



Stroud District Local Plan

Early engagement workshops report – October 2026



Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Activity 1: Taking the temperature	8
Liked or valued	8
Most frequently requested changes	12
Not want to see change or lose	15
Activity 2: Vision.....	18
Activity 3: Growth scenarios (SWOT analysis)	21
Scenario A: Proportionally dispersed growth.....	21
Scenario B: Main settlements focus	27
Scenario C: Infrastructure-led growth	31
Scenario D: Strategic Growth Locations.....	34
Conclusions from growth scenario analysis.....	38
Activity 4: Issues and ideas (map based)	39
🚗 Transport	41
🏠 Community & Well-being.....	42
🏠 Housing	43
🌻 Environment.....	43
🎓 Employment and Education.....	44
Conclusion from the issues and ideas	47
Activity 5: Location of new homes (map based).....	49
Recap and context	49
Cluster results.....	51
District wide	52
Key principles emerging	54
Summary of discussions on location proposals	55
Key Findings	59
Conclusion.....	59
Recommendations.....	60
Appendix	62
Appendix A: Results from Activity 2: Vision (word cloud)	62
Appendix B: Results from Activity 4: Issues and ideas (flags on maps).....	65
Appendix C: Attendees at the workshops.....	73
Appendix D: Stakeholder and Community Engagement Plan ideas:	77

Introduction

This report draws together the findings from a series of early engagement workshops, convened by Stroud District Council's Local Plans team and led by Resources For Change (R4C), at the outset of the Council's new Local Plan Review. The distinct outputs and findings of the four separate workshops are set out in four supplementary reports (Annexes). Two additional workshops were undertaken: one with council officers (which tested the methodology) and one with the Stroud Youth Council. These are summarised in two further separate Annexes.

Stroud District Council commenced work on its new Local Plan in June 2026 and is aiming to meet the Government's 'Gateway 1' self-assessment target by 31st October. At the very beginning of the plan-making process, the Government asks local authorities to carry out some **early scoping consultation**. This is a first step which gives residents, businesses, community groups, landowners, and statutory bodies an opportunity to shape the priorities, issues and vision for the plan, before any strategy options or sites are looked at. Feedback from this stage is used to build a community engagement strategy and to inform subsequent drafts, visions, and spatial strategies.

The workshops sought to gather vital local knowledge and insights from community leaders and stakeholders, with a view to identifying at an early stage the key issues and opportunities for future development in Stroud District. A central objective for the workshop programme was to build relationships between council officers, elected members, communities and other stakeholders at the outset of the plan-making process.

The workshops were targeted to key stakeholders and elected representatives; they were not open to the general public. These workshops formed one part of a wider public engagement and scoping consultation period during summer 2026.

Important note

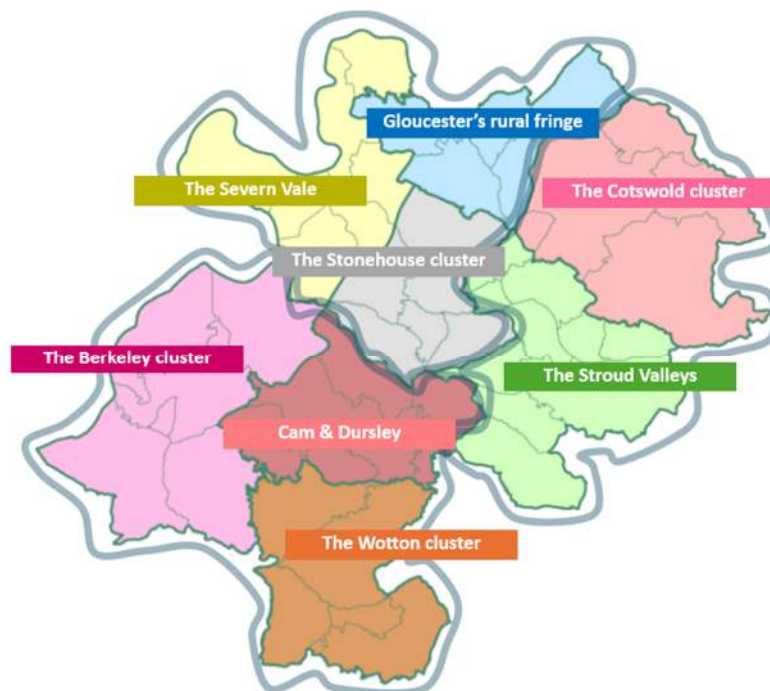
It was made clear to all workshop attendees that participants would not be held to any of the views they might express on the day. All exercises and activities were designed to encourage critical thought and two-way open discussion. Participants were invited to take time to reflect on any insights gained or concerns raised through the workshop process and were encouraged to also provide a separate formal response to the Early Scoping Consultation. Council officers were comfortable that formal responses submitted either before or after the workshops might differ from outputs generated during the workshop itself.

The workshop programme

Following an internal workshop to gauge officer views and test the process, a further four workshops took place between 21st and 28th July 2026 at the Subscription Rooms in Stroud:

three area-specific workshops, and one that focused on infrastructure providers and other key stakeholders. This report excludes the findings from the officer workshop, although a summary of their discussions is available as an Annex.

- Thursday 9th July: **SDC Officer Workshop**: Strategic Leadership Team and key internal stakeholders from a range of council services and departments.
- Tuesday 21st July: **East cluster workshop***: focusing on the east of the district (communities within the **Stroud valleys** and the surrounding **Cotswold** parishes).
- Wednesday 22nd July: **Infrastructure workshop**: for key infrastructure stakeholders and public service providers. This session looked at some of the key issues, future opportunities and particular development aspirations for the coming years, both across the Stroud district and, where relevant, beyond its boundaries.
- Thursday 23rd July: **North cluster workshop***: focusing on the north and north-west of the district (the parishes located around **Stonehouse**, along **Gloucester's southern fringe**, and the predominantly rural communities **bordering the River Severn**).
- Tuesday 28th July: **South cluster workshop***: focusing on the south and south-west of the district (the parishes located around **Dursley, Cam, Wotton-Under-Edge, Berkeley** and communities bordering the River Severn).



*Representatives of town and parish councils in each 'cluster' area were invited, as well as the elected members of Stroud District Council and Gloucestershire County Council that represent those communities.

Public service providers and other key stakeholders were invited to participate in the Infrastructure workshop held on 22nd July.

Seventy five people attended the four workshops (see Appendix C for full list). Their ideas and suggestions are incorporated in this report.



Figure 1: Participants at the North Cluster workshop on 23rd July

Workshop format

Specifically, the aim of the workshops was to gauge at an early stage in the development of the new Stroud District Local Plan how local communities and infrastructure bodies might respond to different growth scenarios to achieve the government target of delivering around 12,690 new homes in Stroud District over a 15 year period (based on a current requirement of 846 dwelling per year, although this is likely to change over the course of the Local Plan Review). The four growth scenarios explored¹ were:

Scenario A: Proportionally dispersed growth (spreading development equitably between all towns and villages across the District)

Scenario B: Main settlements focus (focussing development in and around towns and the larger villages)

¹ These correspond with the four scenarios set out in the Council's Early Scoping Consultation paper.

Scenario C: Infrastructure-led growth (linking development to where infrastructure providers consider most sustainable to can be improved)

Scenario D: Strategic growth locations (planning larger new developments or extensions such as garden villages)

In addition, the workshops aimed to take the temperature in the District more generally in terms of:

- What do you like and value about the District of Stroud?
- What would you like to see change?
- What would you not like to see change / lose?

The workshops also sought to co-create a vision for Stroud District in 2040.

Then utilising a Planning for Real mapping activity – a birds eye view – to identify the key issues and opportunities for existing and new residents of the towns, villages and rural parts of the district focussing on the following themes:

- Housing (yellow)
- Environment (green)
- Transport (purple)
- Community and well-being (red)
- Employment and education (blue)

The final activity at each of the workshops was to identify where new homes might be best situated to meet a nominal target of 12,000 homes (rounded down for ease, for the purposes of this exercise).

Purpose of this report

This report sets out in summary the combined results of the workshops, areas of common ground and challenge. It concludes with key findings that can be used to inform SDC's Gateway 1 Self Assessment that meets the requirement of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) for developing a new Local Plan for Stroud District in 30 months from 31st October 2026.

There are three main audiences for this report:

1. Officers and members of Stroud District Council, principally the Local Plans Team, providing them with a summary of key outputs to help steer their future work in developing a vision, objectives and strategy options for the emerging Local Plan.

2. The wider public, stakeholders, partners and the Planning Inspectorate. This report will be published at Gateway 1, to help evidence that the council has undertaken early engagement activities and scoping consultation, in accordance with Government guidance.
3. In addition, the four supplementary workshop reports provide participants who attended those workshops with a record of the outputs, to support their ongoing engagement with the development of the Stroud District Local Plan.

Activity 1: Taking the temperature

To test the “temperature in the room”, participants were asked to think about three things:

- *what do you like and value about Stroud district?*
- *what would you like to see change over the next 10-15 years?*
- *and what would you like to keep the same / not change?*

They were then invited to write their initial ideas down on three post-it notes, which facilitators grouped thematically on a display board.

These were personal and individual responses, not shaped by group discussion. The outputs from each workshop are detailed in the four supporting reports, so that similarities / differences in the particular themes and issues that concern communities in different parts of the district may be observed.

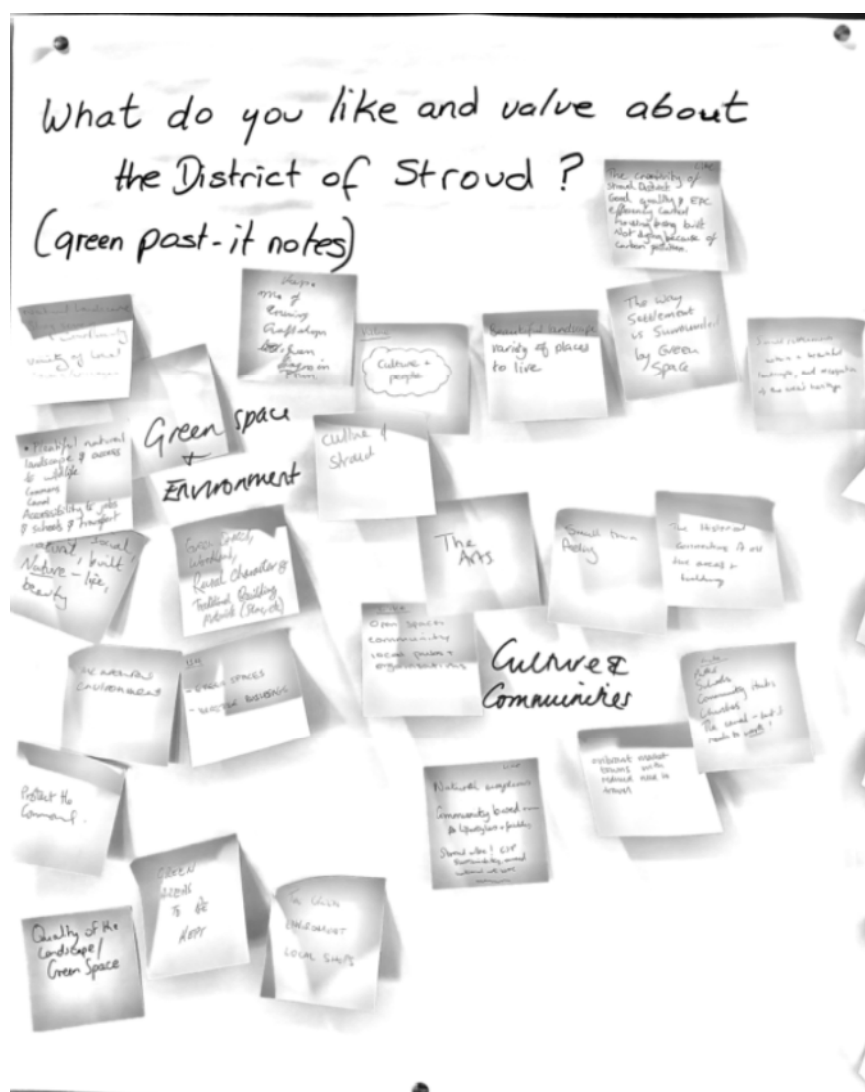


Figure 2: Like and valued post-its from the first workshop on 23rd July

Liked or valued

Q: What do you like and value about the district of Stroud?

Based on the results across all four workshops, the most frequently mentioned **Liked or Valued** features by participants were:

Landscape, Nature & Environment (Most Frequently Mentioned)

Across every single workshop cohort, the natural environment and rural landscape were overwhelmingly the most frequently cited and valued attributes of the district.

- Open countryside, rural setting, and panoramic views.
- Access to nature, public rights of way (PROWs), footpaths, and open/green spaces.
- Natural biodiversity, wildlife, and natural ecosystems.
- Specific geographic landscape features, such as the **Commons** (e.g., Minchinhampton Common, Rodborough Common), **Cotswold AONB / National Landscape**, and the **Severn Estuary / River Corridor**.

Town, Village & Settlement Character

Participants frequently highlighted the distinct built environment and geographic identity across the district's settlements.

- The unique, individual, and distinctive identity of each town and village (e.g., Nailsworth, Painswick, Berkeley, Sharpness).
- The historic market town character and overall "small town" feel.
- Architectural heritage, listed/historic buildings, and conservation areas.
- The balance between rural open space and built settlement boundaries (avoiding urban sprawl/coalescence).

Community, Culture & Social Identity

The human and social fabric of Stroud District was widely valued across all sessions.

- Strong sense of community, community spirit, and active community groups/networks.
- A quirky, diverse, creative, and independent culture ("spirit and uniqueness of the district").
- Well-established local networks, passionate local engagement, and community hubs/facilities.

Local Economy, Creativity & Local Identity

- Vibrant high streets and the strong presence of independent local shops, businesses, and gift shops.
- Industrial and cultural heritage, particularly centred around the historic canal corridor and former textile mills.
- The "green" credentials, environmental reputation, and sustainability focus of the area.

Housing & Infrastructure (Niche/Specific Mentions)

- Accessibility and connections to existing schools, transport links, and rail access (e.g. Cam & Dursley station).
- The presence of specific community infrastructure (e.g., local pubs, churches, sports facilities, and maternity hospital facilities).

Points of difference

While the four workshops showed shared, strong core commonalities – principally a deep appreciation for the district's natural landscape, green spaces, strong sense of community, and distinct local character, there were points of difference.

1. Focus on Regional Geography & Landscape Specifics

While all groups valued the natural environment, they emphasized geographically specific aspects of the landscape:

- **East Cluster** (Valleys & Cotswolds): Highlighted the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB / National Landscape), the Stroud Valleys, The Commons, and the iconic Canal network.
- **North Cluster** (Stonehouse, Severn Vale, Gloucester Fringe): Emphasized "spaciousness" (noting it is not all built-up), the "green lung" effect providing a natural buffer/environment for local towns, and panoramic open views.
- **South Cluster** (Cam, Dursley, Berkeley, Wotton): Placed a distinct emphasis on coastal/riverine features like the Severn Estuary and River Corridor, as well as farms, woods, public rights of way (PROWs), and rurality/rural sprawl.
- **Infrastructure Stakeholders**: Valued green spaces and landscape diversity from a broad, high-level environmental and biodiversity perspective rather than naming local geographical landmarks.

2. Built Environment, Local Identity & Settlement Structure

The characterisation of towns and villages varied based on regional settlement patterns:

- **East Cluster:** Valued the "**small town feeling**," historical connections, traditional buildings, and **industrial heritage** (e.g., historical mills/canal structures) alongside green spaces.
- **North Cluster:** Focused heavily on the **diversity, individuality, and quirky identity** of the separate villages and towns, valuing a strong **rural balance**.
- **South Cluster:** Showed a strong focus on the traditional hierarchy of **historic market towns and rural villages** (e.g., Nailsworth, Painswick) and their unique, independent market-town character.
- **Infrastructure Stakeholders:** Emphasized **distinctive design**, local architectural character across individual settlements, and noted that places are "**relatively clean + safe**."

