
RUSPIDGE & SOUDLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the MEETING held on Tuesday 14th July 2026.

(These minutes remain in draft form until approved at the next meeting of the Council)

Parish Councillors Present:

Cllrs. Tony Matthews, Norman Snell, William Acland, Denis Bagwell-Johnson, Paul Firth, Robert Stubbs.

County Councillors Present:

Cllr. Ray Donaghue.

- Consent obtained for a speed watch group on Ruspidge Rd.
- Visual Impact gang, attending to overgrowth along footpaths etc.

District Councillors Present:

None Present.

Parish Council Clerk – Roland Dowding.

Apologies:

Cllr's Bernie O'Neill, Richard Burton, Andy Moore & Beki Hoyland.

Standing Declarations of Interest

- a) Ruspidge Memorial Hall - Insignificant personal interest by Cllr. Denis Bagwell-Johnston.
- b) Soudley Village Hall - Insignificant personal interest by Cllr. Norman Snell.

Public Present: Glenn Turner. Lena Maller.

- 7.1. **Apologies** received and recorded from absent members.
- 7.2. No declaration of prejudicial interest was declared by members present.
- 7.3. **Minutes** - The minutes of the council meeting held on the **9th of June, 2026** were **ACCEPTED** as a true record of the meeting and were duly signed by the Chairman, Cllr. Tony Matthews.
- 7.4. **Matters Arising** - There were no matters arising from the minutes.
- 7.5. **District Councillor Reports**
Reports are attached as an Appendix to these minutes.
- 7.6. **County Councillor Reports**
Reports are attached as an Appendix to these minutes.
- 7.7. **Planning** – The completed schedule for **July** is attached as an Appendix to these Minutes.
- 7.8. Following a report by the Honorary Treasurer, Cllr. Norman Snell the council **APPROVED** the accounts presented for **July**, payment totalling **£5,229.23**. These figures are inclusive of confidential expenditure. A financial report is included for **July** in the appendix to these minutes.

- 7.9. **Election of Vice chairman** – Cllr. Norman Snell nominated Cllr. William Acland. Seconded by Cllr. Denis Bagwell-Johnson. The members present unanimously approved. Cllr. William Acland accepted the role of vice chairman.
- 7.10. **Nomination of Council liaison to St Whites School** – Deferred until the September PC meeting.
- 7.11. **S.137 Grants 2026** – The following grants and amounts were approved by the Parish Council.
- Busy Rascals of Ruspidge. Grant awarded £300.00
 - SARA. Severn Area Rescue Association. Grant awarded £300.00
 - Dene Magna School. Grant awarded £200.00
 - St Whites Primary School. Grant awarded £300.00
- 7.12. **UNESCO Biosphere Status Update June 2026** – The members present debated the most recent update released by FoDDC. As a general opinion the members agreed they found the Update inconsistent and incoherent. Cllr. Tony Matthews expressed two aspects that he finds concerning, one, finding volunteers to support the project. Two, with the proposed unitary council taking over from FoDDC are FoDDC attempting to rush the UNESCO Biosphere project through whilst they are still an authority. Cllr. Matthews also compared the project to the current Biosphere in place on the Isle of Wight, which is managed by one employee on approximately half a day's employment, whereas FoDDC propose two or three employees. The members discussed the viability of proposals to maintain the unique practices found within the Forest of Dean, Sheep Badgers, Free Miners, The Verderers, etc. Some practices will naturally cease as times and practices change. Also, a lack of information to the public being a concern raised by the members. Members Tony Matthews, William Acland, Norman Snell, Paul Firth & Robert Stubbs voted against supporting FoDDC's current Biosphere proposals and requested the Clerk write to FoDDC to inform them.
- 7.13. **Liaison's Report for Soudley Village Hall.**
Cllr. Norman Snell stood down as liaison to Soudley Village Hall. Cllr. Robert Stubbs agreed to take on the role and proceeded to give the following report.
- Finances are in the black.
 - Work has commenced on the changing rooms.
 - Soudley Fete 11th July was well attended.
 - Project running over the summer called the Village Green, aims to bring parents to the village green whilst their children play increasing social interaction for young families.
- 7.14. **Liaison's Report for Ruspidge Memorial Hall.**
- Solar light are being sited around the sides of the building.
 - Improved access to the lower hall.
 - All of the building's curtains have now been fireproofed and meets fire regulations.
 - Proposals for a wheelchair ramp sited to the rear of the building.
 - Windows being cleaned inside and outside.
 - Paul Firth advised the committee investigate regulation on handrail heights prior to new installations.

- 7.15. **Clerk's Report to Council.**
- NEST submissions are now being attended to by Sjs Accountancy.
 - Amendments made to the Parish Council Website to provide Cllr. Packer access.
 - Caloo. Roundabout install proceeding in Ruspidge.
 - New software change for VAS submissions.
- 7.16. **Policy Adoption. Safeguarding & Equality & Diversity Policy.** The members present approved both policies. The Chairman, Cllr. Tony Matthews & the Clerk, Mr. Roland Dowding, duly signed the policies.
- 7.17. **Soudley Recreational Ground** – Cllr. Robert Stubbs put the following proposal to the members. The Soudley Village Hall Committee would like to fundraise for additional play area equipment at Soudley recreational ground. Should the Hall be successful in raising funds and installing the new play equipment, will the Parish Council then adopt said equipment? The Members present voted **unanimously in favour**, with one caveat, any play area equipment must be of an acceptable standard and meet with current code **BS EN 1176**. The Clerk, Mr. Dowding, noted that Soudley Village Hall must provide minutes formally acknowledging said request.
- 7.18. **Lena Maller** – Made a presentation to the members on the Armed Forces Covenant. Details of which are attached under appendix to these minutes. The members present voted unanimously to sign up to said covenant. Formal signing will take place at the September PC meeting.
- 7.19. **Correspondence** - The council **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the following correspondence:
P1361/25/FUL Planning Application Consultation.
No concerns regarding receipt of emails by the members were recorded.
- 7.20. **Next Meeting** - the next meeting of the council will be held in the **Soudley Village Hall** at **7.00 p.m. Tuesday, 8th September 2026**. The agenda deadline for the full council meeting is **Monday, 31st of September 2026**.
- 7.21. **Exclusion of the Press and the Public** - The council **RESOLVED** that for any remaining business of a confidential nature, the press and the public should be excluded from the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 10.xi (2020).

