

# Consultation on GCC's Draft Road Safety Policy

## Gloucestershire County Council Road Safety Policy – CONSULTATION

I promised to let residents know when this consultation started. You can have your say by following this link:

[CONSULTATION](#)

The consultation is open until 11th September. The Parish Council and Stinchcombe Speed Watch will participate but members of the public are encouraged to join in too.

If you feel strongly, either way, about more 20 mph limits this is your chance to tell the County Council. Safer walking and cycling are other key themes on which you can comment. Horse riders don't get the same attention in the policy as predestrians and cyclists. Bearing in mind the recent incident on Wick Lane, some of our many equestrians might want to raise that point.

*Kath*

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## Alien Invasion in Stinchcombe

*It's happening right now – not people but non-native invasive plants. Human visitors are, of course, very welcome to our village.*

# What did the Victorians do for us?

Lots of things, however, introducing Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam was not their finest contribution. No doubt at the time they seemed like fascinating additions to the garden, real talking points. We can't blame them for another non-native invasive species, Cotoneaster, which arrived over a decade before young Victoria came to the throne.

## Legislation

I have singled out these three because they are causing problems locally. There are many others covered by the legislation on invasive non-native plants. The [Royal Horticultural Society](#) gives an [excellent introduction from a gardener's perspective](#).

In brief, the RHS say:

- the listed species are banned from sale (this doesn't appear to be the case with the listed species of Cotoneaster!);
- they should not be planted or caused to grow in the wild; and
- we should take measures to control any already present in our garden.

Let's have a closer look at our three invaders.

## Japanese knotweed

Japanese knotweed was imported from eastern Asia in 1886 as an ornamental garden plant. It can grow quickly and vigorously just about anywhere, even breaking through concrete and tarmac. This has obvious threats for buildings and infrastructure.

## ***How it spreads***

The plant spreads by the growth of rhizomes, which are underground stems that send out roots. Even a tiny piece of rhizome inadvertently moved with soil or equipment can generate a new plant. Look how the knotweed, with its copious small creamy flowers, has taken over on the public land in the photo! This site is in North America but the same can happen in the UK.



## ***Legal position***

Whilst it isn't illegal to have Japanese knotweed on your land, you can be prosecuted if it spreads into the wild. A civil case could be brought against you if it colonises neighbouring properties. It is not a notifiable weed; however, you must declare its presence if selling your property. A least five pieces of legislation are relevant.

## ***A growth industry***

Unsurprisingly, a whole industry has sprung up around Japanese knotweed control. The control methods available are:

- repeated spraying with professional grade glyphosate-based herbicides for at least 3 years
- physical removal and disposal as a controlled waste under the Environmental Protection Act 1990

A combination of these methods is often used. Most people are likely to need specialist help to ensure that control is successful and stays within the law.

## ***Where is it locally?***

Japanese knotweed is present in at least one place in Stinchcombe. At the request of a resident, I recently reported a patch on the verge alongside Standle Lane, using the Gloucestershire Highways [online reporting system](#).



It looks innocuous in the photo, but without appropriate action that could soon change. Highways have added the area to their contractor's list and the Parish Council will be monitoring progress.

## ***Himalyan balsam***

This rather attractive plant was introduced to the UK in 1839, from the Himalayas as the name suggests. It thrives on riverbanks and in damp woodlands.



cc-by-sa/2.0 - Himalayan Balsam (Impatiens) by Evelyn Simak [geograph.org.uk/p/5454660](http://geograph.org.uk/p/5454660)

## ***What is the problem?***

Why worry when the prolific pink flowers are so pretty and the bees love them? The problem is that Himalayan balsam grows fast, reaching a height of up to 3 metres. Exploding seed pods can project as many as 800 seeds per plant up to 7 metres, enabling it to spread rapidly. It quickly crowds out our native woodland species, reducing biodiversity. A further problem is that when large areas of balsam monoculture die back in the winter, the bare soil becomes vulnerable to erosion.