3. Community Dynamics, Culture & Mindset

Each report reflected a slightly different angle on community life and social culture:

- **East Cluster:** Stressed **creativity, culture, and arts**, alongside community-based lifestyles, local pubs, hubs, and churches.
- **Infrastructure Stakeholders:** Highlighted "**diversity of thought**," an **inclusive culture**, a strong "**hippy/independent spirit**," well-established stakeholder networks, and the community's active passion for protecting the environment.
- **North & South Clusters:** Focused more on **community spirit, friendly relationships, local community groups**, and maintaining traditional **rural community structures**.

4. Accessibility, Governance & Policy Perspective

- **East Cluster:** Uniquely mentioned valuing accessibility to jobs, schools, local shops, and transport links.
- **North Cluster:** Highlighted appreciation for the council's environmental credentials and active policies designed to protect the environment and mitigate the climate emergency.
- **Infrastructure Stakeholders:** Offered a broader operational/governance perspective, noting the value of having a "great local council" and strong collaborative engagement.

Most frequently requested changes

Q: What would you like to see change?

Based on the exercise transcripts from each workshop report, here are the most frequently requested **changes**, organised by theme:

Transport, Highways & Public Connectivity (Most Mentioned Overall)

Transport, particularly in relation to public transport, congestion, motorways junctions and active travel were most frequently cited across all the workshops.

- **Better Public Transport & Reduced Car Reliance:** High frequency of requests across every single group for more frequent, reliable, and affordable bus routes and improved rail services/connections (e.g., Cam & Dursley station improvements, reopening rail links).
- **Traffic & Congestion Management:** Demands to reduce heavy traffic volume, manage HGV/lorry movements, and tackle congestion on key routes (such as the B4008, A419, and local market town centres).
- **Highway & Junction Upgrades:** Calls to improve motorway junctions (Junction 12, 13, and 14 on the M5) and resolve dangerous road stretches/intersections.
- **Active Travel Infrastructure:** Frequent requests for expanded, safer cycleways (e.g., Chalford to Stroud, Wotton to Charfield Greenway), improved walking paths, and pedal-and-ride facilities.

Housing & Local Development

Affordable housing, particularly council housing and housing for young people were most frequently cited:

- **Affordable & Social Housing:** Repeated requests for genuinely affordable housing options, more direct council housing (SDC is one of the last councils still directly managing its own council housing stock), and properties catered specifically to low-income residents, young local people, and downsizers (older people wishing to downsize from a family size property).
- **Brownfield & Existing Site Regeneration:** Consistent demand to prioritize brownfield sites, empty homes, disused mills, and derelict buildings before building on greenfield land.
- **Design & Local Character Preservation:** Calls for better design that respects the historic architecture, village boundaries, and unique character of towns avoiding urban sprawl or settlement coalescence.

Community Facilities, Health & Services

- **Sequenced Infrastructure Delivery:** Strong insistence that physical, medical, and educational infrastructure must be built *before* or alongside new housing developments ("infrastructure before development").
- **Expanded Healthcare Capacity:** Frequent requests for more local access to health services, specifically new or expanded GP surgeries, medical centres, and dentist availability.
- **Youth & Community Provisions:** Broad demand across workshops for more dedicated facilities, youth centres, play spaces, and activities for children and young adults.

Landscape, Climate & Environment

Perhaps due to the very hot summer or simply a high awareness of the issues traditionally in Stroud District climate change adaptation and mitigation measures were frequently cited although there was a strong preference for solar on buildings rather than in the open countryside or the Cotswolds National Landscape.

- **Climate Adaptation & Renewable Energy:** Requests for higher-quality, energy-efficient building standards, net-zero retrofitting, water storage/harvesting, and renewable energy generation (solar and wind).
- **Nature Protection & Public Open Spaces:** Demands to safeguard green open spaces, enhance nature recovery, protect biodiversity corridors, and create more public parks, allotments, and community orchards.

Points of difference

1. Transport, Highways & Infrastructure Priorities

While all groups called for improved public transport and less car dependence, their specific focus areas differed significantly:

- **East Cluster (Valleys & Cotswolds):** Focused heavily on **reducing traffic congestion** on local roads, improving public transport connections between rural/valley communities, and supporting urban/peri-urban centre roads.
- **North Cluster (Stonehouse, Severn Vale, Gloucester Fringe):** Heavily emphasized specific highway issues—such as **lorry and freight traffic**, motor vehicle pressure on the **B4008 and M5 Junction 12**, and creating dedicated active travel infrastructure (e.g., a specific **cycle route from Chalford to Stroud along the A419**).

- **South Cluster (Cam, Dursley, Berkeley, Wotton):** Identified "**infrastructure before development!**", highlighting a broader need for improved highway infrastructure, public transport links, and active travel options.
- **Infrastructure Stakeholders:** Focused on regional and inter-district connectivity, stressing active travel (walking, cycling, canal networks) and improving strategic linkages with neighbouring areas like **South Gloucestershire and other districts**.

2. Housing Delivery, Tenure & Development Approach

- **East Cluster:** Called for a proactive attitude toward site development, prioritizing brownfield sites, converting derelict buildings/empty houses, and delivering housing with natural shading/nature-based cooling solutions (e.g., vines, trees, water features).
- **North Cluster:** Focused heavily on housing inequality and affordability for young people, addressing house prices, enabling young people to downsize or buy their first homes, and revitalising Stroud High Street/town centre through housing.
- **South Cluster:** Highlighted developer accountability—requesting a shift toward more council housing and less shared ownership, stopping developers from passing issues onto others, better integration with local character, and preventing urban sprawl.
- **Infrastructure Stakeholders:** Focused on social attitudes, desiring a more welcoming district-wide attitude toward social housing, better utilisation of educational assets (like SGS College), and stopping developers from simply making cash payments instead of solving actual infrastructure issues.

3. Community Facilities, Health & Services

- **East Cluster:** Requested specific facilities for youth, including provision for young adolescents/young adults, arts & culture, physical education, and specific play spaces designed for girls.
- **North Cluster:** Stressed a balanced spread of leisure and sports opportunities across the district and addressing a broader lack of focus on the planet.
- **South Cluster:** Showed an acute focus on essential healthcare and local services, explicitly demanding more access to doctors, dentists, and schools to accommodate growing populations, alongside stopping spending on non-essentials.
- **Infrastructure Stakeholders:** Uniquely raised issues around faith, food, and poverty—requesting places of worship for faith groups without standard spaces, addressing the poverty gap, and increasing access to affordable, healthy, locally produced food.

4. Economy, Business & Governance

- **East Cluster:** Focused on environmental changes like water storage/usage and non-polluting identities.
- **North Cluster:** Demanded improved two-way communication and infrastructure planning between parish/town councils and Stroud District Council.
- **South Cluster:** Requested better coordination between District and Parish councils, changes to the county-wide structure plan, and improved economic statistical data for local settlements.
- **Infrastructure Stakeholders:** Focused on rural economic growth, calling for physical spaces in smaller villages to allow **local small businesses to expand**.

Not want to see change or lose

Q: What would you not like to see change / lose?

Based on the exercise transcripts across the four workshops, here are the key elements participants **did not want to see change or lose**, organised by theme:

Landscape, Environment & Green Spaces

- **Green Gaps & Settlement Boundaries:** There was strong consensus to protect the distinct identities of villages and towns by preserving green buffers, preventing urban sprawl, and avoiding the merging / coalescence of settlements.
- **Countryside & Natural Beauty:** Protection of the natural landscape, Cotswold AONB/National Landscape areas, open views, character, and rural setting.
- **Biodiversity & Ecosystems:** Safeguarding nature corridors, local wildlife habitats, ancient woodlands, canals, watercourses, and woodland cover.
- **Access to Public Open Spaces:** Retaining existing public rights of way, access to open countryside, parks, playing fields, allotments, and green spaces within walking distance of communities.

Community Character & Identity

- **Heritage & Architectural Character:** Preserving historic buildings, historic market town centres, local stone architecture, disused industrial mills, and overall visual character.
- **Community Spirit & Safety:** Maintaining strong, supportive community networks, local identity, safety, and the peaceful, friendly atmosphere of villages and small towns.

- **Scale of Settlements:** Resisting oversized or out-of-scale developments that overwhelm the existing size and rural nature of local communities.

Local Facilities & Local Economy

- **Independent High Streets & Small Businesses:** Protecting local independent shops, vibrant high streets, traditional pubs, markets, and local employment opportunities.
- **Essential Community Hubs:** Retaining existing vital services such as village halls, local schools, libraries, post offices, and healthcare access points.

Transport & Public Access

- **Pedestrian Safety & Quiet Lanes:** Preserving safe, quiet rural lanes and footpaths that allow safe walking and leisure movement without excessive, fast-moving traffic.
- **Free & Accessible Parking:** Retaining adequate, accessible, and affordable/free parking facilities near town centres and rail stations to support local shops and commuters.

Points of difference

While the four workshops showed a shared desire to protect green spaces, preserve local community spirit, and safeguard nature, there were **points of difference** in emphasis, specific concerns, and local priorities:

1. Landscape, Environment & Spatial Priorities

While all groups wanted to protect nature, the environmental assets they prioritised reflected their specific geographic contexts:

- **East Cluster (Valleys & Cotswolds):** Explicitly prioritised protecting **The Commons**, **wildlife corridors**, open spaces, and preventing harm caused by pollution.
- **North Cluster (Stonehouse, Severn Vale, Gloucester Fringe):** Focused on preserving **semi-rural character**, **open countryside**, access to sports/leisure facilities, and protecting local biodiversity.
- **South Cluster (Cam, Dursley, Berkeley, Wotton):** Placed strong emphasis on protecting **public rights of way (PROWs)**, the **Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)**, **farms and woodland**, and avoiding development on **greenfield sites**.
- **Infrastructure Stakeholders:** Took a broader view, highlighting formal and informal **biodiversity/environmental features** alongside local landscape landmarks.

2. Built Heritage, Settlement Identity & Housing Concerns

The risks identified regarding future development differed markedly by group:

- **East Cluster:** Focussed on urban and built heritage, stressing the preservation of the **local character of buildings, industrial heritage** (e.g., historical mills), and **non-listed historic sites**. They also emphasized **retaining council housing** and avoiding long-term empty homes.
- **North Cluster:** Highlighted fears surrounding **unsustainable strategic housing sites** and losing the rural balance or **village identities** to large-scale expansion. They also specifically noted a desire **not to lose council housing** and innovative build methods.
- **South Cluster:** Showed the strongest resistance to **urban sprawl and settlement coalescence**, explicitly stating they did not want to see **joined villages**, housing in rural/greenfield areas, or major development in the **Berkeley / Sharpness area**. They also noted a desire to avoid new homes that would require future retrofitting to meet 2030 net-zero targets.
- **Infrastructure Stakeholders:** Focused on maintaining **town-level identity** (e.g., Nailsworth and Painswick) and preserving Stroud's overarching **"green" reputation**.

3. Community Facilities, Healthcare & Local Services

Each workshop prioritised different local institutions and infrastructure assets:

- **East Cluster:** Specifically named local health and social assets, such as the **Stroud Maternity unit, sports facilities, and local shops**.
- **Infrastructure Stakeholders:** Explicitly highlighted community engagement, **maternity hospital services**, and preserving the area's distinctive **community feel** and togetherness.
- **North Cluster:** Emphasized **arts and culture**, leisure/sports facilities, and increasing facilities for **children/youth**.
- **South Cluster:** Stressed protecting the **unique independence of market towns** and retaining individual **parish identity**.

4. Transport, Employment & Local Government Change

- **East Cluster:** Uniquely specified a desire for **"no new roads"** and emphasized retaining existing **employment sites and local jobs**.
- **South Cluster:** Said they did not want to lose the **stable planning team** or accept **data centres** in the district.

Activity 2: Vision

Visioning word cloud exercise (online and on paper)

East cluster workshop:



South cluster workshop:



North cluster workshop:



Infrastructure and key stakeholders' workshop:



Figure 3: Word clouds from all four workshops

Participants were invited to write key words or short phrases to describe Stroud District in 2040 (the approximate life of the new plan) using the online polling site Mentimeter.

The larger the words appeared in the “word cloud” the more frequently they were written. Some participants chose to write their suggestions on post it notes rather than using the Mentimeter online tool, so their words and phrases did not appear on the original word clouds. However, they have been added to the tally of frequent key words from across all workshops below (see also Appendix A):

Sustainable (9)	Characterful (3)	Free Public Transport (2)
Green (8)	Resilient (3)	Peaceful (2)
Vibrant (8)	Well Connected (3)	Safe (2)
Rural (6)	Affordable (2)	Vibrant High Streets (2)
Accessible (5)	AONB (2)	
Diverse (5)	Beautiful (2)	
Connected (4)	Exciting (2)	
Inclusive (4)	Fair (2)	
Biodiverse (3)	Fairer (2)	

Table 1: Frequently cited vision words and phrases

These were personal and individual responses, not shaped by group discussion. The outputs from each workshop are detailed in the four supporting reports, so that similarities / differences in the particular themes and issues that concern communities in different parts of the district may be observed. However, with visioning, the generally accepted approach is to focus on common ground rather than differences – to try and bring people together around a shared vision.

Although there were clear recurring words and phrases, there were also some interesting less-used or unique words and phrases. Some of these were variations on the same themes expressed by the frequently-occurring words, and some of them were quite different:

- A sense of community
- Adapted-to-climate-change
- Adequately serviced
- An idyllic back-water
- Beautiful surroundings
- Better learning offers

Activity 3: Growth scenarios (SWOT analysis)

In table-based groups, participants were asked to consider how local communities and infrastructure bodies might respond to different growth scenarios to achieve the government target of delivering around 12,690 new homes in Stroud District by 2040.

Four growth scenarios were *briefly* described by the council's Local Plans Team. Each table considered each scenario in turn, before reporting back to the wider group:

- A. Proportionally dispersed growth** (spreading development equitably between all towns and villages across the District)
- B. Main settlements focus** (focussing development in and around towns and the larger villages)
- C. Infrastructure-led growth** (linking development to where infrastructure providers consider most sustainable to can be improved)
- D. Strategic growth locations** (planning larger new developments or extensions such as garden villages)

The results for each workshop are set out in the separate workshop reports, so that similarities / differences in the particular themes and issues that concern communities in different parts of the district may be observed.

This section draws out the most frequently cited **strengths, weaknesses, opportunities** and **threats** – where there was agreement. We have also included a sub-section on points of difference.

***Note:** As we analysed the workshop outputs, it became apparent that there were different perspectives and views: from those who were more focussed on infrastructure, those who had a town / more urban perspective and those who were perhaps seeing growth from a rural or village stand point. Some participants were also more focussed on employment and economic aspects. We have used “advocates” as short hand for this. The use of this term doesn’t mean that there were any formal or informal groupings taking part. Having said that there was often cross-over for example with rural advocates, also advocating for infrastructure etc.*

Scenario A: Proportionally dispersed growth

Scenario A: Strengths

In the workshop analyses across all four events (East, North, and South Clusters, plus the Infrastructure workshop), the **Proportionally Dispersed Growth** scenario was recognised as an equitable approach where development is spread across all settlements based on their existing size.

Most Frequently Cited / Common Strengths

Equity and Fairness ("Sharing the Burden")

This was the most dominant theme across all four workshops. It spreads development evenly, so no single town or settlement absorbs all the impact, traffic, or disruption.

- "Fair - share the pain"
- "No community left behind / everyone shares the pain"
- "Shuts up NIMBYs"

Revitalising Rural Communities & Village Life

Universally highlighted by rural and village-focused participants. Building new housing in smaller settlements brings in new families, supporting local village services, maintaining schools, and helps keep younger people from being priced out.