The meeting closed at 8:15 p.m.

Signed:.....Chairman.

Dated:.....

APPENDIX

FINANCIAL REPORT for the meeting in: July 2026					
1. Reconciliation of Account as at:		end June 2026			
Ledger		£		Bank	£
Balance b/f		140,947.08		(Com Acc) Lloyds Comm A/c.	6,289.11
Interest Lloyds		24.29		(Com Instant) Lloyds Inst. Access A/c.	64,236.79
GCC Grant		500.00		Unity Current A/c	906.00
NEST Refund		134.24		Unity Inst Access A/c	64,801.48
Unity Bank Interest		313.52			
	</				

<u>Ruspidge & Soudley Parish Council</u>				
<u>Planning Schedule July, 20--</u>				
Planning Reference	Parish			
Site Address & Detail	Comment			
P1361/25/FUL	No Obj			
82 Ruspidge Road Ruspidge Cinderford				
Erection of a 3 bedroom chalet bungalow with associated landscaping, parking and works. Demolition of existing garage and outbuilding.				
P0761/26/FUL	No Obj			
Abbotswood Lodge, Buckshaft Road, Ruspidge, Cinderford.				
Erection of a single storey side extension with terrace on top with associated works.				
Demolition of existing single storey extension.				
<u>Decisions notified by the Planning Authority</u>				
Planning Reference	Parish	District		
Site Address & Detail	Comment	Decision	Date	
P0523/26/FUL	No Obj	Consent	11th May 2026	
11 Peacock Lane, Ruspidge, Cinderford, Gloucestershire.				
Erection of a first floor extension				
P0446/26/FUL	No Obj	Consent	16th April 2026	
11 Ruspidge Road Ruspidge Cinderford Gloucestershire GL14 3AD				
Erection of a three storey rear extension including modernisation of existing dwelling. Demolition of dilapidated rear extension.				
P0310/26/FUL	No Obj	Consent	19th March 2026	
1 Eastern Way, Ruspidge, Cinderford, Gloucestershire.				
Erection of a side extension and raising of roof to form a first floor extension along with the demolition and erection of replacement detached garage				



What does it mean to sign up?

Awareness:

- Circulate information from the **Armed Forces Support Network** within your community by both social media and by distributing posters, or including in newsletters if you have one) in community spaces like village halls and notice boards.
 - HIVE - circulate posters to encourage people to attend.
 - Survey – raise awareness and encourage the armed forces community to feedback – make a link from your website/social media (this is on our website [Forest of Dean Armed Forces Support Network - Forest of Dean District Council](#))
 - If your community has a parish magazine forwarding this information to them for inclusion
 - Check to see if there are any Community Advice First Aiders in your community (ethan.ruskin@gloscab.org.uk)

Business:

- Encourage business in your parish or town to sign up to the covenant by signposting them to ArmedForces.Network@fdean.gov.uk .
- *There are lots of business who employ veterans in the district but what veterans tell us is that there are many veterans who struggle to get interviews.*
- *Key benefits of employing a veteran can be good time keeping, works well as part of a team, good at taking instructions....*
- We are looking for businesses to work with us to develop this. Are there businesses in your community who you know who you could signpost to us?
- Are businesses in your community prepared to get involved in the veteran's discount card to offer Veterans in the Forest a discount? [Official Armed Forces Veteran's Discount Card](#)

Activities:

Do events in your community to celebrate Armed Forces Day and Remembrance Day and let the AFSN know and raise awareness of HIVE/Survey etc

Funding:

FODDC has commissioned support via Wildeearth Journey's to enable a monthly HIVE.

If your parish or Town council has funding could you help fund something in your community or could you work with the AFSN to secure more funding by ringfencing match .

July 2026 -County Report

beki.hoyland@gloucestershire.gov.uk

07815660013

Transport and travel

Please continue to use and promote the use of [FixMyStreet](#) to report issues on the roads.

The Forest of Dean Road Safety Group brings together highways, fire, police, councillors from parish, town, district and county, Forestry England and others as required. The aim of this meeting is to highlight areas in the whole district that need attention and work done to improve safety. If there is something you would like to add to this agenda do let me know.

On 1st July we had updates and discussions on

- How Forestry England and Highways are working together to improve visibility around the wooded areas.
- How we can communicate more with Parish Councils? There are fewer parish reps than there used to be at the meeting so do consider if any of you would like to represent your parish at the meeting or if there are areas that are real safety concerns in your parish can you feed them up to us and what would be the best way to do this?

A40, Over Bridge.

Below I have given you the official links and information about the closure. I know this is going to have a massive impact on our community and I am making sure that all forms of transport, highways, both national and local, as well as Stagecoach and trains are aware that this is a major factor in our lives and that we would appreciate any support with extra busses and trains and consideration when the other roads are closed for what ever reason. I will keep this as an ongoing conversation so do feed back to me if there is an angle I may not be aware of.

From 8 June until spring 2027 National Highways will be carrying out essential repair and maintenance work on Over Bridge. The A40 runs across the bridge, over the River Severn, connecting Gloucester, Cheltenham and Ross on Wye.

Drivers are advised to use alternative routes where possible, especially during peak travel times - please share this message to help reduce congestion and delays.

Lane closures will be in place during day times and occasional full closures will be in place over night. National Highways: South-West is working hard to make sure activity is as coordinated as possible, and disruption kept to a minimum. However, they recognise this won't remove all disruption and apologise in advance for the inconvenience the works will cause. Although they are not our works, we will do all we can to support National Highways to keep any impact as limited and short as possible.

 The slip road which links the A417 Over Causeway to the A40 westbound will be closed 24/7 for the duration of the scheme. Drivers from the A417 travelling onto the A40 westbound will need to join by the roundabout.

