



New free parking offers should provide boost for local businesses

Cotswold District Council will be allowing motorists to continue parking for free every day after 3 pm in the Forum and Brewery car parks in Cirencester until the end of Friday 31 March.

Additionally, the 'free after 3 pm' offer has also been extended to several other car parks* until the end of Friday 31 March as follows:

- Rissington Road, Bourton-on-the-Water
- Old Market Way, Moreton-in-Marsh
- Maugersbury Rd, Stow-on-the-Wold
- Church Street, Tetbury
- West Street, Tetbury

*Please note that parking is already free at the Fosseyway car park, Stow-on-the-Wold and the Old Railyard car park, Tetbury

Commenting on the free offer, Cllr Chris Hancock, the CDC Cabinet Member for Enterprise and Partnerships, said:

"We introduced a similar free parking scheme for selected car parks across the District during the winter months of 2016 and many retail businesses welcomed the boost in footfall."

"We have ensured that signs are in place to stress that parking is free at the selected car parks AFTER 3 pm. I should also add that anyone who pays inadvertently



after 3 pm will be reimbursed provided they contact our parking team at parking@cotswold.gov.uk with their details."

"Our aim, as always, is to provide a good deal for motorists using our car parks. We have frozen parking charges since 2010 and the introduction of a half hour tariff in all our car parks has also gone down well. This 'free after three' parking incentive for several car parks during the early part of 2017 is yet another example of how we are trying to balance the need for parking income (to pay for services) with requests from traders to provide parking concessions on occasions."

Forthcoming Public meetings at Cotswold District Council

21 Feb, 16 May

Full Council, Council Chamber, Cirencester

16 Feb, 16 March, 20 April

Cabinet, Council Chamber, Cirencester

8 Feb, 8 March, 12 April

Planning and Licensing Committee,

Council Chamber, Cirencester

7 March 2017

Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Council Chamber, Cirencester

Please check www.cotswold.gov.uk for start times and agendas details/minutes

Consultation begins on Focussed Changes

Cotswold District Council is conducting a six-week period of consultation concentrating on Focussed Changes to the Local Plan Submission Draft, a document which was itself the subject of public consultation during summer 2016. The Focussed Changes consultation began on Monday 16 January and will end at 5 pm on Monday 27 February 2017. The proposed changes are set out in a report comprising about 80 pages, together with 18 supporting maps.

The public are able to view the relevant documentation on the Council's website or view a paper copy at the Council offices in Cirencester and Moreton-in-Marsh, as well as at libraries across the District.

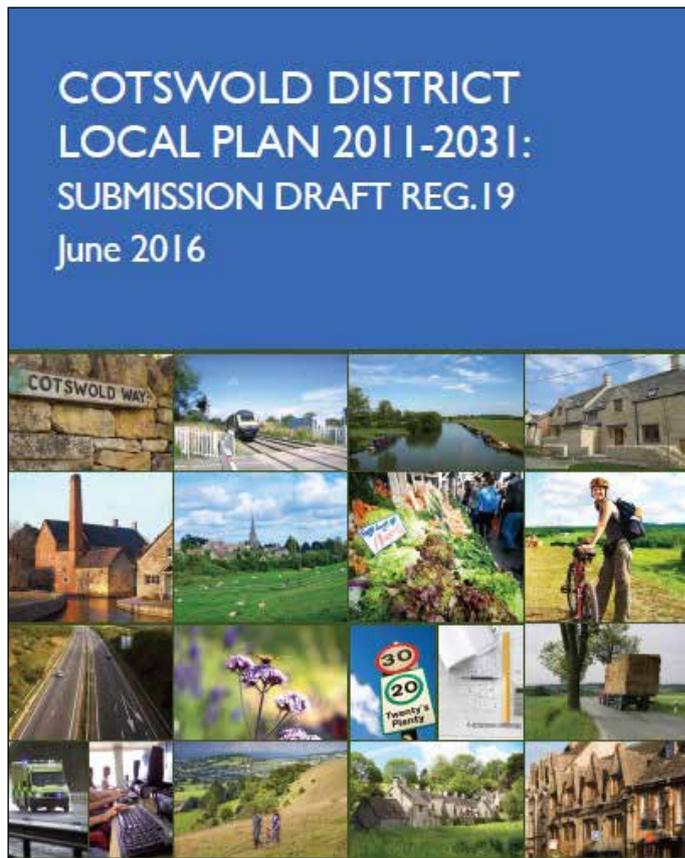
Details about how to comment are also available on the Council's website, and the following public drop-in events have been scheduled to enable people to discuss any issues with the forward planning team:

