

A HERITAGE STRATEGY FOR STROUD DISTRICT

Valuing our historic environment and assets

Supplementary Planning Advice | Adopted February 2018



*HERITAGE

[1] “All inherited resources, which people value for reasons beyond mere utility.”

Conservation Principles, English Heritage, 2008

[2] “Heritage is a broad concept and includes the natural as well as the cultural environment.

It encompasses landscapes, historic places, sites and built environments, as well as biodiversity, collections, past and continuing cultural practices, knowledge and living experiences.

It records and expresses the long processes of historic development, forming the essence of diverse national, regional, indigenous and local identities and is an integral part of modern life.

It is a social dynamic reference point and positive instrument for growth and change.

The particular heritage and collective memory of each locality or community is irreplaceable and an important foundation for development, both now and into the future.”

International Cultural Tourism Charter, ICOMOS, 2002.

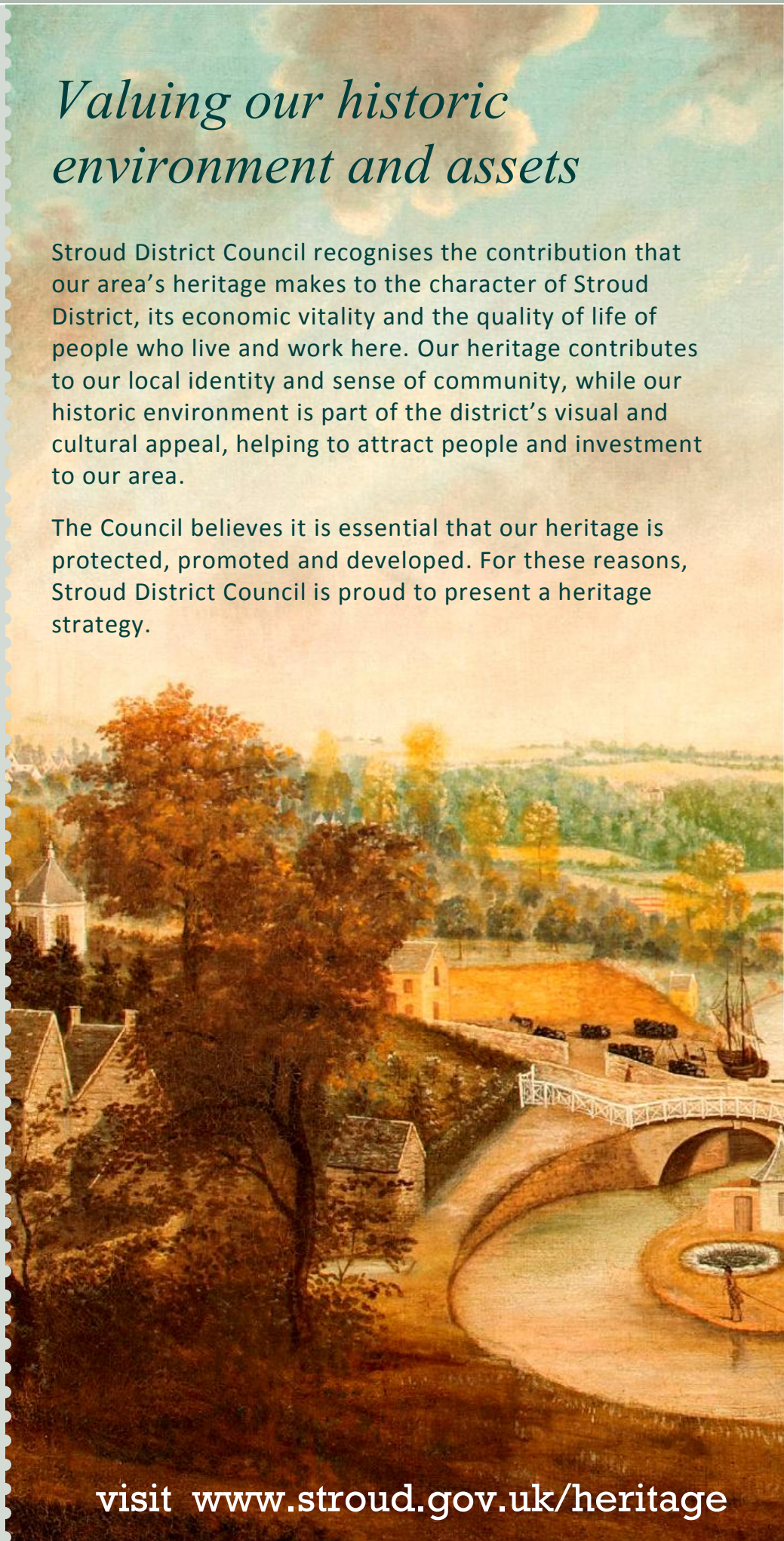
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1. Stroud High Street in the 1980s
2. The 19th century railway sliced through earlier Bourne Mill at Brimscombe
3. Owlpen Manor
4. Timber framed barn, Frampton-on-Severn
5. ‘Interwoven’ a mural by local artist Tracy Spiers at Ebley Wharf on the restored Stroudwater Canal
6. The Purton Hulks
7. Solar panels on a traditional stone roof
8. Berkeley Castle
9. Bisley conservation area

Valuing our historic environment and assets

Stroud District Council recognises the contribution that our area’s heritage makes to the character of Stroud District, its economic vitality and the quality of life of people who live and work here. Our heritage contributes to our local identity and sense of community, while our historic environment is part of the district’s visual and cultural appeal, helping to attract people and investment to our area.

The Council believes it is essential that our heritage is protected, promoted and developed. For these reasons, Stroud District Council is proud to present a heritage strategy.



visit www.stroud.gov.uk/heritage

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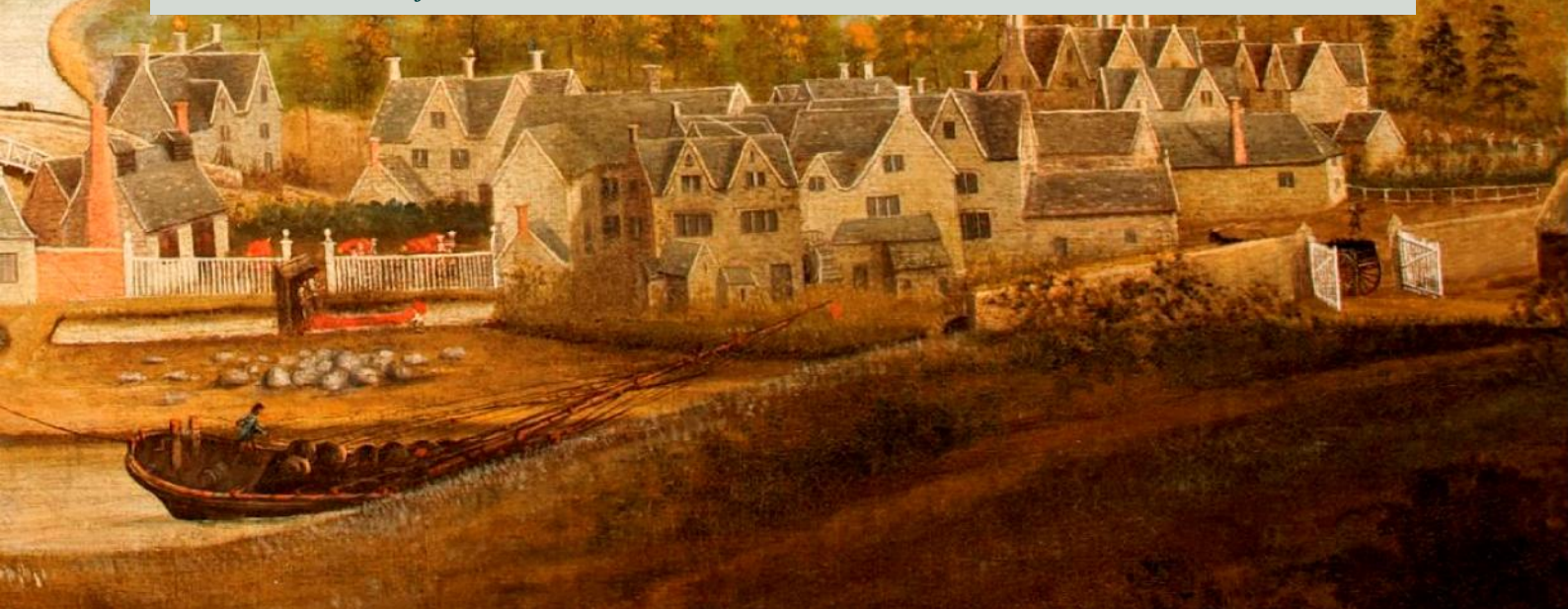
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Wallbridge in Stroud, circa 1785. © Stroud District (Cowle) Museum Trustees, the Museum in the Park, Stroud. The Museum collection includes several paintings of our area, which shine a fascinating light on how the town and surrounds have evolved and grown over time.

WHY A HERITAGE STRATEGY?

Wherever we live, our built, natural and cultural heritage is fundamental to our local identity, and often to our quality of life.

In Stroud District, our heritage is all around us. In fact, it is so much a part of the scenery, such a backdrop to our lives, that perhaps we don't perceive its value or recognise its impact as much as visitors do.

Stroud District has a genuinely exceptional collection of assets and a very high quality environment. So this strategy is really about making sure that we value them, that we don't take this resource for granted, and that we all manage the District's heritage assets in such a way that we hand on a positive legacy for the future.

Scope

Not only do we have a great heritage asset within Stroud District, but we are lucky to have an interested and informed community, including some highly active, knowledgeable and committed individuals and organisations.

Central to this Strategy is a desire to maximise the contribution that the historic environment makes to the diverse character of Stroud District, its economic wellbeing and the quality of life of its communities.

The purpose of the Heritage Strategy is to set informed priorities for the conservation, management and monitoring of the District's heritage assets, including the effective and efficient discharge of the Council's statutory duties and obligations.

Although this Strategy [has been] adopted by the Council as **Supplementary Planning Advice**, which will be used to support and implement the District's adopted Local Plan, it does not set out detailed policy or guidance to supplement what is already established in the Local Plan. Instead, the Strategy seeks to highlight the value and significance of our District's heritage, the benefits of positive management, and how this ties in with the Council's wider corporate priorities.

The supporting **Heritage Action Plan**, consisting of a programme of works relating to the objectives and priorities identified in this Strategy, will enable better and more efficient performance and more effectively

targeted action, including through the identification of opportunities for partnership working, funding, training, education and capacity-building – for our communities, as well as for those operating within Stroud District Council.

As Supplementary Planning Advice, this Strategy does have an essential focus on the role of the planning system in the conservation and management of our area's heritage. But the Vision and the priorities and main themes that run through this Strategy are applicable to our District's heritage in its widest sense.

Whilst the built historic environment is an important and particularly visible aspect of the District's heritage, "heritage" must be seen in much broader terms, encompassing the natural environment, culture, skills and tradition, nostalgia and remembered histories, artefacts, knowledge and interpretation. All of these things contribute to our sense of local identity and distinctiveness, our economic vitality and our quality of life.

The District Council provides many services, performs diverse duties and has a variety of powers that directly and indirectly relate to our area's heritage. To get the most out of this Strategy, to improve the conservation and management of Stroud District's heritage, the Council needs to embed this awareness into its broad range of activities and to actively embrace opportunities.

What are our big issues?

Many of the issues facing our historic environment and heritage assets come down to a common core: it is essential that there is proper understanding of what we have and why it is significant.

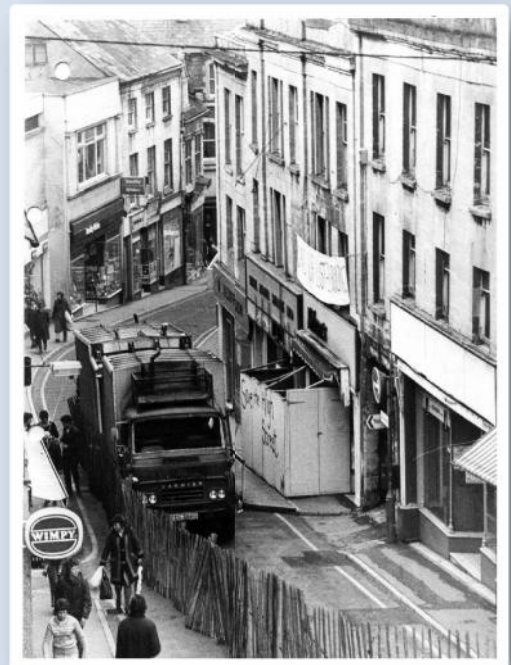
Without this, we will lose things; without this, properly informed and balanced decision-making cannot take place; our distinctiveness gets watered down; and opportunities to bid for funds or effectively target investment may be missed.

