



Action for Gloucester

NEWS FROM RICHARD GRAHAM MP AND YOUR LOCAL TEAM

MORE HOUSING FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE

Gloucester is getting more affordable and social housing. And 48 new units of emergency accommodation for the most vulnerable, in partnership with the YMCA, will open in September.

'This is a great step forward by the Conservative run City Council' said MP Richard Graham, 'and follows the government's acceptance of many of my recommendations in a joint Select Committee report I co-chaired on Supported Housing' (<https://bit.ly/2HmwQaR>).

Our city has made good progress on re-housing about 120 homeless people through the Social Impact Bond, and is helping rough sleepers through the new government funded Somewhere Safe to Stay Hub. The council is now reviewing and improving our Supported



PS is the charity in charge of our Safe to Stay hub

Housing. Richard said, 'For those who need help it's crucial because this is a city that cares about every resident.'

Richard has also encouraged the Council to bring Wessex House on Great Western Road back into use, so Gloucester can look after all those who get into major difficulties for short periods of time with emergency housing.

This fits in with the government's national £44 billion scheme to improve the housing market and deliver more affordable housing and socially rented homes.

Nationally, over 1.3 million new homes have been delivered since 2010, including over 407,000 affordable homes and

135,000 homes for social rent. In Gloucester 95 affordable and supported housing homes are opening on Black Dog Way, with almost more than 400 coming soon in Monk Meadow. 'For almost two decades, virtually no new social housing was built in Gloucester. We've turned this round, with Gloucester City Homes fulfilling a Treasury requirement to build 100 new units, most of which are now complete.'

'The key thing,' noted Richard, 'is that Gloucester is doing more to help the homeless, rough sleepers and vulnerable people in many different situations than ever before - and I want this to continue.'



Wessex House - Ripe for social housing regeneration



Black Dog Way - 100% new affordable housing

£500M MORE FOR COLLEGES TO BOOST SKILLS

The new government has accepted the case made by MP Richard Graham's letter (signed by over 150 MPs) for more funding for Colleges, announcing an extra £500m for 2020-2021. Richard said 'this will make a huge difference to Glos CoL, boosting skills training.' Over 9,000 new apprentices have started in Gloucester since 2010, double the previous government, bringing opportunities for young Gloucester residents. Western Power Distribution apprentice Daniel Davenport said, 'the learning and development from the PD apprenticeship is second to none.' Funding for apprenticeships this year is £2.5 billion - double 2010-11 in cash terms - but Colleges deserve more per pupil. **Glos CoL Principal Matt Burgess said 'this welcome announcement deals with the employers' pension issue and should increase our funding considerably. Richard has played a very helpful role in this.'**



Richard with Western Power Distribution apprentices

£7m Facelift For City Centre Starts Now

Online shopping means retail is hard - but the City Council and MP Richard Graham agree boosting our historic city centre and shops is a top priority. So our City Council is investing £7 million to improve Kings Square and Walk shopping centre. Changes include new public conveniences, a big new tenant at the ex BHS store and a better covered mall. City Centre resident Chris Hartshorne said, 'Kings Square needs a face lift and I like the look of the proposals.' The next steps are pulling down Bentinck House and more of Grosvenor House by

the bus station and the Bruton Way car park in the New Year. The government has cut business rates by a third for most city centre businesses and Richard confirmed the Post Office stays where it is until the Smiths lease is renewed: 'If it is then the Post Office moves round the corner and if it isn't then the PO stays where it is. No member of staff would lose their job if Smiths hosted our PO and no service is discontinued - business as usual for everyone. Overall the new plans are good news for the City Centre.'

Working Gloucester



Looking

Brand New City Health Centre all approved

Gloucester City Centre's health provision is divided at the moment between GP services at St Michael's Square, Rikenel and Eastgate Street. But a new and multi-service health centre on Quayside now has all the approvals needed and the NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) plans to bring all these services together with eg physiotherapy and other new services at the new purpose-built facility. The first spade in the ground should happen soon.

Richard said, 'This exciting development shows NHS, County Council and MP all working together for residents.' And Westgate Residents Chair Maggie Day confirmed, 'This

is just what we need and very close to a lot of older and disabled residents.'