Find out more about the work: [A40 Over Bridge refurbishment - National Highways](#)

Read frequently asked questions: [A40 Over Bridge frequently asked questions - National Highways](#)

For further information please follow the links above or contact National Highways: info@nationalhighways.co.uk Tel: 0300 123 5000

Other Closed Roads

- 9th February - ongoing. Lydney to Whitecroft road is closed for structural maintenance. The no. 23 bus is rerouted as follows: Lydney, Bream, Whitecroft, Parkend, Sling.
- 13th July – 21st August Upper Road Pillowell for rebuilding a collapsed wall
- 17th – 28th August **overnight** road resurfacing around Whitecroft,
- 28th July Whitecroft to Bream road closed to inspect the bridge there.
- 24th August – 16th September. Cinderford Road, Brains Green for undergrounding cables.
- 1st September to 23rd October Soudley bridge, closed for maintenance
- Autumn. Surface improvement work between A48 to Parkend and around Bream.

Public transport

£3 for a single journey on stagecoach busses. With fuel costs increasing it may be worth considering taking the bus. Below are links to help you find your timetable and route.

[About 5 — FoDCAP](#) to download the transport map of the Forest of Dean, including links to all the timetables.

[traveline sw - welcome](#)

[County bus network maps | Gloucestershire County Council](#)

[How to book a journey | Gloucestershire County Council](#) The Robin

Or you can consider walking or the train, here are links to help

[Rights of way online map | Highways](#)

[The official source for trains in Great Britain | National Rail](#)

County News

[Voices of care leavers help to shape housing support for young people](#)

The voices of care leavers are helping Gloucestershire County Council to improve housing support for young people who have left care.

[County Council marks Carers Week 2026 to celebrate county's unpaid carers](#)

Gloucestershire County Council shone a spotlight on the vital role of unpaid carers as part of Carers Week 2026 (8-14 June), encouraging more people to recognise themselves as carers and access the support available.

[Plans to strengthen adult social care services take another step forward](#)

People in Gloucestershire who rely on mental health support will benefit from more joined-up services, as the next step in improving adult social care is delivered.

[M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme reaches further milestone as main works decision approaches](#)

Gloucestershire County Council is moving towards a further milestone on the M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme, following the recent publication of a Cabinet report setting out the next step towards main construction.

[Residents urged to 'Hand it Back' to help others stay independent](#)

Gloucestershire residents are being encouraged to return unused community equipment to help others in need and keep vital services running efficiently.

[Gloucestershire County Council taking part in landmark 2026 green skills conference](#)

Gloucestershire leaders from across education, industry and government come together for the Clean Energy and Green Skills Conference 2026.

[Council calls on utility companies to reduce disruption during National Highways Over Bridge works](#)

Gloucestershire County Council is calling on utility companies to play their part in keeping traffic moving during major works by National Highways on the A40 Over Bridge.

[Chief Fire Officer Mark Preece to retire on 1 October 2026](#)

Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service Chief Fire Officer and Gloucestershire County Council Executive Director of Community Safety, Mark Preece, will retire on 1 October 2026.

[New WhatsApp tool launched to support carers in Gloucestershire](#)

Unpaid carers across Gloucestershire can now get quick, simple help to find local information and support through a new WhatsApp tool.

[Nearly 2,000 unsafe 'squishy' toys seized by Trading Standards | Gloucestershire County Council](#). Gloucestershire Trading Standards are warning parents, carers and retailers to take extra care when buying popular 'squishy' toys, after officers uncovered hundreds of unsafe products on sale across the county

People's emergency briefing - the climate and nature crisis

FODCAP (Forest of Dean Climate Action Partnership) are organising a screening of the [People's Emergency Briefing](#) film on **Thursday 25th June, 18.30-21.00 at The Club in Newnham-on-Severn**.

 [Book here.](#)

The film features footage from last November's [National Emergency Briefing](#), bringing together leading UK experts in climate science, food security, health, economics, national security and nature. It presents a calm, evidence-based overview of how the climate and nature crisis is affecting everyday life in Britain - and what the science says about risks and responses.

The initiative is explicitly non-partisan and is supported by a wide range of organisations, including the Church of England, National Trust, WWF, the Royal Meteorological Society and many others.

Following the film, they will host a structured discussion on what this means locally.

If you cannot make the screening, there is a smaller preview event being organised independently at The George in Newnham-on-Severn, during the day on 9th June, 11.00 - 13.00.

 [Book here.](#)

Community climate change fund

We're pleased to announce that 25 carbon-reducing projects have been chosen to receive grant funding from our community climate change fund. We are still in the final stages of processing these, but as soon as we can we will upload the projects to [our website](#). We will let you know when they are published so you can see the exciting work being done across the county to reduce carbon and engage with communities.

Clothes swap kit

Did you know that textile production contributes more to climate change than international aviation and shipping combined? The industry is responsible for 10% of annual global carbon emissions. The good news is that people are buying second hand - In fact, two thirds of people in the UK now wear second hand clothing . Find out more about [why clothing waste matters here](#).

A clothes swap is a great way to refresh your wardrobe without damaging the environment - plus it saves A LOT of money! If you're planning a clothes swap in Gloucestershire, whether that's for a business or just between friends, you can [borrow our clothes swap kit](#) and download resources to help you run your event. 

Local Government Reorganisation.(LGR) Below is the link for all the up to date information, we are expecting to hear what form LGR will be for Gloucestershire in the first half of July. **(Now expected Wednesday 15th)**

[Future Gloucestershire : Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation in Gloucestershire.](#)

Get ready to book free activities for eligible children and young people this school summer holiday

[Get ready to book free activities for eligible children and young people this school summer holiday | Gloucestershire County Council](#)

Families can view activities available through Gloucestershire County Council's summer Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF) from midday on Monday 22 June. Bookings will be open from midday on Monday 6 July.

A wide range of free, fun activities and nutritious food will be on offer for eligible children and young people across the county to keep them happy, healthy and entertained from Wednesday 22 July to Tuesday 1 September for the summer school holidays.

