

Now you can fill up with free water



Mayor Kevin Cranston at the opening of the water fountain in Bank Gardens

Free drinking water is on tap, thanks to Stroud Town Council's new public water bottle filling station.

The Mayor of Stroud officially launched the new filling station in Bank Gardens as part of the #RefillStroud scheme promoted by Transition Stroud and Stroud District Action on Plastic.

The Town Council approved the project last year but it was delayed when lead pipes were discovered in Bank Gardens. The old pipes had to be replaced with new safe ones.



"While the discovery of lead pipes meant additional costs to the project we persevered because the Town Council is committed to doing its part in protecting the environment," said Town Mayor Councillor Kevin Cranston.

The Town Council has been working with Transition Stroud and Stroud Valleys Action on Plastic to ensure people can easily refill their reusable water bottles for free and reduce the use of single-use plastic.

Town's ambition is to be carbon neutral

Stroud Town Council has become the first Earth Protector Town in the UK as part of its commitment to becoming carbon neutral.

The initiative from the Stroud-based Stop Ecocide campaign hopes to raise

awareness of climate and ecological instability in order for towns to ultimately become carbon neutral.

The Town Council has already pledged to become completely carbon neutral by 2030 and to

encourage more sustainable transport, reduction in energy, production and consumption of locally-sourced food, the reduction in consumption of animal products and reductions in energy use in homes, businesses and elsewhere.

Councillors unanimously voted to join the Earth Protector scheme which builds on the legacy of the late environmental lawyer and campaigner, Polly Higgins, who lived in the town.

The Earth Protector Town scheme, an initiative from the Stroud-based Stop Ecocide campaign that Polly founded, officially launched in September with the Gloucestershire town as its first signatory.

The scheme also seeks to support Ms Higgins' campaign to amend the Rome statute and declare ecocide a crime at the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Jojo Mehta for Stop Ecocide said: "Stroud Town Council is leading the way towards a new framework for municipal life. Their pledge to become an Earth Protector Town and support Ecocide Law is a powerful first step."

Town Mayor Kevin Cranston said "We're pleased that Stroud is the place where the Earth Protector Town declaration is being launched, the result of collaborative work between the Earth Protector movement and the Town Council."

Earth Protector Town's five goals:

1. Produce a strategy and a date to achieve a carbon zero future.
2. Practice the movement from sustainable to regenerative living wherever possible.
3. Protect and enhance ecosystems, habitats and species in and around the town.
4. Pioneer the reduction and elimination of single use plastic.
5. Promote awareness of climate and ecological emergencies.



Stroud Town Council offices are at Thanet House in London Road

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

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Briefs

Dog owners - please show respect

Dog owners are being asked to show respect and keep their pets on leads while visiting the Old Cemetery in Bisley Road.

We would ask dog walkers to recognise that although the cemetery is maintained as a nature reserve, it remains a burial ground where people come to visit their loved ones' graves.

"The children's area is often visited by grieving families and we would ask pet owners to be respectful and keep their dogs on the lead at all times," said Town Clerk Helen Bojaniwska. "While it is an area where the community is welcomed it is also a place of bereavement. There are more appropriate places where dogs can be exercised off the lead."

Dog owners failing to keep their dogs on a lead or pick up their mess may receive a fixed penalty notice or potentially a large fine.

Bringing a bit of green to verges

The Green Spaces team has turned a small patch of grass verge outside Clare Court in Bisley Old Road into a haven for wildlife.

Instead of mowing it, the team has laid some "wildflower turf" to create a mini wildflower meadow to encourage native insects.

It is the first of several areas around the town which the team plans to "rewild" as part of the growing national BLUE campaign. Its logo is a blue heart, made of recycled materials. The aim of the campaign is to create wildlife friendly habitats.

The team have already reduced the size of the regular-cutting areas at Park Gardens, The Leazes playing field, Wallbridge and Uplands playing field, where there are now numerous orchids and other wildflowers.

Let it shine

Stroud Goodwill Evening will be held on December 6. The Town Council is investing in additional lights to the normal annual display to ensure Stroud has a festive feel for shoppers.

Kicked into touch

The Green Spaces team replaced damaged goalposts at The Leazes. The new metal posts have been specially designed for public open spaces.



Keep in touch!

Find out the latest news and videos from Stroud Town Council on our Facebook page @StroudTownCouncil

On Twitter: @TownStroud
www.stroutown.gov.uk

On track to welcome cyclists

Stroud has won a £117,000 grant to improve cycle parking in the town centre.

The funding was announced by the Department for Transport (DfT) and will be used to create covered cycle parking with CCTV at Stroud railway station.