- **Tuesday 24 January from 2pm to 6.30pm at the Committee Rooms, Council Offices, Trinity Road, Cirencester.**
- **Tuesday 14 February from 2pm to 6.30pm at Moreton Area Centre, High Street, Moreton-in-Marsh**

Cllr Nick Parsons, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Forward Planning, explains:

"Many people commented on the 'soundness' of the submission draft Local Plan during July and August 2016 and, in many cases, we will be able to make minor modifications to the Plan to accommodate the constructive comments that we received. Such modifications would not have a material effect on the Plan and can be put to the examining Inspector without the need for formal consultation. However a small number of representations raised issues that would have a more significant effect on the content of the Plan and these do necessitate publishing changes. Such amendments are known as Focussed Changes.

"According to our legal advisers, it would be best practice to go to the examination stage having



provided the public with the opportunity to comment on whether the Local Plan Submission Draft - as amended by the Focussed Changes - has been prepared in accordance with the Duty to Co-operate, legal and procedural requirements, and whether it is 'sound'. If we were to skip consulting on these matters before submitting the Plan, the Inspector would be likely to suspend the examination - possibly for a number of months - until proposed policy changes have been made available for consultation and any resulting matters resolved.

"Bearing this in mind, the quickest route to achieving the adoption of the Local Plan is to run this public consultation on the Focussed Changes before the Plan is submitted for examination. The resulting changes would be appended to the Submission Draft and they would both be examined at the same time."

Don't forget!!!

Please feel free to subscribe to the Cotswold District Council Business Matters Twitter account [@CDCBizmatters](https://twitter.com/CDCBizmatters) which features updates about relevant government initiatives, events, conferences, and training opportunities. We actively encourage local firms to use it as a platform for promoting their business and the number of followers is growing daily.



Gloucestershire Business Show 2017 – Update

With only four months to go, free delegate registration is now open to attend #GBS17 on Wednesday 17 May and Thursday 18 May.

Delegates are welcome to visit the show for all or part of each day - or book for the full two-day extravaganza.

The official launch will be held at The Wilson gallery, Cheltenham on Tuesday 21 February from 6pm. This is a great opportunity to make new connections, greet familiar faces, hear about what's in store at #GBS17 and enjoy drinks and canapes provided by the event sponsor, Fosters.

Invites will be sent to past delegates, exhibitors, sponsors so keep an eye on your inbox!

Registration is free - but be quick as all tickets were snapped up well in advance of last year's event.

Attractions at the #GBS17 will include:

- An exhibition floor with 130+ exhibitors across a diverse range of business, charities and not-for-profit organisations
- The Innovation Theatre programmed with events looking at innovation as a process and culture
- The Business Advice Centre with a team of highly-experienced advisors and mentors
- The Creative Suite with a programme of talks and activities looking at the relationship between the arts and business
- Zoned areas exploring themes around food and farming, science and technology, digital security and professional development
- A theatre kitchen



The #GBS17 team will be updating latest news about the show plus the developing programme on their website at www.gloucestershire-business-show.co.uk

Chesterton Strategic Site application to be determined by Full Council



The outline application by Bathurst Development Ltd (BDL) for a mixed use development at Chesterton will be determined by the full Cotswold District Council rather than the Planning and Licensing Committee. The BDL application comprises the erection of up to 2,350 residential dwellings, and provision of employment land, a primary school, a neighbourhood centre, community facilities (including a health care facility), public open space, allotments, and playing fields on land at Chesterton Farm, Cranhams Lane, Cirencester (known as the Chesterton Strategic Site).

Determining the application by Full Council has the overwhelming support of Council Members, and follows formal consultation with the Chairman of the Council, the Chairman of the Planning and Licensing Committee, the Ward Members and the Leader of the Council.

This approach reflects the significance of the application, not only to Cirencester but to the District as a whole, given that the application site is the only strategic development site proposed as part of the emerging Local Plan. By confirming the approach now, it will hopefully provide clarity and certainty to all of those involved with, and affected by, the proposals - not least, the people of Cirencester.

A Special Meeting of the Council will take place in due course to determine the application. The Council will publicise the timescales and key events leading up to the meeting once the arrangements have been finalised.

Proposed Business Rate rises attacked in national press

National newspapers have recently reported the unrest in the business community about the upcoming North-South tax divide which will see many companies in the south (including the Cotswolds) facing big increases in business rates while those in the North will receive significant cuts.

Under Government plans to revalue business rates for the first time in seven years, firms in the Cotswolds face an increase of 12.7% in their rateable values – the biggest increase in Gloucestershire. In comparison, companies in the North East England will receive average reductions of around 16 per cent.