Children in Reception to Year 11 who receive benefits-related free school meals can take part.

To view the activities on offer families should visit the Family Hubs booking system and create an account:

<https://familyhubs.gloucestershire.gov.uk/> [Home](#)

Welcome to The Library Challenge!

This summer in all Gloucestershire libraries for children age 3 +

[Welcome to The Library Challenge! | Gloucestershire Libraries](#)

Travel through time, get reading, and earn rewards!

There are lots of fun, interactive activities waiting for you! You can try them on your own, or team up with friends, siblings, or grown-ups.

Complete tasks and earn free rewards. Show your activity in any way you like - write it, draw it, stick things in, or add photos. It's your time-travelling story, so make it your own! If you need inspiration, just ask your library for activity sheets to help you get started.

[Download The Library Challenge 2026 Map](#) to explore the 6 different zones: Daring Dreamers, Lost Worlds and Hidden Treasures, Courageous Quests, Big Stories Small Island, Perilous Past, and Epic Myths and Fables.

GCC Meetings

Full Council

Four motions were debated and passed during June's Full Council meeting:

- Extending Youth Voice in Climate Decision-Making (Labour / Greens)

This motion sought to replace the Gloucestershire Youth Climate Group – which did not receive renewed funding - with a new initiative that continues to give young people a meaningful voice in climate policy. It called for a wider and more inclusive approach to youth engagement while retaining independent scrutiny of council climate decisions.

- Community Energy and Community Benefit for Gloucestershire (Lib Dems)

This motion supported a county-wide strategy to expand community energy projects and ensure local communities benefit from renewable energy developments. The motion built on a previous Green motion on community-owned renewable energy. The motion proposed a cross-party group to develop a delivery plan with practical recommendations, pilot projects and funding opportunities.

- Highways Community Partnership (Reform)

This motion supported creating a community highways partnership scheme, enabling residents, parish councils and volunteers to help identify and address minor highways issues. It calls for further work on options, pilot projects and community engagement before any wider rollout.

- Donation of Decommissioned Fire Engines to Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine (Independent)

A motion which asked GCC to donate up to five decommissioned fire engines to the Zaporizhzhia region of Ukraine, where emergency services have been damaged by the war. The motion also reaffirmed the Council's solidarity with Ukraine and support for humanitarian assistance.

The Green Group proposed a motion to embed [Doughnut Economics](#) (DE) as a framework to guide Gloucestershire's future decision-making, balancing social wellbeing with environmental sustainability. The motion recognises that complex challenges such as inequality, poor health and climate change require a more joined-up approach and notes that other councils have successfully adopted the model. The motion calls for member training, a cross-party working group, and the creation of a "Gloucestershire Doughnut" to help inform policy and planning for future unitary authorities. However, there was insufficient time to discuss the motion at the meeting and so this will be delayed to a future date.

Links to the agenda, minutes and full motion texts can be found [here](#), with a full recording of the meeting [here](#).

Cabinet

The following decisions were taken during June's meeting of the Cabinet:

GCC Response to Local Government Reorganisation

Cabinet agreed the County Council's response to Government consultation on the Gloucestershire Structural Change Order. It expressed a preference for a single unitary authority operating as a "new council" model and delegated authority to finalise the submission.

Council Strategy, Finance, Performance and Risk Monitoring (Q4 2025/26)

Cabinet noted strong financial performance, including a £7.6 million underspend, and agreed transfers to reserves. It also approved capital programme changes and reviewed performance, savings delivery and risk management for 2025/26.

Green Skills Strategy 2026–2030

Cabinet approved the new Green Skills Strategy to support development of the skills needed for the transition to a low-carbon economy. Officers were authorised to implement the strategy and participate in the Federated Faculty initiative.

Joint Minerals and Waste Plan

Cabinet approved the preparation of a new Minerals and Waste Local Plan under updated planning regulations. Officers were given delegated authority to progress plan-making, evidence gathering and consultation stages.

Gloucestershire E-Scooter Trial and Future E-Bike Scheme

Cabinet approved a 12-month extension of the current Voi e-scooter trial from July 2026. It also authorised procurement of a future county-wide combined e-scooter and e-bike scheme from July 2027.

SHaRe Open Admission Framework

Cabinet approved procurement of a new framework for children's services support, including short breaks, disability support, holiday activities, inclusion services and professional resources. The framework will operate for six years with an option to extend.

M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme

Cabinet approved progressing to the main construction phase of the M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme. It also increased the project budget to £407 million and approved financial arrangements to support delivery.

🚧 A417 Missing Link and Air Balloon roundabout works 🚧

National Highways announced that from 6am on Monday 29 June, traffic on the A417 between Gloucester and Cirencester will be switched onto a new temporary route from the A46 Brockworth interchange to the former Cowley roundabout. This arrangement is expected to be in place for at least five weeks while they continue building the new road.

🔧 What to expect:

- Narrower lanes and a 40mph speed limit
- Single-lane traffic in both directions between A46 Brockworth Junction and Air Balloon
- Permanent closure of the existing A417 between Air Balloon and the B4070

This change allows them to keep traffic moving and continue construction safely.

🕒 Plan ahead:

National Highways expect significant delays, so please allow extra time for your journey. If you're travelling longer distances, consider alternative routes, especially during peak times.

🔴 Upcoming closures:

Thursday 25 June (9pm–6am): Overnight closure between A46 Brockworth and Air Balloon

Friday 26 June (9pm) to Monday 29 June (6am): Full weekend closure between A429 Burford Road and Air Balloon

➡ Please follow signed diversion routes (not sat navs).

⚠ Please note all dates are subject to change due to weather or unforeseen circumstances.

For more information about the scheme please visit the national highways website: [A417 Missing Link - National Highways](#)

We appreciate the delays will be frustrating and we're working closely with National Highways to make sure every effort is made to reduce congestion. You can help by raising awareness about the roadworks through your networks. We will continue to share updates as we receive them and we urge anyone with concerns to contact National Highways on: info@nationalhighways.co.uk or 0300 123 5000.