- *"Inject new life into existing communities"*
- *"Helps to keep generations in villages"*

Involvement and Boost for Local SME Builders

Some tables/groups seemed more strongly steered by concerns around economic delivery and construction viability. Small, dispersed plots of land are ideal for local, small-to-medium enterprise (SME) builders rather than volume housebuilders, supporting the local economy.

"Lots of locally skilled builders able to do non-traditional construction"

Low Individual Impact on Local Infrastructure

Noted as a secondary strength compared to major growth options. Incremental additions to multiple villages mean existing infrastructure (like small rural roads or local utilities) absorbs small increments rather than suffering a massive sudden shock.

"Wouldn't put adverse effects on infrastructure"

Points of Difference (How Perspectives Varied Across Groups)

While the core concept of "fairness" was shared, different workshops viewed the nuances of this scenario through distinct lenses:

Rural preservation vs. rural viability:

- **Rural and village focussed participants:** tended to see dispersed growth as a vital lifeline to prevent rural decline, keep village pubs/shops open, and retain young families.
- **Infrastructure and urban focussed participants:** Viewed this as fragmented growth that makes delivering new, high-quality public transport or major infrastructure (e.g.,

new health centres) significantly harder compared to concentrated or strategic growth locations.

Impact on Existing Communities:

- Some tables/groups framed this scenario positively as helping to bring new residents into small, existing communities.
- Other groups noted the trade-off that while it avoids overloading one area, it distributes minor disruption everywhere rather than insulating existing settlements.

Scenario A: Weaknesses

Across all four events (East, North and South Clusters and the Infrastructure Stakeholders), the **Proportionally Dispersed Growth** scenario was recognised as having key challenges, primarily around infrastructure delivery, car dependency, and financial viability.

Most Frequently Cited / Common Weaknesses

Infrastructure Deficits and Delivery Challenges

This was the most dominant concern across all workshop groups. Spreading small amounts of housing across many villages makes it difficult to fund or justify major new infrastructure upgrades, such as new schools, healthcare facilities, or road improvements.

- "Difficult to deliver infrastructure – no critical mass"
- "Lack of major developer contributions (Section 106 / CIL) to fund big projects"
- "Puts strain on existing small-scale rural services"

Increased Car Reliance and Transport Issues

A major environmental and practical concern cited across groups. Dispersing homes into smaller rural settlements with limited or non-existent public transport links increases reliance on private vehicles.

- "Encourages car dependency / unsustainable travel patterns"
- "Poor public transport connections in smaller villages"
- "Increased rural traffic on narrow roads"

Lack of Affordable Housing Viability

Participants highlighted that smaller, piecemeal developments often fall below the statutory threshold for requiring developer-funded affordable housing, or fail to achieve the economies of scale needed to deliver it.

- "Fewer affordable homes delivered on smaller sites"
- "Not financially viable for larger housing associations"

- "Harder to enforce affordable housing quotas"

Distributing Impact and Local Resistance Across All Areas

While intended to be fair, spreading development means almost every community experiences building work and disruption, potentially triggering widespread local opposition across the entire district.

- "Spreads disruption everywhere rather than containing it"
- "Widespread local opposition across multiple villages"
- "Erosion of rural character and village identity"

Scenario A: Opportunities

The **Proportionally Dispersed Growth** scenario was seen as offering notable opportunities, particularly for local economic engagement, community resilience, and incremental development.

Most Frequently Cited / Common Opportunities

Sustaining and Enhancing Rural Services and Schools

This was the most widely cited opportunity across the groups. Incremental population growth in smaller settlements provides the baseline demand needed to keep local facilities viable and open.

- "Sustaining local village services, shops, pubs, and primary schools"
- "Helps retain young families and local demographics in villages"
- "Gradual increase in local council tax base to support rural amenities"

Supporting SME Builders and Local Supply Chains

Dispersed, smaller sites create ideal conditions for small-to-medium enterprise (SME) builders who are often priced out of or unable to deliver larger strategic sites.

- "Unlocks opportunities for small local builders and tradespeople"
- "Keeps economic benefit and construction spend within the local area"
- "Faster build-out rates on smaller, manageable plots"

Incremental Infrastructure and Micro-Improvements

While large-scale infrastructure is harder to fund, smaller developments can offer targeted, localised improvements that directly benefit the immediate village context.

- "Targeted local highway or footway improvements through smaller contributions"
- "Potential for micro-scale renewable energy or community-led projects"

- "Opportunity to utilize infill and underused brownfield land within settlement boundaries"

Fostering integration

Adding small numbers of homes over time allows new residents to integrate naturally into existing village networks without overwhelming existing social structures.

- "Gradual integration of new residents into established communities"
- "Maintains distinct village identities while adding controlled vitality"

Points of Difference

- **Rural & village advocates:** Some participants from rural and village communities viewed the opportunity as a vital lifeline for rural survival – seeing every new home as crucial support for maintaining local primary schools, village halls, and shops.
- **Infrastructure focused participants:** Some tables / groups were strongly steered by concerns around infrastructure delivery and viewed these small-scale opportunities as inefficient, arguing that scattered micro-contributions fail to deliver the transformational, high-capacity infrastructure (like dedicated cycle networks or new health centres) achievable through larger concentrated developments.
- **Economic & local delivery advocates:** Some tables / groups picked up on the local economy and local delivery, seeing the small-site nature of dispersed growth as a major opportunity to re-energize local SME housebuilders, diversify the market, and accelerate short-term build rates.
- **Strategic planning advocates:** Meanwhile, others advocated for ‘strategic’ planning, noting that reliance on many small builders creates administrative friction and fragmented delivery, missing out on the scale and consistent design standards that larger, master-planned developments can provide.

Scenario A: Threats

Threats associated with the **Proportionally Dispersed Growth** scenario, particularly concerned infrastructure capacity, car reliance, and erosion of village character.

Most Frequently Cited / Common Threats

Erosion of Rural Character and Loss of Village Identity

This was the primary cultural and physical threat noted across all groups. Incremental development across all settlements risks turning distinct, historic villages into generic, suburban sprawl.

- "Loss of identity in smaller settlements / villages"
- "Loss of green spaces & urban sprawl"

- "Inappropriate development on small plots - loss of village character"

Infrastructure Overload and Service Strain

Because small developments struggle to generate funds for major capacity upgrades, existing rural road networks and public services face severe over-capacity risks.

- "Puts strain on existing small-scale rural services"
- "Impact on existing road network - rural roads can't cope"
- "Pressure on local schools and GP surgeries"

Car Dependency and Carbon Impact

Spreading population growth into areas lacking public transport options locks residents into private car dependency, conflicting directly with sustainability targets.

- "Encourages car dependency / unsustainable travel patterns"
- "Poor public transport connections in smaller villages"
- "Increases carbon footprint through commuting"

Points of Difference

While all groups acknowledged these overall threats, different workshops prioritised distinct risks based on different geographic and thematic interests:

- **North & South Clusters:** Saw the greatest threat as the **loss of local identity and character**, fearing that incremental additions would erode historic village boundaries.
- **Infrastructure workshop stakeholders:** Viewed the greatest threat as **infrastructure overload**, emphasizing that scattering homes without major road or drainage upgrades causes network vulnerabilities that cannot easily be retrofitted.
- **East Cluster & other participants:** Highlighted threats around **piecemeal delivery**, where small sites lead to opportunistic applications without delivering broader community benefits.
- **Participants with a planning or environmental interest:** Focused on **environmental damage**, noting that spreading development across numerous villages leads to wider biodiversity loss and agricultural land take.

Scenario B: Main settlements focus

Scenario B: Strengths

The **Main Settlements Focus** scenario was recognised as a practical, urban-centric approach where development is concentrated primarily in established main towns and key service centres.

Most Frequently Cited / Common Strengths

Utilisation of Existing Infrastructure and Services

This was the most prominent theme across all cluster workshops. Focusing growth in main settlements takes advantage of facilities, road networks, and utilities that are already established.

- "Infrastructure already there"
- "Have infrastructure / facilities available"
- "Less expensive to extend infrastructure"

Protection of Rural Areas and Village Identity

Participants across rural and urban groups alike valued this scenario for insulating smaller villages from overdevelopment and preserving greenfield and rural areas.

- "Protects villages & rural areas"
- "Protects identity of existing villages"
- "Protects countryside / greenbelt"

Promotion of Sustainable Transport and Active Travel

Concentrating homes near existing jobs, public transport nodes, and services reduces reliance on private vehicles and supports climate goals.

- "Better for active travel / sustainable transport"
- "Positive from climate action link to existing infrastructure"
- "Shorter trips for services and employment"

Opportunities for Brownfield Regeneration and Density

Larger settlements offer greater potential to repurpose redundant buildings, utilise infill plots, and deliver higher-density housing options, including affordable housing.

- "Existing buildings that have become redundant - can be re-purposed"
- "Bigger developments can provide more affordable & variety of homes"

Points of Difference

While groups shared common ground on the efficiency of using existing hubs, their perspectives diverged based on local priorities:

- **Participants with a village or rural perspective:** Appreciated that main settlement focus protects rural character, but expressed concern that it starves smaller villages of new residents needed to keep local primary schools and pubs open.
- **Participants with an urban or infrastructure focus:** Saw concentrating development in towns as the most financially and environmentally sensible strategy, prioritizing public transport efficiency over rural housing distribution.

Scenario B: Weaknesses

In the workshop analyses across all four events, participants identified clear limitations to concentrating growth solely in main settlements.

Most Frequently Cited / Common Weaknesses

Overloading Existing Town Infrastructure

A major concern across all groups was that main towns are already operating near capacity, and adding significant housing without major capital investment will lead to severe strain.

- "Existing infrastructure already over-capacity (schools, GPs, roads)"
- "Increased urban traffic congestion and parking issues"
- "Puts strain on water, sewerage, and utility networks in main towns"

Neglect and Slow Decline of Rural Communities

Participants noted that diverting all growth away from smaller settlements leads to demographic aging and service loss in rural areas.

- "Leaves rural villages behind – no new housing or young families"
- "Threatens viability of rural schools, village shops, and local services"
- "Increases rural housing unaffordability as no supply is added"

High Cost and Complexity of Urban Sites

Developing within main settlements often involves complex brownfield remediation, land assembly, and higher land costs.

- "Brownfield site viability and decontamination costs"
- "Difficult land assembly and planning constraints in built-up areas"

Points of Difference

Urban Capacity vs. Rural Viability:

- Tables/groups that were dominated by representatives from the district's main towns and larger urban areas tended to focus heavily on traffic bottlenecks, lack of parking, and overloaded GP surgeries in town centres.
- Representatives from rural communities tended to focus on the equity issue, arguing that exclusion of growth in villages locks local youth out of the housing market and causes rural decline.

Scenario B: Opportunities

Workshop participants identified several key opportunities provided by focusing growth in main settlements.

Most Frequently Cited / Common Opportunities

Town Centre Regeneration and High Street Support

Directing new residents into main settlements boosts footfall for local businesses, shops, and urban town centres.

- "Revitalizing town centres and supporting local high streets"
- "Re-purposing vacant commercial or industrial units for housing"

Delivering Comprehensive Public Transport and Active Travel Networks

Concentrated demand makes bus routes, rail improvements, and dedicated cycling infrastructure commercially viable.

- "Enables viable public transport upgrades and frequent service"
- "Creates walkable communities with easy access to amenities"

Delivering Larger Volumes of Affordable and Diverse Housing

Larger sites in main towns enable volume housebuilders to deliver higher percentages of affordable housing and varied housing types.

- "Higher percentage and yield of affordable homes on larger sites"
- "Provides greater variety of housing types (flats, starter homes, elderly care)"

Points of Difference

- **East & South Clusters:** Highlighted town centre regeneration, adaptive reuse of redundant buildings, and boosting local retail footfall as the core opportunity.

- **Infrastructure Workshop:** Focused on mass transit viability, modal shift away from private cars, and centralized green infrastructure networks.

Scenario B: Threats

Participants across all events highlighted significant long-term risks if the Main Settlements Focus scenario is pursued without adequate management.

Most Frequently Cited / Common Threats

Urban Congestion and Impact on Quality of Life

Unmanaged growth in main towns risks overwhelming road networks, reducing urban green space, and worsening local air quality.

- "Severe traffic congestion on town access corridors"
- "Loss of urban green spaces and town parkland to infill development"
- "Overcrowding of social infrastructure like hospitals and schools"

Creation of Two-Tier District

Exclusively focusing on main settlements risks widening the socio-economic gap between thriving urban centres and declining, expensive rural enclaves.

- "Villages becoming exclusive enclaves for retirees and wealthy commuters"
- "Complete loss of local services and public transport in rural areas"

High Land Values and Developer Resistance to Complex Sites

If town centre brownfield sites prove too expensive or complex to deliver, developers may stall, leading to housing delivery shortfalls.

- "Land value expectations making development unviable"
- "Failure to meet housing targets due to slow brownfield build-out rates"

Points of Difference

- Tables/groups that were dominated by representatives from the district's main towns and larger urban areas tended to cite fears of physical degradation, loss of urban open space, and road network collapse in main towns.
- Representatives from rural communities tended to cite fears related to socio-economic isolation, where rural areas become unviable for young families, turning into commuter / dormitory or retirement villages.

Scenario C: Infrastructure-led growth

Scenario C: Strengths

The **Infrastructure Led Growth** scenario was recognised as a proactive, forward-thinking approach where development is aligned directly with existing or planned infrastructure capacities.

Most Frequently Cited / Common Strengths

Preventing Future Capacity Bottlenecks

This was the most prominent theme across the groups. Planning growth where infrastructure already exists or where capacity can be expanded easily prevents the blockages and service strain seen in uncoordinated growth.

- "Would prevent issues in the future — future proof developments"
- "Positive from climate action link to existing infrastructure"
- "Less expensive to extend infrastructure"

Sustaining Communities and Optimizing School Places

Participants highlighted that directing growth to areas with existing spare capacity keeps existing community facilities, particularly primary schools, operating at sustainable levels.

- "Keeps communities alive: schools aren't full in all communities"
- "Better for affordable housing options / services available"

Points of Difference

- **Urban or infrastructure advocates:** Emphasised the cost-effectiveness and climate benefits of building where utilities and transport corridors already exist.
- **Those with a more rural perspective:** Focused more on social benefits, seeing it as a way to utilise surplus capacity in village schools and community centres.

Scenario C: Weaknesses

In the workshop analyses across all four events, participants identified significant barriers, particularly regarding funding timelines and geographic limitations.

Most Frequently Cited / Common Weaknesses

High Upfront Capital Costs and Funding Gaps

A major concern across all groups was the upfront financial investment (which often aren't forthcoming) needed to deliver infrastructure before houses are built, creating significant delivery risks.

- "High upfront cost for infrastructure before development happens"
- "Relies heavily on public funding or upfront developer contributions"
- "Risk of delay if infrastructure isn't delivered on time"

Uneven Growth and Geographic Exclusion

Concentrating growth strictly along infrastructure corridors risks neglecting other communities, leaving them without new housing or investment.

- "Ignores areas without current infrastructure capacity"
- "Creates winners and losers across the district"
- "May force development onto greenfield sites along transit corridors"

Points of Difference

- **Infrastructure & planning advocates:** Some tables / groups that seemed particularly focused on infrastructure and strategic planning highlighted the risk of upfront capital shortfall and funding delays for improved infrastructure.
- **Rural advocates:** Identified the risk of inequality, where villages outside major corridors get completely bypassed.

Scenario C: Opportunities

Many workshop participants identified strategic opportunities provided by aligning growth directly with infrastructure.

Most Frequently Cited / Common Opportunities

Unlocking Sustainable Transport and Active Travel Links

Focusing growth along key transport corridors makes high-frequency bus routes, rail improvements, and active travel routes commercially viable.