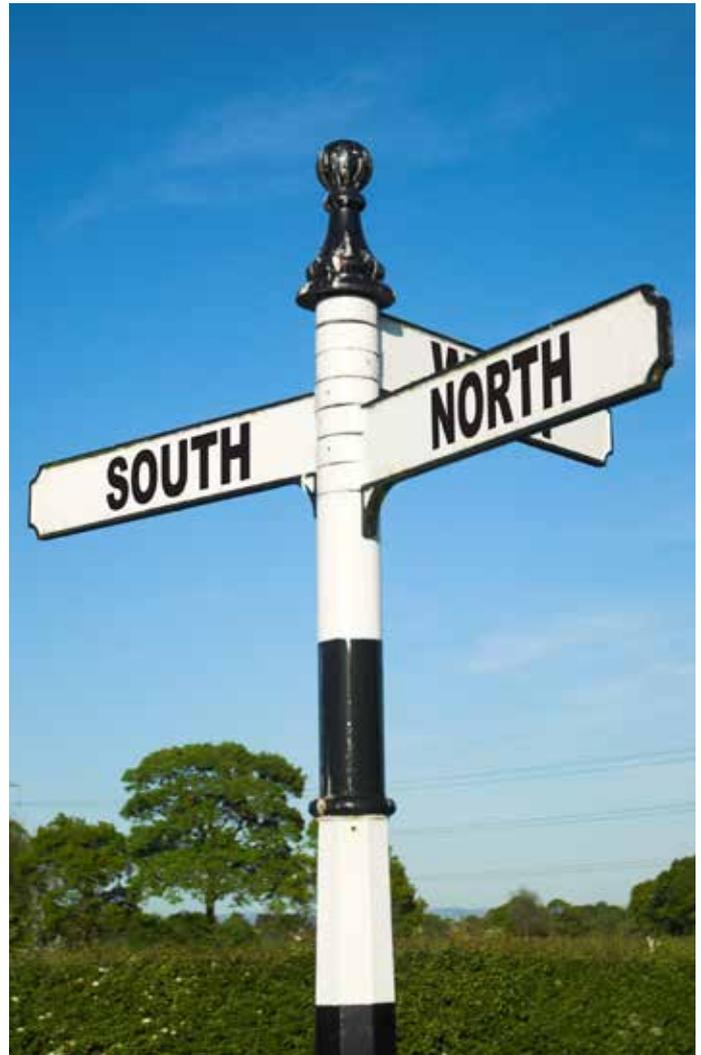
The issue was highlighted by Cotswold District Council in late October 2016 when Leader, Cllr Lynden Stowe, advised local businesses to check their business rate valuations and assess whether they might have grounds for appeal.

The rates have been calculated to take into account the rise in property prices since 2008. However, national newspapers have noted that profitable businesses in the South will be subsidising less successful firms in the north of the country, where trade has fallen dramatically in recent years.

Company leaders in London have warned that the Government is treating them as a “cash cow” after the revaluation. The same concerns have been raised in the Daily Telegraph by Cllr Stowe of CDC who comments:

“This is nothing to do with this Council – the Inland Revenue Valuation Office has proposed these rises, and the average increase is far too high. It seems ridiculous that business rate payers in Cheltenham and Gloucester face average rises of just over 2% which effectively gives them a competitive advantage of about 10% over neighbouring organisations in the Cotswolds.

“I can understand why some firms in this area might be expected to pay higher business rates than those in areas of the country where trading conditions are more difficult, but an overall increase of 12.7% is far too high. Essentially every extra pound that our local businesses



and organisations have to pay is a loss to our local economy –they worked hard to weather the recession and now they are being asked to provide a heavy subsidy to other areas that didn't perform so well.

“From a Cotswold District Council perspective, we face an annual increase in Rateable Values totalling £23,000 for our offices at Cirencester and Moreton-in-Marsh, as well as significant additional rises in the rateable value of car parks and other assets. Additionally, we will not gain a penny of these increases in the form of additional income because the money will be shifted to the rest of the country.”



Training events

For details of training and business support services provided by Gloucestershire Enterprise Ltd, see www.glosenterprise.co.uk/



Creation of a decked parking site in Cirencester reaches critical milestone



Members of Cotswold District Council's Parking Demand Project Board have agreed unanimously to seek funding from the Cabinet and Council for decked parking at the current location of the Waterloo Car Park in Cirencester.

The Board, which was established to find parking solutions for Cirencester, met in early January and agreed that sufficient progress had been made to support a detailed business case and funding request for decked parking at the site.