City Health Centre site on Quayside

New '16-17 Saver' Railcard Cuts Train Costs

Great news for Gloucester teenagers as the brand new 16-17 Saver Railcard was launched guaranteeing half-price travel for young people, saving families an average of £186 every year.

Richard said, 'Younger rail travellers can now benefit from cheaper rail fares, allowing them to reduce the cost of getting to college, work or holiday travel.'



Richard with Severn Vale pupils who are eligible

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The photographs include Richard either endorsing

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New Gloucester to Cheltenham Cycle Way Coming Soon

The plan for a new cycle route between Gloucester and Cheltenham is being finalised. This will be a safer route (c.10.5km) for all cyclists along the B4063 Innsworth route. Richard noted, 'This £4.5m project will help a Greener Gloucestershire hit net zero carbon by 2050, and should encourage lots to get on their bikes between Gloucester and Cheltenham. There are still a couple of County Council approvals and construction should start in spring 2021 and be finished by Christmas 2021.'



Richard Graham MP at Kings Square plans with residents



Gloucester City Cycling Club Captain Toby Woodbridge said, 'We all welcome this project and look forward to go over the details of the route soon'

DOUBLE The Number of Trains to London in December

This summer Gloucester has 2 extra GWR London services a day, and in December we'll get direct hourly trains and indirect trains every 30 minutes. Richard Graham has been working on this for years and said, 'I am grateful to ministers, Network Rail and GWR alike for having firstly doubled the line and now doubled the trains, which will also have a quicker journey time. Everyone travelling to Swindon or London will benefit.'

The MP added he was still working on a better service to Bristol and hoped to have more news before too long. ■



Richard with the GWR team at the first entrance to our Rail Station from Great Western Road in over 150 years

Play Areas in Gloucester Have Doubled in 10 Years

Thanks to a million pound investment by the City Council, using development contributions and other funding, eg the Lottery Fund, Gloucester now has 75 play areas today against 36 in 2007.

Cllr Richard Cook, Cabinet Member for Environment, commented that, 'Things won't stop here: we've got plans for more because this is key to making our city a great place to grow up in.'

Richard noted, 'It's another great example of Gloucester regeneration and may make us the only city in the country to have doubled the number of play areas in just over a decade. I've asked the Centre for Cities Research team to check - how amazing would that be?' ■

ham MP

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led do not imply that people shown with or oppose him as a Member of Parliament.



Richard with the Friends of Elmbridge and their playground

FROM TIP TO GREEN ENERGY AND BIODIVERSITY PARK

The tip at Hempsted is now no longer a tip. Residual waste from Gloucester and Stroud (everything that can't be recycled) no longer goes into landfill there. 'It's purely a recycling site now', said City MP Richard, 'and the immediate benefit is land all grassed over and no more clouds of seagulls: residents no longer pay landfill fines and the residual waste is turned into enough energy for 20,000 homes, while cutting CO2 emissions by the net

equivalent of 26,500 tonnes each year.'

The future of the Enovert owned 360-acre site is exciting. 'Enovert will start planting thousands of trees in September, some of which could be for biogas, and they'll consider both a large solar farm to help source green energy for Gloucester and a biodiversity park with the right partner - which would also be a great educational tool for schools.'

Richard said, 'I've always believed that closing the tip was an important strategic goal for our city - releasing almost all the land for green energy and biodiversity, and perhaps a viewing point on the top of the hill, off the Severn Way. Recycling will continue and the result will be a 360 acres contribution to a Greener Gloucester - a great legacy from decades of landfill. I will do all I can to make these green energy opportunities and a biodiversity park happen.'



No more clouds of gulls at the tip

Brexit Update

New PM Boris Johnson has made it very clear that leaving the EU on October 31st is his first priority and that a good Deal without the 'backstop' is his preference. Richard said, 'Every Conservative and Labour MP was elected to respect the Referendum result and we **must** deliver that pledge. I will continue to support efforts to leave the EU with the best Deal possible, but further delay is not good either for business certainty or for the credibility of democracy.'



Sign up for Richard's E-Newsletter on local issues

Name(s)

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Richard about to jump into the Docks for our homeless charity HaVinG: 'I will do almost anything for a good cause.'

Or sign up online at richardgraham.org/contact