- "Enables viable public transport upgrades along key corridors"
- "Supports modal shift and active travel connections"

Coordinated Multi-Agency Delivery and Masterplanning

This scenario encourages long-term collaboration between local authorities, utility providers, and healthcare trusts to deliver comprehensive local services. Also to masterplan (take a strategic rather than piecemeal approach) to delivering infrastructure, homes and jobs.

- "Opportunity for joined-up planning with health, education, and transport providers"
- "Unlocks strategic funding opportunities and government grants"

Points of Difference

- **Infrastructure Stakeholders' workshop:** Focused on strategic transit corridors, carbon reduction, and active travel.
- **East & South Clusters:** Focused on multi-agency collaboration to solve persistent utility, health, and education shortages.

Scenario C: Threats

Participants across all events highlighted long-term risks if the Infrastructure Led Growth scenario encounters funding or execution bottlenecks.

Most Frequently Cited / Common Threats

Infrastructure Failure and Delivery Bottlenecks

If critical infrastructure is delayed or underfunded, housing delivery stalls completely or development occurs without the promised upgrades, creating lack of trust or cynicism about broken promises.

- "Housing built before infrastructure is ready, leading to severe congestion"
- "Dependence on external funding streams that may not materialize"

Over-development of Key Corridors and Loss of Green Buffers

Focusing growth heavily along transport routes can lead to continuous linear sprawl and the loss of rural character between settlements. Also, could mean new residents become subject to poor air quality and noise pollution and lead to bottlenecks at commuter times around motorway junctions / conflict with aims of the Strategic Road Network to deliver longer journeys including for freight.

- "Risk of ribbon development along major transport corridors"
- "Erosion of green gaps between distinct settlements"

Points of Difference

- **Infrastructure workshop & East Cluster:** Feared the financial risk of infrastructure delays leading to gridlock.
- **North & South Clusters:** Feared the environmental risk of linear urban sprawl eating up rural buffers along main roads.

Scenario D: Strategic Growth Locations

Scenario D: Strengths

For all four events (East, North and South Clusters and the Infrastructure Stakeholders), the **Strategic Growth Locations** scenario was recognized as an ambitious, master-planned approach focused on delivering large-scale new communities or major expansions.

Most Frequently Cited / Common Strengths

Developer-Funded Comprehensive Infrastructure

This was the single most dominant theme across all groups. Large-scale developments provide the critical mass required to secure major infrastructure funding directly from developers.

- "Infrastructure cash from developers"
- "Economies of scale – new infrastructure = 'proper' infrastructure enabled eg GPs, community facilities including for faith"
- "Critical mass for primary and secondary schools"

Purpose-Built, Master-Planned Communities

Participants valued the opportunity to design brand-new settlements from scratch, integrating high environmental standards, modern layouts, and balanced land uses.

- "Designed from scratch"
- "Masterplan opportunity"
- "Allows for comprehensive green infrastructure and active travel design"

Protection of Existing Villages and Historic Character

Concentrating major housing allocations onto a small number of strategic sites protects existing rural settlements from piecemeal overdevelopment.

- "Protects identity of existing villages"
- "Less disruptive to existing communities"
- "Prevents rural sprawl across the wider district"

Points of Difference

East Cluster & rural advocates: Participants from rural communities (particularly strongly expressed at the East cluster workshop) valued this scenario primarily because it acts as a buffer, shielding historic Cotswold villages and existing towns from uncoordinated, incremental development.

Infrastructure workshop: Valued it for economies of scale, seeing it as the most effective route to secure dedicated primary healthcare facilities, modern schooling, and high-capacity public transport links.

Scenario D: Weaknesses

In the workshop analyses across all four events, participants highlighted major delivery, timeline, and spatial concerns associated with large strategic sites.

Most Frequently Cited / Common Weaknesses

Long Lead Times and Delayed Housing Delivery

A primary drawback noted by all groups, particularly emphasised by participants in the **East Cluster**, is that large strategic sites require years of planning, land assembly, and upfront infrastructure works before delivering completed homes.

- "Long lead times to start delivering houses"
- "Slow delivery rates in early years of plan period"
- "Requires massive upfront capital investment before any return"

Risk of Car-Dependent Commuter Enclaves

Without early public transport provision, strategic sites risk becoming isolated, car-dependent developments reliant on adjacent highway networks.

- "Risk of creating satellite commuter towns reliant on cars"
- "High cost of providing early high-frequency public transport"
- "Potential impact on existing major road [motorway] junctions and highways"

Neglect of Existing Village Housing Needs

Focusing housing delivery onto a few strategic locations leaves existing smaller settlements with limited or no growth, failing to address local affordable housing needs or maintain village service and facilities.

- "Does nothing to support existing rural village services"
- "Fails to meet localized affordable housing needs in smaller settlements"

Points of Difference

East Cluster & Infrastructure Stakeholder workshop: Focused heavily on lead-time risks, expressing concern that relying on complex strategic sites could lead to short-term housing supply shortfalls across the district.

North & South Clusters: Focused on geographic inequality, highlighting that local young people in villages outside the strategic growth areas would remain priced out of their home communities.

Scenario D: Opportunities

Workshop participants identified transformational opportunities provided by master-planned strategic sites.

Most Frequently Cited / Common Opportunities

High-Quality Sustainable Design and Net-Zero Standards

Designing new settlements from scratch offers the best opportunity to enforce strict environmental, energy, and biodiversity net-gain standards.

- "Blank canvas to implement net-zero and sustainable building designs"
- "Integrated renewable energy generation and micro-grids"
- "Creation of dedicated, connected ecological corridors"

Comprehensive Infrastructure and Integrated Transport

Strategic scale unlocks substantial developer funding for brand-new primary/secondary schools, health centres, and dedicated rapid transit corridors.

- "Unlocks major developer funding (£106/CIL) for transformational infrastructure"
- "Opportunity for purpose-built active travel and bus rapid transit links"

Points of Difference

East Cluster & Infrastructure Stakeholder workshop: Highlighted the funding opportunity to secure brand-new, purpose-built health centres, schools, and major road upgrades paid for by volume development.

North Cluster: Focused on the holistic place-making opportunity—creating vibrant, balanced new communities with integrated employment, retail, and community spaces from day one.

Scenario D: Threats

Participants across all workshop events highlighted significant long-term risks if strategic growth locations experience financial or planning failure – simply don't materialise.

Most Frequently Cited / Common Threats

Vulnerability to Market Downturns and Developer Stalling

Placing a large proportion of the district's housing target into a few strategic sites creates single-point-of-failure risks if a key developer stalls or experiences financial difficulties.

- "Housing supply fails completely if strategic site stalls or becomes unviable"
- "Vulnerability to macro-economic downturns and developer build-out rates"

Creation of Soulless Housing Estates Without Promised Services

A persistent concern was that housing would be built first, but promised community facilities, shops, and public transport links would be delayed or never delivered. Genuine place-making is required.

- "Houses built without early delivery of community facilities and GPs"
- "Risk of creating unintegrated, soulless housing developments"
- "Severe local road network congestion before major relief roads are built"

Points of Difference

East Cluster: Highlighted the land-supply risk, noting that if strategic sites stall, the council risks losing its 5-year housing land supply, exposing the rest of the district to speculative planning applications.

South Cluster: Highlighted social and identity risks, fearing the creation of isolated dormitories that lack local soul and strain adjacent historic market towns.

Conclusions from growth scenario analysis

There was **no single front runner**. Instead, the overarching consensus across all workshop groups was that a **hybrid approach (a mix of scenarios)** represents the best way forward.

Key Points of Consensus

Rejection of Pure "Single Strategy" Models: None of the individual scenarios was viewed as a standalone solution without significant drawbacks:

- **Proportionally Dispersed Growth** spreads benefits fairly but fails to deliver major infrastructure or affordable housing at scale.
- **Main Settlements Focus** utilises existing capacity efficiently but risks gridlock and neglects rural village viability.
- **Infrastructure Led Growth** aligns housing with transport corridors but risks leaving non-corridor communities behind and requires heavy upfront funding.
- **Strategic Growth Locations** generates major funding for schools, health centres, and roads, but has long lead times and fails to address localized village needs.

Support for a Hybrid / Blended Option: Workshop participants across all four events consistently advocated for combining elements of the scenarios:

- **Strategic & Main Settlements as the Core Engine:** Directing the largest proportion of growth to strategic locations and main towns to achieve economies of scale and unlock developer funding for major infrastructure.
- **Targeted Dispersed Growth for Village Viability:** Incorporating a controlled degree of proportional or small-scale growth in rural villages to keep primary schools open, support local shops/pubs, and provide homes for local young people.
- **Infrastructure-Led Coordinated Delivery:** Ensuring that wherever development occurs, it is directly aligned with existing capacities or transport improvements.

Activity 4: Issues and ideas (map based)



Table 2: Participants at the workshop on 23rd July

Planning for Real (PFR) is a well-established and inclusive means for local communities to have a voice and express their views about the future development of their areas. Resources for Change is now the new home for PFR and we were pleased to be able to include a classic PFR activity as part of this series of workshops.

For this whole-group activity, A0 printed maps of the district were set up on large tables and participants were invited to take a bird's eye view of the district, having a look at some of its constraints and topographic issues. Participants were then invited to place pre-printed "issues" and "ideas" flags directly onto the maps, identifying locations of concern or opportunity. At the Infrastructure workshop (and the initial Officer workshop), whole-district maps were provided. At the three area-based workshops, participants were also provided with A0 maps that zoomed in on their area (the north/east of the district, the north/west and the south/west respectively), so that flags could be placed with more pin-point accuracy.



Figure 5: Environment "flags" at East cluster workshop on 21st July 2026

The flags represented a diverse range of issues and ideas, grouped under five colour-coded categories:

1. **Transport** (purple)
2. **Community and well-being** (red)
3. **Housing** (yellow)
4. **Environment** (green)
5. **Employment and education** (blue)

Participants were able to write their own issues and ideas on blank flags, if no suitable pre-printed flags existed.

Participants were also invited to place "agree" or "disagree" flags next to other participants' issues and ideas.

Every single flag was logged by location and frequency. In this way, we are able to give a numerical value to the key issues and ideas by location. These are listed in full in the Appendix B.

What follows is a composite summary of the results from all the workshops, grouped by theme:

Transport

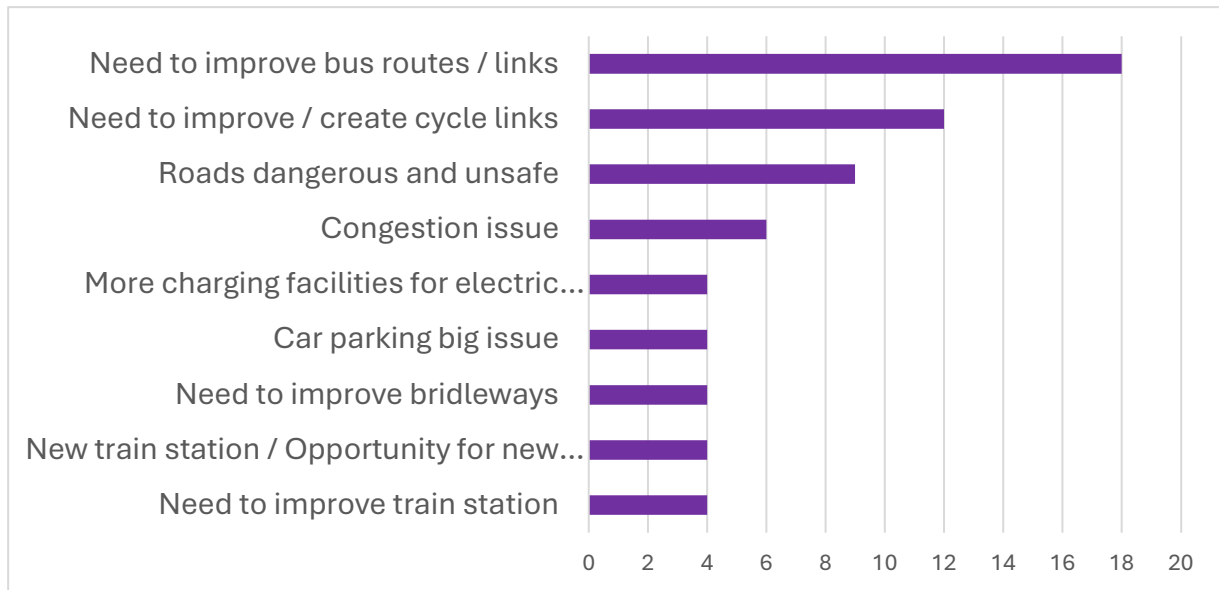


Figure 6: Transport issues& ideas - frequency

- **Bus Network Expansion (18 mentions):** Need for improved routes connecting outlying villages (Ebley, Painswick, Kingswood, Berkeley, etc.).
- **Safe Cycling Links (12 mentions):** Demand for dedicated cycle paths (Top of Town Stroud, Draycott, Charfield & Kingswood).
- **Road Safety (9 mentions):** Concern over dangerous road conditions on key corridors (B4066, Kingswood, Standish).
- **Traffic Congestion (6 mentions):** Bottlenecks cited (Stroud, Kingswood, Windsoredge, Whaddon, Dursley, and Horsley).
- **Rail Infrastructure Upgrade (8 mentions total):** Upgrades to Cam & Dursley Station (4 mentions) and opening a new station at Stonehouse / opening the line to Bristol (4 mentions).
- **Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (4 mentions):** Need for EV charging points (Wotton-under-Edge, Hillesley, and Nailsworth).
- **Improve Bridleways (4 mentions):** in Wotton, Hillesley, and Stonehouse.

Community & Well-being

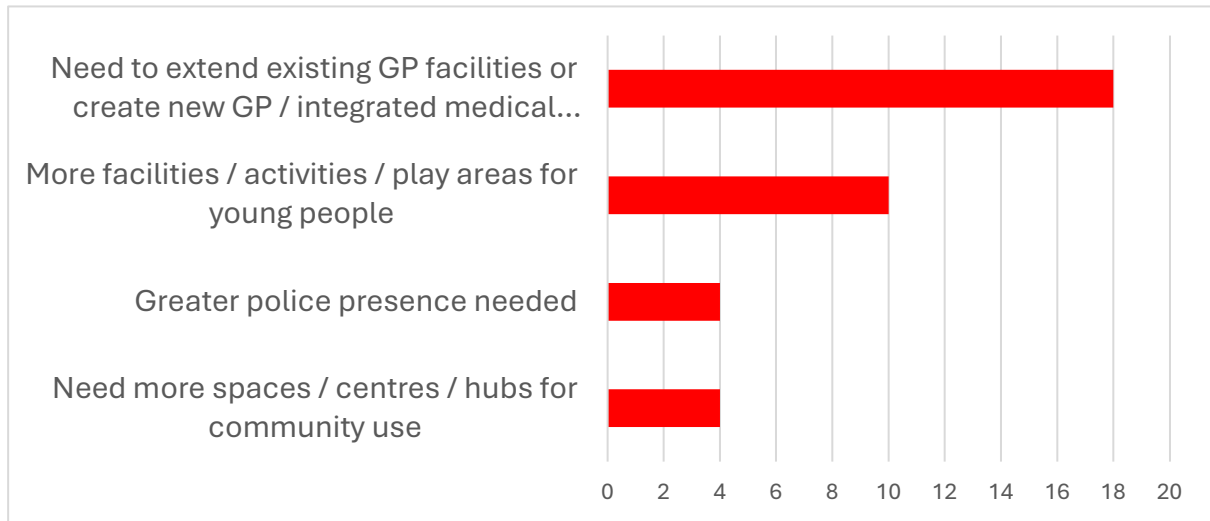


Figure 7: Community & well-being issues and ideas - frequency

- **GP & Medical Services (18 mentions):** Widespread demand to extend existing GP surgeries or create integrated medical hubs across almost all hubs (Dursley, Cam, Stroud, Stonehouse, Berkeley, etc.).
- **Youth Facilities (10 mentions):** Strong need for modern play spaces and youth activities in Cam, Stroud, Edge, Wotton, and surrounding areas.
- **Community Hubs & Meeting Spaces (4 mentions):** Strong demand for new or improved physical community centres to build local cohesion, particularly in major development areas (Hunts Grove and Upton St Leonards).
- **Sports & Leisure Facilities (4 mentions):** Need for modern leisure infrastructure and sports facilities (Dursley, Selsley Common, and West of Junction 13 M5).

