

PRESS RELEASE:

LAUNCH OF CIRENCESTER COMMUNITY PLAN

(12 September 2008)

Cirencester is well on the way to seeing changes for the better. A partnership of community representatives and the Town Council have completed a plan that will help make our town one of the best places to live in Gloucestershire.

Many local people's views were fed into developing the plan, and consultation has been taking place over the past two years.

The plan, called "Our Future Cirencester", contains 16 projects in four themes:

- A sustainable market town;
- A good place to grow up;
- An attractive town to live in, visit and where we can enjoy vibrant culture; and,
- A better place to do business.

This plan will enable people in the community to work together to seek the improvements they want in the ways they want it. This is a bottom-up blueprint for the future and it will have a lasting impact on Cirencester.

The plan will be formally launched on 18 September in the Town Council offices at a meeting of the Gloucestershire Market Towns Forum.

However, even though it is still under wraps, significant progress has already been made.

The partnership has just secured funding for a major study to work with local businesses to help improve the trading climate in town and at Love Lane. The Cirencester Chamber of Commerce is a driving force behind the project and it will take a high profile in the research in the following months. The project will be seeking a number of appropriate representatives from local businesses to represent the local economic community within the project over the next few weeks.

The partnership is also working with Parklife, an economic development arm of the County Council and the Learning and Skills Council, to look into the value of introducing a business improvement district in Cirencester. BIDs have been introduced into market towns similar to Cirencester with very good results for local businesses.

The partnership is also working closely with existing local organisations such as the Civic Society, Cirencester Archaeological and Historical Society, New Brewery Arts, the Parish Church, local schools and the District Council to begin to progress a number of initiatives such as:

- More activities and meeting places for children and young people.
- A heritage strategy that will make Cirencester more attractive and will help reveal its fascinating historical features.
- Rejuvenation of the market place.
- A themed festival for us all to enjoy.
- Making cycling and walking easier and safer.

Local businessman and active member of the Chamber of Commerce said:

I have to say that having been very sceptical at the beginning - I am now immensely impressed by the amount of work that has obviously gone into the project so far.

Steering Group Chairman, Town Councillor Andrew Lichnowski said:

I have been delighted at the response so far. We have had a flood of offers for help with the project from individuals and organisations. This proves that we are on the right track and are delivering what local people want.

Andrew Tubb, Chief Executive of Cirencester Town Council said:

The Town Council takes seriously its role as lead authority on the community plan and recognises the importance of working together in order to be able to deliver the projects in the plan.

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