Town Centre Regeneration – The Heritage Stones from the Highways budget are still in process – Graham and Mark may be able to update more.

Public Transport –The Bus Station is next in line for a revamp and I will keep up to date on any developments. CTC & I met with the Active Travel Team who are working with GCC

Youth ASB/Engagement –Awaiting SARA plan from the Police (overdue) – spoke to PCSO Amber and she said she will arrange to meet with representatives to take us through it within the next 3 weeks. I hope to use some Grassroots Funding to help with activities so am open to ideas.

I have been engaging with the Head of Youth Justice who is sending a representative to the meeting this week and plans too:

- Map the planned activities and understand how they are addressing the concerns raised by the community.
- Identify any gaps in provision or opportunities for additional support, particularly from community members who are wanting to help.
- Formulate a plan that shows what is being done and how we can measure progress, review impact, and keep the work under ongoing review.

Speedwatch – New sites have been approved (Station St, St Whites Rd, Church Rd, Valley Rd). I conducted a session last Sunday and the top speed was 46mph. GCC have pulled funding for this but existing schemes like ours can continue.

Redevelopment - Graham and I met with Keith Chaplin and Jacqui Wright to discuss the issues Brownfield Regeneration Grants for some of the long-term derelict sites in Cinderford. We hope to look at getting some press and GCC attention and focus on this issue but this may take some time.

I will meet with David Owen (Director of Economy & Environment) to discuss ideas about having GCC services placed in the town. He has asked for a meeting with me & FODDC (Jacqueline Wright) which is set up for July to explore that further.

Grassroots - There have been lots of applications for the fund County Councillors can access and many have been approved or are on the way. The outdoor gym equipment has been approved and installed.

Police - I have continued to have regular meetings with Police and I the next meeting is the 10th of August. Please pass on to me any issues you wish to bring up. Other work with the Police & Trading Standards is – trying to arrange a meeting about alleged illegal car repair and sales work, alleged illegal cigarette shops, ASB in Rowandene, Youth ASB (SARA plan).

I have had multiple reports in Cinderford & Ruspidge about masked riders on bikes, what appears to be illegal scrambling and other issues. The response from the Police has been one of stating they have limited powers and need reports and I would like some advice from the Council.

Myself and Les met with a representative of the Romanian community to discuss signs and information RE the seed spitting issue that went well. We hope to have a meeting with another member of this community also which Les has been trying to arrange.

We undertook a multi agency walkabout – somewhat impromptu – with Parking, Street Wardens, Police, Darren Flower and Nikki. It snow an open invitation and will happen again on 10/08 and will be a regular invite.

We have Neighbourhood Watch meeting on the 4th of August.

Cinderford Fire Station – I have asked for a meeting to understand the potential impacts of suggestions RE the communication I have had from GCC stating - The Cabinet report recommends seeking approval to undertake public consultation on a proposed option which would see:

- Cheltenham West Fire Station no longer providing night-time crewing; and
- Cinderford Fire Station moving to a day-crewed model which means a fire crew will be immediately available in the day time and it will remain crewed by on-call staff over night.

I am invited to the Countywide Community Drugs Partnership in September. This will complement the work I am trying to do on rural substance misuse support.

Other constituent work includes highways, planning and policing issues. That includes –

Working on flooding issues in Valley Rd and Albion Rd. Work has started in Valley Rd (now awaiting a couple of quotes before the second stage can be completed) and we are now awaiting a survey done on the flood drainage system in Albion Rd/Springfield Drive.

Request – the North of the Forest has the GCC Visual Impact Gang one week out of every 2 so if you have any ideas for things they could do let me know. The LHM has told us they will do a deep clean of Valley Rd.

Steam Mills School potholes – GCC have told me they have been scheduled to be done

Schol Asked and awaiting an update on Forest High as I know they has some Trustee votes scheduled to hep decide future plans.

Requesting to find out who the School Crossing Patrol Officer for my area to speak to them/discuss issues or visit Steam Mills & St Whites School. This is taking some time!

I have complained about the slow reply from officers RE the Steam Mills crossing petition which has taken an unacceptable amount of time to return.

I have worked with GCC and Cinderford High St Action Group and now have an official statement which falls short in many ways. Myself and Lee of CHAG are meeting and I am in contact with Gloucestershire Live and hope they pick up the story.

White Lining – the LHMs budget has been cut from 60k to 20k – so it will not be done in a bull lining bundle. Therefore please all report via fixmystreet otherwise we will not get much done

Myself and Cllr Camp met with the National Highways Rep and are getting regular updates of the progress of the work (I have emailed some useful information)

Streetworks Wardens – I have asked if it's possible, we join or be considered for Cinderford and the Forest. Would you share this via the Council FB page. (At the end of the report)

GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

NEWS BRIEFING FOR TOWN, BOROUGH AND PARISH COUNCILS

June 2026 / 15 Stories

SUMMARY

This June 2026 news briefing details critical operational updates, public consultations, and community initiatives from Gloucestershire County Council. Key highlights include trading standards enforcement actions seizing thousands of unsafe toys, infrastructure adjustments to mitigate severe travel disruptions on the M50 and A40, and structural challenges highlighted by the newly appointed highways chief regarding road maintenance funding. Furthermore, the council has launched major public engagement windows across Gloucestershire to shape the future layout of high streets, parking spaces, and speed restrictions. Additionally, community development funds have directly boosted grassroots youth spaces and historical communal hubs, while preparatory steps have been finalized ahead of the landmark Clean Energy and Green Skills Conference 2026.

1. CELEBRATING GLOUCESTERSHIRE'S REGISTRARS

This update highlights a county-wide celebration of the Registration Service, an essential civic department that manages vital life events including births, deaths, marriages, and civil partnerships. By marking National Registrars' Day, Gloucestershire County Council aims to formally recognize the dedication, professionalism, and community impact of the registration staff who provide support to residents during their most significant and emotional personal milestones.