Housing

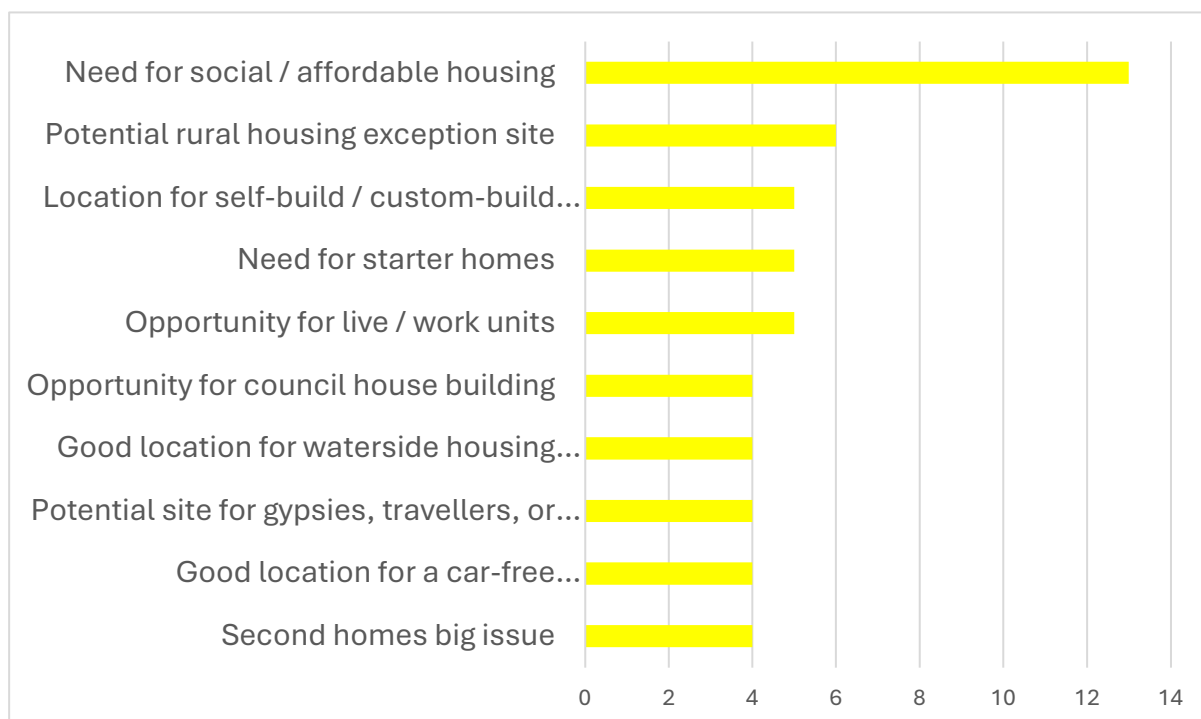


Figure 8: Housing issues and ideas - frequency

- **Affordable Housing (13 mentions):** Major priority across 16 locations for social and genuinely affordable housing.
- **Settlement Identity (9 mentions):** Preserving green gaps between settlements to prevent towns/villages from merging (e.g., Stonehouse–Stroud, Cam–Dursley).

Environment

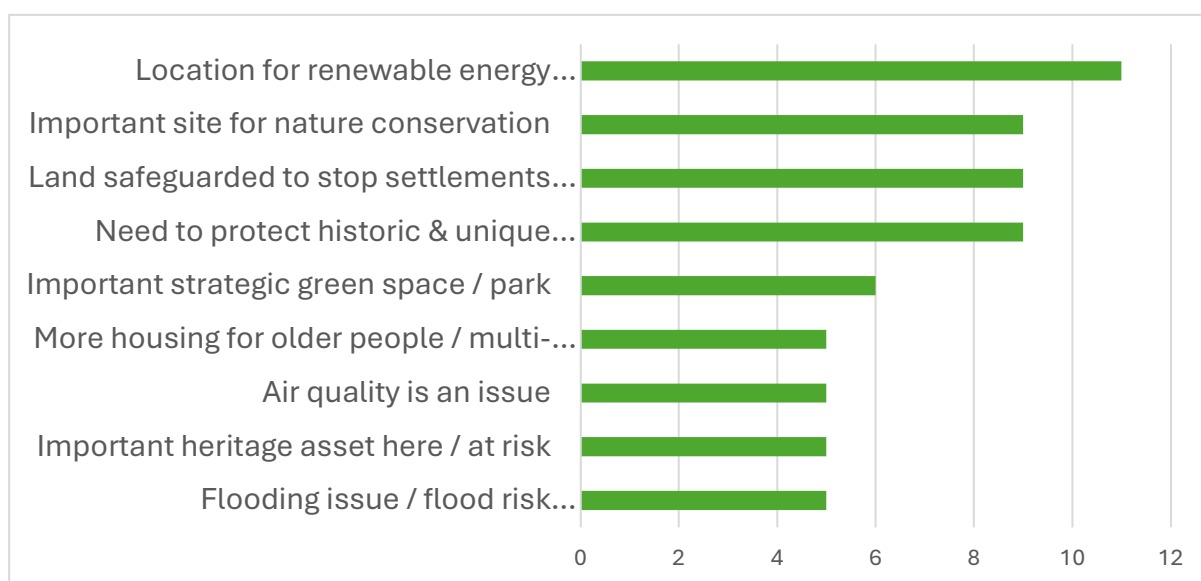


Figure 9: Environment issues and ideas - frequency

- **Renewable Energy Opportunities (11 mentions):** High interest in suitable wind/solar sites balanced with local heritage.
- **Green Gaps to Prevent Settlements Merging (9 mentions):** Safeguarding countryside gaps between expanding towns, notably between Stonehouse & Stroud, Cam & Dursley, Charfield & Kingswood, Westend & Nupend, and Eastcombe.
- **Protecting Historic & Unique Character (9 mentions):** Preserving local heritage, architectural identity, and landscape settings in Dursley, Wotton-under-Edge, Berkeley, Hillesley, Uley, Standish, Horsley, and Nupend.
- **Nature Conservation Sites (9 mentions):** Protecting ecologically sensitive land and wildlife habitats in Wotton-under-Edge, South of Owlpen, Standish, Eastington, West of Stonehouse, Horsley, Woodchester, and Minchinhampton.
- **Strategic Green Spaces & Parks (6 mentions):** Securing key green buffers and municipal parks in Wotton-under-Edge, Nympsfield, Watledge, Amberley Green, Minchinhampton, and Cainscross.
- **Flood Risk & Management (5 mentions):** Mitigation schemes required in flood-prone zones like Wotton-under-Edge, Berkeley, Kingswood, and Saul.
- **Heritage Assets at Risk (5 mentions):** Protecting vulnerable historic sites in Wotton-under-Edge, Kingswood, Standish, Minchinhampton, and Woodchester.
- **Air Quality Management (5 mentions):** Traffic and industrial air pollution concerns noted in Brimscombe, East Dursley, Cowscombe Wood, Painswick, and Stroud.

Employment and Education

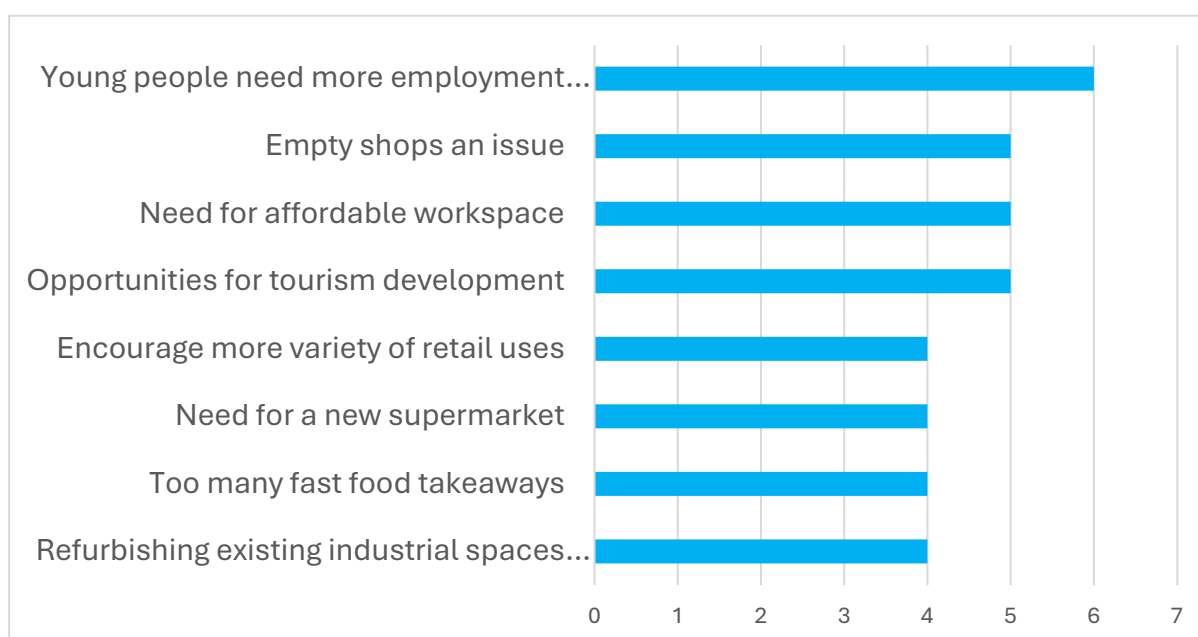


Figure 10: Employment and education issues & ideas - frequency

- **Youth Employment & Early Careers (6 mentions):** Create job opportunities, apprenticeships, and entry-level career paths for young people (Brimscombe, Wotton-under-Edge, Stroud, and Cam Station)
- **Education Provision Expansion (4 mentions):** Need to expand educational capacity across all levels, including primary schools (Land West of Cam, Great Oldbury), secondary schools (Land West of Stonehouse, Wotton), further education (Rodborough, Stroud), and early years facilities (Stroud, Kingswood).
- **Affordable Workspace (5 mentions):** Strong priority to provide low-cost, flexible workspaces for small businesses, freelancers, and start-ups (Nailsworth, Wotton-under-Edge, Dursley, and Stroud).
- **Industrial Refurbishment (4 mentions):** Preference for upgrading, modernizing, and repurposing existing brownfield industrial sites rather than building on greenfield land (Brimscombe, Stroud, Woodchester).
- **Retail Variety & Vacant Shops (5 mentions):** Need to address empty high street units and promote a broader range of independent retail (Dursley, Wotton-under-Edge, Stroud, and Berkeley).
- **Tourism Development (5 mentions):** Potential for expanding local tourism and visitor infrastructure around Stroud, Ryeford, Tinkley Farm, Wotton-under-Edge, and Ham.
- **Fast Food Takeaway Concerns (4 mentions):** Widespread concern over the over-concentration of fast food outlets across the district, particularly in Stroud and Box.
- **New Supermarkets (4 mentions):** Demand for additional grocery retail options to serve new housing developments and growing populations in Ashmead Green, West of Cam, and Great Oldbury.



Figure 11: Participants at the 23rd July North cluster workshop

Conclusion from the issues and ideas

Recurring themes, location data, and priority counts across all four workshop reports have suggested **six broad community steers** for the emerging plan. These address the primary pressures facing the district, while capitalising on clear opportunities and priorities identified by local communities. These could helpfully inform the development of objectives for the draft plan.

1. Enhance Rural & Active Travel Connectivity

- **The Issue:** Public transport deficit and unsafe road conditions. Bus routes were cited 18 times as inadequate for rural villages, while hazardous road stretches (such as the B4066) and traffic bottlenecks create daily barriers.
- **The Opportunity:** Capitalize on the strong demand for active travel by developing a connected network of safe cycle paths (12 mentions) and bridleways. Upgrade Cam & Dursley Station and open rail capacity/stations at Stonehouse to connect the district directly to Bristol and regional hubs.

2. Expand Healthcare & Essential Community Infrastructure

- **The Issue:** Severe pressure on primary healthcare and youth provision. Expanding GP facilities tied for the single most cited issue overall (18 mentions), reflecting a major gap between population growth and medical capacity.
- **The Opportunity:** Mandate integrated health hubs and medical centre expansions in major growth areas (Dursley, Cam, Stroud, Stonehouse, Great Oldbury). Combine these with multipurpose community hubs and updated youth/play facilities to foster social cohesion.

3. Deliver Affordable Housing while Protecting Local Identity

- **The Issue:** High demand for social and affordable housing (13 mentions) balanced against concerns about losing village character and towns merging together (9 mentions).
- **The Opportunity:** Prioritize small-scale rural exception sites, council housing, and brownfield/waterside redevelopments (e.g., along canals and rivers). Formally designate strategic "**Green Gaps**" between adjacent settlements (e.g., Stonehouse–Stroud, Cam–Dursley) to preserve distinct community identities.

4. Drive Sustainable Local Employment & Youth Pathways

- **The Issue:** Lack of entry-level job opportunities for young people (6 mentions) and high demand for flexible, low-cost workspaces for small businesses (5 mentions).

- **The Opportunity:** Allocate space for affordable, flexible workspace hubs in town centres (Nailsworth, Wotton, Dursley, Stroud). Prioritize the refurbishment of existing brownfield industrial spaces over greenfield build, while expanding school and further education capacity to align training with local jobs.

5. Revitalize Town Centres & Diversify the Retail Mix

- **The Issue:** Commercial vacancy, empty high-street units (5 mentions), and concerns over an over-concentration of fast-food takeaways (4 mentions).
- **The Opportunity:** Support high-street regeneration by encouraging diverse, independent retail, flexible commercial uses, and sustainable tourism developments. Ensure new housing developments (such as West Cam and Great Oldbury) are supported by local grocery and supermarket infrastructure.

6. Balance Renewable Energy Expansion with Landscape Conservation

- **The Issue:** Environmental threats from localized flooding, poor air quality in specific corridors, and potential conflict between development and sensitive natural landscapes.
- **The Opportunity:** Leverage strong community support for renewable energy projects (11 mentions, including wind and solar) by establishing clear spatial policies that direct generation to appropriate, non-sensitive sites. Safeguard nature conservation areas, historical heritage assets, and strategic green spaces, integrating natural flood management schemes where appropriate.