## ***Where is it locally?***

On the Dursley side of Stinchcombe Hill, Himalayan balsam has become well-established only a few years after it was first spotted. The [Cam, Dursley and Uley Joint Woodland Management Committee](#) is running conservationist work parties (see photo) to pull out as much as possible before it sets seed. Unlike Japanese knotweed, the pulled plants can be broken, trampled and left on site.



## ***Cotoneaster***

It was a surprise to see five species of Cotoneaster on the list of invasive alien species. They are widely available to purchase, often with no warning about their status. (There are also many other Cotoneaster species that aren't on the list.) The first plants arrived in the UK from East Asia as long ago as 1824. They are useful ground cover and provides berries for

the birds. Unfortunately, the birds spread the seeds to sensitive habitats. Limestone scree, such as on parts of Stinchcombe Hill, is especially vulnerable. Cotoneaster can eventually crowd out native flora and develop extensive root systems. Ecologist Elizabeth Kimber has written [an informative article](#).

## ***We're part of the problem***

Our own back garden contained two types of Cotoneaster when we moved in 26 years ago. As far as I can tell they are *horizontalis* and *microphyllus*, both on the list. They have certainly been spreading, in spite of half-hearted attempts to control them (see area in front of the bird bath).



## ***Impact on Stinchcombe Hill***

As a conservation volunteer for over a decade, I have observed an increase in the amount of Cotoneaster appearing on the upper slopes of Stinchcombe Hill. We try to root out any plants we see, but it is a huge area to monitor. Even the small plants can have long roots that it is difficult to remove completely. My garden, and possibly yours, is contributing to this problem so I need to get serious about tackling it.

## ***Legal Position***

As with Japanese knotweed, listed species of Cotoneaster are controlled waste. Strictly speaking, pruning's and uprooted plants should not be disposed of to SDC's garden waste scheme or taken to any of its household recycling centres. In our garden I am going to physically remove as much as possible, before the berries ripen, and burn it (considerately) on site. Chemical treatment is an option I will avoid unless it proves absolutely necessary.

## ***How you can help***

If you spot any of these three invaders on public land or in the wild around Stinchcombe, **please let the Parish Council know.** You can report infestations on roadside verges directly to Highways, as already stated in the Japanese knotweed section. It would still be useful if you informed the Parish Council so that we can follow up.

*Kath Hudson*

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# Jubilee Celebrations

Its nearly here! Shame the weather isn't looking great but things can change .....

We all look forward to welcoming you to Stinchcombe Jubilee weekend and here is a note of what to expect.

It all starts on Thursday at 10 am with a playtime before the punch and judy show by Tom Foolery, all the well-known characters will be there: Punch, his wife Judy, Baby, Joey the Clown, The policeman, Crocodile, Ghost – and – of course – the sausages.

This is followed by the teddy bears picnic and home-made Queen's Platinum Crown Competition. If you are attending these, hopefully you have already put your names down with Margaret Wannell and please remember to bring your teddy and lunch.

The hog roast looks set to be a great evening, we have around 130 people attending! The hog will be ready to serve from 6.15/6.30 with a serving of 75 people half hour – so plenty of time to mingle, chat, and have a drink. Thank you to everyone who has entered the pudding competition, we can't wait to try your pudds! Limited tickets remain, speak to Dave Clare if you need some!

We will do a quick toast to the Queen at 8pm now (was going to be 8.30pm) to allow a little more time to walk up to the beacon for the 9.45pm lighting. The bar at the village hall will remain open while we light it and be there when we get back. There won't be any refreshments at the beacon location and it may well be dark on the way back, so bring a torch.

For Saturday, we are running Family fun and games for the energetic of us! A fairly informal series of popular games like sack and 3-leg races and a few with a twist as well.

This is probably the only event that is weather dependent, so fingers crossed the current forecast is wrong. The games will start behind the overspill car-park at 2pm, and the bar will be open then too! You may want to bring your own water if you don't want to visit the bar.

Afternoon tea is served from 4pm to 6pm in the village hall.

The weekend then closes with Thanksgiving Evensong at the church on Sunday at 6pm. This will be followed by cheese and wine.

Any questions, ask any of the village hall, PCC, or parish council members.

