

Summary of Vision Consultation

The following issues were raised at a recent public meeting to discuss the Vision for Cirencester and the District Council's new Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) for Cirencester. Themes which could be reflected in the Community Strategic Plan:

'Soft' issues

- More public art including floral displays with shopkeepers getting involved
- Appoint a Town Centre Manager to develop better promotion, including an events programme throughout the year
- Seven day opening
- Cafe culture similar to Stroud should be encouraged
- Introduce shop mobility
- Advertise to visitors what Cirencester has to offer, as in French towns
- Easily comprehensible signs to help visitors navigate/ interpret the town and its attractions e.g. the Roman legacy
- Stronger management/ community leadership to override sectional interests
- Dedicated cycle route to Kemble along trackbed of dismantled railway
- Theatre at Brewery Arts to provide a music and performing arts venue in the heart of the town

Strengths

- The town is compact, with a strong sense of community
- It is relatively safe
- Surrounded by beautiful landscape
- There is a desire to change the current traffic system
- The abundance of town centre parking
- Pleasurable retailing experience with lots of independent shops
- Historic heritage
- Interesting markets
- Small specialist shops
- It is flat and relatively easy to get around
- The town retains a legacy of a country market town, with a gentile character
- Very good, popular schools
- Town's layout expresses its history and rural context

Weaknesses

- Ugly car parks in the centre of town
- Buses in Market Place, which are intrusive and cause pollution
- Cycle paths need to be improved
- Poor signage generally
- Speed limits are confusing
- Archaeological heritage can sterilise development opportunities
- High cost of housing, and the problems this creates for attracting key workers and implications for a balanced community
- Business premises are short of parking in the centre
- A lack of 'smart' business premises in the town
- The lack of a Town Centre Manager and resulting lack of focus in terms of co-ordinating initiatives and promoting the town
- Some parts of town are not user-friendly for young people
- Poor access to some of the historic buildings

- Limited opening times of cafes
- High price of cafes and car parking
- Town is dead on Sundays
- There's not much for young people (12-18 year olds) to do - they feel left out, and have few places to meet/ things to do that are cheap.