- Gloucestershire is marking National Registrars' Day on Wednesday 1 July.
- The celebration highlights the dedicated work of its Registration Service, which supports residents through some of life's most important moments.
- **Relevance to local councillors:** Councillors are encouraged to champion the visibility of local registration offices and point residents to these services for vital life event documentation.
- **Link:** <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gcc-news/news-june-2026/celebrating-gloucestershiresregistrars-on-national-registrars-day/>

2. NEARLY 2,000 UNSAFE 'SQUISHY' TOYS SEIZED

This story covers a key enforcement operation by Gloucestershire Trading Standards, which launched an enforcement operation targeting dangerous, non-compliant consumer products entering the local marketplace. Officers successfully identified and intercepted a substantial batch of popular 'squishy' toys that failed to meet mandatory safety regulations, posing a serious choking or chemical hazard to young children, and prompting an immediate wider warning to local families and retail networks.

Gloucestershire Trading Standards issued an urgent warning to parents, carers, and retailers regarding popular 'squishy' toys.

- Enforcement officers successfully uncovered and seized hundreds of unsafe products on sale across the county.
- **Relevance to local councillors:** Councillors should share this safety warning via ward newsletters and community channels to protect families from non-compliant retail stock.
- **Link:** <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gcc-news/news-june-2026/nearly-2000-unsafe-squishytoys-seized-by-trading-standards/>

3. CHIEF FIRE OFFICER MARK PREECE TO RETIRE

The council has formally announced the upcoming retirement of its top emergency services executive, marking the conclusion of a significant chapter in regional public safety management. Over his tenure, Chief Fire Officer Mark Preece has dual-led the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service and served as the council's Executive Director of Community Safety, overseeing strategic emergency response, risk reduction, and county-wide resilience initiatives.

- Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service Chief Fire Officer Mark Preece has formally announced his retirement.
- In addition to his fire service role, Preece serves as Gloucestershire County Council's Executive Director of Community Safety.
- His retirement will officially take effect on 1 October 2026.
- **Relevance to local councillors:** Elected members will be briefed on the transition and recruitment timeline to ensure seamless continuity in division-level safety oversight.
- **Link:** <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gcc-news/news-june-2026/chief-fire-officer-mark-preece-to-retire-on-1-october-2026/>

4. PARKING AND TRAVEL REVIEW IN BOURTON-ON-THE-WATER

In response to long-standing concerns regarding seasonal traffic congestion, visitor management, and infrastructure strain in the Cotswolds, the council has launched a comprehensive public travel review. This initiative opens a direct consultation channel with residents, business owners, and commuters to gather qualitative data on local transport pressures, allowing the community to directly shape future parking controls and sustainable travel infrastructure.

- People living, working, and visiting Bourton-on-the-Water are being invited to have their say on parking and travel in the village.
- The engagement initiative aims to collect localized feedback to evaluate current controls and future infrastructure choices.
- **Relevance to local councillors:** Ward councillors are requested to actively direct local business owners, residents, and seasonal commuters to this survey to resolve localized congestion.
- **Link:** <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gcc-news/news-june-2026/residents-and-businesses-to-have-their-say-on-parking-and-travel-in-bourton-on-the-water/>

5. COMMUNITY SPACE IN NYMPFIELD REOPENS

This update reports on a successful local community asset preservation project in Nympsfield, where a vital communal space has been secured for public benefit. The historic Rose & Crown Inn, now transitioned into community ownership, has received targeted capital support from the council's dedicated neighbourhood fund to facilitate necessary building adjustments and accelerate its formal reopening as a localized social hub.

- A community space in Nympsfield at the Rose & Crown Inn is set to benefit from new investment.
- The project has been awarded funding of £1,000 to assist its local reopening.
- This allocation is part of Gloucestershire County Council's wider £1.1 million Grassroots Neighbourhood Fund.
- **Relevance to local councillors:** Councillors can use this model to show local groups how small-scale grants from the Grassroots Fund can rescue vital division infrastructure.
- **Link:** <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gcc-news/news-june-2026/community-space-in-nympsfield-set-to-reopen-with-funding-from-grassroots-neighbourhood-fund/>

6. SAFER ROADS CONSULTATION IN STROUD AND CAINSCROSS

The council has advanced its commitment to neighbourhood safety and active travel by opening a major public consultation on speed limit reductions across Stroud and Cainscross. Part of the broader Safer Roads and Community 20s policy framework, the proposals aim to introduce a blanket 20mph speed zone across high-density residential streets and urban shopping corridors to lower collision risks and protect vulnerable road users.

- Residents, businesses, and communities in Stroud and Cainscross are being asked to share their views on new safety proposals.
- The primary focus of the consultation is the introduction of lower 20mph speed limits across the area.
- **Relevance to local councillors:** Councillors within Stroud and Cainscross should host localized feedback sessions to capture resident safety concerns regarding traffic speeds.
- **Link:** <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gcc-news/news-june-2026/residents-invited-to-shape-plans-for-safer-roads-in-stroud-and-cainscross/>

7. SUMMER HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES AND FOOD (HAF) PROGRAMME

To combat seasonal food poverty and support low-income households during the extended school break, the council has finalized the schedule for its upcoming Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme. The initiative provides free, structured physical activities, creative workshops, and fully balanced nutritional meals to eligible children, with the council publishing the digital schedule early to allow families to coordinate their summer bookings.

- Families can now view the extensive list of activities available through the council's summer Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF).

Activity viewing opened from midday on Monday 22 June, with formal bookings set to open from midday on Monday 6 July.

- **Relevance to local councillors:** Councillors are urged to signpost vulnerable or low-income families in their divisions to these booking windows before positions fill up.
- **Link:** <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gcc-news/news-june-2026/get-ready-to-book-freeactivities-for-eligible-children-and-young-people-this-school-summer-holiday/>

8. FUNDING BOOST FOR HUCCLECOTE SCOUTS

This report highlights the allocation of a significant community grant designed to upgrade youth development infrastructure within the Hucclecote area. The 11th Gloucester Hucclecote Scout Group secured capital funding from the council's neighbourhood improvement reserves, allowing the volunteer led group to modernize their physical meeting hall, enhance safety installations, and expand their overall operational capacity for local young people.