Some of this rests with the District Council, particularly in the execution of its role and responsibilities as local planning authority. But there is also a need for wider and better understanding amongst all individuals and organisations involved in managing, developing and conserving our historic environment and assets.

Valuing our historic environment: an underappreciated asset?

Both within and outside the Council, there are highly informed, committed individuals, who are passionate about our area's history and environment, and work hard to champion and protect our heritage. But there is also a widespread deficit of understanding about what we have got here, perhaps even a bit of complacency.

A central goal for this Strategy is to turn this around: to raise our exceptional heritage up the agenda and to encourage people to view the historic environment as a true asset, which not only has intrinsic cultural and aesthetic value, but which can also bring economic, social and environmental benefits to our area.



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▲ Stanley Mills...

Both the main mill building (Grade I listed) and the Stanley Mills conservation area around it are on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register (HAR), 2018.

Our heritage "at risk"

A small proportion of Stroud District's designated heritage assets have been formally identified as "at risk" through Historic England's monitoring programme, **Heritage at Risk (HAR)**. But there are gaps in our knowledge and understanding about the condition and vulnerability of our area's wider historic environment, and indeed our undesignated and cultural heritage assets.

Our local distinctiveness

Over the past few decades, economic pressures, ‘anywhere’ standard design and, to some extent, changes in building regulations and energy efficiency requirements have begun to water down our area’s visual distinctiveness. This is happening right across the District, including in conservation areas and where listed buildings are altered or extended.

This is an accelerating and self-perpetuating problem: the more frequently we see development that is non-contextual or non-distinctive, the more we see this as normal. It enters the local vocabulary, it sets a precedent, and it muddies the waters, meaning that we are less able to pick out what really is locally distinctive or significant about a place.

Promoting high quality, distinctive design that is ‘of our time’, energy- and space-efficient, and reflective of the diverse character and local building traditions of our District is a key issue for the **Local Plan Review** to grapple with over the next five years*.



▲ This could be anywhere...

This little estate is not in Stroud District. But it looks just like dozens of housing developments built in the past two decades, all over Stroud District, and all over England. Although the houses are individually quite pleasing and they are vaguely traditional in appearance, they are not really locally distinctive.

* Stroud District Local Plan Review *Issues and Options Paper*, October 2017. Key Issues 21, 22, 23.



▲ Sharing...

The Council has an extensive collection of old photographs. The Conservation Team liaised with enthusiastic volunteers, who have begun a project to digitise the images. These are now being shared via social media, increasing public access to this fascinating resource and sparking reminiscences and conversations online.

Resources

This Strategy aims to provide evidence and explanation that will allow the Council to set informed priorities in relation to the conservation, management and monitoring of the District’s heritage assets.

But it exists within a context of nation-wide reductions in public sector funding and cuts to local authority budgets. There is an inevitable impetus to “do more with less”, now and in the foreseeable future.

Investigating opportunities to draw on diverse resources in a joined-up way, and to better employ the skills and enthusiasm of the District’s communities and interest groups in the positive management of our common heritage, will be increasingly important.

This approach also links with the “localism” agenda and is timely, bearing in mind the increasing number of communities expressing interest in progressing Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs). The Strategy will provide a strategic overview and a practical steer for emerging NDPs, helping them to understand, incorporate and exploit their local heritage capital; and it is hoped that emerging NDPs will be able to help shape and benefit from projects included in the **Heritage Action Plan**, in years to come.

VISION

“Valuing our historic environment and assets, while building a positive legacy for the future”

This Strategy envisages Stroud District as a place that understands and has pride in its rich and varied heritage, where no one takes it for granted.

In Stroud District, we will protect, conserve, enhance and enjoy our historic environment and knowledge about our heritage, so that it makes a dynamic contribution to modern life.

We will treasure the contribution that our built, natural and cultural heritage makes to the diverse character of Stroud District, to its economic and cultural wellbeing and to the quality of life of our communities.

The historic environment will act as a stimulus and inspiration to high quality development in all parts of the District, so that it can reinforce local identity and play a part in increasing the appeal of the area as a place to live, work, visit and invest in – building a positive legacy for our future.

Objectives:

Based on this Vision, and in response to the main issues facing our District and its heritage, the Heritage Strategy has three main objectives:

- 1** ▶ To maximise the contribution that the historic environment makes to the character of the District, its economic well-being, and the quality of life of its communities;
- 2** ▶ To identify ways to positively address the issues and pressures that are facing our heritage assets;
- 3** ▶ To maximise opportunities for the historic environment to help deliver the District Council’s wider corporate objectives, including those of the Local Plan.

These three objectives are all about properly *valuing* our historic environment and assets. To do this, we need to understand what we have got. We need to find ways to sensitively capitalise on it, in order to help sustain a long term future for our heritage assets and ensure that we hand on a healthy and positive legacy.

The Strategy Priorities:

* **UNDERSTANDING** *Our heritage and its significance:*

Many of the issues facing our heritage assets come down to a common core: it is essential that we have a proper understanding of what we have and why it is significant.

- ▶ Promoting and supporting, however possible, good stewardship, improved access and sharing of knowledge, information, artefacts and interpretation.
- ▶ Developing resources, expertise and skills; identifying gaps; and making the most of opportunities for learning and training.
- ▶ Exploring and promoting the 'story' of Stroud District, to improve understanding about how particular assets (whether known or previously unidentified) fit into that story and contribute to local or national significance.

* **CAPITALISING** *On our heritage:*

Identifying ways in which our historic environment and heritage really works as an 'asset' with cultural, economic, social and environmental value.

- ▶ Exploiting our rich heritage and our high quality historic environment as part of the District's USP and 'place branding'. (Place branding is about communicating and managing the identity and perception of a place).
- ▶ Encouraging all kinds of new development in all parts of the District to use our historic environment as a stimulus to high quality, imaginative design, which carries our distinctive local identity into the 21st century.
- ▶ Nurturing creative and cultural industries, which are a distinctive feature of Stroud District's economy: encouraging existing cross-fertilisation with our heritage and boosting mutual benefits for our historic environment, with particular focus on the re-use of industrial heritage.

* **POSITIVE MANAGEMENT**

Identifying issues and vulnerabilities, and highlighting opportunities to address them by making best use of expertise, resources and skills – both within and outside the District Council.

- ▶ Committing to the positive management of our District's heritage "at risk".
- ▶ Establishing a programme for the appraisal and management of conservation areas.
- ▶ Identifying and protecting non-designated heritage assets of local significance.

* **RAISING OUR HERITAGE UP THE AGENDA**

Raising awareness about the value of our District's exceptional heritage, including its economic, wellbeing and environmental capital; and using this as a positive driving force for Stroud District.

- ▶ A Heritage Champion for Stroud District.
- ▶ Knitting the quality of our heritage into the council's corporate literature to help raise awareness of what we have here, reinforce our District's 'brand', and give credit to the work that the council and partner organisations do, as well as the benefits that are brought to our District.

The Council's future **Action Plan** will focus on these priorities as a means of delivering the Strategy's objectives ▲

1 | UNDERSTANDING

Our heritage and its significance

Stroud District has a genuinely exceptional collection of designated assets and a very high quality built and natural environment.

The NPPF stresses that Planning should always seek to secure high quality design and should conserve heritage assets *in a manner appropriate to their significance*, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.

Whilst this Strategy cannot provide a complete catalogue of everything that has heritage interest, it is important to try to highlight some of the main themes and distinctive quirks of our local history, which have provided us with such a valuable legacy.

Our historic environment is dynamic, not static. Each year we discover previously unknown sites, learn more about the assets with which we are already familiar and gain new appreciation of aspects of the historic environment that were once neglected. Our understanding of what happened in the past can be transformed by research; advancement of knowledge is the cornerstone of our ability to care ever more effectively for heritage assets through the planning system and through local and national designation. Understanding is fundamental to people's engagement with their historic inheritance and our ability to maximise the potential social, economic and environmental benefits of this legacy.



From the earliest prehistoric settlement to the successive waves of new-comers (Romans, Saxons, Vikings), our area's location at a strategic pinch-point between the Cotswold hills and the River Severn has been significant. [image ©Nick Turner]

* UNDERSTANDING

Our heritage and its significance:

Many of the issues facing our heritage assets come down to a common core: it is essential that we have a proper understanding of what we have and why it is significant.

This Strategy highlights 3 priorities for improving understanding:

- ▶ To promote and support, however possible, good stewardship, improved access and sharing of knowledge, information, artefacts and interpretation.
- ▶ To develop resources, expertise and skills; to identify gaps; and to make the most of opportunities for learning and training.
- ▶ To explore and promote the 'story' of Stroud District, to improve understanding about how particular assets (whether known or previously unidentified) fit into that story and contribute to local or national significance.

* heritage SIGNIFICANCE

[1] "The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting."

National Planning Policy Framework (Glossary), 2012

[2] "The sum of the cultural and natural heritage values of a place, often set out in a statement of significance."

Conservation Principles, English Heritage, 2008

Why is it important to know?

Knowing a bit about the story of a place – whether that is your home, your town or a development site – will help with understanding what is or is not significant about a particular heritage asset, and whether particular changes are likely to harm that significance or to actually enhance and reveal it.

How can we use it?

- The Local Plan (Policy ES10) requires a **heritage statement** (a sort of impact assessment) to support any development proposal that affects a heritage asset (whether formally designated or not). You need to understand an asset's significance before you can assess the impact that your proposal is likely to have on it.
- A general understanding of our area's history and significance will help when identifying **local heritage assets** (non-designated heritage assets that are of local significance), including for a local list.
- There may be aspects of our 'story' that could **signal archaeological potential** on a particular site or in particular parts of the District.
- Local heritage is often an important part of the evidence base for community **Design Statements** and **Neighbourhood Development Plans**. A heritage assessment or Conservation Area Appraisal will provide context, helping with policy formulation and justification.
- **Capitalising**: promotion and marketing the local distinctiveness and USP of the District, or perhaps your area or business or product.

What have we got here?

The graphic on page 10 sets out some of the headline facts and figures about Stroud District's designated heritage assets (as at January 2018). These are primarily physical features of the built and natural historic environment, which have been nationally or locally designated and have some statutory protection through the planning system.

	TOTAL	GRADE I	GRADE II*	GRADE II
Listed Buildings	3,301	43	204	3,054
Scheduled Ancient Monuments	68			
Registered Parks and Gardens	14	1	5	8
Registered Historic Battlefields	0			
Protected Historic Wreck Sites	0			
Conservation Areas	41			
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	1			
World Heritage Sites	0			

*Tally of Stroud District's designated Heritage Assets (National Heritage List for England, as at January 2018)

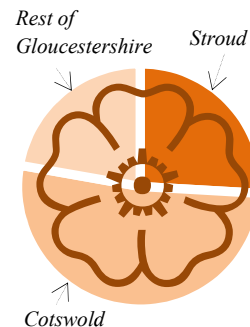
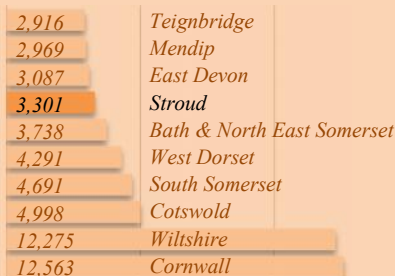


This is the number of entries in the statutory List*, but it equates to more than **4,500** individual properties and structures.

Of the **37** local authority areas in the South West, only

6

have more listed buildings* than us – including the vast county authorities of Wiltshire and Cornwall.



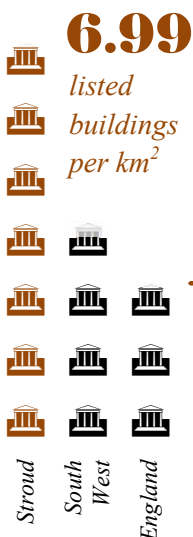
Stroud District is home to more than a quarter of Gloucestershire's Registered Parks and Gardens, and almost 5% of the total in the South West region.

A huge number of homes and businesses are affected by heritage designations:



4,368 addresses within Stroud District are affected by Listing (3,090 of which are residential properties); and **11,075** addresses lie within a Conservation Area (7,630 of them are residential).

What have we got here?



Given Stroud District's size and rural nature, we have an exceptionally 'dense' collection of listed buildings: well over double the national average (2.9/km²) and roughly twice the South West average (3.7/km²).

The Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) designation covers just over

50%
of the District's entire land area.