Commenting on the decision, the Board Chairman Cllr Mark Harris, said:

"We have now reached the point where we can provide an overwhelming case for this proposal, so we believe that the time is right to apply formally for the funding which will enable us to move forward with the procurement stage and also engage the services of an architect.

"This landmark development would signal a significant step forward for Cirencester's future prosperity, but we are also aware that there are a range of sensitivities that must be addressed. For this reason, we will continue to consult with local stakeholders, and also residents in the vicinity of the site, to achieve the most sympathetic solutions regarding the look, feel and impact of the site."

The Cabinet Member tasked with oversight of the Board, Cllr Mark MacKenzie-Charrington, added:

"We are pressing to gain the approval of the Council for this project as soon as possible, and I am confident that we can then move as quickly as possible to deliver a new car park which will contribute to meeting present and future demand for parking spaces in the town. We are aware that people want us to get on with this work and I can assure everyone that the Board is fully committed to this aim."

His views were echoed by Cabinet Member for Enterprise and Partnerships, Cllr Chris Hancock, who is responsible for car parking and enforcement across the District:

"I am very pleased that we are now at the 'light the blue touch paper' stage of this project. Providing a decked car park at the Waterloo is just one of many options we are exploring to ease demand for parking in the town. These include: developing other car parking sites; establishing park and ride schemes; creating decant arrangements while existing spaces are out of commission during construction work; and encouraging the public to use healthy transport options such as walking and cycling."

For more information about the Cirencester Parking Demand Project please go to the CDC website.

Abbey 900 is up and running!

Cirencester's much-anticipated Abbey 900 festival has begun.

This year-long series of events and celebrations emphasises the contribution of the now defunct 900-year old medieval abbey to the town's cultural and economic success. In fact, historians suggest that the founding of the Abbey marked the beginning of the town's resurgence after being such a major settlement in Roman times.

Working in tandem with the Cirencester Community Development Trust, the Abbey 900 team has been welcoming ideas for the festival since the start of last year and they are now making them a reality. Many local businesses and charities have demonstrated their support for the festival through a variety of sponsorships, including K.D. Winstone Trust and the Royal Agricultural University as two major partners. Having the Bishop of Gloucester - the Right Reverend Rachel Treweek – as patron is also another major boost for the organisers.

January saw the arrival of four manuscripts from Jesus College, Oxford, which have not been seen together in Cirencester since 1539. They will be on display in the Corinium Museum until May and entrance to see them is free, thanks to generous sponsorship by Tanner and Co Soroptimists International.

February sees the official opening of the festival when the Bishop of Gloucester attends a tree planting ceremony in the Abbey Grounds on 22nd. This will be the first time in 60 years that a new tree will be planted in the grounds.

In April, work will begin on 70,000-brick LEGO replica of the abbey (sponsored by legal firm Sewell Mullings). Residents and visitors will be able to buy their own brick and add it to the model. The money raised from this project will be used to create a fund to help maintain and improve some of the significant heritage that makes Cirencester so special.

Events in May will include a Medieval Banquet, and a Fleece Fair in the Market Place, while the late May Bank Holiday weekend will feature knights in armour at the Abbey Grounds, courtesy of the Plantagenet Society.



Recreation of Cirencester Abbey excites participants

Additionally, throughout the year there will be several commemorative concerts and plays, including a performance of *Murder in the Cathedral* in September, as well as flower festivals, junior triathlons and the opportunity to be a 'Monk for a Day'.

Activities for families will include self-guided bike trails, while both the museum and local groups will be organising a range of talks. New Brewery Arts will also be focusing its summer exhibition and workshops on Ecclesiastical Art.

The BBC has even agreed that Abbey 900 can host Radio 4 show *Any Questions!*

For further information – including how your business can get involved – please email abbey900ciren@gmail.com or call 01285 644244



Local farm shop and café gains national recognition



Gloucestershire farm shop and takeaway café Jolly Nice celebrated a great 2016, having received two prestigious awards – Best Rural Start-Up at the national Rural Business Awards and Best Independent Retailer at the Cotswold Food and Drink Awards.

The business first opened in 2013 on the site of an old filling station at Frampton Mansell, and has gone from strength to strength. From the outset, Jolly Nice made an impact, principally because the owners operated out of a distinctive 1965 Airstream trailer on the forecourt, serving homemade burgers and ice cream. The site soon expanded and now includes a farmshop, deli and butchery offering fruit and vegetables, cut flowers and plants, artisan fish and cured meats alongside coffee, cakes, beers, wine and spirits.