It follows an application by the Town Council, working in partnership with GWR, Sustrans and Stroud District Council. The Councils will provide match funding for the project which is due to be completed by March 2020.

Town Mayor Kevin Cranston said: "During our community consultation process for our Neighbourhood Development Plan, improving the area around the railway station and doing more to promote cycling were high on people's wish lists.

"The Town Council took that on board and has been working very hard with our partners over the past 12 months to look at ideas to do that and to apply for appropriate funding. This grant is the fruit of that effort."

Have a say on town's future development

The Town Council has unveiled its five-year vision for Stroud and wants people to have a say on what the future should look like.

The draft strategy has seven key objectives:

1. A carbon neutral town which recognises the limits of the global environment.
2. A prosperous town in which the economy generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, so that people can secure quality employment.
3. A town with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience.
4. A town in which people's physical and mental wellbeing is maximised.
5. A town where people can fulfil their potential.
6. An attractive, viable, safe and well-connected community.
7. A vibrant town where culture makes a significant contribution to people's well being and the economy.

From these the Town Council has identified its priorities and actions.

Now it wants people to give their comments on the proposal to ensure it reflects what the community wants.

"This draft strategy sets out where we think we should be going over the next five years, but we would like to hear what Stroud residents, business and community organisations think of our ideas before we implement it," said Town Mayor Kevin Cranston.

To get involved people can complete the online survey at: <https://tinyurl.com/y496n3xo>, email council@stroutown.gov.uk or write to: Strategy Consultation, FREEPOST RLZY-TEAB-STUJ, Stroud Town Council, Thanet House, 58 London Road, Stroud, GL5 2AD

The closing date is 25th October 2019.

Do your part to be carbon neutral

Have you got a great idea to reduce CO2 emissions in Stroud? The Town Council has set up a Carbon Reduction Fund to encourage the community to do their part.

The £5,000 fund will judge applications by the level of CO2 savings per pound spent. It can be used to fund practical work, feasibility studies/research projects, awareness raising or training.

The deadline for the next grant applications is noon on January 6, 2020. Find out more on: www.stroutown.gov.uk/what-we-do/grants

The Town Council has pledged to become carbon neutral by 2030 and to where possible encourage more sustainable transport, reduction in energy, production and consumption of locally-sourced food, the reduction in consumption of animal products and reductions in energy use in homes, businesses and elsewhere.

As part of its commitment, the Town Council's Green Spaces team now use an electric van.



Rangers lend a hand to Archway students

The Green Spaces Rangers have helped work skills students at Archway School create a nature garden.

Working with the year 9, 10 and 11 Works Skills students the Rangers built a raised flowerbed, laid wild meadow turf, planted a hedgerow and installed a mature rowan tree. They also assembled a circular bench, which was kindly donated by Giffords Circus, around the rowan tree providing an attractive focal point to the garden. Also involved in the project were Stroud and Rodborough Educational Trust.

Town Mayor Kevin Cranston said: "A big part of the Rangers' role in Stroud is to engage with the community and encourage people to create environmentally friendly and sustainable areas in the town.

"It's so important to work with young people who will be the next custodians of our planet and to instil in them a love of nature and an understanding of how a garden can benefit the environment and bring calm to a stressful world."

We're ready to take on the adults!

Children at the Daisy Bank open space are making the most of their new outdoor table-tennis table.

Friends of Daisy Bank raised the money for the equipment while the Town Council met the costs of installing the table with the Green Spaces team setting it up.

It was officially launched at Daisy Day, the annual fundraising event held in the park between Horns Road and Bisley Road. The Town Council also contributed towards the fun day.

Entertainment included live music, a children's area with a range of activities, food and drink and an inflatable gladiator challenge.

The Town Council has installed a range of play



equipment at Daisy Bank over the years, working with parents and children to create an area that the community wants.

Rangers supporting the community

The Town Council's Rangers not only keep the parks and public areas looking great but they also work with community groups to improve the local environment.

In the coming months they will be running a range of workshops as part of the Garden Guardians project, launched at the Big Nature Festival in the Park. Find out what's planned on <https://stroudnature.org/garden-guardians/>

The Rangers gave a short talk to a Brownie Group on the Blue Campaign and meadow biodiversity and helped with planting of mini orchard at Farmhill Baptist Church, in partnership with Paganhill Community Group.

Care homes: our concerns

The Town Council extended its sympathy to the staff and residents of Southfield and Wyatt House and their relatives, following the decision by Gloucestershire County Council to close their homes.

Town councillors wrote to the County Council objecting to the closures.

In the letter the Town Council stated: "Although the consultation states that residents have the option of staying in "Stroud", this means the district and not the town.

