

## November 2023 report to Parish Councils within the Blakeney and Bream division

Please feel free to get in touch, I will do my best to help. [Beki.hoyland@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:Beki.hoyland@gloucestershire.gov.uk)  
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### Roads and transport related.

Here is a link to where to find out about road works <https://one.network/public>  
the way to report problems on our road network has changed.

<https://fixmystreet.gloucestershire.gov.uk>

Some of the benefits and features of Fix My Street include:

- Being able to use the map to see which issues have already been reported or add a new report.
- Anyone can sign-up to receive updates about the work being done.
- Download the Fix My Street app to make reports from your phone.
- Reducing duplication of reports and admin.

**Ruspidge Road update:** Highways have had receipt of the geo tech. reports which have confirmed this is not a large scale sink hole and would appear to have been some washout from the STW leak a few weeks prior to the hole appearing. We have plant booked for the repairs to start at the end of November for a two week period, following this the road will be reopened. While the road is closed we will be carrying out some additional works during the two weeks. The site will be inspected by the Geo team ongoing until they are happy there is no additional movement following the re-opening of the road.

- New round a bout being built on the Lydney by pass, traffic lights will be active for several month
- Drains on Awre Road, Blakeney are being re designed to cope with water coming off the A48.
- I have asked Highways, in the shape of our local community Lengthsmen to go around the division cleaning road signs and making sure they are not over grown and visible.
- There is also a week in November where we will have them to prepare our pavements and drains for winter. **Please do let me know** if there are particular areas you would like them to concentrate on.
- Station Road in Newnham will be resurfaced during half term.
- Parkend Road, Bream is due to be resurfaced this financial year.
- **The flail** that is booked for a week is now expected at the end of November/ beginning of December. It will cut hedges back further than the normal so that hopefully next summer the over hang will be less. It is the responsibility of land owners to maintain hedges.
- **A NEW BUS:** Recent Cabinet decision on where new funding from central Government for busses the following are proposed: the existing 2 hourly service (72) between Chepstow and Lydney will be extended to Blakeney, Soudley, Cinderford and Mitcheldean. The Robin will be enhanced. These will be funded for two years on the basis that they will be self financing after that so we do need to use them as much as possible. I would appreciate that we can work together to promote the new service, The £2 single fair is set to remain in place which makes it affordable and flexible. Can we be creative in how we promote this new service once it starts? **UPDATE: the bus is due to start operating at the end of January 2024**
- **Wydean Stages Motor Rally 2023** on the 18<sup>th</sup> November will mean that various footpaths will be closed for the day across West Dean, Ruspidge and Newnham. Let me know if you would like more detail on which foot paths are effected.

## **Telecoms Mast in Soudley.**

I have been in communication with Clark Telecom as well as the parish and village hall committee on this and the latest update I have is that work is progressing to survey the new site for suitability.

## **Forest water ways work**

I went on a tour by Forestry England of works they are doing on the upper catchments of the Dean to slow water runoff and increase biodiversity. They are working in partnership with GCC, FoD DC and Severn Trent. They are taking several meters along every stream, ditch and river out of forestry production and creating leaky dams that will slow the flow and spread the water out meaning that the landscape holds far more water when there are heavy rains thus reducing flood risk to the towns and villages. There is also work happening around the Cinderford Brook at Linear Park that will extend down along the Blue Rock trail part of the stream. This work will not interfere with the heritage of the sites, protecting and maintaining the stone work but at the same time allowing fish and other water creatures to migrate upstream.

**Full Council** on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> November saw the following motions:

1. GCC will consider the viability and ways to give free bus travel to veterans
2. GCC will work with catering staff to produce a policy for catering and procurement for council events that aims to include:
  - Locally produced and seasonal food
  - Increased plant based options
  - Good quality meat
  - Nutritious and balanced options in line with the governments Eatwell Guide
  - Work closely with Gloucestershire Food and Farming Partnership and Sustainable Food places
  - Use reusable and recyclable packaging and utensils
  - Consider ensuring that all suppliers are signed up to: Food For Life served here <https://www.foodforlife.org.uk> Food for the Planet <https://www.foodfortheplanet.org.uk>
3. That the Leader of the council writes to the Police and Crime Commissioner and request a meeting.
4. Form a task and finish group to address the issue of cattle deaths on Minchinhampton and Rodborough Commons.