Looking forward to seeing you at some point over the weekend.

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## Chairman's Report

### **Chairman's Report to Annual Parish Assembly to be held on Monday 30th May 2022**

Since the last Parish Assembly in 2021 there has been the AGM and 9 full Parish Council meetings, most of which were attended by the County and District Councillors. The PC aims to meet every six weeks, primarily in the Committee Room at the Village Hall unless dictated by COVID regulations.

At the AGM on the 26th May 2021 the following appointments were confirmed:-

Footpath Wardens – Mr Snellock and Mr Packer

Tree Warden – Mr Kirkham

Playground Equipment Warden – Mr Cheetham

Rep to Village Hall Committee – Mrs Shaw

Snow Warden – Mr Davies

Snow Plough Operator – Mr Longstreth

The following were also appointed as representatives of the Parish Council to other organisations:-

Stinchcombe	Hill
Trust	Ms K Hudson

Stinchcombe United Charities	Mrs
J. Thomas	

Dursley	United
Charities	Mr R
Holloway	

Village	Hall
Committee	Mrs M
Shaw	

Berkeley Stakeholder Group	Mr
C Davies	

### **Parish Councillors**

The Council is operating at full complement, Simon Packer took over as Chair last year with Kath Hudson acting as Vice Chair.

I would like to thank Marian Shaw for her hard work as departing Chair and helping me as I settle into the role.

Since the AGM, Chris Snellock has stood down as footpath warden and John Thomas has taken it on. Laurie Bradley has also replaced Russ Holloway as Dursley United Charities representative. Many thanks to Chris and Russ for their work.

Kath Hudson has worked very hard on Speed Watch and getting the Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) ready to install – more

later.

We will all miss Richard Cheetham and are grateful for all his efforts over the years.

## **Financial Matters**

As a result of a survey last year, the precept for 2021/22 was increased from £3,550 to £5,500 to facilitate the provision of traffic calming measures in the village and exploratory Playground works. This will be maintained for 2022/2023.

## **Planning**

There have been 28 planning applications within the Parish and Parish Councillors have seen, consulted and commented on them all.

Notification was received from Planning of a screening request for proposed 60 dwellings, public open space and ancillary works at land north of Taits Hill Road, which caused considerable concern among residents. A Residents' Association was formed across Stinchcombe Village, Taits Hill Road, Clingre Down and Orchard Leaze, including parts of Cam parish as well as Stinchcombe, which sought advice from a planning consultant.

## **Facilities**

A new bin and replacement flagpole were installed by the church – Many thanks to Craig Lawful for fitting them. A further bin is ready for installation by the bus shelter outside the Village Hall. This will replace the bin that DRC had at their entrance there.

A new notice board has been obtained and is ready to be installed to replace the one knocked over at Old Hill Lane.

The Playground group have presented their proposals at a combined Hall, Church and Parish Council meeting. The designs

look good but there are still a number of unanswered questions about insurance, maintenance and public consultations that need sorting.

## **Highways**

Standle Lane has been completely resurfaced with thanks to all those who helped push this one through.

The Speed Watch group now have a preferred make and model of VAS and the evidence to support the recommendation. The final steps are getting the nearby residents' agreement to the installation, buying it, and installing it. If anyone knows a "street works" accredited contractor, please let Kath know.

Design for the village gateways is complete with a series of options ready to go to residents for consultation. Work on the planters has gone ahead – thanks to all those involved

After the parking issues with the rugby club earlier in the season, we had a very constructive meeting with a series of actions that I am pleased to report seem to have solved this problem.

## **Footpaths and Rights of Way**

There was a litter pick held in March this year had a poor turnout but nevertheless produced more than 20 bags of litter.

There have been ongoing discussions between the owners of Piers Court, PROW officers and Parish Council representatives regarding the use of public footpaths on Piers Court land.

## **General**

It's nice to see a lot more collaboration between the various village bodies in the last year, I hope that that continues – Don't forget the Jubilee celebrations on the 2nd and 4th of June!

