

Environment group

Responsibilities

The Environment Group is responsible for the maintaining the quality of the built and physical environment of the borough, from cleaning the streets to conserving the historic buildings.

The group contributes to the vision as set out in Our future, our choice which is the community plan for Cheltenham, with particular reference to meeting the priorities of an attractive and safe town, safe and accessible transport and healthy environment.

There are four divisions within the group:

- Built environment - which is responsible for development control, conservation, building control and land charges
- Environmental maintenance - which is responsible for refuse collection and recycling, street and open space cleaning, public conveniences, roads maintenance and abandoned cars
- Green environment - which is responsible for parks and open spaces, cemetery and crematorium, allotments, trees and grass verges
- Integrated transport - which is responsible for transport strategy, car parks, bus shelters, park and ride, shopmobility and concessionary travel schemes

Issues

The group works to protect and enhance the infrastructure that makes the town attractive including protecting and enriching its architecture, parks, gardens and open spaces. Through the planning process the group ensures that new buildings are well designed and they improve the appearance of the town, and through the transport strategy, ensures that we have a sustainable traffic system. The council has adopted a Civic Pride approach to the town centre in order to efficiently co-ordinate investment and maintenance in the central part of town. The quality of the environment is important to the economic wellbeing of the town as it is not only important for residents but for those who work within the Borough and the many visitors each year.

One of the key issues for the group will be the transfer of the Highways Agency back to Gloucestershire County Council, ensuring that service delivery is not effected and that the disruption and uncertainty for employees is minimal.

In 2006/07, the Council is to fund the government's initiative for free 'off peak' travel for the over 60's. The cost of this service will very much depend upon the take up of the scheme. This may place significant pressure on council budgets.