## **Working Task Groups**

- **Bus Task Group.** On going conversations about busses, in particular between Cinderford, Soudley and Blakeney. But also more widely in a task group that has been listening and questioning Stagecoach and other bus operators as well as the Department for Transport. The report from that should be out by November.
- **Rural Estates Task Group.** Work on a report into the County Farm Estate is nearing completion and will be sent to Cabinet in November, looking at how the county farms can contribute to the wider aims of GCC. And feeding into the review of the Rural Estates Strategy.

I will share both the above reports with you once they are complete but both working groups have been very informative and I think I am representing us all to the officers of the County Council by taking part in them. If anyone would like to know more do please get in touch.

## **Adult Social Care Fairer Contributions Policy Engagement**

To help inform a review of its fairer contributions charging policy, the council wants to hear the thoughts and views of those who currently use it. The council would also like to hear from those who may use the policy in the future to make sure the council's policy works for people now and

for years to come.

Adult Social Care services are paid for by the county council with contributions from care users. Care users can be charged for their care and asked to make a contribution in line with their financial circumstances

To find out more and to take part in the survey visit [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/charging-policy](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/charging-policy) (hard copies of the survey are also available upon request)

## **Tree projects this winter**

Do you have an idea for a tree planting project this winter?

From orchards to hedgerows we have funding that could make your dream planting project a reality.

Find out more on our [land use webpages](#) and submit an [expression of interest](#) to get trees planted.

## **Can we make more use of repair cafes? Are we advertising them to the parish?**

If you need new items turning up, small holes patching or anything else, visit the repair cafe to find out how you could mend your broken ..... anything

You can find all the details of the [repair cafes in Gloucestershire on our website, there are 16 cafes across the county](#), if you haven't visited one before make it your mission to go this year.

<https://www.gloucestershirerecycles.com/reduce/repair/repair-cafes/>

**Families in Partnership newsletter** – including information on Home to School transport, School admission policies, and help and support for families with SEND

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKGLOUCESTERSHIRE/bulletins/3733365>

The number of Children in care in Gloucestershire is nearly 900, nearly a third of these have to go out of county to be looked after because there are not enough places within county.

Family Hubs are being developed across the County to help all families with the challenges of parenting, how to make ends meet and general networking and support. I will keep you up to date on this exciting development.

Please watch and share this very moving short film that has been released about fostering with Gloucestershire County Council. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mCNmSgIVZ7w>

[GCC\\_2786 Fostering Generic A4 Poster\\_AW.pdf \(govdelivery.com\)](#)



## **Why Foster with Gloucestershire County Council?**

- Gloucestershire County Council's fostering service is entirely not for profit and always has the child's best interests at heart. For more information on this, visit [www.fosterwithyourcouncil.uk](http://www.fosterwithyourcouncil.uk).
- You'll be helping local Gloucestershire children stay in their communities. This means they can go to the same school, see their friends and have contact with their families if it's safe to do so.
- All children who come into care in Gloucestershire are the responsibility of the county council and we usually look to our own foster carers first to find a local home for them.
- You'll gradually build your skills and knowledge with support and training that is based in Gloucestershire, so you won't have to travel out of county for these. You'll also have access to a comprehensive programme of online learning and support, including out of hours support.
- All the professionals supporting you and the child work for Gloucestershire County Council's children's services.
- When you foster for GCC, you'll join a friendly and supportive fostering community that meets regularly to share information

and learn from each other. You'll be connected to other carers in your area, giving you a local support network. You'll have a choice of 10 local support groups to attend, at a time to suit you.

- You'll be invited to social events, like the annual family fun day and the foster carers' appreciation evening and will have access to discounts with local businesses.

With best wishes

Ann James

Director of Children's Services