Activity 5: Location of new homes (map based)

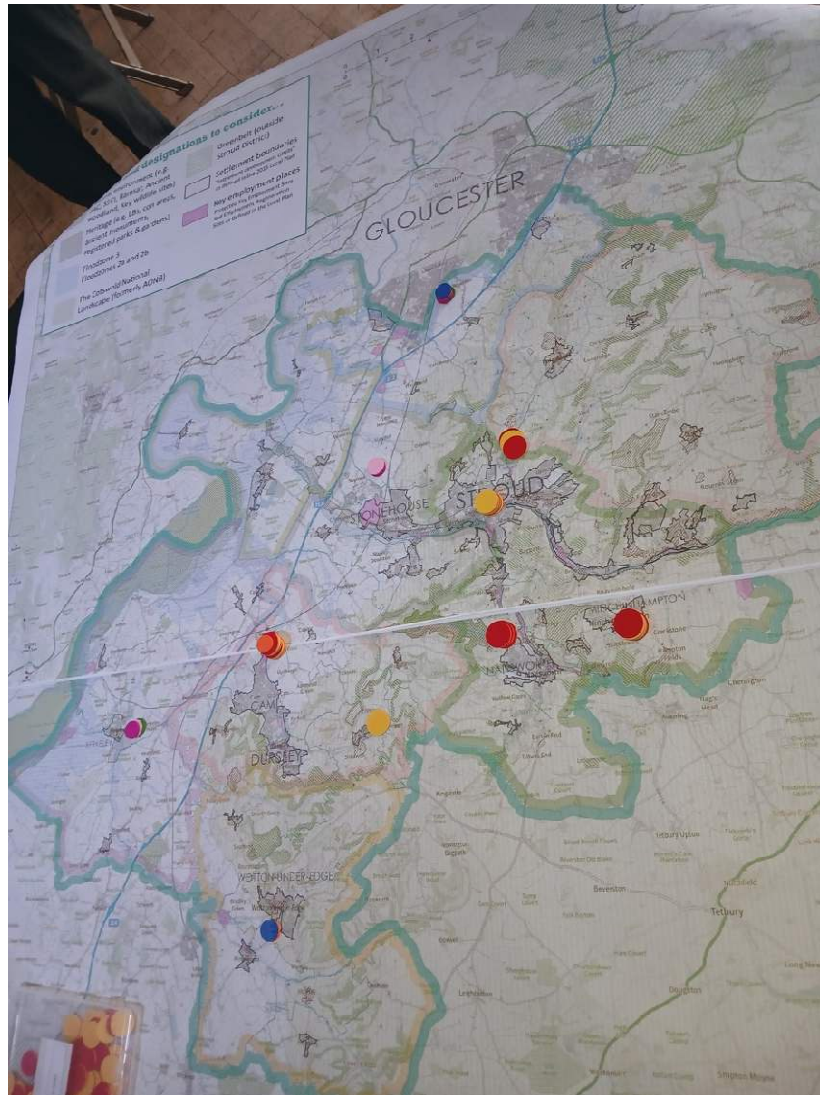


Figure 12: Example from Infrastructure workshop held on 22nd July 2026

Recap and context

The provisional target for Stroud's next Local Plan is 12,690 homes over a 15 year period (based on a current requirement of 846 dwelling per year, although this is likely to change over the course of the Local Plan Review). National planning policy would view this as a minimum base target.

For this exercise, participants at each of the workshops were asked to think hypothetically² about how they might achieve a **nominal target of 12,000 new homes**³, by considering how

² This was a hypothetical exercise, not based on any known sites or on realistic land availability. However, some participants used their local knowledge to relate the task to known sites, including allocations in the previous Draft Local Plan and current or past planning applications.

³ Rounded down to the nearest 1,000 for the purposes of this exercise.

best to distribute them spatially across the district. This exercise got participants thinking about things like:

- Environmental constraints
- The location of key infrastructure
- The needs and capacity of specific settlements
- The character of existing places
- The scale of growth
- Pros and cons of small infill/village-edge developments, vs large urban extensions or new settlements
- Character and density

This was another map-based group activity. A0 printed maps of the district were set up on large tables. These showed topographic features and some of the key constraints affecting the district. At the Infrastructure workshop (and the initial Officer workshop), whole-district maps were provided. At the three area-based workshops, participants were also provided with A0 maps that zoomed in on their area (the north/east of the district, the north/west and the south/west respectively).

The group was given tidily wink counters (purple ones representing 1000 dwellings each; and yellow/red ones representing 50 dwellings each). They were asked to try to place them on the maps. Some chose to go to the district maps first, some to their cluster area maps. Tokens could be stacked to create for larger developments of 2000 or 3000 dwellings or multiples of 50 ie 100 or 150+.

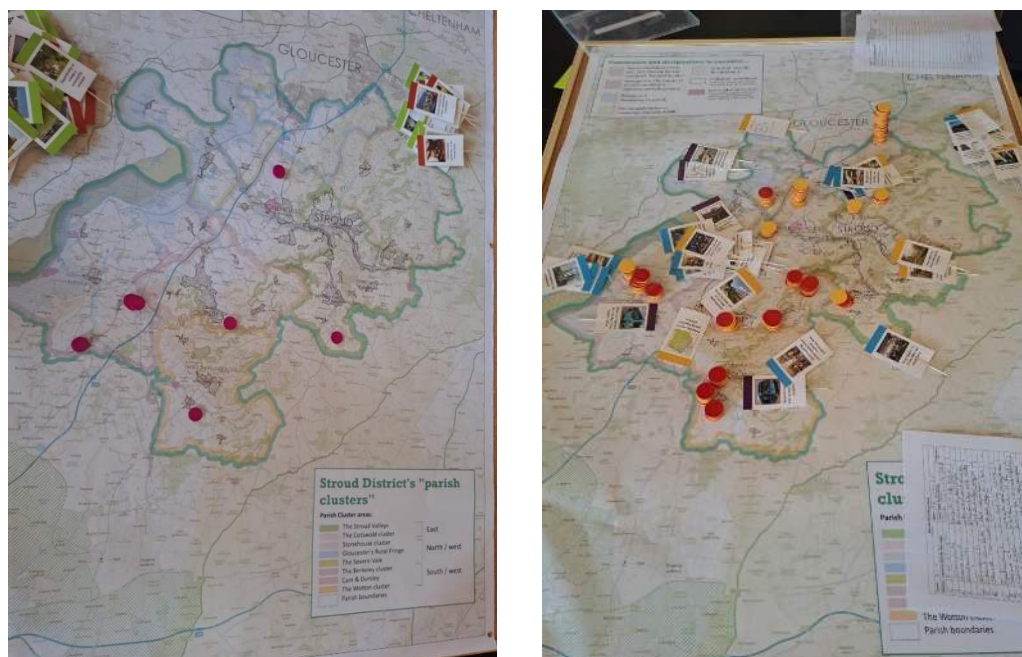


Figure 13: The activity in progress at one of the workshops

Groups were asked to do this by their cluster and for the whole district. A discussion then followed on how they had reached these numbers and the key constraints. The discussion for each workshop is set out in the workshop reports but are summarised here.

Important note:

This activity was not designed to be ‘easy’ or even ‘achievable’. The purpose of the exercise was to get participants thinking and talking about factors that shape a development strategy, to listen to other participants’ perspectives and consider broad impacts, not just local issues. Not all the groups completed all the activities within the time allotted.

So, while the numerical and locational data is interesting, the most significant outputs were the discussion points that cropped up.

Cluster results: in our own backyards

This activity was carried out at the North cluster workshop, the South cluster workshop and the East cluster workshop. At each of these, the participants were provided with a large A0 map which focused on their part of the district (north/west, south/west and east). The groups were asked to consider the distribution of housing growth on a more local basis, thinking about opportunities, needs and constraints in and around their communities – and how they might locate a ‘share’ of the overall 12,000.

The detailed location and quantitative results for this exercise are provided in the Annex reports for each workshop.

Although the three maps were centred on the parishes lying within the three cluster areas, all the groups chose to place at least some of their ‘share’ outside their own area.

While two clusters were able to nearly meet their ‘share’ of the target for their cluster area (nominally, approximately 4,000 dwellings), the south cluster workshop wasn’t.

Cluster group	Overall housing numbers	Proportion of the total number identified	
		i) inside their own cluster	ii) elsewhere / outside
East total	3600	97% (3,500)	(3%) 100
North total	4800	65% (3,100)	35% (1,700)
South total	900	61% (550)	39% (350)
Combined total	9300	7,150	

Figure 14: “Local” site suggestions for each of the Cluster workshops

These results do perhaps illustrate that it is really hard for communities to look objectively in their own back yards. Finding suitable locations across Stroud District for a total of 12,000+ new homes is not likely to be possible solely by community consensus.

Having said that, the conversations that accompanied the achievement of these totals were insightful, as they were grounded in local knowledge of the sites, the site histories (previous and current planning applications) and site constraints – road access being a particular issue in relation to sites south of Gloucester or close to the M5 corridor.

District wide: thinking strategically

We also asked each group try and identify areas across the district where growth could be best accommodated / managed. The infrastructure workshop group also participated.

East Cluster Workshop		North Cluster Workshop		South Cluster Workshop	
Location	Numbers	Location	Numbers	Location	Numbers
Berkeley	1000	Cam North West	1000	Standish	1000
Cambridge	1000	Hinton / Sharpness	3000	Standish (Little Haresfield)	1000
Hinton	1000	North of Stroud	1000	M5 J12	1000
Sharpness	3000	Nupend	1000	Hunts Grove	1000
South of Ham	1000	South East of Whitminster	1000	Haresfield (East of Parkend)	1000
Whaddon	1000	South West of Whitminster	2000	Moreton Valence	1000
Whitminster	3000	Upton St Leonards	1000	East of Whitminster	1000
		West of Kingswood	1000		
Total	11,000	Total	11,000	Total	7,000
<i>East report</i>	<i>Table 15</i>	<i>North report</i>	<i>Table 14</i>	<i>South report</i>	<i>Table 14</i>

Figure 15: District site suggestions for each of the Cluster workshops

Two out of the three cluster workshops were able to nearly meet the nominal target for the whole district (12,000), mainly relying on larger new settlements or urban extensions. None of the cluster workshops identified scope for large developments in the east of the district, which is dominated by the Cotswolds National Landscape designation (although the participants at the East cluster workshop did consider scope for 2000 homes at the former RAF airfield at Aston Down, as part of their 'local' cluster exercise – see preceding table Figure 14 and the location breakdown set out in the separate East Cluster Annex report). Most of these locations are in the west of the district, spread between north and south. The participants at the South workshop only identified scope for larger developments at locations outside of their area (none of the locations in the South workshop column is in the south of the district). This may mean that they simply could not identify any suitable areas for larger developments in their cluster area.

Infrastructure workshop

At the infrastructure stakeholder workshop held on 22nd July, the participants were able to slightly exceed the 12,000 homes, perhaps reflecting their distance or objectivity from the communities but also their recognition (as supported in the workshop report) that greater volumes of new house building will bring greater opportunities for developer contributions and hence infrastructure improvements.

Infrastructure 22/07/2026	
Location	Numbers
Cam + Dursley	1450
Minchinhampton	500
Nailsworth	150
Painswick	150
Sharpness	3000
Stonehouse	2000
Stroud	350
Uley	50
Whaddon	4000
Wotton-under-Edge	2000
Total	13,650

Figure 16: Housing numbers by area from the Infrastructure Stakeholder Workshop on 22nd July 2026

The Highways England representative was very concerned that siting any significant growth close to motorway junctions or in the M5 corridor would have a negative impact on the junctions and the flow of the motorway which is inconsistent with its primary role as a long distant strategic route rather than for commuter journeys into Gloucester or Bristol.

We were fortunate to have very insightful contributions from the Strategic Health Authority with a very strong knowledge of current and future primary health provision in the district and neighbouring areas.

Key principles emerging

This sub-section summarises the Activity 5 discussions across the four workshops:

Key Principles of Agreement

1. Environment

- All groups agreed that areas constrained by national landscape designations (such as the Cotswold National Landscape) and topography should be protected from major growth unless on previously developed land.
- There was consensus that strategic development should follow established transport and low lying corridors (such as the A38, M5, and main railway lines) where environmental capacity is higher.

2. Infrastructure first

- Across all sessions, participants agreed that critical infrastructure—particularly health facilities, school capacity, public transport, and wastewater should be delivered alongside or ahead of housing, rather than added retrospectively – or in some cases not at all (unplanned growth).
- Participants broadly recognised that strategic growth is constrained by national infrastructure limits (such as motorway junction capacity and rail network constraints) that require high-level resolution.

3. Balancing economies of scale with local community needs

- There was agreement that significant allocations are needed in key locations to achieve the economies of scale required to fund major new infrastructure, such as integrated health centres and transport improvements.
- At the same time, participants agreed that smaller-scale, dispersed growth is essential for rural settlements. Small allocations sustain local shops, support village schools, and help keep young people, families and local workers in their communities.

4. Prioritising brownfield and regeneration – protecting agriculture and rural distinctiveness

- Participants across all groups strongly endorsed reusing brownfield sites, redundant industrial land, and underutilised urban buildings before releasing greenfield or agricultural land.
- Protecting productive farmland and preventing settlement coalescence (the merging of distinct towns and villages) were consistently highlighted as essential principles for maintaining local identity and sustainability.

Points of difference

1. Concentrated / dispersed development

- Infrastructure stakeholders advocated for concentrating development into a few large strategic sites. They argued that dispersing growth dilutes developer contributions (CIL/S106), making it challenging to fund substantial new infrastructure.
- Some parish representatives leaned toward spreading development more evenly across settlements ("sharing the pain and the gain"). They contended that large strategic sites create isolated "dormitory" developments and place an unfair burden on single communities.

2. Growth as catalyst / unplanned growth overloading services

- It was argued that assigning higher growth to existing market towns acts as a catalyst to unlock much-needed investment in town centres, retail diversity, and healthcare services that would otherwise be denied.
- The contrasting view held that communities already suffering from overloaded GP surgeries, congested roads, and overflowing sewer networks should not accept further allocations until existing infrastructure deficits are fully rectified.

3. Pragmatic / protectionist

- Most participants acknowledged that growth must go where land is less constrained or where infrastructure is already or could more easily be provided.
- When focusing on their immediate areas, some local representatives had a tendency to push major strategic growth into neighbouring areas while advocating primarily for small, tightly controlled infill or affordable exception schemes locally.

Summary of discussions on location proposals

The following takes into consideration the conversations that accompanied the housing number / location discussions, ordered by location:

1. Sharpness / Berkeley Area

Key Discussion Points:

- Identified as a major potential strategic site to build on brownfield land around the former power station to create an innovation hub.
- Reluctance from Network Rail to increase train capacity is a major obstacle to delivery.

- Local feedback highlighted concerns regarding severe flood risk and rising sea levels in the Severn Estuary area.
- Strong resistance from some local participants against extensive development in the Berkeley/Sharpness area to preserve its rural, coastal character.

2. Whaddon (Gloucester Fringe)

Key Discussion Points:

- Seen as a primary strategic expansion site located on the Gloucester fringe.
- Larger housing numbers (up to 4,000) were supported by some participants to build a viable business case for dedicated local infrastructure, including expanding healthcare capacity to benefit surrounding communities.
- Identified as a potential location for an urban extension or gypsy/traveller pitches.

3. Stonehouse & Surrounding Area

Key Discussion Points:

- Positioned to leverage existing transport links and potential rail connections toward Bristol, Gloucester, and Cheltenham.
- Identified potential for high-density, car-free developments and social housing.
- Participants highlighted the necessity of safeguarding green gaps between Stonehouse and Stroud to prevent towns from merging (coalescence).

4. Wotton-under-Edge

Key Discussion Points:

- While current public transport connections and supermarket provisions are limited, participants argued that a larger allocation could justify investments in new retail, services, and infrastructure.
- Topographical constraints and conservation area policies were cited as challenges.

5. Aston Down

Key Discussion Points:

- Proposed as a major candidate for a new garden village/town on brownfield airfield land.
- Enables large-scale strategic master-planning and up-front infrastructure delivery.

- HGV traffic and transport connectivity were noted as existing issues to address.

6. Cam & Dursley

Key Discussion Points:

- Leverages proximity to active transport and railway facilities.
- Healthcare representatives confirmed planned health infrastructure could handle the capacity, but concerns were raised regarding local school limits and sewer capacity.
- Participants noted that Cam has already absorbed significant development and currently lacks central amenities/village identity.

7. Brimscombe

Key Discussion Points:

- Highlighted as an opportunity for waterside housing development, council housing, and brownfield regeneration linked with the canal.
- Discussed alongside needs for refurbishing old industrial spaces.

8. Strategic Highway Corridor (A38 / M5 Junction 12 / Whitminster / Moreton Valence)

Key Discussion Points:

- High-capacity strategic sites focused on main road arteries.
- Delivery is heavily restricted by capacity bottlenecks at M5 Junctions 13 and 14, where National Highways issued formal objections due to peak-time limits.