- The 11th Gloucester Hucclecote Scout Group is set to benefit from an investment to improve their dedicated space for children and young people.
- The group was officially awarded a funding boost of £5,000.
- This project was funded via Gloucestershire County Council's £1.1 million Grassroots Neighbourhood Fund.
- **Relevance to local councillors:** This demonstrates the tangible impact of council grants on youth services; councillors should help local volunteer-led clubs draft similar bids.
- **Link:** <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gcc-news/news-june-2026/funding-boost-helpshucclecote-scouts-improve-space-for-children-and-young-people/>

9. COUNCIL RESPONDS TO M50 CLOSURE IMPACT

Following National Highways' strategic implementation of overnight structural maintenance on the M50 westbound, the council has actively deployed highways monitoring teams to mitigate secondary traffic impacts. Because the high-volume trunk road closure automatically rerouted heavy freight and standard vehicular traffic directly through the residential networks of Gloucester, the council is working to manage local disruptions and adjust traffic signalling.

- Gloucestershire County Council is actively advising residents and motorists regarding a National Highways overnight closure of the M50 westbound.
- The strategic closure has resulted in significant traffic being diverted directly through Gloucester.
- **Relevance to local councillors:** City councillors should work closely with highways officers to monitor gridlock points along the diversion routes and log local damage claims.
- **Link:** <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gcc-news/news-june-2026/council-aware-of-m50-closureimpact-as-traffic-diverted-through-gloucester/>

10. DISRUPTION MITIGATION CALLED FOR NEAR A40 OVER BRIDGE

With National Highways carrying out essential structural rehabilitation on the A40 Over Bridge through spring 2027, the council has intervened to preserve critical traffic flow along a major county economic artery. To minimize severe daily gridlocks, the council has issued a firm request to all third-party utility companies, demanding a temporary halt on all non-urgent or non-emergency street-works in the immediate surrounding road networks.

- The council is formally calling on utility companies to play their part in keeping traffic moving during major works.
- The primary bottleneck is caused by ongoing works by National Highways on the A40 Over Bridge.
- **Relevance to local councillors:** Councillors should direct resident complaints about utility streetworks delays to the executive team to reinforce strict permitting rules.
- **Link:** <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gcc-news/news-june-2026/council-calls-on-utilitycompanies-to-reduce-disruption-during-national-highways-over-bridge-works/>

11. NEW HIGHWAYS CHIEF HIGHLIGHTS FUNDING DEFICIT

The newly appointed head of highways infrastructure has delivered a candid financial assessment regarding the long-term maintenance of the county's road networks and pothole repair backlogs. Highlighting a substantial £15.5 million government

funding gap, the highways chief warned of a widening budgetary 'black hole' that forces the council to tightly prioritize statutory structural repairs while delaying lower-priority resurfacing projects.

- The new highways chief expressed shock regarding an ongoing shortfall of £15.5 million in road funding.
- A stark warning was issued over a potential 'black hole' developing within road infrastructure funding as the county faces these budgetary pressures.
- **Relevance to local councillors:** Councillors should manage expectations within their wards, clarifying that non-essential road resurfacing schedules will face constrained timelines.
- **Link:** <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gcc-news/news-june-2026/new-highways-chief-shockedby-government-funding-gap/>

12. LEADERSHIP IN GREEN SKILLS AT 2026 CONFERENCE

The council has advanced its strategic climate agenda by spearheading preparations for the upcoming Clean Energy and Green Skills Conference 2026. This landmark assembly brings together leaders from education, heavy industry, and regional government to establish clean energy pipelines, aligning local vocational training with the immediate workforce demands detailed in the newly published Gloucestershire Green Skills Strategy (2026–2030).

- Gloucestershire is set to take a major step towards a Net Zero future by hosting the Clean Energy and Green Skills Conference 2026.
- The event brings together key leaders across education, industry, and government to align future skillsets with ecological targets.
- **Relevance to local councillors:** Councillors can connect local business networks and education providers in their wards to these green enterprise resources.

Link: <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gcc-news/news-june-2026/gloucestershire-countycouncil-leading-the-way-on-green-skills-at-landmark-2026-conference/>

13. ROYAL THREE COUNTIES SHOW SHOWCASE

During the premier regional Royal Three Counties Show in Malvern, Gloucestershire County Council deployed a prominent interactive public pavilion to support the local rural economy. The stand combined physical agricultural exhibits with advanced virtual reality setups, showcasing the county's farming heritage, active travel corridors, local business grants, and sustainable tourism opportunities to thousands of regional visitors.

- Gloucestershire County Council celebrated the county's identity at this year's Royal Three Counties Show.
- The event took place from Friday 12 to Sunday 14 June 2026 at the Three Counties Showground in Malvern.
- The council's presence showcased local achievements, tourism, and rural enterprise support.
- **Relevance to local councillors:** Councillors can use contacts built at the show to champion agribusiness and sustainable rural tourism within their divisions.
- **Link:** <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gcc-news/news-june-2026/gloucestershire-countycouncil-to-showcase-the-very-best-of-the-county-at-royal-three-counties-show/>

14. CHELTENHAM HIGH STREET AND PROMENADE ENGAGEMENT

The council has launched an expansive public consultation aimed at revitalizing and reshaping the aesthetic and functional design of Cheltenham's central commercial zones. This urban design initiative invites residents, shoppers, and trade organizations to submit direct feedback regarding proposed layouts for Cheltenham's high street and promenade, specifically focusing on balancing pedestrian safety, disabled accessibility, and commercial deliveries.

- Public engagement has been launched to collect feedback on the future look and feel of Cheltenham's high street and promenade.
- The council is inviting communities to have their say on accessibility and design layouts.
- **Relevance to local councillors:** Cheltenham councillors are urged to convene town trade forums to ensure the retail core's long-term business layout is preserved.

