

## County Councillor Report for March 2026

Please contact me any time on:

[John.patient@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:John.patient@gloucestershire.gov.uk) Tel: 07891 321904

And please report any Highways defects via the Fix My Street app or

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

For parish councillors & clerk use only via [highwayscouncillors@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:highwayscouncillors@gloucestershire.gov.uk) – feel free to copy me in.

## District News

The latest round of Stroud Funding is about to be launched, Stroud District Council's crowdfunding platform that helps community-driven ideas gain support and funding.


While groups are encouraged to put as much as they can into their fundraising efforts, projects can benefit hugely from additional support such as grants from local businesses, promotional opportunities, and community networks.

This round will begin with two online workshops on Wednesday 4 March, 12-1pm and Thursday 5 March, 6-7pm. These offer groups the chance to get support and feedback on their ideas, as well as learn more about how Stroud Funding works. Groups that need further guidance can also attend a 1-1 drop-in clinic. More details and sign-up links are here [Stroud Funding - About - Spacehive](#)

Ways you can help:

Print and display the attached poster on noticeboards

send the poster to local magazines, newsletters or include in emails

Share our Facebook post  Got a great idea for your community?... - Stroud District Council | Facebook

Direct residents with community project ideas to the Stroud Funding website: [Stroud Funding - Home - Spacehive](#)

## County News

### [Council votes to approve £698.4 million budget](#)

Gloucestershire County Council has approved the £698.4 million budget for 2026/27.

### [Road Safety | Inform Gloucestershire](#)

This Road Safety Needs Assessment is now available online. It was based on a detailed analysis of death and serious injury data in Gloucestershire from January 2017 to June 2024, to identify at risk groups and collision hotspots in the county to inform future work and target prevention activity.

Actions identified include:

- Joint safety campaigns and improved messaging at pedestrian crossings
- Targeted police enforcement in high-risk areas
- Work with schools and youth settings to reach younger drivers
- Investment in safer road design and engineering on priority routes
- Support for communities seeking 20mph schemes

### [Gloucestershire's landmark Local Nature Recovery Strategy goes live with school celebration](#)

Gloucestershire County Council has published its first Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and interactive map. The plan – a statutory obligation from government – suggests measures to restore nature, boost biodiversity and create a healthier future for everyone who lives, works and plays in Gloucestershire. The Green group will push the administration to implement the promised improvements.

### [Fostering Service celebrates debut novel of young person in care](#)

Gloucestershire County Council has celebrated the achievement of a young person in care as he published his debut novel at 17-years-old.

### [Council celebrate a year of Youth Hubs for supporting young people across Gloucestershire](#)

Gloucestershire County Council is celebrating over a year of impact from its commissioned Youth Hubs, delivered in partnership with three not-for-profit organisations working across the county.

### [First project announced under Grassroots Neighbourhood Fund](#)

Gloucestershire County Council has announced the first award from the Grassroots Neighbourhood Fund, with £3,000 granted to support the Youth Manager role at Brockworth Link Youth Club. **Please continue to send applications to your local councillors (see below for details).**

## **Government Consultation on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)**

Residents across Gloucestershire are encouraged to take part in the recently launched Government consultation on LGR, which opened on 5<sup>th</sup> February and will run for seven weeks.

LGR will result in the loss of Gloucestershire's existing county and district councils, which will be replaced by one or two new unitary authorities (UA). [County Greens have long opposed these changes](#), citing them as undemocratic and a waste of limited local resources. The Labour Government, however, has insisted they will go ahead. It is therefore vital that residents have their say on how services should be run in the future. The three proposed options for LGR which are being consulted on are:

- A single UA responsible for all services across Gloucestershire.
- Dividing the county into two UAs in an East (Cheltenham, Tewkesbury, Cotswold) West (Gloucester, Forest of Dean, Stroud) split.
- The 'Greater Gloucester' model consisting of one UA for a slightly expanded Gloucester City and a second for the rest of the county.

More information on the proposals can be found on the [Future Gloucestershire](#) website. To take part in the consultation, visit [local government reorganisation in Gloucestershire](#) website.

A final decision is expected in summer 2026. Elections to the new authority/authorities are planned for May 2027 with the new structure established no earlier than April 2028.

## **Grassroots Neighbourhood Fund**

The Grassroots Neighbourhood Fund scheme is continuing to seek applications from eligible groups. The scheme delivers funding to community initiatives seeking to make a positive impact on health and

wellbeing, access to nature, digital inclusion, community cohesion, and reducing inequalities. Each Councillor is allocated £20,000 to support projects in their division.

More information about the new scheme is available on the dedicated [webpage](#). Guidance for how to apply is available [here](#).

## GCC Meetings

### Full Council

As highlighted above, this month's meeting of Full Council saw members vote on the budget. While the Greens voted in support, they also made clear that they would push the Lib Dem administration to go further on prevention and commit sufficient resources to environmental issues.