9. Stroud (Town & Surrounding Parishes)

Key Discussion Points:

- Focuses on in-fill, converting vacant/derelict buildings, high-rise/density town options, and repurposing historic mills.
- High demand expressed for social rent, starter homes, and live/work units.
- Constrained by steep topography, heritage assets, and AONB/National Landscape protections.

10. Other suggestions / discussions

Minchinhampton:

- Proposed to leverage capacity in existing local health services.
- Development considerations and key constraints include protecting the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB / Cotswolds National Landscape), high local land costs, and addressing issues related to second-home ownership.

Berkeley Town:

- Discussed as part of wider housing proposals in the southern cluster alongside the larger Sharpness strategic site.
- Local feedback highlighted strong resistance to extensive development in order to preserve the area's rural and coastal character, along with severe concerns regarding flood risk and rising sea levels in the Severn Estuary.

South of Ham, Hinton, and Cambridge:

- Identified in cluster proposals as potential locations for larger rural allocations.
- Constrained by strategic highway limits, specifically capacity bottlenecks and peak-time restrictions on the motorway network at M5 Junctions 13 and 14, where National Highways issued formal objections.

Kingswood and Standish:

- Put forward across individual cluster proposals as potential development locations.
- Standish proposals (ranging from 50 to 1,000 homes) were discussed in relation to the West/North of Stonehouse expansion area, with participants emphasizing the need to maintain green gaps to prevent settlement coalescence.

Key Findings

Conclusion

As mentioned in the introduction, this report will contribute to the government's new requirements to engage the public and statutory consultees as part of a Scoping Consultation to inform Stroud District Council's Gateway 1 Submission for their new Local Plan.

There was a separate online survey that took place during this period 29th June to 9th August 2026 which is being reported on separately, so this report is focussed on the findings from four workshops held with parish, district and county councillors and statutory consultees and other key stakeholders such as Stroud and South Gloucestershire College and Stroud District Islamic Centre. A full list of attendees is listed in the Appendix.

The report shows how the council has engaged at an early stage to start to develop their vision and aims and objectives, although the latter are more implied rather than fully formed. It is expected that these (aims and objectives) will be developed from a combination of the results of the online survey and the workshop results. The report also starts to identify possible approaches to an emerging spatial strategy identifying possible areas for growth and how growth might be delivered in a Hybrid or Blended option. These are set out on page 27 of the report but are repeated here.

One of the purposes of these workshops was to share the scale of the challenge faced by the council, along with all local authorities in England, in achieving the government's ambitious targets for new homes during this and subsequent parliaments. As mentioned in Recommendation 8, a sense of joint enterprise – we're all in this together – did come through at the workshops. This might not be the case so much with the general public – a stronger sense of that may come through the online survey – but this is a positive beginning for the development of the new Local Plan.

The greatest sense of this perhaps comes through the draft Vision, developed through these workshops, which provides a potential blueprint for the future of the District:

Stroud District in 2040 will be a sustainable, green, and vibrant community that celebrates its rich rural heritage, beautiful and biodiverse natural environment and landscapes. It will be a safe, peaceful, diverse and inclusive place to live, with vibrant high streets, villages and rural communities. Well-connected with affordable public transport, the district will remain accessible, characterful, and resilient, balancing affordable living with an exciting future.

Recommendations

1. **Support for a Hybrid / Blended Option:** Workshop participants across all four clusters consistently advocated for combining elements of the scenarios:
 - a. **Strategic & Main Settlements as the Core Engine:** Directing the largest proportion of growth to strategic locations and main towns to achieve economies of scale and unlock developer funding for major infrastructure.
 - b. **Targeted Dispersed Growth for Village Viability:** Incorporating a controlled degree of proportional or small-scale growth in rural villages to keep primary schools open, support local shops/pubs, and provide homes for local young people.
 - c. **Infrastructure-Led Coordinated Delivery:** Ensuring that wherever development occurs, it is directly aligned with existing capacities or transport improvements.

Moving on to where participants put their issues and ideas onto the maps of their cluster group or district, the following other opportunities were widely identified:

2. **Address public transport deficit and unsafe road conditions:** While public transport and unsafe roads are the responsibility of the highways authority – currently Gloucestershire County Council – as responsibilities start to merge, there are opportunities to link land-use planning and transport improvements in particular by supporting the growing demand for active travel, developing a connected network of safe cycle routes, upgrading and opening new stations, particularly where major growth (3000 plus homes) is likely such as at Sharpness – by identifying where these can be supported through developer contributions (S106/CIL).
3. **Resolve M5 Corridor / Highway Constraints:** Initiate a formal multi-agency working group with National Highways, Gloucestershire County Council and neighbouring districts to assess capacity bottlenecks at M5 Junctions 12, 13, and 14 and how to resolve these in the light of expected growth – whether planned or unplanned (for example if a five year housing supply can't be identified).
4. **Expand primary healthcare:** Widely cited was the need for GP facilities reflecting a gap between population growth and medical capacity. There appeared to be a strong appreciation of the need amongst NHS providers and hence positive scope for collaboration between strategic health and land-use planning. The recommendation is to build on this momentum to establish a developer contribution (S106/CIL) framework for integrated health hubs and medical centre expansions in growth areas.
5. **The need for affordable housing:** Again this was widely identified, with support for the continued use of exception sites to enable rural affordable housing in smaller settlements accompanied by the more widespread demand for council housing in larger settlements.

6. **Sustainable youth employment and transition to renewables:** Lack of entry level jobs for young people was widely identified and providing entry level opportunities through flexible workspace hubs could provide part of the solution. The growth in housing development should also be seen as an opportunity to bring together colleges providing a foundation in the trades (construction, electrical, plumbing, joinery, decorating etc) and locally based small and medium size housebuilders and their sub-contractors. These can provide well paid jobs which can be augmented by retrofitting existing homes with insulation, energy efficiency, air source heat pumps and batteries, including potentially linking up with Stroud District's green employers such as Ecotricity.
7. **Challenging housing targets:** It was identified that Stroud District has never previously achieved the levels of housebuilding required to meet the Government's current target of **12,690** homes over a 15 year period (based on a current requirement of 846 dwelling per year). Nevertheless, participants at all the workshops were consistently able to identify potential housing sites – albeit not always in their area. There was a sense that if growth was done right, with appropriate infrastructure including transport, good quality design, respect for the environment, and bring benefits for existing as well as new communities, that proposals would be supported.
8. **Engaging landowners and developers:** However it must be noted that these workshops didn't include landowners (except when they were also councillors) or developers. While it is understood that a separate developers forum is already in existence / planned, it would make sense for one or more workshops to take place where some of the challenges could be aired, and greater consensus and a sense of joint enterprise developed.
9. **Further engagement:** The district council is required to undertake further engagement⁴ with local communities, voluntary groups, key demographic and protected groups, businesses and other stakeholders including in neighbouring districts in developing the District's Local Plan. While a full consultation plan will be drawn up it is suggested at the next opportunity to go to where people are – leisure centres, markets, shopping centres, colleges and to specific interest groups to engage them in developing the Local Plan. For a more detailed set of ideas for engaging more widely including with young people, please refer to the Appendix D Stakeholder and Community Engagement Plan.

⁴ See <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/767/regulation/2/made> for full list.

Appendix

Appendix A: Results from Activity 2: Vision (word cloud)

The vision words and phrases across the four Stroud District workshops held in July 2026 are ranked below by frequency score (number of repetitions). Multi-word entries submitted with underscores have been formatted for readability, and variations (such as capitalization or hyphenation) have been grouped accordingly.

Word / Phrase	Frequency Score
Sustainable	9
Green	8
Vibrant	8
Rural	6
Accessible	5
Diverse	5
Connected	4
Inclusive	4
Biodiverse	3
Characterful	3
Resilient	3
Well Connected	3
Affordable	2
AONB	2
Beautiful	2
Exciting	2
Fair	2
Fairer	2
Free Public Transport	2
Peaceful	2
Safe	2
Vibrant High Streets	2
0 Emissions	1
A Cycling Paradise	1
A Rural Area	1
A Rural District	1
A Sense Of Community	1
Adapted-To-Climate-Change	1
Adequately Serviced	1
An Idyllic Back-Water	1
Beautiful Surroundings	1
Better Learning Offers	1
Bigger	1
Bike Main Transport	1
Built Up	1

Word / Phrase	Frequency Score
Buoyant	1
Calm	1
Caring	1
Climate Change Ready	1
Climate Resilient	1
Communal Facilities	1
Community Driven	1
Community Energy	1
Community Feel	1
Commuters	1
Congested	1
Connective	1
Conscious Of Environment	1
Cool And Green	1
Country Wide	1
Countryside	1
Crowded	1
Democratic	1
Depleted	1
Distinct Towns Villages	1
Economically Thriving	1
Enough Council Homes	1
Environmentally Friendly	1
Equal	1
Fabulous Things To Do	1
Few Congested Roads	1
Financially Sound	1
Flood Resilient	1
Flourishing	1
Friendly	1
Good Night Time Economy	1
Great Place Making	1
Green District	1
Greener	1
Have Clean Air	1
Healthy	1
Inclusive Communities	1
Itinerant Floaty	1
Looking Loved	1
Low-Traffic	1
Meeting The Needs Of All	1
Nature-Rich	1
Not An Urban Sprawl	1
Offer Something For Everyone	1
Open Community	1

Word / Phrase	Frequency Score
Overcrowded	1
Overdeveloped	1
Overwhelmed	1
Partly Rural	1
Pedestrian Friendly	1
Pleasant	1
Pollution Free	1
Pothole Free	1
Pretty	1
Quirky	1
Recreational Space	1
Regenerate Brownfield	1
Single Person Homes	1
Spoiled	1
Spoilt	1
Sprawl	1
Stable For Young People	1
Still Rural	1
Supporting Local Business	1
Technology	1
Thriving Cultural Dynamic	1
Too Many Cars	1
Trees On All Streets	1
Unique	1
Urban	1
Urban Sprawl	1
Van / Boat / Mobile Home Spaces	1
Variety Of Jobs	1
Visited	1
Welcoming	1
Well Thought Out Development	1
With A Civic Assembly	1
Working For All	1

Appendix B: Results from Activity 4: Issues and ideas (flags on maps)

Each of the four supplementary workshop reports contains an Appendix, listing all the **Issues and Ideas** generated at each respective workshop. The table below is a complete, consolidated list of all the **Issues and Ideas** across all four workshops. Where duplicate and similar entries exist, they have been combined and merged – for example “extend existing GP facilities or create new GP / integrated medical facilities”.

Below, the merged results are grouped by theme (**Community, Education & Employment, Environment, Housing, Transport**) then sorted in descending order, starting with the **most frequently cited** issues and ideas, based on the total count/frequency across all four workshops:

Community & well-being

Location	Issue / Idea	Frequency
Dursley / Cam / Wotton-under-Edge / Berkeley / Stroud / Selsley / Box / Minchinhampton / Frampton on Severn / Stonehouse / East of Brookthorpe / Nupend / Great Oldbury / Standish / South of Wotton-under-Edge / Draycott / North Cam	Need to extend existing GP facilities or create new GP / integrated medical facilities	18
Cam / Edge / Nupend / Upton St Leonards / Stroud / Wotton-under-Edge / South of Kingswood / Eastcombe / Nailsworth / Land West of Cam	More facilities / activities / play areas for young people	10
Hunts Grove / Upton St Leonards	Need more spaces / centres / hubs for community use	4
Wotton-under-Edge / South Kingswood / Berkeley / Land between Naas Lane & Brookthorpe	Greater police presence needed	4
Sharpness / District-wide / Furze Wood (Miserden)	Isolation is a big issue	3
Horsley / District-wide / Wotton-under-Edge	Steepness makes walking & cycling difficult	3
North Cam / Minchinhampton / Stroud	Cemetery capacity issue / extension needed	3

Stroud	Opportunity to create a dementia-friendly space	2
Stroud / Minchinhampton	Poor mobile coverage / digital connectivity	2
Coaley / Upton St Leonards	Antisocial behaviour / crime prevention issue	2
Stroud / District-wide	Need for better mental health provision	2
Outside Cam / West of Cam	Good location for community theatre	2

Education & Employment

Location	Issue / Idea	Frequency
Brimscombe / Wotton-under-Edge / Stroud / District-wide / Cam Station	Young people need more employment opportunities	6
Stroud / Ryeford / Tinkley Farm / Wotton-under-Edge / Ham	Opportunities for tourism development	5
Nailsworth / Wotton-under-Edge / Dursley / Stroud	Need for affordable workspace	5
Dursley / Stroud / Wotton-under-Edge / Berkeley	Empty shops an issue	5
Brimscombe / Stroud / Woodchester	Refurbishing existing industrial spaces / facilities	4
District-wide / Stroud / Box	Too many fast food takeaways	4
Ashmead Green (Dursley) / West of Cam / Great Oldbury / Cam	Need for a new supermarket	4
Dursley / Wotton-under-Edge / Ham / Stroud	Encourage more variety of retail uses	4
South of Cam Station / Cambridge	Large scale industrial units	3
Wotton-under-Edge / Berkeley	Poor mobile coverage / digital connectivity	2
Rodborough / Stroud	Further education facilities need to be extended	2
Land West of Cam / Great Oldbury	Primary schools need extending	2

Land West of Stonehouse / Wotton-under-Edge	Secondary schools / new secondary school needed	2
Hardwicke / Between Great Oldbury & Stonehouse	More leisure / entertainment facilities needed	2
Stroud / Moreton Valence	Good location for new hotel	2
Stroud / Kingswood	More early years places needed	2

Environment

Location	Issue / Idea	Frequency
General / Nympsfield / North of Edge / North of Wotton-under-Edge / Whaddon / Purton / Hinton / Upton St Leonards / Epney / Nailsworth	Location for renewable energy (solar/wind) generation	11
Dursley / Wotton-under-Edge / Berkeley / Hillesley / Uley / Standish / Horsley / Nupend	Need to protect historic & unique character	9
Land between Stonehouse and Stroud / South of Nympsfield / Between Cam & Dursley / East of Wotton / Charfield & Kingswood / Between Dursley & Downham Hill / Cam & Stinchcombe / Land between Westend & Nupend / Eastcombe	Land safeguarded / preserved to stop towns / settlements merging	9
Wotton-under-Edge / South of Owlpen / Standish / Eastington / West of Great Oldbury / West of Stonehouse / Horsley / Woodchester / Minchinhampton	Important site for nature conservation	9
Wotton-under-Edge / Nympsfield / Watledge (Nailsworth) / Amberley / Minchinhampton / Cainscross	Important strategic green space / park	6
Wotton-under-Edge / Berkeley / Between Wotton & Kingswood / West of Berkeley / Saul	Flooding issue / flood risk management scheme needed	5
Wotton-under-Edge / Kingswood / Standish / Minchinhampton / Woodchester	Important heritage asset here / at risk	5
Brimscombe / East Dursley / Cowscombe Wood / Painswick / Stroud	Air quality is an issue	5
Between Cam & Dursley / Cam / Wotton-under-Edge / Hillesley / Cainscross	More housing for older people / multi-generational	5

Dursley / Selsley Common / West of Junction 13 M5	Opportunity to create new sports / leisure facility	4
Church End (Frampton on Severn) / Wotton-under-Edge / Rodborough	Need for more allotments	3
West Cam / Uley / Uley, Shadwell	More play facilities for older children / young adults	3
East of Frocester / Stanley Downton / West of Kings Stanley	Traffic calming needed	3
Cowcombe Wood (Chalford)	Opportunity to clean up land	2
Cam	New strategic park	2
Arlingham / Doverow Hill (Stonehouse)	Location for new green space / path / public access to open land	2
Wotton-under-Edge / Eastcombe	Solar farms a threat	2
Wotton-under-Edge / Uley	Opportunity to create a community orchard	2
Cam / Great Oldbury	Location for new skate / BMX park	2
North of Westfield Brake (Berkeley) / Lower Lodge Wood (Wotton-under-Edge)	Opportunity for new forest / wetland flood management	2
Stonehouse / Land North of Stonehouse	Create a community orchard	2
Eastington / Kings Stanley	Need to improve children's play area	2
West of Brook End (Berkeley) / Woodchester	Better links with river / water sports opportunities	2
Brimscombe / Butterrow	Opportunity to create better links with canal	2
Thrupp / Cowcombe Wood (Chalford)	Opportunity to clean up land	2