We have **41** CONSERVATION AREAS

All our town centres are Conservation Areas apart from Stonehouse.



Our 15 mile long Industrial Heritage Conservation Area is one of the largest conservation areas in Britain.

We have

68

Scheduled Ancient Monuments (almost 1% of all the SAMs in the South West); plus countless sites of archaeological interest that have not been formally scheduled.

...What have we got here?

But our District's total "heritage asset" is much broader than these designations. Many other unlisted, unscheduled buildings, structures, features and places are of local heritage interest; while the documentary, oral and cultural history of our area and our communities, including knowledge about specific places or objects (whether designated or not), are an invaluable part of our heritage too. Stewardship of and access to this knowledge, including through museums, exhibitions, archives and local history groups, are crucial to unlocking a proper appreciation and understanding of what we have here and to what degree it is significant.

Listed Buildings

When you consider the size and rural nature of our District, we have an exceptional 'density' of listed buildings packed into our 472 square kilometres.

As you would expect, our area's long history of wool trade and cloth manufacture, upon which many of our towns and villages were founded, is reflected in the kinds of buildings and structures that are listed – as is the area's later industrial diversification. Stroud District's list entries include not only the numerous mill buildings that are such distinctive features of our local environment, but workshops, stores, offices, weavers' cottages and the prestigious mill owners' or managers' residences. Wealthy clothiers built some impressive mansions, many of which reveal the changing fortunes of their owners and the ups and downs of the cloth trade through the historic extensions or fashionable remodelling that was undertaken at different periods. Buildings and

structures relating to transport and industrial infrastructure also feature, including milestones, turnpike toll houses, canal bridges and locks, and Stroud's railway station, which is home to the 19th century Grade II* listed goods shed, designed by Isambard Kingdom Brunel.

Perhaps a surprising by-product of the cloth industry, which brought enormous wealth to the district and particularly to clothier families, is the unusually high number of listed burial monuments, grave stones and – particularly – chest tombs in Stroud District. This dynastic wealth, combined with the abundant and good quality local limestone which lent itself to detailed, decorative carving, has left us with a peculiar legacy of more than 380 chest tombs dating from the 17th-19th centuries (more than 10% of all our listed buildings), a high proportion of which are listed Grade I or II*.



◀ Wool...

Southfield House in Woodchester (Grade II) dates from the late C16th, but was periodically extended and remodelled to reflect more up-to-date fashions. In 1750, Frederick, Prince of Wales, paid a visit to wealthy clothier, Sir Onesiphorous Paul – it is thought that a whole new wing and an oak panelled room were added to the house for the occasion!*

Water... ▶

A rare survivor of the historic lavenet salmon fishing industry on the River Severn, this early C19th Fishing House at Elmore is Grade II listed.



Scheduled Monuments and other archaeology

The South West is particularly rich in Scheduled archaeology, with an average 0.29 Scheduled assets per square km – almost double the average density for England as a whole (0.15 per square km). So Stroud (0.14 per square km) is fairly representative of the national average, although rather sparse compared to the South West average. Most English local authorities have fewer than 60 Scheduled Monuments within their boundaries.

33 of our 68 Scheduled Monuments consist partly or entirely of long- round- or bowl-barrows, which are ancient burial mounds. Cotswold long barrows are internationally famous as one of the largest and most accessible groups of Neolithic tombs in Britain. About sixty long barrows are known in Gloucestershire, including *Hetty Pegler's Tump* (Uley) and *Nymphsfield Long Barrow* on Frocester Hill, which have been excavated and are open to the public. *The Toots* on Selsley Common is well preserved, but unexcavated. Barrows are the most numerous type of heritage site on Historic England's *Heritage at Risk* (HAR) register, and our own local situation seems to mirror the national picture: four of Stroud District's six Scheduled Monuments in the 2017 HAR are barrows.

Stroud District's Roman heritage is another notable source of archaeology. The remains of 3 Roman villas have been scheduled – including the famous villa at Woodchester – and there are many other traces of Roman settlement, both designated and undesignated. At Kingscote, a large site in Cotswold District just crosses the border into our District: a Romano-British town consisting of more than 75 buildings – one of only 133 small Roman towns recorded in England. The Cotswolds was amongst the wealthiest and most densely populated areas in the Roman province of *Britannia Prima* (which covered southwest England and Wales). The Severn Vale was also populated, but the picture of Roman and post-Roman habitation here is still evolving. Roman settlements have long been known about at Standish, Eastington and Frocester. But recent archaeological investigations (including finds at a

development site on Foxes Field at Ebley and at Rectory Meadows in Kings Stanley) have unearthed traces of late Roman villas, suggesting that the Frome Valley was more densely inhabited during Roman times and contained more high status buildings than previously thought.

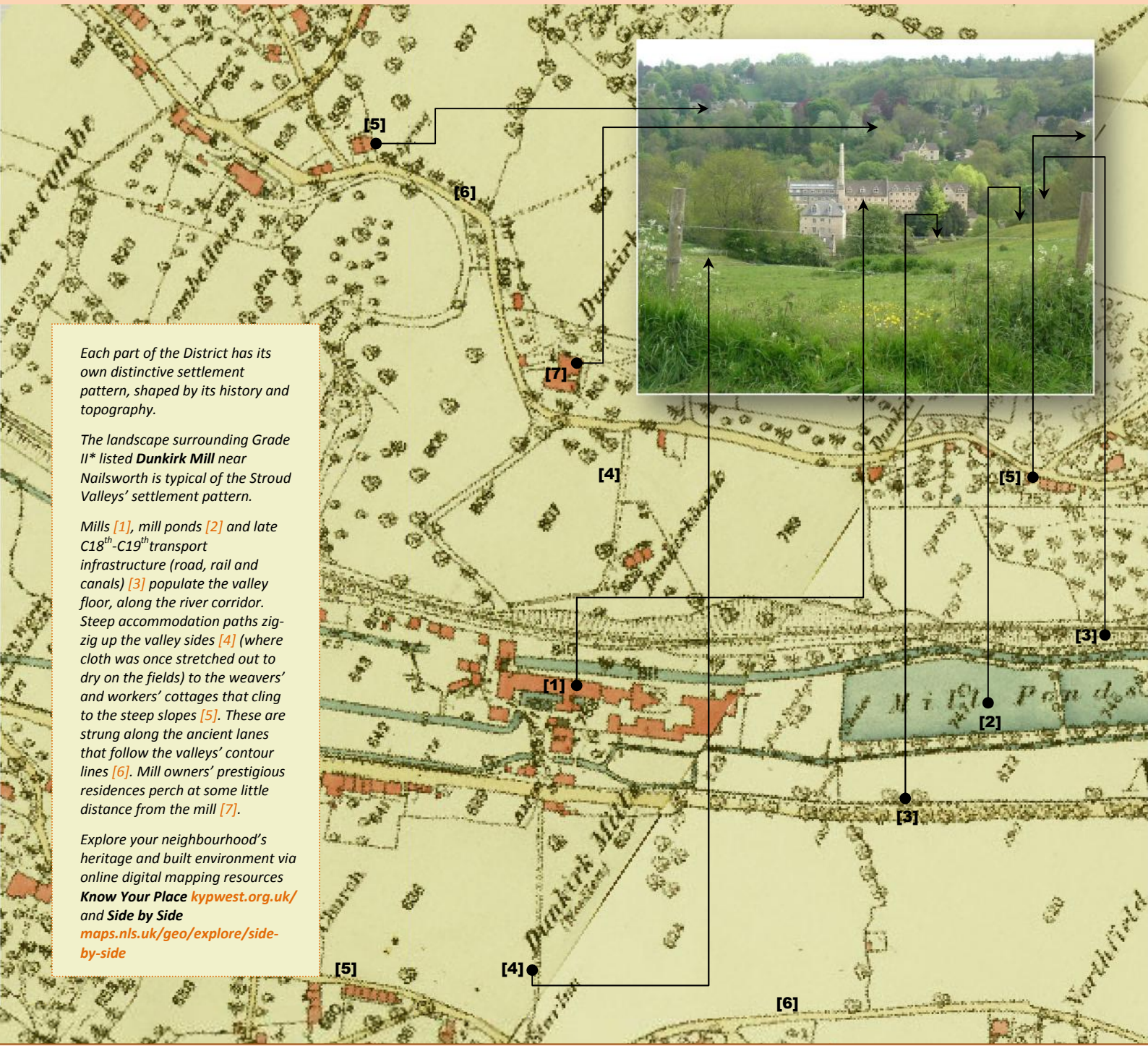
Conservation Areas

We have 41 conservation areas in Stroud District, covering a really diverse range of places – from densely populated town centres, such as Stroud, Dursley and Berkeley, to the wide open spaces of Sharpness Old Dock and Stratford Park; from quintessential chocolate-box villages, like Bisley and Box, to impressive industrial heritage at places like Stanley Mills and Stroud Station.

In size, our conservation areas range from tiny, tightly-drawn Woodmancote (just 16,400 sqm) to the enormous Industrial Heritage Conservation Area (IHCA), which stretches more than 15 miles right the way across the middle of the District. Covering nearly 6.7 square km and tracing the watercourses of the industrial Stroud Valleys, from Framilode on the River Severn to Sapperton and Avening in the east, the IHCA is one of Britain's largest conservation areas. It envelopes and links a series of smaller pre-existing conservation areas, which were also designated in recognition of the valleys' exceptional industrial heritage. It is certainly an unusual conservation area, with its own particular issues and pressures. The IHCA and Stanley Mills CA are both currently assessed as "at risk" and appear in Historic England's *Heritage at Risk* register. Our two conservation areas make up 5.5% of all the "at risk" conservation areas in the South West region¹. More on this in Chapter 3 (***POSITIVE MANAGEMENT**).

All our town centres are conservation areas (with the exception of Stonehouse). Most of them have long histories as market towns, founded on the medieval wool trade and shaped by the changing fortunes of the cloth industry over the centuries.

¹ Historic England's *Conservation Areas At Risk Survey* (CAARS) 2017 and *Heritage at Risk Register* (HAR) 2017. 36 "at risk" conservation areas are identified in the South West region.



Each part of the District has its own distinctive settlement pattern, shaped by its history and topography.

The landscape surrounding Grade II* listed **Dunkirk Mill** near Nailsworth is typical of the Stroud Valleys' settlement pattern.

Mills [1], mill ponds [2] and late C18th-C19th transport infrastructure (road, rail and canals) [3] populate the valley floor, along the river corridor. Steep accommodation paths zig-zag up the valley sides [4] (where cloth was once stretched out to dry on the fields) to the weavers' and workers' cottages that cling to the steep slopes [5]. These are strung along the ancient lanes that follow the valleys' contour lines [6]. Mill owners' prestigious residences perch at some little distance from the mill [7].

Explore your neighbourhood's heritage and built environment via online digital mapping resources **Know Your Place** kypwest.org.uk/ and **Side by Side** maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/side-by-side

“Collecting, safeguarding and making accessible artefacts and related information about the landscape and people of the Stroud District for present and future generations.”

▲ **Mission...**

Part of the Museum in the Park's mission statement, which focuses on "Enabling people to access and share the collections and heritage of the Stroud District for inspiration, learning and enjoyment."

The Museum tells the story of Stroud District, from its geological foundations to its industrial heyday, right through to today's cultural and artistic output.



Hands on... ▶

An interactive exhibit at the Museum: having a go at making a mosaic, inspired by the District's Roman heritage.

These are attractive town centres, whose draw and vitality today relies, to varying degrees, on the visible heritage which adds character and local distinctiveness to their roles as working, shopping and leisure environment

Historic parks, gardens and designed landscapes

We have 14 Registered Parks and Gardens – Stroud District is home to almost 5% of the Registered Parks and Gardens in the entire South West region, and more than a quarter of Gloucestershire’s Registered sites. Only six local authority areas in the South West have more Registered sites than us – including the county authorities of Wiltshire and Cornwall.

Over half the District’s Registered Parks and Gardens are open to the public – either regularly or by arrangement. From the pleasure gardens and 12 acres of parkland around *Misarden Park* to England’s only complete surviving 18th century *Rococo Garden* at Painswick House, these assets are part of the Cotswold brand. Our area has particular associations with Arts & Crafts gardens and with famous designers such as Vita Sackville West, who had a hand in updating the 17th century walled gardens of Alderley Grange.

Natural heritage and landscape

Over half our District is designated an Area of Outstanding National Beauty (AONB). Not only do we have an exceptionally high quality landscape, but part of the character and interest of the Cotswold AONB is derived from its historic buildings and settlements. From the rolling wold tops, populated by scattered farmsteads and hamlets; to the steep Stroud valleys, where weavers’ settlements cling to the slopes and ancient trading routes are incised into the limestone; and the dramatic form of the Cotswold scarp, which plunges down to the Severn Vale.

