

Stroud District Council – Annual Parish Report April 2026

[Stroud District Council's 2026/27 budget](#) increases the council tax by 2.99% (£7.27pa) to £250.35 at Band D, an increase of under 14p per week for the services provided by the Council, reflecting new statutory burdens on the Council and inflationary increases in its costs. This year's budget was proposed in the context of last-minute changes to the financial settlement, which will significantly reduce Government funding to district councils like Stroud from April 2027 onwards, along with reductions in funding from business rates, which are also decided nationally.

Alongside the budget, the council approved the [updated Council Plan](#), a revised blueprint for council priorities and objectives. The plan outlines the Council's commitment to supporting communities, addressing inequalities, protecting and enhancing the environment, strengthening the local economy, and improving affordable and social housing provision. The Council Plan and budget priorities also emphasise the importance of strong local partnerships and the need to prepare for forthcoming local government reorganisation.

The Council's **council house building programme** continues to go from strength to strength. Last week the keys were handed over to the first six of sixteen new affordable homes in Kingswood, marking a significant milestone in the council's work to increase the supply of high-quality, energy-efficient homes for local people. Several other developments will have completed in 2026, including those in Dursley, Cam, Wotton-under-Edge and Cashes Green. This is alongside a **huge project to upgrade the existing housing stock** of around 5500 homes, including a [£1.8 million refurbishment of Nuncell's Cross in Stroud](#). The council has secured [£5.2 million from Government](#) to deliver warmer, healthier and more energy efficient homes.

Progress towards reinstating the "Missing Mile" of the Stroudwater Canal took a significant step forwards in March - the National Lottery Heritage Fund Board of Trustees joined the Council and its partners to turn on the pump to fill Oldbury Pound at Eastington. This is the first section of the Missing Mile reconstructed from scratch since part of it was filled in by M5 construction from the late 1960s. This important milestone follows a major funding award of £6.46million by The National Lottery Heritage Fund in November. The investment will deliver major benefits to the region by reconnecting communities across the Stroud Valleys, Stonehouse, Gloucester and the Severn Vale and will boost tourism and unlock economic opportunities. Led by Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, the Environment Programme has already transformed the canal's natural landscape, creating a wildlife corridor with new wetlands, restoring a traditional orchard and planting new hedgerows.

The Council supported the Government's recent consultation on **local government reorganisation**, which is due to take place for Gloucestershire in 2027-2028. Reorganisation will involve replacing Gloucestershire's existing county council and

six borough and district councils with one or two new councils. It will not involve reorganising town or parish councils. Three proposals were put forward by Gloucestershire's councils in November. SDC backed the one unitary proposal, for a single unitary council for Gloucestershire – this meets the government's own criteria, matches existing footprints for the police, NHS and other partners, and is the most financially sustainable option. The letter sent to the Minister by Cllr Chloe Turner, Leader of the Council, on behalf of SDC sent to Government can be read here: <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/media/yvil4kxv/letter-from-sdc-rt-hon-steve-reed-obe-mp-281125.pdf> The Minister is expected to decide on his preferred option this summer.

Stroud Funding, **SDC's community crowd-funding platform**, has now supported 33 successful initiatives, raising a combined £494,744 for improvements across the district. Recent projects, including a climbing wall and a community garden in Brimscombe and History Trail and Youth Club funding in Minchinhampton, can be viewed here: <https://www.spacehive.com/movement/stroud/projects> The next funding window is open until 6th May.

SDC has introduced the following improvements to its **recycling programme** this year:

- Every household in the Stroud district can now use the council's **expanded garden waste collection service**, thanks to a fleet expansion that provides full district-wide coverage, including remote and rural areas that were previously unreachable.
- Residents can now recycle **toothpaste tubes** and **non-black plastic plant pots** in their green recycling bins or bags
- **Batteries and vapes** can now be collected from your doorstep - place up to ten small household batteries and up to five disposable vapes or vape pods in separate clear plastic bags, such as empty food wrappers or sandwich bags on top of your food waste caddy on collection day.
- [A new recycling video](#) explains how we recycle the district's waste
- a **new reduced bulky waste collection charge** to support residents who receive Council Tax Support or Housing Benefit. Eligible households can now book a collection for up to three bulky items for just £5. The standard charge is £25.
- To align with upcoming national requirements, the council is also **preparing to introduce kerbside collections of plastic film and wrapping** by 31 March 2027.

Stroud District Council has been exploring **creativity in economic development and in the rollout of our Culture Strategy**: partnering with a local artist on [bus art](#) and [GWR station posters](#) to promote sustainable travel to and around our area, wonderful exhibitions at the Museum in the Park including [Robert Race's automata](#) and [Alan Evans, Earth, Fire, Iron](#), which attracted international interest. SDC also purchased the historic Grade II* Listed Brunel Goods Shed from Network Rail in

March 2025 and as planned has now sold the building to Stroud Valleys Artspace (SVA), securing its future as a vibrant cultural venue at the heart of Stroud. A programme of local [Culture Grants](#) is open now (next deadline 1st June)

We have also boosted our work on [supporting the farming economy](#) in our area, including partnering with Hartpury College to support farmers across the district to strengthen their businesses and protect the environment.

Stroud District Council completed the **allocation of £620,261 of Rural Prosperity Funding** this year, supporting capital projects for small businesses and community infrastructure. Grants of up to £20,000 were available to businesses and community groups in eligible rural areas to support capital projects such as building work, large tools, and equipment. The full list of funded projects is here: <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/business/support-for-business/rural-england-prosperity-fund> Similarly, the Council has successfully distributed its award of £1,398,985 of **UK Shared Prosperity funding** (4% of which was for administrative costs) since 2022, with the final payments to local organisations made this year. The full list of funded projects for building pride in place, supporting high quality skills training, supporting pay, employment and productivity growth and increasing life chances is here: <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/business/support-for-business/uk-shared-prosperity-fund/>

The Council's **commitment to animal welfare** was reflected in recent award success: the Animal Welfare service retained its Platinum Stray Dog Services award and upgraded its Silver Animal Licensing award to Gold this year – a testament to its high standards in caring for stray dogs and ensuring compliance in licensable activities. The council's Housing Service also celebrated success, achieving a Gold award for the second year running for its pet-friendly housing policies and support for responsible pet ownership among tenants.

SDC has launched its new [Climate & Nature Strategy](#), with increased focus on nature recovery and adaptation to climate change. Funding for local climate and nature activity will shortly be available through a grant programme, following the previous rounds which have been very popular.

SDC's **Local Plan** is still under examination – the Inspector has recently opened a new, targeted consultation for the Council itself, National Highways, Gloucestershire County Council and South Gloucestershire Council, with a response date of 5th May. In the meantime, work on the new Local Plan is underway, and SDC will be among the first in the country to start under the new regime. Councillors are expected to be asked to agree the formal commencement of the new Plan at the upcoming council meeting this month.

SDC is moving forward with plans to redevelop **Brimscombe Port**. Following positive feedback from developers during a recent market testing exercise, the council will shortly begin procurement for a development partner who shares our vision for a vibrant, sustainable neighbourhood. A refreshed Project Board will

include local representatives to help guide the next phase. In the meantime, we're exploring temporary uses for the site so it can benefit the community while longer-term plans take shape. For more information, please visit www.stroud.gov.uk/brimscombeport

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