"We understand that only 21 rooms are available within a six-mile radius of Stroud, so residents will be forced out of the area they know, causing hardship to family members supporting their relatives, putting extra pressure on care staff and causing an environmental impact through visitors having to travel further."

Ambitious bid not successful

An ambitious bid for government funding to improve infrastructure in Stroud has not been successful.

The bid to the Future High Streets fund was prepared by a partnership including: Stroud Town and District Councils, Stroud Chamber of Commerce, Dransfield Properties and other stakeholders.

The application sought funding for many of the projects identified in the Shaping the Heart of Stroud, Neighbourhood Development Plan, including revitalising the streets scene, highways improvements and restoring heritage buildings in the town centre.

Competition for the funding was fierce and none of the bids from Gloucestershire councils were accepted by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government.

Making our town accessible for all

A new initiative by the Town Council and Accessible Gloucestershire is making Stroud accessible for all.

It began a year ago when the Town Council started a campaign to improve access at Stroud Railway Station.

Disability Access Auditor Christian Drewitt carried out a review of the station looking at the access issues and how to improve the area for people with disabilities.

Christian was then asked to review the access at 20 further public buildings in Stroud, identify existing good practice and make suggestions where often small changes can be made to improve experience.

Now the Town Council and

Accessible Gloucestershire both have a useful bank of information to support people with disabilities.

The audits feature comments to support people: in a wheelchair, with limited mobility, people of a smaller stature, with visual impairments and with hearing loss. It runs in conjunction with the Stroud Rotary Club Let's Hear project.

The work is also helping to inform organisations such as the Subscription Rooms and Lansdown Hall & Gallery Trusts, and others about how to improve accessibility as part of any building renovations.

The Town Council is now offering support for private sector organisations located in the parish to undertake an accessibility audit

with Accessible Gloucestershire.

The Town Council will offer 50% of the cost of the audit per building for any businesses or 100% for not-for-profit organisations not covered in the first phase of the project.

To participate please email kim.cowan@strouttown.gov.uk with a brief description of your business and contact details.

See the reviews of Stroud's public buildings on <https://strouttown.gov.uk/information/disabled-access-reviews/>

Reviews of venues further afield can be viewed on the Accessible Gloucestershire site <http://www.accessglos.co.uk/> Contact: christian@accessglos.co.uk

Check out the Sub Rooms

It's all change at the Subscription Rooms as the community venue grows from strength to strength.

A new cafe and bar has opened while the upstairs bar got a makeover. There's also been great sold-out events since it was taken over by the Stroud Subscription Rooms Trust.

Earlier this year Stroud District Council transferred ownership of

www.thesubrooms.co.uk

the historic building to the Town Council and the Trust took over running the venue.

There's a range of events planned including Stroud Book Festival in November with such big names as Ian McEwan, Katie Fforde and Gruffalo creator Julia Donaldson.



In 2020 look out for Dr Feelgood, veteran songwriter Tom Robinson and comedian Lee Nelson.

People can also support the venue by donating money towards the renovation of the venue or becoming a volunteer.

My work experience

Dan Green, aged 15, writes about his work experience at the Town Council

I did a week of work experience with Stroud Town Council and discovered some of the intricacies of local government.

I carried out and took part in a range of activities and workshops, such as a sustainable transport workshop, community development activities and some tasks with the Green Spaces team.

I found the week really useful as I was able to experience the large amount which the Town Council is responsible

for and the different powers and duties which it has.

It was worthwhile to see what has to be done to sustain the council-owned parks, buildings and other areas as well as what has to be overcome to implement new features such as the new water fountain in Bank Gardens.

Lots of people my age are unaware about local councils and I think something needs to be done about that issue as people should know who and what looks after their community.

Your town needs you

You can make a real difference to your community of Stroud by becoming a town councillor.

On May 7, 2020, residents will vote for representatives for all 18 seats on Stroud Town Council.

The Town Council is planning to hold a series of drop-in events over the coming months so people can find out more about what the role involves.

“Being a town councillor takes just a few hours a month of your time but you can make a valuable impact on the life of this town,” said Town Mayor Kevin Cranston.

“Town councillors can be anyone. What unites them is their interest and passion in local issues, their community and people and their willingness to get involved.”

To stand as a candidate for the Town Council you must be at least 18 years old and have lived and/or worked in the parish/community area for at least a year.

If you would like to find out more about becoming a town councillor, please contact town clerk Helen Bojaniwska on 01453 762817 or email council@stroudtown.gov.uk

Share your memories

2020 will be the 30th anniversary of the creation of Stroud Town Council and we want your memories. Are you a former town councillor? Were you involved in projects connected with the Town Council through the

decades? If so, please share your memories by contacting Sheral Gardner.

Email: sheral.gardner@stroudtown.gov.uk or phone 01453 762817

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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