We must not forget though that beyond the AONB our District is rich in many other beautiful and fascinating landscape features. Nor should we forget the impact that the landscape and our place

in the world has had in shaping our history: the River Severn has been a strategic trading and communications route since prehistoric times, while its estuarine landscape and the Vale lowlands were important to the rural economy. Traces of medieval and later agriculture are still visible in ridge-and-furrow undulations, as well as the field pattern and hedgerows in places.

Museums and cultural heritage assets

The Museum in the Park is the District’s flagship museum. Based at the Grade II listed former mansion house within Stratford Park in Stroud (a conservation area), the museum service is a discretionary public service provided by means of a partnership between Stroud District Council and the Stroud District (Cowle) Museum Trust (a registered charity). The Council provide the management and funding for the service and the Trust are the legal guardians of the collections.

The Council is also custodian of other cultural and community facilities, including the Grade II listed *Subscription Rooms* in Stroud, which hosts events and exhibitions and is now leased and managed by The Stroud Subscription Rooms Trust.

The District Council and some of our town and parish councils have an important role in the management of a broad range of buildings and assets which are either statutorily designated or have some local heritage interest.

There are many museums, visitor centres and heritage centres across the District, in private, public or charitable trust ownership, representing a diverse, exciting range of heritage and cultural interest. Amongst these, *Dr Jenner’s House and Garden* in Berkeley commemorates Edward Jenner, the 18th century pioneer of vaccination; the *Stroudwater Textile Trust* champions Stroud’s industrial past; and the *Woodchester Mansion Trust* works to conserve and interpret the fascinating unfinished 19th century Victorian Gothic masterpiece, which was mysteriously abandoned in 1873.

The story of our place

This Strategy document cannot give a complete account of everything that has heritage significance for Stroud District. But promoting the story of our area, to help improve understanding of how particular assets fit into that story, is a key ambition for the future.

Our heritage has been shaped by where we are in the world. That is why it is specific and significant to us, as individuals and as communities. How the area known today as “Stroud District” developed over time has shaped the historic, visual and cultural legacy we are left with.

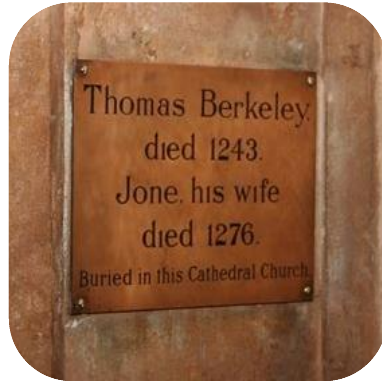
From the earliest prehistoric settlement to the successive waves of newcomers (Romans, Saxons, Vikings), our area’s location at a strategic pinch-point between the Cotswold hills and the River Severn has been significant. Both Crown and Church had important impacts on medieval life, shaping the kinds of buildings and settlements we are familiar with today. The ancient wool trade was particularly formative; while our topography – with an abundance of steep valleys and fast-flowing watercourses – played an important role in our area’s long and diverse industrial heritage. The area’s industrial wealth (as well as periods of hardship and stagnation) gave us some of our most outstanding heritage assets. Ingenuity, nonconformity and philanthropy are distinctive characteristics of our heritage – and arguably these are still prominent in the District’s cultural heritage today.

Where can you find out more?

- The Museum in the Park is a great place to start – it tells the story of Stroud District, from its geological foundations to the latest cultural events and innovations, and is home to many records and artefacts. museuminthepark.org.uk
- The County Council provides archaeological planning advice and curates Gloucestershire’s official Historic Environment Record (HER), an essential first point of call which contains information on more than 8,500 designated and undesignated heritage assets and investigations in Stroud District. gloucestershire.gov.uk/her
- The national Heritage Gateway website provides access to local and national records. heritagegateway.org.uk
- Gloucestershire Archives is creating a new ‘Heritage Hub’ in Gloucester: the onsite and online Hub is a collaborative approach to gathering, keeping and sharing the documented heritage of Gloucestershire. gloucestershire.gov.uk/archives/
- The District’s numerous local history groups and societies are a great resource. Stroud Local History Society has a good website: digitalstroud.co.uk
- The National Heritage List for England (NHLE) is the official register of all nationally designated buildings and sites. historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list
- More information and comparative data about the District’s designated assets can be found in Historic England’s national audit of the historic environment, Heritage Counts, carried out annually on behalf of the Historic Environment Forum. historicengland.org.uk/research/heritage-counts/
- British history online is a digital library of key printed sources, with a primary focus on the period between 1300 and 1800. The many volumes of the *Victoria County History of Gloucestershire* are a particularly useful source of history about particular settlements. british-history.ac.uk/
- Explore your neighbourhood’s heritage and built environment via *Know Your Place*, an online digital mapping project, including Gloucestershire’s (HER). kypwest.org.uk/

1. Æthelflæd, ‘Lady of the Mercians’, and husband Æthelred (both buried in Gloucester) granted privileges to Berkeley Abbey in the 890s. Our area, part of the former Hwicce kingdom, lay at the meeting point of Wessex and English Mercia. She re-planned and re-fortified Gloucester as a defence against marauding Danes. [image British library*].
2. “Fair Rosamund” Clifford (c.1150-1176), alleged mistress of King Henry II, is said to have been born at Frampton Court – still occupied by the Clifford family today. Frampton’s village green (reputedly England’s longest) is known as Rosamund’s Green. Depicted by Pre Raphaelite artist John William Waterhouse, 1916.
3. The transformation of Wotton-Under-Edge from small hamlet to a market borough in the C13th was largely due to Joan de Somery (de Berkeley) (c.1191-1276). Her creation of burgages attracted merchant families from Bristol and Gloucester – feeding a booming wool trade.
4. Berkeley Castle is said to be the place of Edward II’s imprisonment and grisly murder in 1327. He is buried in Gloucester Cathedral. [image British library*].
5. William Tyndale (born c.1494) spent his childhood around Slimbridge and Stinchcombe. North Nibley’s towering Tyndale Monument commemorates his revolutionary translation of the New Testament into English [image from Foxes Book of Martyrs*].
6. John Wesley (1703-1791), founder of Methodism, preached from a butchers block in Stroud’s Shambles market in 1742 and was a frequent visitor to the town. Stroud had a tradition of religious nonconformity dating back to the 1570s. [image: National Portrait Gallery*].
7. King George III paid a special visit to Stroud in 1788: he was fascinated to see the junction of the two brand new canals, so the Royal party stopped off to see a barge pass through the Wallbridge locks.
8. Today we are safe from smallpox, thanks to Dr Edward Jenner (1749-1823). He pioneered a vaccine from his home in Berkeley, becoming arguably the world’s most famous doctor in his day. Lithograph by P. R. Vigneron, 1824. [Image credit: Wellcome Library, London]
9. Gloucestershire born Samuel Lysons was one of the first archaeologists to investigate Britain’s Roman sites: he unearthed the Orpheus mosaic at Woodchester in 1793. [image: National Portrait Gallery*].
10. Lord John Russell, Stroud MP and Britain’s last Whig Prime Minister, was the principal force behind the Great Reform Act of 1832. [image: National Portrait Gallery*].
11. Edwin Beard Budding (1796-1846), an engineer from Eastington, invented the lawnmower, inspired by the cutting cylinders used at a local cloth mill to trim the nap.
12. Henry Wyatt (1793-1847) a wealthy clothier, businessman and campaigner, erected Britain’s first memorial to the abolition of slavery in 1834 at the entrance to his mansion, Farmhill Park. The anti slavery arch is Grade II* listed of national significance.
13. George Holloway (1825-1892), Stroud MP and philanthropist. Once Stroud’s largest employer, he introduced revolutionary steam powered sewing machines and ready-to-wear clothing to England. He built terraced housing for his workers at Horns Road.
14. Danish inventor Mikael Pedersen (1855-1929)*. His association with Dursley and Lister Petter resulted in the Pedersen bicycle, amongst other engineering innovations.
15. Beatrice Webb (1858-1943), co-founder of the London School of Economics and Political Science, advocate of a welfare state and pivotal member of the Fabian Society: born and brought up at Standish House, her family home. [image: LSE Library*]
16. Oakridge Craftsmen (1938), painted by Sir William Rothstein (now in Cheltenham’s The Wilson Museum and Gallery). The Cotswolds became an important centre for the Arts & Crafts Movement in the late C19th/early C20th. A band of notable architects and craftsmen settled around Oakridge /Daneway and made their mark on several of our towns and villages.
17. Norman Jewson, Arts & Crafts architect and member of William Morris’s Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings (SPAB), restored Owlpen Manor during the 1920s.
18. Laurie Lee’s writings and poems (including the 1959 classic *Cider With Rosie*) have immortalised Slad and the Stroud Valleys in the national consciousness. His portrait hangs in the Woolpack Inn, Slad.
19. Isabella Blow, fashion muse and patron, launched Stroud’s farmers market with Jasper Conran and was influential in drawing modern artists and designers to the area. She married Detmar Blow, grandson of Arts & Crafts architect Detmar Blow, who designed Grade II* Hilles House at Harescombe (1914-16) as the Blow family home.

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2 | CAPITALISING

Valuing our historic environment and assets

The far-reaching benefits of heritage are widely acknowledged and heritage impacts on many aspects of people's lives.

It is therefore important that heritage is not considered in isolation, but in a wider context, which takes account of its capacity for 'added value'.

* **CAPITALISING** *Valuing our historic environment and assets:*

This Strategy highlights three priorities to help the Council and Stroud District's communities and businesses capitalise on our heritage:

- ▶ Exploiting our rich heritage and our high quality historic environment as part of the District's USP and 'place branding'. (Place branding is about communicating and managing the identity and perception of a place).
- ▶ Encouraging all kinds of new development in all parts of the District to use our historic environment as a stimulus to high quality, imaginative design, which carries our distinctive local identity into the 21st century.
- ▶ Nurturing creative and cultural industries, which are a distinctive feature of Stroud District's economy: encouraging existing cross-fertilisation with our heritage and boosting mutual benefits for our historic environment, with particular focus on the re-use of industrial heritage.

Image: Christopher Hargraves

Economic benefits

Heritage and the historic environment are intrinsically linked to economic activity. Many economic activities take place within the historic environment, are dependent upon it, or are attracted by it. Heritage is a major driver of economic growth – this is true nationally and it is true within Stroud District.

▲ **Leisure...**

Haresfield Beacon, a National Trust site, marks the halfway point of the 102 mile long Cotswold Way. The Beacon is part of an extensive Scheduled Ancient Monument, which includes an Iron Age hill fort, Romano-British settlement, cross-dyke and bowl barrow.

Wellbeing benefits

The historic environment plays an important part in how people view the places they live, how they feel and their quality of life. Heritage can, of course, help to create a sense of place and local identity, and can foster a sense of community cohesion. But there are also interesting cause and effect relationships between heritage and health and wellbeing.

Building a positive legacy for the future

"Sustainable development" is at the very core of the planning system: achieving development that improves our social, economic and environmental conditions today, but not at the expense of future generations. Sustainable development is about change for the better, and not only in our built environment². The historic environment, our built, natural and cultural heritage, has a key role to play in sustainable development - bringing about "change for the better".

² Ministerial foreword to the NPPF

Economic benefits

The relationship between heritage and the national and regional economy is well documented*.

- In the South West of England, Heritage generated £1.2 billion in Gross Value Added (GVA) in 2013 (comparable to agriculture, forestry and fishing at £1.3 billion). This is equivalent to 2.3% of total GVA in the South West (the figure is 2% nationally).
- In total, domestic and international heritage-related visits generated £1.8 billion in expenditure in the South West.
- There are an estimated 44,100 “heritage-related jobs” in the South West.
- Repair and maintenance of historic buildings in the South West directly generated £974 million in heritage-related construction sector output in 2015. This is equivalent to 9.3% of total construction output or 24% of the repair and maintenance output in the South West (compared to 8% and 22% nationally).

There is no doubt that our historic environment and assets are responsible for a significant “Gross Added Value” to our District economy too, across a wide range of sectors and functions, including:

- Tourism and leisure
- The construction industry and conservation specialists
- Economic activity in historic buildings and places
- Investigation, research and display of archaeological sites and structures
- Education

Heritage-led regeneration, jobs and growth

Heritage can provide a key driving force in economic regeneration. The Government recognises that *“the development of our historic built environment can drive wider regeneration, job creation, business growth and prosperity”*³.