The business is the brainchild of Westonbirt-based tenant dairy farmers Rebecca and Simon Wilson, who wanted to find a more sustainable way to farm their Grade 1 Historic Parkland. Rebecca spent many years looking for the perfect site to sell produce directly to customers, including artisan ice cream produced by the couple's daughter Harriet who originally started her business from the family kitchen, using the organic milk from Simon's Shorthorn herd.



Rebecca is very pleased with progress so far and reveals the secret of their success:

“We only stock the very best produce we can find. In our own food and drinks we use the very best ingredients, often sourced directly from local farmers and producers. Being based in the Frampton Mansell area, we also serve as a much needed shop for many residents in the locality. We also employ an increasing number of local people and we are always keen to boost the local economy.”

A new on-site kitchen serves up the famous Jolly Nice burgers and a range of hot food, including bacon rolls using the family's rare breed pork which is farmed in woodland at Westonbirt. The range of ice creams, available only at the site's shop, includes traditional flavours such as Madagascan Vanilla and Dark Chocolate together with experimental flavours including Guinness, brown bread and sloe gin and tonic.

Most recently, the business attracted a lot of interest when it planted a Christmas tree forest, enabling visitors to walk around and choose their perfect tree.

A venue for all weathers, visitors can enjoy food and drink in atmospheric yurts beside a wood burner or in the meadow behind the site on tables which overlook a paddock where shorthorn cattle and a neighbour's rare breed sheep graze leisurely.

Growth Hub in Cirencester will unlock local business potential

GFirst LEP, Gloucestershire's Local Enterprise Partnership, believes that a new Growth Hub at the Royal Agricultural University (RAU) campus in Cirencester will strengthen the Gloucestershire business community. It will provide innovative business support and form part of an expanding network of Growth Hubs in strategic locations across the county.

It will help to boost the Gloucestershire economy by assisting local businesses of all sizes and from all sectors to accelerate their growth and exploit their full potential. The Growth Hub will also build on the RAU's existing areas of expertise by supporting businesses working in agri-technology or based in rural environments across the county.

Promoting entrepreneurship and innovation in the area, the Growth Hub will provide personalised support to businesses of all types in the region, from pre-start through to existing companies and organisations looking to develop. It will deliver business development, business support networks, strategy and advisory services, business information and enterprise support. It will form part of an expanding network of Growth Hubs in strategic locations across the county of Gloucestershire.

Created by GFirst LEP, this network will enable enhanced business support services to be delivered at a range of venues to ensure that physical location is not a barrier for businesses to get the support they need.

The plans for the Growth Hub in Cirencester have been supported by a wide-ranging group of partners including; Cotswold District Council, Cirencester Town Council, Cirencester Chamber of Commerce, Cirencester Community Development Trust and Cirencester

College. It is anticipated that the new Growth Hub, which has received £1.25m funding from GFirst LEP as part of the Gloucestershire Growth Deal, will be ready to support local businesses by April 2018.

Local businesses and interested members of the public are invited to an exhibition to view the plans for this exciting community development. The drop-in event will take place on Wednesday 8 February from 2pm to 8pm at the Boutflour Hall, Royal Agricultural University and all are welcome.

Professor Joanna Price, Vice-Chancellor of the Royal Agricultural University said: "The Growth Hub will be an invaluable facility for Cirencester and the wider Gloucestershire community. The county has a diverse business community, many of whom operate in rural areas and is home to a number of world-leading companies; the new Growth Hub will further strengthen and grow the Gloucestershire business economy. Entrepreneurship and innovation are central to the University's academic mission and we are excited to be working with GFirst LEP and growing our relationships with our partners, including the University of Gloucestershire, which has already developed a successful Growth Hub."

Sarah Danson, Growth Hub Project Manager at GFirst LEP said: "I'm really excited to have our next partners on board for the Growth Hub Network – the Royal Agricultural University has submitted an excellent proposal and we look forward to working with them to develop the new Growth Hub and drive business growth in Gloucestershire."



Calendar

Cirencester Chamber of Commerce

Meetings take place on second Wednesday of each month from 6 pm to 8 pm. If you would like to receive a regular reminder, send your details to secretary@ccoc.org.uk

Fairford and Lechlade Business Club

Evening meetings are held at 7.30pm and breakfast meetings quarterly (March, June, September and December) at 8am on the fourth Thursday of the month. See www.flbc.org.uk for details.

Tetbury Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Committee meetings take place on Thursday evenings from 6.30 pm to 9 pm. Contact 01666 502436 for details or go to www.tetburychamber.org.uk