Tell us your views

We are consulting on the proposals in the Cheltenham Transport Plan and would like to know what you think.

You can do this in a number of ways:
- Please visit www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/cheltenhamp and complete the online questionnaire.
- If you prefer, please complete the paper questionnaire delivered with this leaflet. The questionnaire is also available at Cheltenham Borough Council’s Municipal Offices and at the events below.

Completed paper questionnaires can either be handed in at the Municipal Offices, at the consultation events or returned in the freepost envelope provided.

All responses must be received by 1st September 2013.

For further information on the proposals and to look at copies of reports and drawings, please visit www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/cheltenhamp, talk to us at one of the below events or call in to the Municipal Offices in Cheltenham.

Consultation events

In addition to this leaflet, we are also holding consultation events for which you are invited to attend for further information and the chance to discuss the proposals.

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<tr>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
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How did we get here?

When we asked five years ago, people supported the idea of removing traffic from Boots Corner and improving the space freed up for better use. Since then, the councils have been considering how to manage town centre traffic and where to find the money to make the changes so this can happen. The funds are now available - through Government grants and the sale of council land - and work on the project has moved to the next level of detail, which is presented here.

Cheltenham’s traffic system has evolved over the years - often in the past leading to the loss of attractive and historic buildings and spaces. The proposals given here do not need new road building, so no more of the town’s buildings or spaces will be lost. In fact the scheme gives space back to pedestrians and cyclists - who can make better use of a street pattern ideal for walking and cycling - whilst helping bus traffic.

Putting the heart back into the High Street

Across the country, our high streets are under pressure from the rise of out-of-town retail and internet shopping. Locally, competition is also growing as Cheltenham’s neighbours make their streets and spaces more attractive. But, Cheltenham is bucking the trend by reinvigorating its heart and building on its reputation as the place for shopping and a centre for relaxation, leisure and culture.

Key to realising this vision is improving the High Street. An essential part of this improvement is a reduction in the traffic, which creates a barrier to pedestrians by cutting the centre in two at Boots Corner.

Reducing the number of vehicles passing through Boots Corner will mean that a new attractive public space can be created, benefiting from the reduction in pollution and noise currently caused by through traffic.

The Cheltenham Transport Plan has government funding to help achieve the first step in realising this ambition - improving local transport and making the town an even better place for cycling and walking.

Cheltenham Transport Plan

Cheltenham Borough Council is continually striving to improve the quality of life in the town and increase its economic prosperity. Part of this vision involves making a number of changes to the road network in the town centre, known as the Cheltenham Transport Plan. If implemented, these proposals will help bring a number of benefits to the town.

The council has been working with Gloucestershire County Council to develop the existing Cheltenham Transport Plan, and we now need the public’s views. Once the public have expressed their opinions and the results have been analysed, the councils will decide if any changes are needed, before agreeing a final version of the plan.

The final plan will be subject to a formal traffic order consultation before a decision by the county council, who are responsible for the town’s roads, probably in the autumn of 2013.

How can I express my views?

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Your questions answered

1 Why is this Cheltenham Transport Plan necessary?

The proposals are part of a wider range of actions aimed at securing central Cheltenham’s economic wellbeing, whilst also intervening to prevent increasing levels of congestion and health threatening air pollution.

2 Who will be allowed to use Clarence St, Pittville St and the route through Boots Corner?

Access to the western High Street area has been restricted to buses only, between 10am and 6pm, and to delivery vehicles outside these hours. This has worked, and it is our intention to apply this restriction but also allow taxis (hackney carriages) after 6pm and before 10am in the vicinity of Boots Corner. Access will be available to pedestrians and cyclists at all times.

3 But hasn’t the recession resulted in fewer vehicles and less vehicle miles?

Yes, this is true, people are seeking cheaper ways to travel. However the long term trend for the last few decades has been more vehicles on our roads. In the 2011 census 25% of people were either walking or cycling to work in Cheltenham. This plan will encourage further changes by promoting walking, cycling and public transport, and reducing reliance on cars.

4 How reliable are the predictions being made?

Gloucestershire County Council has used state-of-the-art traffic modelling to test the impact of the proposals. Whilst these are still predictions, they provide essential evidence to support decision making. If the plan goes ahead, traffic surveys will be carried out to monitor the changes to traffic.

5 What happens to the traffic lights?

The plan proposes that several sets of traffic lights will be removed where they are considered to be unnecessary, due to predicted changes to traffic levels.

6 What can be done if the changes cause higher levels of traffic in some areas than was predicted?

Whilst the modelling does predict changes to traffic on some routes, traffic will be monitored across the town after the improvements are made. If unexpected impacts are found, further changes will be considered as appropriate to improve the way the scheme works.

7 What will happen at Boots Corner?

Boots Corner will become a pedestrian space through which buses and cycles may pass - the same as has been happening between Pimark and Tosco on the High Street for many years. Taxis and delivery vehicles will also have access after 6pm and before 10am. The removal of other traffic will create an opportunity to provide a civic space that enhances the heart of Cheltenham.

8 Have the proposed changes been considered on safety grounds?

All the proposed road network changes have been subject to road safety audits. As the designs are developed, further checks will be made, including a review once the plan is introduced. All improvements will be monitored for a period after completion to assess their safety and identify any improvements necessary.

9 Where will the traffic unable to travel through Boots Corner go?

Traffic counts show that vehicles use a variety of routes through the town, depending on their start and finish points. After the plan is introduced, new opportunities to access the town centre will be created by re-instating two-way traffic on some streets. Some traffic will find alternative routes to avoid the town centre and some people will choose to walk, cycle and use public transport more. The traffic modelling predicts that, whilst some roads are likely to see an increase in use, others will see a decrease.

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How will it be done? To achieve this, we are proposing...

**Proposals**

- Create an attractive centre for the town that will bring visitors and shoppers to Cheltenham.
- Restrict traffic at Boots Corner to buses during the day time.
- Allow two-way traffic in Imperial Square, Oriel Road and Albion Street (part). Provide local people with information on their travel choices and promote more walking, cycling and bus use.
- Improve the efficiency of junctions and remove unnecessary traffic signals.
- Improve signing to car parks and for cycling and walking.

**Benefits for Cheltenham**

- Bolster the town’s economy, attracting new businesses to the town centre and creating job opportunities.
- Improve access along the High Street for pedestrians and create the opportunity to improve the central space.
- Make access to the car parks more direct and reduce the need to drive round the town centre.
- Reduce traffic levels across the town and minimise the amount of additional traffic in neighbouring roads.
- Keep pedestrians, bikes and motor traffic moving safely, reducing congestion and improving air quality.
- Reduce traffic in the town centre and encourage walking and cycling.

Please indicate your preference on the enclosed questionnaire.

To discuss receiving this information in large print or braille please ring 0800 051 4514.

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**Boots Corner – the future?**

The reduction in traffic through Boots Corner will help create a civic space that enhances the heart of Cheltenham. Here are four ideas for how the space could be used.

- **Centrepiece sculpture developed through public consultation**
- **Event space linking with festival activities**
- **Water feature reflecting Cheltenham’s history as a spa town**
- **Tree planting extending the traditional boulevard treatment of the Promenade into the High Street**

Please indicate your preference on the enclosed questionnaire.