Cllr Craig Horrocks (Rodborough) said: "This is not a bad budget. But it doesn't match the council's own stated ambition to invest in prevention. Our borrowing is well within safe limits, and we have room to do more. Using that space to invest in the future is a brave but sensible choice — and I don't think this budget takes it far enough."



*Cllr Craig Horrocks speaking in the chamber*



*Cllr Beki Hoyland introducing Green amendments*

Leader of the Green Group Cllr Beki Hoyland (Blakeney and Bream) added: "The best way to tackle long-term problems is to invest early in our communities. Spending on prevention today means spending less on fixing things tomorrow".

The Greens managed to secure £390,000 worth of amendments to the budget, including:

- ✓ £110,000 to expand the Cam & Dursley Green Way cycleway
- ✓ £80,000 to improve access to Public Rights of Way
- ✓ £80,000 to sponsor care leavers through youth worker apprenticeships
- ✓ £100,000 to restore the Community Climate Grant
- ✓ £20,000 for air pollution monitors at high-risk schools

The Greens also seconded a Labour amendment to use £10,000 to help young people access work, training and education. Amendments from Reform UK and the Conservatives were rejected.

Reform UK's proposals, which included scrapping funding for climate action, cutting the council's nature budget and spending money on mass dredging were strongly condemned as unscientific by the Greens.

In her speech, Cllr Chloe Turner (Minchinhampton) said: “Dredging is exactly the opposite of the ‘slow the flow’ approach that experts have shown to be the most cost-effective and nature-friendly way to manage floods, and which has been championed by county Greens in the past.”

“Reform’s proposal to cut our already stretched ecology team, at a time when nature is under more pressure than ever, is also genuinely alarming. We already face damage from the Labour Government’s attacks on nature — and Reform show exactly the same ignorance about how vital nature is to our economy, our health and our safety. This is a party that doesn't understand the science, doesn't grasp the economics and doesn't give a toss about the natural environment that so many in our county care about.”



*Cllr Turner speaking in the chamber*



*Cllr Luff speaking in the chamber*

Cllr Gary Luff (Bisley and Painswick) highlighted ecosystem degradation as a national security issue, drawing on the UK Government’s recent National Security Assessment: “The threat from the nature crises to our national security couldn't be clearer”, he said. “However, Reform UK is more interested in siding with billionaires, the fossil fuel industry and Putin rather than protecting British citizens.”

### **Other meetings**

Also held this month were meetings of the Police and Crime Panel, the Economic Strategy and Corporate Scrutiny Committee and the Pensions Committees.

Full recordings of all County Council meetings can be found [here](#).

## **Greener Gloucestershire News**

### **Just SUST festival**

A brand-new celebration of pre-loved clothing, creative community and sustainable living for Stroud.

A vibrant day of workshops, sustainable textile browsing, clothing talks, demos and a film premiere. Plus, a community runway show of the preloved clothing and pay-as-you can food, music & dance! 🎨

- Saturday 28 February 2026
- 11:00 - 21:00
- Brimscombe Mill, Brimscombe Hill, Stroud, England, GL5 2SB.

For more information [visit the website](#).

**Heat pump demonstrations - discover the future of home heating** 🌱 ❄️

Join for a 30-minute live demonstration showcasing how heat pumps work and why they're a key solution for low-carbon heating. Whether you're curious about switching from gas, exploring energy-efficient upgrades, or simply want to understand the technology better, this session is designed to inform and inspire.

Book onto a demonstration [here](#).

## **‘Warm and Well’ energy support**

Need some simple steps to manage your energy bills or stay warmer at home without pushing up costs?

Gloucestershire residents can get free support through the Warm & Well service, run by energy charity [Severn Wye](#). They can help you better understand and manage your energy use and bills. You can get help with switching your energy tariff or supplier, advise on renewables and check if you are eligible for any grants or funding schemes.

Their advisers are on hand to answer all your questions and may be able to offer you a free home visit to provide in-depth advice specific to your property and needs.

 0800 500 3076

 [energyadvice@severnwye.org.uk](mailto:energyadvice@severnwye.org.uk)

[Website](#)

## **Bikeability sessions**

The Think Travel team are offering Bikeability courses during upcoming school holidays. 

The courses are designed for children aged 9 to 14 and consist of 2 x 2-hour sessions, held at the same time on consecutive days. All instruction is provided by fully qualified, experienced instructors who are Enhanced DBS checked and First Aid trained. Courses are run in small groups with a 1:3 instructor-to-child ratio to ensure personalized attention and safety. The cost for the course is £10.

## **National News**

If you watched the ITV news on Friday night you would have and seen a report on the withheld and then redacted Nature Security report. If you missed it, here's what they reported;

<https://www.itv.com/news/2026-02-27/nature-loss-could-cost-twice-as-much-as-financial-crash-leaked-report-reveals>