Nationally*, research indicates that:

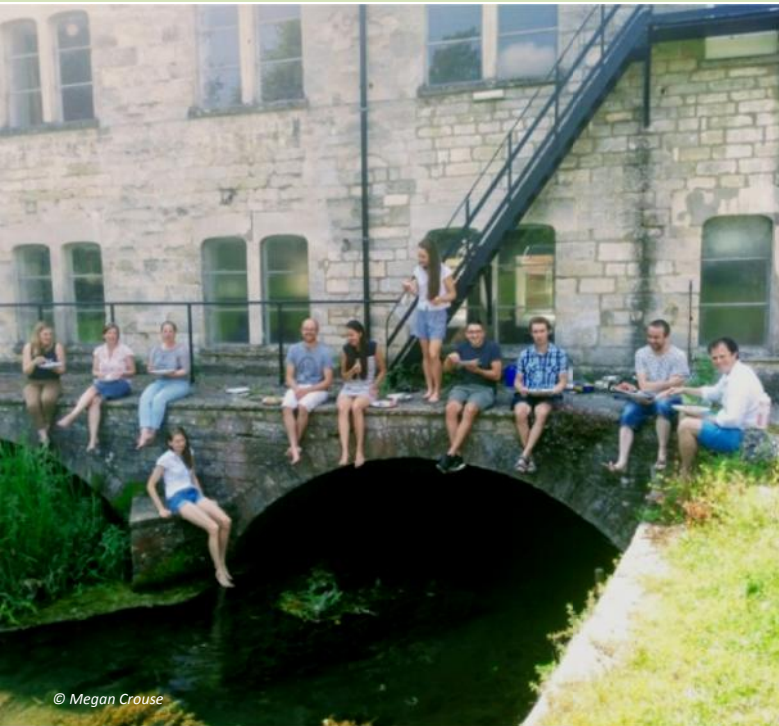
- One in four businesses said that the historic environment is an important factor in deciding where to locate (this was rated equally important as road access)
- Over 90% of respondents to a 2010 survey agreed or strongly agreed that investment in their local historic environment made the area a better place in which to live, work, visit or operate a business
- Investment is worth the return: £1 of public sector investment in the historic environment generates £1.60 of additional economic activity over a ten year period
- Approximately one in five visitors to areas which have seen historic environment investment spend more in the local area than before; and one in four businesses has seen the number of customers increase.

Stroud’s Local Plan recognises that, often, the land most in demand for new development in our District is also that which is at the very heart of our environmental heritage assets⁴. This is certainly an issue when it comes to protecting and enhancing our historic environment – but it is also an opportunity:

- ✓ All our **town centres** are conservation areas (with the exception of Stonehouse, which nonetheless has some heritage interest). These are attractive town centres, whose draw and vitality today relies, to varying degrees, on the visible heritage which adds character and local distinctiveness to their roles as working, shopping and leisure environments.
- ✓ The Local Plan (Policy EI2) has identified some existing employment sites where targeted regeneration and mixed-use redevelopment could boost their current employment potential, economic output and community benefit. Many of these are **historic mill sites**

³ Culture White Paper 2016 DCMS

⁴ Stroud District Local Plan 2015. ‘Key Issue 79’, Chapter 1.
* Heritage Counts: Heritage and the Economy 2016. Historic England on behalf of the Historic Environment Forum.



© Megan Crouse



© Nick Turner

▲ Creative...

Creative and cultural industries are 29 % more likely to be found in a listed building than in a non-listed building in England.

Architectural practice Millar Howard Workshop has based itself in a former Stroud Valleys woollen mill. Our area's rich industrial heritage is fertile ground for creative industries and new start-ups seeking flexible and character-filled work space.



SpaceHoppers

▲ Co-working...

Stroud District has above average levels of self-employment and home-working. SpaceHoppers (based at Libbys Mill in Stroud) and Cluster (Belvedere Mill in Chalford) cleverly cater to this market, occupying adapted former industrial buildings to provide shared work spaces and facilities.

Regeneration... ▼ ▶

The current Local Plan identified Ham Mill in Thrupp as one of several 'regeneration sites' (Policy EI2), where redevelopment should seek to intensify employment provision, as well as developing other uses. A heritage-led scheme was granted planning permission in 2017. The mix combines 100 new homes with modern commercial / employment space and the scheme aims to set an architectural benchmark, to catalyse regeneration of other under-used industrial heritage sites in the District.



© Assael Architecture

▲ Niche...

How will our town centres adapt in the future, in the face of changing retail habits? Some may come to rely even more heavily on their leisure offer and niche markets. Much of Nailsworth's destination appeal depends on its pretty historic environment.

Vital heritage... ▶

Today, Stroud town centre derives much of its vitality and appeal from its attractive historic character, despite the steepness of the High Street.

But in the 1980s the town centre faced the threat of extensive demolition. Local community action (leading to the formation of the Stroud Preservation Trust) prevented this, raising awareness of the value of these heritage assets.

Today we understand and appreciate the economic harm that poorly considered demolition and insensitive redevelopment can have.



© Assael Architecture



© Nick Turner

and some lie within the **Industrial Heritage Conservation Area** and along the historic **Cotswold Canals corridor**, where they are well placed to benefit from the ongoing canal restoration and to contribute to shaping what should become an exciting and valuable leisure, tourism and cultural asset, as well as delivering new homes and jobs.

- ✓ The Council's *Jobs and Growth Strategy* identifies the need to work with the Canals and Rivers Trust to produce a 'destination strategy' for **Sharpness Docks** and surrounding area – including the area around the Old Docks conservation area, which has been allocated for strategic development in the Local Plan. Sharpness is a really unusual, distinctive part of Stroud District, quite unlike anywhere else. Its unique heritage and atmospheric character could – and should – play a central role in shaping the future of Sharpness, acting as a positive driver for change and investment.

Creative and cultural industries

The Council's *Jobs and Growth Strategy* identifies creative industries as one of the District's key employment sectors, within which to focus job-creation investment. The District's healthy creative economy is a particularly distinctive feature of the Stroud Valleys' economic character⁵. The Stroud District Local Plan⁶ envisages Stroud as "the beating heart of a flourishing artistic and cultural scene", and links the regeneration of the industrial valley bottoms and the restoration of the Cotswold Canals with building a focus for creative and green industries. This is identified as a guiding principle, to be borne in mind when considering future development within the Stroud Valleys especially.

Nationally⁷, research indicates that:

- Creative and cultural industries are 29 % more likely to be found in a listed building than in a non-listed building in England (HLF 2013)

- A very high proportion of creative industries based in historic buildings are start-ups, with over 60 per cent established between 2010 and 2013 (HLF 2013)
- Property agents state that historic buildings are attractive to creative industries because they are smaller, more flexible and cost-effective (AMION and Locum Consulting 2010).

As well as offering creative industries an attractive permanent base, our District's natural and built environment is a huge draw to temporary or visiting creative enterprises.

- ✓ In recognition of the significant economic benefits that film and TV production can bring to the local economy, Stroud District Council has signed up to **Creative England's Film Charter**, committing all council departments to a "film friendly attitude". Creative England estimated productions spent over £4 million in Gloucestershire in 2014, and that film production can bring up to £32,000 per day into the local economy when filming on location, using local hotels, facilities and traders.

Tourism, visitors and leisure

An estimated £144 million was spent by day tripping and overnight visitors to Stroud District in 2014, with a tourism-related business turnover of more than £184 million. Around 3,199 people are believed to be employed in jobs relating to Stroud's tourism sector, which is 5% of the District's employment offer⁸.

Market research in 2012⁹ (which quizzed people who were familiar with our area and those who were not) suggested that people most associate the Stroud 'brand' with market towns, villages, scenic countryside; historic attractions, sites and landscapes; and food and drink. The study, which examined perceptions and experiences of visiting The Cotswolds, revealed that many of the things that people most sought or expected from The

⁵ *Stroud District Settlement Role and Function Study 2014*, Chapter 3.

⁶ *Stroud District Local Plan 2015*. 'Vision 1.1' and 'Guiding Principles' for the Stroud Valleys, pages 42-44.

⁷ *Heritage Counts: Heritage and the Economy 2016*. Historic England on behalf of the Historic Environment Forum.

⁸ *The Economic Impact of Gloucestershire's Visitor Economy 2014*. The South West Research Company Ltd on behalf of Stroud District Council, 2016.

⁹ Arkenford 2012

USP... ▶

Stroud District has exceptional natural, cultural and heritage capital. Marketing our area's 'unique selling points' not only boosts tourism, but may help to draw re-locating or start-up businesses to the District and to increase the District's appeal as a place to live and work.



Discover Stroud District www.visitthecotswolds.org.uk



▲ Film friendly...

Filming for the BBC's *Wolf Hall*, taking place at Berkeley Castle. Our District's natural and built environment is a huge draw to temporary or visiting creative enterprises, including film and TV productions, which can bring significant expenditure and investment into the local economy.



© Giles Keyte

Active... ▶

Stroud's Art Deco Lido (open air pool), part of the Council-owned leisure centre, sits within the Stratford Park Conservation Area;

The hill top commons have archaeological, geological and biodiversity interest;

Stroudwater Textile Trust's series of walking guides;

Walking the historic grounds of Misarden Park.



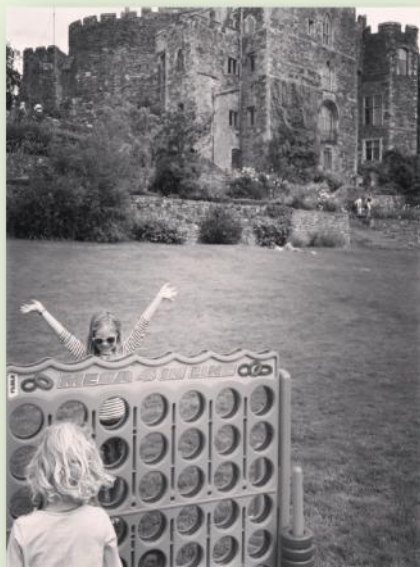
© Nick Turner



www.stroud-textile.org.uk

▼ Engaging...

A family fun day at Berkeley Castle.



Remembering... ▶

"Rempods", a local company (itself based at a former historic mill site), uses the idea of handling familiar objects in nostalgic settings to provide specialist dementia therapies.



www.rempods.co.uk

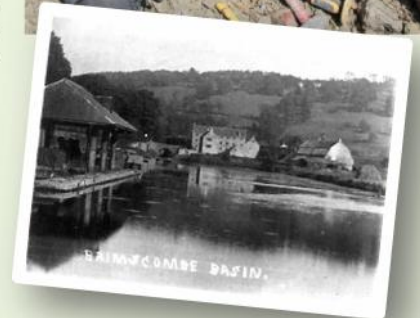
Volunteers and Partners... ▶

Without volunteers, there would be no Cotswold Canals project. Volunteers have raised funds, contributed labour, skills and knowledge and manned boats.

Since work began in 2009 on the stretch of canal between Stonehouse and Brimscombe (part funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund), £17 million of private investment has been channelled into the canal corridor, providing more than 500 new homes and leading to nearly 60 new business start-ups and hundreds of new jobs.

The next phase of works relies on continued partnership between the District Council, Cotswold Canals Trust, County Council, the Homes & Communities Agency and the Canals & Rivers Trust:

- completing the link between Stonehouse and the national canal network at Saul Junction
- transforming Brimscombe Port by re-excavating an expanse of water, providing moorings, constructing new homes, businesses and community facilities.



Brimscombe Port in 1900. As such a large inland port, Brimscombe was highly unusual and of national significance.

Cotswolds are things that Stroud can offer in abundance: villages (appealed to 77% of respondents), Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (79%), places with interesting architecture (69%), market towns (75%), local view points (72%), rivers, canals and waterways (67%).

- ✓ Local Plan site allocation **SA5** includes the historic **Old Dock conservation area at Sharpness**. With its emphasis on delivering a mix of tourism, leisure and recreational uses, supported by housing development, the allocation reflects the Local Plan's vision for the cluster of parishes around Berkeley: boosting the area's established tourism and visitor economy, whilst conserving and managing the rich built and natural heritage.

Wellbeing benefits

Our built and natural heritage offers diverse opportunities to bring benefits to community and individual health and wellbeing, including -

- Providing community or cultural facilities through the adaptive re-use of historic buildings
- Nurturing self-identity and mental health through interaction with historic places or objects
- Helping communities to identify what is of local heritage value and what may be significant to their community identity and distinctiveness
- Reinforcing community or family cohesion through shared experiences – whether through reminiscences, education and learning or simply to a fun day out
- Volunteering: bringing benefits to both the individual and the wider community, as well as to the heritage asset itself
- Improving physical health and activity levels through access to natural heritage sites, including our historic parks and gardens, the many historic sites and viewpoints dotted across our landscape, the Cotswold AONB and our hill-top commons.