- **Link:** <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gcc-news/news-june-2026/public-engagement-launched-on-future-of-cheltenham-high-street-and-promenade/>

15. MORETON-IN-MARSH PARKING SUFFICIENCY REVIEW

To address the competing transport demands in North Gloucestershire, the council has extended its comprehensive parking reviews to Moreton-in-Marsh. This targeted traffic management study seeks wide-ranging input from residents, regular rail commuters, and independent business owners to evaluate current parking capacity, with the ultimate goal of implementing structural adjustments that protect residential parking while supporting local commerce.

- Residents, businesses, visitors, and commuters are invited to shape the future of parking in Moreton-in-Marsh.
- Gloucestershire County Council is running a review to better balance parking needs across the town.
- **Relevance to local councillors:** Councillors should serve as conduits for feedback, ensuring the review addresses the distinct parking needs of town commuters versus local trade staff.
- **Link:** <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gcc-news/news-june-2026/residents-and-businesses-invited-to-shape-the-future-of-parking-in-moreton-in-marsh/>

Streetworks Wardens

Overview

Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) manages approximately 3,600 miles of public highway and coordinates approximately 27,000 essential works on the highway network a year. As the Highway Authority we are legally required to inspect 30% of utility works at various stages in the works cycle.

In the previous 12 months our 6 Inspectors have carried out over 11,000 inspections.

All road works and street works must comply with a complex set of regulations, and we robustly manage performance against standards detailed within these regulations. When we identify noncompliant sites, we can issue Fixed Penalty Notices to the Works Promoters to help improve their performance.

Gloucestershire is a large rural authority with a high volume of works being carried out daily, it is therefore not feasible for Gloucestershire County Council to inspect all works undertaken. We recognise the impact poorly managed road works and street works can have on local communities and we are committed to addressing these issues proactively. To support this, we would like to work more closely with our local Councils through a trial scheme titled the “Street Works Warden Scheme”.

The scheme will run for an initial 6-month period, where we hope to work alongside local Councils to help highlight any street works concerns that have been identified on the highway network. We hope this initiative will further strengthen the excellent working relationship we have with Parishes

to tackle poor and disruptive street works activities across the county.

Examples of concerns that can be reported include but are not limited to; unsafe sites, sites that have been unmanned for several days, signs and barriers left on site upon completion and sites where there is significant unnecessary disruption.

Scheme Objectives

- To increase reporting visibility of works being undertaken within Gloucestershire.
- To promote early identification and reporting of issues associated with street works activities on the highway.
- To provide reassurance to our community that GCC are working in partnership with local councils and are working hard to identify and address street works related issues.
- To use the data collated from the trial to drive continuous improvement initiatives with those working on the highway.

Street Works Warden General Responsibilities

- Identifying works being undertaken without the necessary permits in place.
- Identifying works being undertaken that don't comply with the conditions imposed on the permit.
- Highlighting examples of unsafe working practices.

Street Works Wardens - Pilot Scheme

24

Page 2 of 5

- Reporting when works are taking longer than the permit allows.
- Reporting where the reinstatement has been completed to a poor standard or if any road lining has not been put back.
- Reporting where signs, barriers or cones have been left behind following the completion of works.

Example checks

Q. Is there a valid permit for the work taking place?

All known road works are published online via <https://one.network> or Roadworks | Highways.

By logging into the site, you can locate the works taking place on a map and by clicking on the works symbol, view the permit details including the permit reference number which must be displayed in

a prominent position on site. You will also be able to view who is carrying out the works, what the works are and when they will start and finish. If any of these details are incorrect, please let us know and we can arrange for an inspector to assess the site.

If there isn't a permit on the website, it is possible that they are urgent works. In this scenario, the company undertaking the work have 2 hours from starting works to submit their permit. Please let us know of any works that you find without a valid permit.

Q. Is an information board displayed on site?

All works must display a permit information board, advising who is working there and who to call if any issue arises whilst the works are taking place. Each board must be legible and display a unique permit reference number. A penalty may be issued for missing or incorrect permit information boards.

Q. Are there any Signing, lighting and guarding concerns?

All works must be safely guarded. Here are some examples of the things you can check:

- Are the barriers stood up correctly and linked together guarding the work area? If they are not in the correct position and have blown over as shown in Images 1 and 2 below, please capture photograph and report your concerns.

Page 3 of 5

Q. Are the barriers stockpiled on site or taking up more space than needed?

- Have the barriers been correctly secured and weighted to ensure they are kept in place and sturdy during inclement weather to reduce the likelihood of them being blown over.

Image 1 Image 2

- Image 1 shows an untidy site with barriers incorrectly weighted and leaning over and partially obstructing the footway following a reinstatement of the carriageway.
- Image 2 shows the same site a day later with barriers incorrectly weighted and blown over in the footway and carriageway creating a safety hazard to both pedestrians and vehicles.

Q. Are there any cones, signs or barriers left on-site after works have been completed?

Works Promoters must ensure that work sites are clear following the completion of their work before closing the permit. Failure to ensure equipment is removed from site after

completion of the works may result in a charge being issued.

If you identify any incomplete works or items left behind, please contact us so that we can work with the responsible party to ensure that they are collected as soon as possible.

Q. Can the contractor be easily identified?

If works have been completed and equipment has been left on site, we can notify the Utility and if they fail to respond we can issue a daily charge if we know who the signs belong to.

Please check the back of any signs for any identifying contractor details.

*Image 3

Process for Recording, Collecting and Sending Photo Evidence of any issues found

Page 4 of 5

1. Take a time, date and location stamped photos of the issue/concern you wish to raise.
2. Log on to <https://one.network> to establish if the works are covered by a valid permit.
3. Upload report and images via the “Street Works Warden” category within Fix My Street
4. The report will then be allocated to the relevant Street Works Inspector to investigate and action accordingly with feedback passed back to the appropriate Warden on the outcome.

GCC Inspector and Roadspace Coordinators areas

Page 5 of 5

Caine Edwards

Traffic Manager

Tel: 01452 425220

Mobile: 07748 933834

Email: caine.edwards@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Version: 3.0

Issued Date: 03/07/2025

Next Review Date: 01/07/2026

Owner: Caine Edwards

Approved By: Joanne Heal