Thanks go to Kath Hudson and Nola Bradley for continuing production of the village Newsletter and to the team who distribute it. Richard Bartlam continues to update and maintain Stinchcombe E-News for which we thank him. Richard would welcome Stinchcombe news and photographs to include in E-News.

### **Summary**

Thank you to my fellow Parish Councillors and Clerk for their help and support over the past year. Thank you also to the Tree, Footpaths and all the appointed Wardens for their time and efforts in keeping our Parish running smoothly and such a pleasant place to live and to our County and District Councillors for their time and support which are very much appreciated.

Feel free to join us for the AGM and assembly on 30th May in the Village Hall.

Simon Packer

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# **Stinchcombe Platinum Jubilee Celebrations**

## **Join us as Stinchcombe celebrates the Queens Platinum Jubilee**

# What's On

All at the Village Hall unless otherwise noted

## Thursday 2nd June

- 10am to 12pm
  - **Children's Playtime** – Please register for places at children's entertainment.
  - Punch & Judy,
  - Teddy Bears picnic,
  - Home made Queen's Platinum
  - Crown Competition
- 6pm to 8.30pm
  - **Hog Roast and salad** – £10 each
  - Pudding competition
  - Cash bar 6pm to 11pm
- 8.30pm
  - **Toast to the Queen**
- 9.45pm
  - **Lighting of the Beacon** at the Village Green – on the Hill

## Saturday 4th June

- 2pm to 4pm
  - Family Fun
  - Fun and games for all ages
- 4pm to 6pm
  - Afternoon Tea – £5 each

## Sunday 5th June

- 6pm
  - Thanksgiving Evensong at the church, followed by cheese & wine

# To Register and for Info

- [Facebook Group:](#)
  - Stinchcombe Jubilee 2022
- Children's entertainments:
  - Margaret Wannell – 01453 546200
- Hog roast tickets and Pudding Competition:
  - Dave Clare – 01453 519571 or  
d.clare007@btinternet.com
- Afternoon Tea:
  - Margaret Wannell – 01453 546200
- Or through any committee member of the Village Hall or Parish Council

***Please register for places at children's entertainment, Buy tickets for Hog Roast £10 and for the Afternoon Tea £5, and enter the Jubilee Pudding competition.***

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## Gloucestershire Recycles

### Reuse, repair and share old items to help create a Greener Gloucestershire

Gloucestershire Recycles is encouraging people across the county to bring items back to life by repairing them.

Many items are thrown away with almost nothing wrong with them, but lots of people don't have the skills to repair things themselves.

Repairing and reusing items is even better for the environment than recycling, it can save money, reduce carbon emissions, reduce plastic waste, and reduce resource use.

If everyone in Gloucestershire repairs just one item, more than 600,000 items could be saved – the equivalent of 125 lorries worth of recycling.

Repair Cafes have been set up across the county, where talented volunteers can repair items for you. Items such as clothes, electronics, furniture, bric-a-brac, and bikes are all regularly brought along and repaired.

Those people that have DIY or crafting skills are encouraged to get involved and share their skills at their local Repair Cafe.

There are Repair Cafes all over Gloucestershire, including in Cheltenham, Cirencester, Yorkley, Newent, Tewkesbury, Stroud and Nailsworth.

Get involved using #GreenerGloucestershire on social media, with your stories, hints and tips on repair.

For more information, visit <https://www.gloucestershirerecycles.com/reduce/repair/>, or email, [waste@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:waste@gloucestershire.gov.uk).

For the latest news in this area, subscribe to the [Gloucestershire Recycles Recycling and Waste Minimisation newsletter](#), or the [Greener Gloucestershire Climate and Sustainability newsletter](#).

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# Platinum Jubilee Oak Trees

A joint Parish Council/Village Hall/Church committee is working on plans for the celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee which are well under way and more details will be available soon.

As part of the celebration, the PC has been allocated two commemorative oak trees to form part of The Queen's Green Canopy. They're currently being carefully looked after by Diana Davidson and are doing very well, but they should be planted soon. The PC is having trouble deciding on the best site, or sites, for them and could do with some help. Do you have any suggestions as to where they should be planted? If so, email the clerk or let any Parish councillor know your ideas.