The wellbeing 'value' of visiting heritage sites has been calculated as equivalent to £1,646 per person per year.¹⁰ This is the amount of money that would have to be taken away from a person to restore them to the level of wellbeing they would have had, had they not visited a heritage site. This figure is more than the value attributed to participating in sports or the arts. Visiting an historic town or city was found to be the most beneficial.

Physical and mental health

Whilst 'old' buildings are generally valued by people of all ages and are commonly considered to be more "beautiful" than new buildings¹¹, it seems that built heritage has particular value to older people – perhaps due to a sense of continuity, longevity and familiarity. There is evidence to suggest that engagement with museum and gallery collections can enhance people's physical and mental wellbeing and even improve their life expectancy¹².

Encouraging older people to reminisce has been shown to enhance both the inner self and social skills. Furthermore, shared memories amongst the elderly opens up a potentially lonely time of life in to one that favours passing on knowledge and bolstering a sense of place¹³.

Our historic environment also offers opportunities for people of all ages to get involved physically and practically. From volunteers working physically hard to repair features along the Cotswold Canals, to the rural skills workshops and schools' outdoor learning sessions run at the National Trust's Ebworth Centre, Stroud's urban and rural environment is rich with opportunities for active engagement.

Encouraging participation

The extent to which people 'give' to heritage – both financially and through giving time – can be seen as an indicator of how much they value

¹⁰ *Heritage Counts: Heritage and Society 2017*. Historic England on behalf of the Historic Environment Forum.

¹¹ *Values and Benefits of Heritage*, 2016. Research review by HLF. 1.1.2, p5.

¹² *Values and Benefits of Heritage*, 2016. Research review by HLF. 3.1, p14-15.

¹³ This premise was at the heart of a heritage, health and wellbeing project, developed by the Manchester Museum in conjunction with Manchester City Council's Valuing Older People initiative

heritage. A 2016 research review by the Heritage Lottery fund (HLF) into the *Values and Benefits of Heritage* reported that 7% of respondents to a national 2015 survey by DCMS had volunteered in the heritage, museum or library sectors within the previous 12 months. This equates to approximately 3.7 million people (DCMS Taking Part Survey 2014/15).

Nationally, older people are more likely to attend museums and heritage sites than younger people. However, a person who visited a heritage site or museum as a child is more likely to visit throughout adulthood¹⁴. Encouraging access by youngsters is a way of fostering a lifelong interest and sense of value.

Building a positive legacy for the future

“Sustainable development” is at the core of the planning system. The foreword to the NPPF explains that -

“The purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development. Sustainable means ensuring that better lives for ourselves don’t mean worse lives for future generations. Development means growth... Sustainable development is about change for the better, and not only in our built environment.”¹⁵

Sustainability is often described as having three elements: social sustainability, economic sustainability and environmental sustainability. All three are interlinked and consideration of development proposals tends to require a balanced judgement about the relative gains (or losses) that the proposal might bring about in relation to each three.

The historic environment, our built, natural and cultural heritage, has a key role to play in sustainable development - bringing about “change for the better”. This is up-front in the NPPF, which states that pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the

quality of the historic environment (NPPF, paragraph 9); and that Planning should always seek to secure high quality design and should conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations (NPPF, paragraph 17).

And our own Local Plan recognises that, whilst the preservation and protection of the historic environment is one half of the story, new development also offers opportunities for positive change:

- New development should maintain and, where appropriate, *enhance* heritage assets and their settings in a manner that is appropriate to their significance¹⁶;
- The historic environment should act as a stimulus and inspiration to place making in all parts of the District so that it can *reinforce local identity* and play a part in *increasing the appeal of the area* as a place to live, work, visit and invest in¹⁷;
- New development should seek opportunities to draw on the historic environment in order to maintain and *enhance* local character and distinctiveness¹⁸.

The adaptation of historic buildings offers opportunities to provide secure and positive futures for the District’s heritage assets, whilst also improving their usefulness as places to live and work.

New development is one of the most conspicuous ways in which the character and quality of a place can be either reinforced or degraded. The Local Plan encourages *all kinds of new development in all parts of the District* to use our historic environment as a stimulus to high quality, imaginative design.

Making the most of opportunities associated with new design and development, within and inspired by the historic environment, is a key priority for this Strategy.

¹⁴ *Values and Benefits of Heritage*, 2016. Research review by HLF. 2.3, p 13

¹⁵ Ministerial foreword to the NPPF

¹⁶ *Stroud District Local Plan*, Policy ES10 and paragraph 6.56

¹⁷ *Stroud District Local Plan*, paragraph 6.53

¹⁸ *Stroud District Local Plan*, paragraph 6.56



“Creating cultural opportunities for everyone that stimulate and act as a catalyst to explore the past, understand the present and imagine the future.”

▲ **Mission...**

Part of the Museum’s mission statement



Getting involved... ▲ ▶

The sleek new ‘learning pavilion’ at The Museum in the Park (part funded by Gloucestershire Environment Trust’s largest grant to date) sits happily within the restored walled garden and offers new facilities for school children and organisations such as Dementia Adventure.

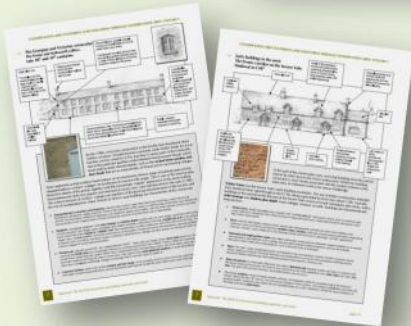
◀ Volunteering...



Local distinctiveness... ▼ ▶

A new-build home in Frampton on Severn. Oak framing, combined with modern technology, can be extremely energy efficient, whilst reflecting the architectural heritage of the Gloucester vale.

Conservation Area Statements and Village Design Statements are tools to help identify just what makes a place ‘distinctive’ in terms of the buildings, spaces, materials and topography that characterise it.



The grass roof and dry stone walling of the new M5 Gloucester Services, nestled below the Cotswold escarpment, is both unapologetically modern and architecturally sensitive in its form, landscaping and palette of materials. Designed by Glenn Howells Architects with AFL Architects, the project won several Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) awards in 2016.

3 | POSITIVE MANAGEMENT

Identifying issues and opportunities

Heritage is not self-managing. Without intervention, over time, things start to degrade: whether through natural weathering processes, through damage, demolition, physical alterations and additions to the historic fabric, or through changes to the surroundings and context.

We want to make the most of opportunities to enhance the positive management of the historic environment – including the potential to make use of expertise, skills

and resources outside the Council, to improve communication and education, and to build capacity within the District's communities.

Positive management means investigating key vulnerabilities, issues and pressures that face Stroud's diverse heritage assets, how they are currently addressed, and whether there are opportunities for change to bring about better, more effective, conservation and management.



This Strategy has three big ***POSITIVE MANAGEMENT** priorities for the District Council, based around identifying issues and vulnerabilities, and highlighting opportunities to address them by making best use of expertise, resources and skills – both within and outside the District Council:

- ▶ Committing to the positive management of our District's **heritage "at risk"**
- ▶ Establishing a programme for the appraisal and management of **conservation areas**
- ▶ Identifying and protecting **non-designated** heritage assets of local significance

These are priorities are focussed on making sure that the right information and evidence is available when needed, to enable informed decision making.

Planning and the historic environment

The **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** advocates that local planning authorities should produce a clear and positive strategy for the conservation and management of their area's heritage¹⁹.

As **Supplementary Planning Advice**, this Strategy and the Heritage Action Plan will be used to support and implement the District's adopted Local Plan – in particular, **Policy ES10 "Valuing our Historic Environment and Assets"**, which is the principal policy against which decisions about development that affects the District's historic environment will be assessed.

Conserving and enhancing Stroud District's distinctive qualities, including our rich built and natural heritage, is one of the Local Plan's Strategic Objectives²⁰. During the Local Plan's emergence, this guiding principle influenced strategic decisions about where future development will and will not happen and where large development allocations have been located, and it has helped to shape detailed place-making and design policies. This link is set to continue through the Local Plan Review and future iterations of the Plan.

▼ The current Local Plan



The adoption of the Stroud District Local Plan in November 2015 means that our District has a development plan that places the quality of our environment and surroundings at its heart.

¹⁹ NPPF para.157: "Crucially, Local Plans should ... contain a clear strategy for enhancing the natural, built and historic environment, and supporting Nature Improvement Areas where they have been identified". And para.126: "Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats".

²⁰ *Stroud District Local Plan*: Strategic Objective SO6: Our District's distinctive qualities. Page 148.

The Local Plan set out the Council's commitment to produce a heritage strategy to support Policy ES10²¹. It also includes a series of key 'indicators'²², designed to give an indication of how successful ES10 is and how effectively the policy influences planning decisions.

These indicators are things that can be regularly monitored and measured – and if numbers go up or down, they should give an indication of whether the condition, security and positive management of the District's heritage assets is generally improving or declining. They include:

- the number of heritage assets that are judged to be "at risk";
- the number of conservation areas with an up to date appraisal and an up to date 'conservation areas at risk' (CAARS²³) survey;
- the number of listed buildings;
- the number of non-designated heritage assets of local significance (these can be, but are not always "locally listed");
- the number of instances of substantial harm to non-designated heritage assets.

A key priority for the **Action Plan** is to set out:

- ✓ The nature and extent of a programme to monitor the District's **heritage assets "at risk"**, including the degree of positive and proactive influence the Council may be capable of;
- ✓ A programme for the appraisal and management of our **conservation areas**;
- ✓ An appropriate methodology for the identification and assessment of **non-designated heritage assets**, including options for 'local listing' or alternative means of monitoring and managing such assets.

²¹ *Stroud District Local Plan*: Policy ES10, Valuing our Historic Environment and Assets. Supporting paragraph 6.55.

²² *Stroud District Local Plan*: Appendix 1: Policy ES10 Key Indicators

²³ This is a nationwide Historic England survey, which has been running since 2009 and is designed to be an annual audit of all England's conservation areas. The survey is carried out by Local Authorities.

Heritage “at risk”

A small proportion of Stroud District’s heritage assets have been formally identified as “at risk” through Historic England’s monitoring programme, **Heritage at Risk (HAR)**. In 2018, 19 of our designated heritage assets have been included on the HAR register:

- **5** Scheduled Monuments: four of which are long- or bowl-barrow burial mounds;
- **12** Listed Buildings: including two mill buildings (at Stanley Mill and Longfords Mill) and seven places of worship (churches);
- **2** Conservation Areas: The Industrial Heritage Conservation Area and Stanley Mills Conservation Area.

Our two “at risk” conservation areas make up **6%** of all the “at risk” conservation areas in the South West²⁴.

Historic England does not monitor Grade II listed buildings through the HAR programme, except for listed places of worship. So the national HAR completes only part of the picture.

Establishing a co-ordinated, up-to-date and regularly monitored Buildings at Risk (BAR) programme is a key opportunity for Stroud District Council, to enable targeted and proportionate intervention aimed at reducing the severity and number of assets “at risk”:

- ✓ Providing evidence to inform the resourcing and management of the District’s assets
- ✓ Identifying patterns, trends and common issues, which may suggest unforeseen solutions
- ✓ Building a case to apply to external sources for financial aid / other assistance
- ✓ Monitoring the effectiveness of the Local Plan
- ✓ Making the register and key findings publicly accessible may encourage greater community involvement and may encourage new owners

²⁴ Historic England’s *Heritage at Risk Register 2018* identifies 33 “at risk” conservation areas in the South West region.

/occupiers / users to come forward with investment and alternative uses

- ✓ Celebrating success stories.

It will be helpful to undertake a regular review of external funding sources and to ensure that potential avenues for attracting investment and resources into the District are well publicised among stakeholders.

Industrial heritage

The District’s industrial legacy is a distinctive aspect of our area’s heritage. It provides us with some peculiarly distinctive challenges, on top of typical ‘heritage at risk’ issues that are common all over the country. But this aspect of our heritage also affords us some opportunities that many other areas do not have.

The fact that the Industrial Heritage Conservation Area (IHCA) and Stanley Mills Conservation Area have both been identified as “at risk” through the CAARS process is significant: the vulnerability of Stroud’s District’s industrial heritage reflects a common picture across the whole country. A survey undertaken in 2011 to support a Historic England initiative to tackle the problem found that, nationwide, the percentage of listed industrial buildings at risk was three times greater than the national average for listed buildings at risk.

