

Report to Stow Town Council May 2026 fro ward District Councillor Dilys Neill

I am very sorry not to join you at the Town Council meeting, I will be looking after my grandchildren in Austria. I thought I would include a lot of detail about Stow Fair.

As usual, the May Fair was busy, well over 100 caravans on the field. I visited on the Friday before the Fair and spoke to Margaret Lovell (Gig) and Beryl Smith, the matriarchs of the families who own the field. There were already twenty caravans and camper vans parked in the field, but Gig and Beryl assured me that they were all relatives. Beryl called me on Saturday morning to let me know that Brandon Tool Hire who normally supply the portaloos for the field had said that they were now only supplying to customers who had a trade account, and although the organisers normally pay up front for the toilets, they were not willing to bend the rules. They were closed over the weekend, so I visited the field on Monday morning, I rang Brandon Tool Hire who confirmed the above. Steve, Beryl's son in law was in charge of organisation and he had already rung several toilet hire companies, as did I but we couldn't find anyone who had toilets available. The company SF Loos, who supplied the toilets for the carpark at KGF offered to supply toilets on the Wednesday, but Beryl thought that would be too late, which was perhaps a mistake. I think that SF Loos were asking hefty fee. CDC arranged toilets for the day of the fair at the car park, and these were paid for out of the part of the tourist levy which goes to CDC. Because of the lack of toilets, and the size of the fair, the problem with human waste started earlier and was worse than usual, but it seems that the arrangements for landowners to notify Gooch via CDC for the waste to be cleared worked well. I spoke to Inspector Philippa Moore who felt that the policing had worked well and that there had been only a few incidents of crime and anti social behaviour. The safety advisory group (SAG) met twice before the fair and we will have a review meeting on June 2nd. The organisers have asked if they can join the SAG before the next fair and if they do, we will certainly discuss toilet provision.

Bromford. I was invited to attend a meeting organised by Bromford (Place Based Partnership working) which brought together representatives of various organisations including police, health services and voluntary organisations to look at the problems experienced by, and provision for local communities. Bromford has tenants in very rural and urban settings and clearly their requirements differ. There is a plan to improve communication between the various organisations so that people don't "fall through the gaps." I have been invited to attend a further meeting with Rachel Coley who organised the meeting, which I hope Alison will be able to attend, and Rachel would be delighted to talk to the Town Council if you would like

Toilets. A private individual has expressed an interest in purchasing the Maugersbury Road toilet block. The response from the officer who deals with assets is that the council would be willing to negotiate a price but only if they are kept open as public toilets. No agreement has been reached as far as I am aware.

Cotswold District Council News. The AGM was on 29th May at which cabinet members and members of committees were appointed. Details are available on the council's website. I am still chair of the planning committee and also CDC's representative on the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the County Council. The biggest news is that Cllr Joe Harris, who has been a councillor for 15 years, and leader for six, has resigned from the district and county council to take up a post with East West rail. We also approved a motion to write to local NHS leaders to ask them to conform that services at our community hospitals, including North Cotswold Community Hospital, will not be cut.

Following public consultation, the draft local plan will be published in August. As you know we have asked cabinet members and officers to visit Stow and to consider the particular problems which we face, especially lack of housing which younger people can afford, parking and lack of employment opportunities outside the tourist sector.

Local government reorganisation: the seven councils in Gloucestershire have been asked to supply further information for the Ministry of Housing, communities and local government. We should know before the summer parliamentary recess whether we will have one or two unitary authorities for the county but there will be a lot more to be discussed after that decision has been made. There will be election for a shadow unitary authority probably in May 2027, and then the district and county councils will cease to exist in 2028