not to buy a historic chapel of rest because it would be too expensive to repair and refurbish.

The chapel building in Bisley Road cemetery is owned by Stroud District Council. It is currently used mainly as a grounds maintenance depot by the Town Council.

The Town Council had an option to acquire the Victorian building for community use, with one part potentially to be used to

generate income to cover running costs.

The District Council offered to sell the chapel to the Town Council for £175,000. Research and a public consultation was carried out.

Costs to carry out work and essential repairs were estimated to total £684,000 and the Town Council decided not to acquire the building.



Chloe Wheeler, 13, Kacey Henry, 14, and Sophia Blick, 12, at the Play Gloucestershire session at Mason Road

Youngsters make of the most free play

Stroud youngsters can enjoy free after school play sessions.

The Town Council helps fund weekly play sessions at Archway Gardens play area and Mason Road.

The sessions are run by Play Gloucestershire, a children's charity that specialises in outdoor play.

Weekly after school play sessions run from 4-6pm. They resume on 2nd May at Mason

Road and run every Tuesday of term time. At Archway Gardens it is every Thursday from 4th May.

For more information on Play Gloucestershire, please visit www.playgloucestershire.org.

Residents speak up about road safety

Stroud residents have nominated 13 town streets for a Town Council road safety initiative.

The Town Council launched the campaign after receiving a grant from the Gloucestershire Police and Crime Commissioner for four vehicle activated signs.

The signs can be designed to display reminders of the speed limit or other warning messages and are activated by oncoming vehicles.

The Town Council was so inundated with responses from residents as to where the signs should go that they have decided to commit extra funding to the project so that the signs

can be moved around.

It received two petitions totalling 324 signatures for Stratford Road and Parliament Street.

The 13 nominated roads are: Beeches Green Road, Bisley Old Road, Bisley Road, Bowbridge Lane, Brick Row, Farmhill Lane, Folly Lane, Lansdown, London Road, Parliament Street, Peghouse Rise, Slad Road and Stratford Road.

Gloucestershire Highways will now carry out an intensive assessment of the roads to determine which are suitable for the signs. This process is likely to take several weeks.

Gloucestershire Highways has

the final say on which sites are chosen for the signs.

"We'd like to thank residents for the amazing response we have had with this initiative," said Town Mayor Kevin Cranston.

"The road safety in our town is of great importance and we would urge Gloucestershire Highways to make these assessments a high priority so that action can be taken."

Police and Crime Commissioner Martin Surl, who has made safe and social driving a priority, said: "Involving the people who are most affected is the best way to find a solution because they know best where the problem areas are."

Walk on the wild side

Join the Town Council's biodiversity ranger for a dawn chorus stroll at the Old Cemetery on 22nd April.

There will be a prompt 5am start at the Chapel of Rest. Matt will take people on a stroll around the old cemetery. The walk will

stick to the sometimes-steep tarmac paths, but be aware that off the paths is uneven ground. Please wear suitable clothing for the weather. No dogs please, as we don't want to scare the birds away. It will finish at 7am.

Then on 17th June, there will be a summer nature walk starting at 2pm.

Enjoy a guided walk around the old cemetery with Matt who will share his knowledge and passion for the wildflowers, insects, birds and possibly reptiles that may be encountered.

For further details about either event please contact Stroud Town Council on 01453 762817.

Briefs

Precept helps support landmarks

The Town Council's share of the council tax has increased by just 14p per week for the average Band D payer.

In 2016-2017, an average Band D council tax payer will pay £131.96, an increase of £7.04 per year.

The increase will help the Town Council with its increased community responsibilities. It will take over the ownership of three of Stroud's most important landmarks.

"In a time of widespread funding cuts we are stepping up to take on responsibility for more community assets and to improve our community engagement," said Town Mayor Kevin Cranston.

The Town Council is responsible for 20 green spaces and play areas in the town including the town cemetery. It manages five allotment sites, the town clock and floral displays.

Coat swap is a hit

Almost 100 coats were donated in an effort to help people ward off the cold winter after Stroud's Assistant Town Clerk saw people shivering on her way to work.

More than 65 people picked up a pre-loved adult or child's coat in the initiative, which was sparked by Sheral Gardner who said it was a great way for members of the community to help other people.

The remaining coats were donated to the Stroud branch of Emmaus, a charity which aims to end homelessness.

Pear-fect park

The Green Spaces team have planted old Gloucestershire varieties of apple, pear and plum trees on the steep banks of Park Gardens.

Councillor elected

Sarah Lunnon (Green Party) was elected as a town councillor for the Valley Ward. The by-election follows the resignation of Councillor Susie Roberts. The Valley Ward largely covers the area between Slad Road and Summer Street.

Keep in touch!



Find out the latest news and videos from Stroud Town Council on our Facebook page @StroudTownCouncil On Twitter: @TownStroud www.stroudtown.gov.uk



Nominate your star of Stroud



The Home Farm Trust Car Washing Team received the Mayor's Award in 2016

It's time to pay tribute to Stroud's community heroes in the town council's annual awards.

Organised by the Town Council, the awards recognise those people – young and old – who go the extra mile.

Stroud Mayor Kevin Cranston said anyone can nominate someone and that it just takes a few minutes.

"All you need to do is include the person's name and contact details and a few sentences about why they deserve an award, said Mr Cranston.

The winners will be announced at a special town meeting on 24th May at 7.30pm at Lansdown Hall.

The Annual Town Meeting is open to Stroud residents and is a chance for people to find what has been happening in the town and to discuss town matters.

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. Nominations can also be made via email without the form.

The deadline for nominations is noon on 10th May.

Award categories

Young Person of the Year: for people under the age of 25 who have contributed to culture and the arts, sports, community life or the environment.

Environmental Awards: for action to enhance the environment or improve awareness of sustainability issues.

Trade Award: for people who work in or run any shop, café, restaurant or other business in the parish of Stroud, not just the town centre.

Community Award: for a group or individuals who have gone that extra mile to improve community life.

Useful numbers

Stroud District Council www.stroud.gov.uk T: 01453 766321

Bins, rubbish and recycling • Bulky waste collection • Fly tipping
Street cleaning • Abandoned vehicle • Council tax • Housing
Benefits • Dog warden • Pest control • Planning and building control
Car parks • Licensing

Gloucestershire County Council www.gloucestershire.gov.uk
T: 01452 425000:

Libraries and archives • Schools • Births, marriages and deaths
Health and social care

Gloucestershire County Council Highways
www.gloucestershire.gov.uk T: 08000 514514

Public rights of way (PROW) • Roads and pavements • Overgrown
vegetation • Street lighting • Flooding

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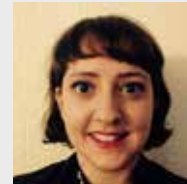


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