In our area, the vulnerabilities relate partly to issues around adaptation and re-use of redundant buildings and sites. National research²⁵ suggests that former textile industry buildings and country houses typically face the most acute ‘conservation deficit’ (i.e. the difference in the cost of repair compared to the end value) of all the various types of designated assets on the current HAR.

But our historic industrial environment is also complex and not always conventionally ‘attractive’. Its historic and architectural interest can be easily eroded by poorly contextualised new development and incremental, seemingly minor, losses – because the significance is not always easy to appreciate. So improving knowledge and understanding of this significance is vital.

²⁵ Historic England’s *Heritage at Risk Register 2016*

Building at risk... ▼

Grade II* St Mary's House is on the national Heritage at Risk Register.



Image: Mark Brazendale



A conservation area at risk... ▲

The cumulative impact on the Industrial Heritage Conservation Area of individual, apparently minor, demolitions can be hard to appreciate. This 55m long corrugated iron shed at Fromehall Mill was lost more than ten years ago. There are now relatively few survivors of what was once a locally common 19th century building type. Brightly painted and decorated 'crinkly tin' and timber structures were home to industry, agriculture, schools and chapels. They are part of the IHCA's fabric.

Market Towns... ▼

Wotton-Under-Edge is one of the District's 41 conservation areas, along with the historic market towns of Dursley, Stroud, Berkeley, Nailsworth and Minchinhampton.



© Nick Turner

Conservation Areas

2017 saw the 50th anniversary of Conservation Areas in England, created through the 1967 Civic Amenities Act. Unlike listed buildings and other statutory heritage designations, conservation areas are designated by local authorities when they determine that an area has particular architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

- In Stroud District, **we have 41 Conservation Areas** – which reflects the generally high level of architectural and historic interest of many of our settlements.
- The District Council is legally **obliged to review the district “from time to time”**, to assess whether existing designations are still justified and to identify any additional areas worthy of designation.²⁶
- Ideally an ‘appraisal’ of the area should be carried out at the time of designation, to **explain its special architectural or historic significance**.²⁷
- Local Planning Authorities have a duty to formulate and publish **proposals for the preservation and enhancement** of their Conservation Areas.²⁸
- This is in **addition** to the obligations to make **local plan policies** for the conservation, enhancement and enjoyment of the historic environment, as set out by the NPPF²⁹.

A 2017 YouGov poll commissioned by Historic England³⁰ found strong public support for Conservation Areas nationally, but only 56% of people surveyed who live in a conservation area were actually aware that they live in one. The survey also confirmed that common problems facing Conservation Areas are unsympathetic doors, windows and new extensions, poorly maintained streets and neglected green space.

²⁶ Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 69.

²⁷ Historic England *Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management* (2016), paragraph 21.

²⁸ Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 71.

²⁹ NPPF, paragraphs 126 and 157.

³⁰ Historic England's *Heritage at Risk Register* 2017

An appraisal of the area's character and significance is an important tool in helping to ensure that the likely impact of any proposed development is properly understood and that informed decisions are made by the Local Planning Authority in determining planning applications which might affect the area's significance.

Understanding what the vulnerabilities are (how certain trends or pressures can threaten a particular conservation area's significance) makes the implementation of policies and design guidance easier.

Regularly reviewed appraisals, which identify threats and opportunities, can be developed into a Management Plan, which can in turn channel development pressure to conserve the special quality of the conservation area. Areas in relative economic decline and areas under particular pressure for development can benefit from management opportunities that promote beneficial change³¹.

As of 2018, character appraisals (known as "Conservation Area Statements" / CAS), have been adopted as Supplementary Planning Advice for only 15 of our 41 conservation areas.

A key priority for the first **Heritage Action Plan** is to set out a programme for the ongoing appraisal and review of the District's conservation areas, with the ultimate aim of having up-to-date Conservation Area Statements in place for each conservation area.

- ✓ The programme will set out a reasonable target for what can be achieved within the next five years and will be reviewed each time the Action Plan is refreshed.
- ✓ Improving awareness about the existence of CAS and management proposals – including training on how to use them – will also be an important part of any review programme.
- ✓ Community involvement will be encouraged, and will depend upon the Council providing a degree of support and advice and helping to develop local skills and capacity.

³¹ Historic England *Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management* (2016), paragraph 22.

Non-designated heritage assets of local significance

The vast majority of buildings and structures have little or no heritage significance and so do not constitute "heritage assets". But a minority have enough heritage interest for their significance to be a material consideration in the planning process. In Stroud District we are lucky to have a rich historic environment, with a large number of designated heritage assets. But almost every one of our settlements will have at least a handful of heritage assets which, whilst not significant enough to warrant statutory designation, nevertheless have local historic interest.

- **Non-designated heritage assets are a material consideration in the planning process:** their significance is one part of the balanced judgement that the local planning authority must make when determining an application for development.³²
- The Stroud District Local Plan (Policy ES10) supports **development which will protect and, where appropriate, enhance the heritage significance and setting of locally identified heritage assets.**
- The Local Plan also requires a **'heritage statement' to accompany any application for development which would affect a heritage asset or its setting**, including non-designated and locally identified heritage assets. The statement should describe the nature and significance of the affected asset(s) and their setting, and explain how the proposed development would protect or enhance them in a way that is appropriate to their significance.
- **Local planning authorities may identify non-designated heritage assets.** These are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which are not formally designated heritage assets. In some areas, local authorities identify some non-designated heritage assets as 'locally listed'³³. 49% of local authorities had a Local List in 2018.

³² NPPF, paragraph 135

³³ PPG *Conserving and enhancing the Historic Environment*, paragraph 039

In Stroud District, local heritage assets tend to be identified on an *ad hoc* basis through the planning process, as individual development proposals are considered. This might be during pre-application discussions, or during consideration of a planning application. A potential heritage asset might be flagged up by a planning case officer, by a conservation officer, by the applicant or through public comment – for example a comment by a consultee, amenity society, parish council etc.

Establishing a more structured ‘Local List’ has several benefits:

- ✓ Speeding up the planning process: if an asset is already identified in a local list, it can be quickly identified at the outset of a planning proposal by both the applicant and the planning authority.
- ✓ Cutting down on dispute: Whether or not a building, site or structure constitutes a “heritage asset” will also be less open to dispute if it has been assessed against consistent and objective selection criteria and has been ‘adopted’ via a proper process.
- ✓ The speed and robustness of *ad hoc* identification may also be improved by having a local list: ideally, in the case of buildings, their significance should be judged against published criteria³⁴, which may be generated as part of the process of producing a local list.
- ✓ Building a better picture: a local list can help to complete the overall picture of our area’s heritage significance and will form part of an evidence base for future planning decisions and policy-making at both community- and District-level.
- ✓ An opportunity for our local communities to work in partnership with the District Council: helping to build and reinforce a sense of local identity and distinctiveness by identifying parts of the historic environment valued by the community at the local level; making use of expertise, knowledge and resources outside the Council; improving communication and spreading awareness about valuing our historic environment and assets.

³⁴ PPG *Conserving and enhancing the Historic Environment*, paragraph 041



Local significance... ▲

Non-designated structures and features of local heritage significance may be part of the fabric, character and backdrop of a place. They might also be related to historically significant people or events. Clockwise from top left: a parade of turn-of-the-century shops in Stonehouse; a distinctive finger post in North Nibley; street signage in Stroud's earliest suburb; the Vindicatrix monument in Sharpness marks a significant chapter of the community's maritime history.

The Purton Hulks... ▼

An extraordinary and extensive boat graveyard on the Severn shoreline. Although one of the ships, The Harriet, is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, the wider site has no statutory designation or formal protected 'status', despite widespread recognition of its local heritage significance. The hulks are undoubtedly a local heritage asset.



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4 | RAISING OUR HERITAGE UP THE AGENDA

A positive driving force for Stroud District

Raising awareness about the value of our District's exceptional heritage, including its economic, wellbeing and environmental capital is central to the success of this Strategy.

This is partly about public awareness, but it is also about corporate awareness within Stroud District Council and about strengthening our commitment to positive management of the historic environment; and making the most of the role we can play in building a positive legacy for the future,

across diverse service areas and corporate functions.

The Council provides many services, performs diverse duties and has a variety of powers that directly and indirectly relate to our area's heritage. In order for a strategy to work positively and effectively to improve the conservation and management of Stroud District's heritage, the Council needs to embed this awareness into its broad range of activities and actively embrace opportunities.

* RAISING OUR HERITAGE UP THE AGENDA

A positive driving force for Stroud District

This Strategy highlights two priorities relating to raising awareness about the value of our District's exceptional heritage, including its economic, wellbeing and environmental capital, and using this as a positive driving force for Stroud District:

- ▶ A Heritage Champion for Stroud District.
- ▶ Knitting the quality of our heritage into the council's corporate literature and other platforms, to help raise awareness of what we have here, reinforce our District's 'brand', and give credit to the work that the council and partner organisations do, as well as the benefits that are brought to our District.

St Cyr's Church on the Stroudwater Navigation at Stonehouse. The Cotswold Canals restoration is a corporate priority for Stroud District Council.

What do our corporate strategies say?

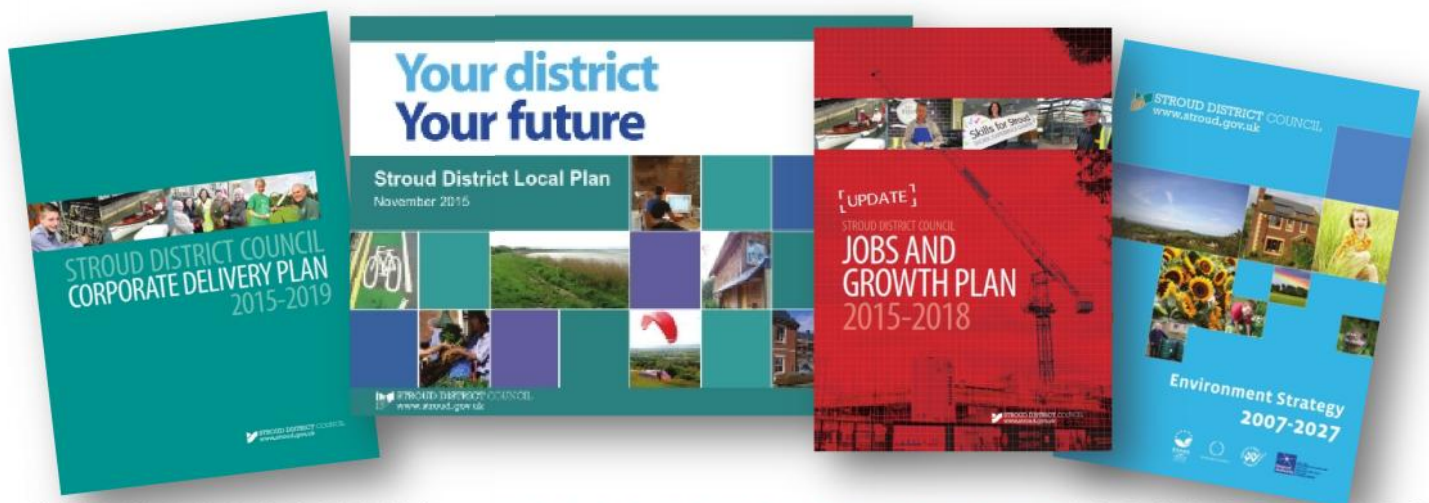
“Leading a community that is making Stroud District a better place to live, work and visit for everyone”

The District Council’s **Vision** guides the Corporate Delivery Plan and the allocation of Council resources. Most people’s experience of living in, working in or visiting our District is touched in some way by our built and natural heritage. It is a heritage that is evident right across our area and it is an important part of Stroud District’s ‘brand’.

The Council’s current **Corporate Delivery Plan** and **Jobs and Growth Plan** cite the economic benefits and the Council’s investment in key regeneration projects, including the Cotswold Canals project, the planned redevelopment of Sharpness Docks and Brimscombe Port and the forthcoming town centres’ role and function study, as well as the District’s growing links with the film industry through Creative England.

All of these projects feed directly or indirectly off our area’s historic environment (and have significant impacts upon it), deriving at least some value and impetus from their heritage assets. Several of these projects have received some form of heritage-related funding. It is clear that a diverse range of initiatives have been undertaken over the years, by many different parts of the Council organisation, which have in some way recognised, celebrated or capitalised upon our distinctive heritage.

Future review of these and other corporate strategies and service plans offer opportunities to make explicit links to the economic value and the potential offered by our area’s historic and natural heritage



Our built, natural and cultural heritage is intertwined with Council business on many different levels. Heritage impacts and expertise are manifested across a diverse range of functions, duties and powers throughout all Service Units, including:

- Managing and funding the museum service, in partnership with the Stroud District (Cowle) Museum Trust.
- Leading partners in the Cotswold Canals restoration project.
- Leading and delivering long-term sustainable development and regeneration, through strategic planning, economic development and the re-development of Council-owned land or premises.
- Conserving and enhancing the historic built environment through the planning system and effective application of building regulations.
- Using diverse Planning, Environmental Health and Housing statutory powers to manage historic buildings and sites at risk – from “Tidy-up Notices”, to compulsory purchase and powers to deal with empty homes or dangerous structures.
- Managing an extensive portfolio of publicly owned assets – including high profile examples such as Stratford Park Lido, Brimscombe Port and the Stroud Subscription Rooms (now leased by The Stroud Subscription Rooms Trust), but also less obvious sites like garage blocks in conservation areas.
- Supporting and advising communities in the production of Neighbourhood Development Plans and Community Design Statements, particularly in relation to evidence-gathering and policy formulation.
- Promoting and supporting the District’s cultural and tourism offer.
- “Place branding”; marketing and communications about (amongst other things) Council services and the area’s economic appeal.
- Managing public spaces, including Stratford Park (a conservation area) and cemeteries.
- Health, wellbeing and sports development – including dementia-friendly initiatives and promoting access to the natural environment.
- Licensing of cultural events.
- The Council’s own house-building programme.
- Housing renewal, including dealing with empty homes and improving energy efficiency.

Our built and natural heritage are helping to deliver corporate objectives and the Council's five key priorities for making Stroud District a better place to live, work and visit for everyone:

ECONOMY: *Help create a sustainable and vibrant economy that works for all.*

This Strategy identifies many ways in which our historic environment is an asset to our economy – including through tourism and leisure, creative industries, business start-ups, regeneration, town centre vitality and specialist trades and crafts.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING: *Provide affordable, energy efficient homes for our diverse and changing population.* The adaptation of historic buildings offers opportunities to provide new homes, including affordable housing. And, conversely, the construction of new housing is one of the most conspicuous ways in which the character and quality of a place can be either reinforced or degraded. The **Local Plan** encourages all kinds of new development in all parts of the District to use our historic environment as a stimulus to high quality, imaginative design. This should be true of the Council's own projects, as well as those delivered through the open market.

ENVIRONMENT: *Help the District community minimise its carbon footprint, adapt to the changing climate and recycle more.* Converting and re-using an old building is the ultimate form of recycling, involving less waste and embodied energy than demolishing it and building a new one. There are clearly issues around the thermal performance and energy efficiency of most old buildings: upgrading, renewal and adaptation of listed buildings and other heritage assets will require creative solutions and proportionate compromise to avoid significant harm, as the local and global importance of this priority is only likely to grow in the future. The Council's updated 2017 **Environment Policy** now incorporates a broader "environment" focus, which references the Council's role in protecting and shaping the quality of our natural and built surroundings and heritage. This highlights the importance of heritage to environmental "sustainable development", in terms of handing on a positive legacy to future generations and helping us to live within our environmental limits – which better reflects the interpretation in both the NPPF and our own **Local Plan**.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING: *Promote the health and well being of our communities and work with others to deliver the public health agenda.* This Strategy has highlighted several positive and perhaps unexpected ways in which our built and natural heritage can boost health and wellbeing – including through physical and outdoor activity; memory and reminiscence; community identity, cohesion and sense of place; shared experiences and interactions which combat isolation; leisure; and the generally uplifting effect of being in attractive, well cared-for surroundings.

RESOURCES: *Provide value for money to our taxpayers and high quality services to our customers.* This Strategy provides evidence and explanation which will allow the Council to set informed priorities relating to the discharge of its duties to conserve and manage the historic environment, including through the Planning service, the Museum service and Council-owned assets. This will enable better and more efficient performance and more effectively targeted action, including through the identification of opportunities for partnership working, funding, training, education and capacity-building. The current **Corporate Delivery Plan** identifies as a key focus the need to invest in projects and Council assets that deliver a return, generate income or deliver savings, so enabling the Council to fund essential public services. Our historic environment offers opportunities for this.

A Heritage Champion

The idea of a Heritage Champion (sometimes a “Design and Historic Environment Champion”) has been around for more than ten years, promoted by the Government and by Historic England (as well as the former Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, CABE). Nationally, whether or not a local authority has a Heritage Champion is monitored by Historic England on behalf of the Historic Environment Forum and is reported in the annual *Heritage Counts* publication.

69% of English Local Authorities have a “Heritage Champion”³⁵ – normally a councillor who has been nominated by their authority to be an advocate for all aspects of the historic environment in their area and to promote the role that heritage can play in achieving the authority’s wider objectives.

It is up to each local authority to decide what nomination process to use and to shape the precise scope and remit of the role. But a Heritage Champion will generally:

- ✓ Generate enthusiasm for and awareness of the importance of the local historic environment
- ✓ Help ensure that commitment to the proper care of the historic environment is embedded in all relevant activities and plans of the local authority
- ✓ Influence and communicate with others to ensure benefits for the historic environment.

Appointing a Heritage Champion offers a potentially very effective way of raising our heritage up the agenda. If the Council does choose to elect a Heritage Champion, they will have a key role in promoting the aims and priorities of this Strategy and in building partnerships.

³⁵ In 2018 there were 254 Heritage Champions across England, according to Historic England’s *Heritage Counts: Heritage Indicators 2018. Locally, Cotswold District, Tewkesbury Borough and South Gloucestershire all have Heritage Champions (Heritage Counts: Local Authority Profiles 2018)*. Find out more about Heritage Champions: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/local-heritage/heritage-champions/>

IMPLEMENTATION *and* MONITORING

This Heritage Strategy has been adopted as **Supplementary Planning Advice (SPA)**, to support the **Stroud District Local Plan**, which runs until 2031.

This document is ‘Part 1’ of the Strategy; ‘Part 2’, its supporting **Heritage Action Plan**, is integral to its success. Together, the Strategy and Action Plan will enable better and more efficient performance, and more

effectively targeted action, including through the identification of opportunities for partnership working, funding, training, education and capacity-building – for our communities as well as for those operating within Stroud District Council.

As part of this, it is important to be able to monitor progress and measure performance against the Strategy’s key priorities.

Implementing this Strategy will directly affect the Council’s operation, first and foremost in its development management and strategic planning role as the local planning authority.

But to get the best out of this Strategy, it will also require a wide range of private, public and voluntary bodies to work together. The Council will work with other **stakeholders**, including Historic England and the County Council, with parish councils and neighbourhood groups, building preservation trusts, civic societies, museums, cultural venues, heritage attractions and other specialists to identify needs and opportunities and to support particular projects however we can.

In particular, the Council recognises and supports the development of neighbourhood plans, which have a key role to play in the management and shaping of our historic environment.

If the Council chooses to elect a **Heritage Champion**, they will have a key role in promoting the aims and priorities of this Strategy and in building partnerships.

Resources

As **Supplementary Planning Advice (SPA)**, this Heritage Strategy will allow the District Council to set informed priorities in relation to the conservation, management and monitoring of the District’s heritage assets and the allocation of resources.

The current **Corporate Delivery Plan** identifies as a key focus the need to invest in projects and Council assets

that deliver a return, generate income or deliver savings. There may be opportunities to convert the Council’s capital fund to revenue, whilst delivering heritage benefits.

However, aside from the execution of the District Council’s statutory functions and obligations, this Strategy has been prepared on the basis that there will be limited local authority funding available for the delivery of projects or initiatives identified in the supporting Action Plan.

The Strategy seeks to channel future efforts to achieve three big heritage **objectives** (p6) by highlighting four key themes and a series of **Strategy Priorities** (p7). These 11 Priorities are a way of helping the Council to focus future action and allocate support to community or other stakeholder initiatives.

The themes and Priorities are sufficiently flexible to allow action to be scaled up or scaled down, according to available funding and resources in years to come, whilst still remaining focused on achieving the Strategy’s fundamental objectives.

Heritage Action Plan

The second part of this Strategy is an **Action Plan** for The District Council. The first Action Plan will consist of a programme of works, refined through consultation with key stakeholders, which relates to the Strategy’s key Priorities.

The Action Plan will set out realistic objectives and actions for the next five years. Performance will be monitored, with indicators set out for each action, and an annual progress report to Environment Committee (or any future equivalent). The Action Plan will be periodically refreshed, with a rolling five year timeframe.

Local Plan indicators

The Local Plan includes a series of key ‘indicators’³⁶, designed to give an indication of how effective **Policy ES10** (*‘Valuing our historic environment and assets’*) is.

These indicators are things that can be regularly monitored and measured – and if numbers go up or down, they should give an indication of whether the condition, security and positive management of the District’s heritage assets is generally improving or declining. They include:

- the number of heritage assets that are judged to be “at risk”;
- the number of conservation areas with an up to date appraisal and an up to date ‘conservation areas at risk’ (CAARS³⁷) survey;
- the number of listed buildings;
- the number of non-designated heritage assets of local significance (these can be, but are not always “locally listed”);
- the number of instances of substantial harm to non-designated heritage assets.

These will be monitored and a performance appraisal will form part of the periodic review, refresh and reporting of the Heritage Action Plan.

*Note: The current Local Plan is due for review, with a new Local Plan anticipated 2021/22. As part of this process, the current **ES10** indicators will be subject to review (alongside the current policy wording and the general strategic direction of the Plan as a whole), with a view to ensuring they are fit for purpose and measurable.*

³⁶ *Stroud District Local Plan: Appendix 1: Policy ES10 Key Indicators*

³⁷ This is a nationwide Historic England survey, which has been running since 2009 and is designed to be an annual audit of all England’s conservation areas. The survey is carried out by Local Authorities.

Find out more ... Some useful contacts and points of reference

stroud.gov.uk

Information about the District’s conservation areas, listed buildings and other designated assets; find out about applying for listed building consent and planning permission and how to access pre-application advice from the Council’s specialists; see the Local Plan and other planning policy documents.

- ❖ The County Council provides archaeological planning advice and curates Gloucestershire’s official *Historic Environment Record* (HER): gloucestershire.gov.uk/her
- ❖ Historic England manages The *National Heritage List for England* (NHLE), the official register of all nationally designated buildings and sites. There is a wealth of information on the Historic England website, including funding sources, Heritage At Risk and Heritage Counts data, as well as practical advice and technical guidance: historicengland.org.uk
- ❖ The Cotswolds Conservation Board advises on planning and development in the Cotswold AONB and produces the *Cotswold AONB Management Plan* and supporting guidance. cotswoldsconb.org.uk
- ❖ National Planning Policy is contained within the NPPF. This and the government’s planning practice guidance on the historic environment is available online: gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment
- ❖ The Museum in the Park is a great place to start – it tells the story of Stroud District, from its geological foundations to the latest cultural events and innovations, and is home to many records and artefacts: museuminthepark.org.uk
- ❖ The national Heritage Gateway website provides access to local and national records: heritagegateway.org.uk
- ❖ Gloucestershire Archives includes an emerging ‘Heritage Hub’, which is envisaged as a collaborative approach to gathering, keeping and sharing the documented heritage of Gloucestershire: gloucestershire.gov.uk/archives/
- ❖ The District’s numerous local history groups and societies are a great resource. Stroud Local History Society has a good website: digitalstroud.co.uk
- ❖ There are several civic societies and preservation trusts based in the District, including The Cotswold Canals Trust, Stroud Preservation Trust and The Stroudwater Textile Trust, which have good online presence. Civic societies can be searched via civicvoice.org.uk
- ❖ British history online is a digital library of key printed sources, with a primary focus on the period between 1300 and 1800. The many volumes of the *Victoria County History of Gloucestershire* are a particularly useful source of history about particular settlements: british-history.ac.uk/
- ❖ Explore your neighbourhood’s heritage and built environment via online historic maps, such as the great ‘side-by-side’ resource from the National Library of Scotland: maps.nls.uk
- ❖ Don’t forget books and local libraries! There are many fascinating local history books and published collections of old postcards and photographs. Amongst these, *The Buildings of England* series (the Pevsner Architectural Guides) is a very useful introduction to the architecture and built heritage of our individual towns and villages. Stroud District is covered by *Gloucestershire Vol 1: The Cotswolds* and *Gloucestershire Vol 2: The Vale and Forest of Dean*.

Development Services
Stroud District Council
Ebley Mill
Stroud
Gloucestershire
GL5 4UB

The Planning Strategy Team
01453 754143
local.plan@stroud.gov.uk

Development Management
(including Conservation Officers)
01453 754442
planning@stroud.gov.uk

visit www.stroud.gov.uk/heritage