Selsley Common / Stroud	Location for community event / festival	2
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Housing

Location	Issue / Idea	Frequency
General / Hunts Grove / Painswick / Stonehouse / Highfield (Whiteshill) / Upton St Leonards / Dursley / Cam / Ebley / Wotton-under-Edge / Rodborough / Bournes Green (Bisley-with-Lypiatt)/ Standish / West of Nailsworth	Need for social / affordable housing	13
Cam / Cam Long Down / Painswick / Eastington / Bath Street (Bath Road??)	Potential rural housing exception site	6
Forest Green / Stroud / Thrupp / Cambridge	Opportunity for live / work units	5
West Cam / Stonehouse / Painswick / Wotton-under-Edge / Far Oakridge	Need for starter homes	5
Bradley Green (Wotton-under-Edge)/ SW of Horsley / Minchinhampton Common / Whiteway / Woodchester	Location for self-build / custom-build housing	5
Minchinhampton / West of Nailsworth / Slimbridge	Second homes big issue	4
Stroud / North of Stonehouse / Cam	Good location for a car-free development	4
General / Between Whaddon & Brookthorpe / Nympsfield / Brimscombe	Potential site for gypsies, travellers, or show people	4
Cam / South of Ebley / South of Stonehouse / Brimscombe	Good location for waterside housing development	4
Stroud, East of Highfield / Brimscombe / Upton St Leonards / Stroud	Opportunity for council house building	4
North of Stonehouse / Upton St Leonards / Stroud	Potential for high density / high rise development	3
Sharpness / Cainscross	Potential regeneration area	2

Location	Issue / Idea	Frequency
South of Standish / Whaddon	Opportunity for large-scale / small-scale urban extension	2
South of Moreton Valence / Aston Down	Potential for a new garden village / town	2
Wotton-under-Edge / Stroud	Rough sleeping issue	2
West of Kings Stanley / Stroud	Potential to convert vacant / historic buildings into homes	2

Transport

Location	Issue / Idea	Frequency
General / Ebley / Box / Nympsfield / The Camp → Whiteway / Miserden / Bournes Green (Bisley-with-Lypiatt) / Painswick / Standish / Whaddon / Cainscross / Wotton-under-Edge / Hillesley / Land West of Berkeley / Berkeley / Charfield / Kingswood / Slimbridge	Need to improve bus routes / links	18
Top of Town Stroud / Wotton-under-Edge / Charfield & Kingswood / Hillesley / Wotton Road / Draycott / Cowscombe Wood / Copsegrove Covert (Bisley-with-Lypiatt) / Stroud / Standish / Between Great Oldbury & Stonehouse	Need to improve / create cycle links	12
B4066 / Kingswood / Uley, Shadwell / Cowscombe Wood / West of Kings Stanley / Nympsfield / Standish / Stroud (near Highfield) / Horsley	Roads dangerous and unsafe	9
Stroud / Kingswood / Windsoredge (Nailsworth) / Whaddon / Dursley / Horsley	Congestion issue	6
Cam & Dursley Station	Need to improve train station	4
Stonehouse / Stonehouse Train Station	New train station / Opportunity for new train station / Open up rail line to Bristol	4
Wotton-under-Edge / Hillesley / West of Kingswood / North East to Stonehouse	Need to improve bridleways	4

Wotton-under-Edge / Kingswood / Uley, Shadwell (Uley)/ Minchinhampton	Car parking big issue	4
Wotton-under-Edge / Hillesley / Nailsworth	More charging facilities for electric vehicles	4
Junction 13 M5	This junction needs improving	3
Draycott (Cam)	Pedal & park site	3
Junction 14 M5	Junction improvements / address public transport issues	3
Junction 12 M5	Needs improving / congestion issue	3
Stonehouse / West of Stonehouse / Wotton-under-Edge	Need to improve walking links	3
A4135 Cam / Dursley railway line / Wotton-under-Edge / Hunts Grove	Railway line and/or road make it difficult to walk or cycle	3
Berkeley Bypass / Nympsfield / Stroud (nr Highfield)	Junction needs improving	3
Wotton to Charfield	Greenway please	2
Charfield	Improve bus routes to this location	2
Nailsworth / Aston Down	HGV movement issue here	2
Cainscross / Draycott	Need to improve cycle links	2
Upton St Leonards / River Severn (Frampton)	Promote river / water taxis	2
Stroud / Wotton-under-Edge	Introduce electric cycle hire	2
Draycott (Cam)	Park & ride / Junction improvements	2
East of Dursley	Inappropriate for greenway – too dangerous	1
Stroud	Opportunity for park & ride	1

Moreton Valence	Good location to dispatch council vehicles from	1
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Appendix C: Attendees at the workshops

21st July 2026: EAST workshop

(focus on the Stroud valleys and the surrounding Cotswold parishes):

Name	Organisation
1. Cliff Christie	Nailsworth Town Council
2. Bill Harvey	Brimscombe & Thrupp Parish Council
3. Cllr Chloe Turner	Stroud District Council for Minchinhampton Ward & Gloucestershire County Council
4. Cllr Elizabeth Stanley	Stroud District Council for Cainscross Ward
5. Cllr Martin Brown	Stroud District Council for Bisley Ward
6. Cllr Steve Robinson	Stroud District Council for Nailsworth Ward / Nailsworth Town Council
7. Cllr Cate James-Hodges	Stroud District Council for Stroud Central Ward
8. Colleen Rothwell	Nailsworth Town Council
9. Cllr Martin Percy	Stroud District Council for Coaley & Uley Ward / Coaley Parish Council
10. Pippa Schwartz	Minchinhampton Parish Council
11. Nick Hurst	Minchinhampton Parish Council
12. Cllr Cath Moore	Stroud District Council for Stroud Uplands Ward
13. Katharine McNealey	Woodchester Parish Council
14. Robert Tyler	Brimscombe & Thrupp Parish Council
15. Louise Gerrard	Rodborough Parish Council
16. Cllr Lucas Schoemaker	Stroud District Council for Stroud Trinity Ward / Stroud Town Council / Stroud Commonwealth
17. Cllr Tricia Watson	Stroud District Council
18. Seb Howells	Horsley Parish Council
19. Cllr Maggie Dutton	Stroud District Council for Nailsworth Ward
20. Cllr Natalie Rothwell-Warn	Stroud District Council for Stroud Slade Ward & Gloucestershire County Council
21. Alison Robinson	Stroud Town Council
22. Tom Fearne	Stroud District Council (planning officer)
23. Cllr Helen Elliot Boulton	Stroud District Council for Brimscombe & Thrupp Ward
Two officers from the Local Plans team were also in attendance, plus R4C facilitators.	

22nd July Infrastructure Workshop

Name	Organisation
24. Ben Dent	Gloucestershire Food and Farming Partnership
25. Sally Parish	National Highways
26. Laura Stephen	Stroud District Council (housing strategy officer)
27. Elle Winning	Climate Leadership Gloucestershire
28. Penny Chislett	South Gloucestershire and Stroud College (Stroud)

Name	Organisation
29. Steve Hall	South Gloucestershire and Stroud College
30. Andrew Hughes	NHS Gloucestershire
31. Krista Harris	Stroud District Council (community infrastructure officer)
32. Jacob Reid-Thomas	The Growth Hub
33. Adeel Irfan	Stroud District Islamic Centre
34. Rosie Kenyon	Gloucestershire County Council (strategic planning officer)
35. John Chaplin	Stroud District Council (planning officer)
36. Sarah Walker	Gloucestershire Rural Community Council
Two officers from the Local Plans team were also in attendance, plus R4C facilitators.	

23rd July: NORTH workshop

(focus on the parishes around Stonehouse, along Gloucester's southern fringe, and bordering the River Severn)

Name	Organisation
37. Tracey Hannis	Great Oldbury Parish Council
38. Alyson Lewis	Leonard Stanley Parish Council
39. Eric Hibbert	Brookthorpe-with-Whaddon Parish Council
40. Martin Coles	Brookthorpe-with-Whaddon Parish Council
41. Peter Spencer-Phillips	Eastington Parish Council
42. Cllr Gary Luff	Stroud District Council for Painswick and Upton & Gloucestershire County Council
43. Ian Greaves	Bisley-with-Lypiatt Parish Council
44. Cllr Carol Kambites	Stroud District Council for Stonehouse Ward & Stonehouse Town Council
45. Cllr Moya Shannon	Stroud District Council for Severn Ward
46. John Perkin	Hardwicke Parish Council
47. Kevin Lee	Hardwicke Parish Council
48. Theresa Watt	Stonehouse Town Council
49. Sue Hartley	Standish Parish Council
50. Alison Widgery	Standish Parish Council
51. Cllr Helen Fenton	Stroud District Council for Chalford Ward
52. Laurence Corbett	Stroud District Council (planning officer)
53. Charlie Morris	Stroud District Council (planning officer)
Two officers from the Local Plans team were also in attendance, plus R4C facilitators.	

28th July: SOUTH workshop

(focus on the parishes located around Dursley, Cam, Wotton-Under-Edge, Berkeley and bordering the River Severn)

Name	Organisation
54. Helen Dunn	Slimbridge Parish Council
55. Johanna Hutcheson	Cam Parish Council
56. Cllr Paul Turner	Stroud District Council for Berkeley Vale Ward
57. Martin Hall	Coaley Parish Council
58. Mary Leonard	Kingswood Parish Council
59. Marilyn Basketeer	Kingswood Parish Council
60. Cllr Gareth Kitchen	Stroud District Council for Wotton-under-Edge Ward
61. Rich Halpin	Wotton-under-Edge Town Council
62. Andrea Durn	Wotton-under-Edge Town Council
63. John Rubin	Dursley Town Council
64. Loraine Patrick	Dursley Town Council
65. Justine Hopkins	Berkeley Town Council
66. Diane Bainbridge	Berkeley Town Council
67. Nick Gardiner-Clark	Stroud District Council (planning officer)
68. Rachel Brown	Stroud District Council (planning officer)
69. Helen Johnstone	Hillesley & Tresham Parish Council
70. Lucy Biddle	Cam Parish Council
71. Tina Walker	Cam Parish Council
72. Kim Chandler	Cam Parish Council
73. Stephen Lydon	Leonard Stanley Parish Council
74. Cllr Catherine Braun	Stroud District Council for Wotton-under-Edge Ward
75. Juliet Browne	Uley Parish Council
Three officers from the Local Plans team were also in attendance, plus R4C facilitators.	

9th July: SDC Officer workshop

The Council's Strategic Leadership Team was invited, plus key internal stakeholders from a range of council services and departments.

Role:	Directorate / Service:
Strategic Director of Place	Place
Chief Planning Officer	Place / Planning
Planning Strategy Team Manager (Local Plan)	Place / Planning
Senior Planning Strategy Officer (Local Plan)	Place / Planning
Senior Planning Strategy Officer (Local Plan)	Place / Planning
Senior Planning Strategy Officer (Local Plan)	Place / Planning
Development Management Team Manager	Place / Planning
Senior Community Infrastructure Officer	Place / Planning
Climate Change and Sustainability Manager	Place / Climate & Economic Development

Role:	Directorate / Service:
Economic Development Officer	Place / Climate & Economic Development
Strategic Lead for Nature Recovery and Biodiversity	Place / Climate & Economic Development
Commercial Services Manager	Communities / Environmental Health
Environmental Protection Manager	Communities / Environmental Health
Communities Development Manager	Communities / Community Services
Communities Health and Wellbeing Manager	Communities / Community Services
Leisure Services Manager	Communities / Community Services
Senior Housing Strategy and Enabling Officer	Communities / Housing
New Homes and Regeneration Manager	Resources / Property Services
Cllr Katy Hoffman	Stroud District Council for Rodborough Ward
Plus three R4C facilitators	

Appendix D: Stakeholder and Community Engagement Plan ideas:

Introduction

Based on discussions in regard of stakeholder mapping and involving young people, R4C have produced this short paper.

Stakeholder mapping

We have carried out a gap analysis of the stakeholder list you shared with us. Because this is for a **Local Plan** process, the focus is on capturing missing statutory consultees, specific underrepresented groups, and key local sectors that usually have a major stake in planning policy.

Theme 1: Local Government & Statutory

- **Missing Neighbouring Authorities:** You have included Forest of Dean, Gloucester City, South Gloucestershire, and Cotswold. We also discussed **Tewkesbury Borough Council** and touched on **Bristol City Council** (or the West of England Combined Authority - WECA), which share significant strategic housing, growth, and commuting links with the Stroud district.

Theme 5: Environment & Heritage

Nature conservation: You have excellent coverage for wildlife and rivers, but you may be missing more local groups for example

- **Local Commons & Landscape Management:** groups like the **Minchinhampton and Rodborough Commons Advisory Committee** or the **National Trust** (who manage massive landholdings in the district, like Woodchester Park and the Stroud Commons).

Theme 6: Business & Economy

We discussed your approaching the Economic Development team within the council but here are some other ideas:

- **Green Economy / Sustainability Sector:** Stroud is a famous hub for eco-businesses. While Ecotricity is listed, you are missing **Biodynamic / Organic Farming Associations** (e.g., the Soil Association links or local community-supported agriculture like Stroud Community Agriculture).
- **Local Business Formats:** While the Chamber of Commerce is listed, specific **Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)** or local trader associations (like the Stroud Chamber of Trade) are missing to capture high-street retail interests.

Theme 8: Community & Faith

- **Housing & Tenants' Associations:** There are no explicit representatives for **Stroud District Council Tenants** (housing executive/tenant panels) or local **Housing Associations / Registered Social Landlords** (e.g., Bromford, Aster), who are critical for affordable housing delivery and community planning.
- **New / Future Residents:** Local plan consultations heavily skew toward older, established homeowners (as your raw data notes: "*average age... is about 75*"). You are missing groups representing **Private Renters, First-time Buyers, or Generation Rent** action groups to balance out the demographic.
- **Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller Community:** You have the *GCC Liaison* listed, but it is highly recommended to include direct advocacy groups like **Gloucestershire Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Health/Community projects** rather than just internal council staff.

Theme 9: Sport & Recreation

- **Water-Based Recreation:** Given the presence of the Canal & River Trust and Frome catchment, you are missing **Cotswold Canals Trust** (crucial volunteers/stakeholders for regeneration) and local rowing/canoeing or angling clubs.
- **Field Sports and Equestrian:** The Cotswold edge has a significant equestrian economy. Organisations like the **British Horse Society (BHS)** or local pony/riding clubs are missing, which is a major gap for rural public rights-of-way planning.

Theme 10: Other / Special Interest

- **Civic Societies:** Beyond general heritage societies, the **Stroud Civic Society** is a highly active, dedicated group that specifically comments on architecture, design, and planning applications across the district.

Engaging Younger People

To follow are some ideas, building on our discussions, on how to reach out to younger cohorts and balance out the older. average response age typical of Local Plan consultations.

An average response age of 75 is typical for standard Local Plan consultations, but it risks challenge when planning for the district's housing, jobs, and environment up to 2040 and beyond.

Here are some ideas to reach younger cohorts (ages 16–35) effectively:

1. Leverage Existing Youth Infrastructure

Instead of asking young people to come to council premises, directly target the specific youth groups already on your list:

Stroud District Youth Council (Stroud Youth Voice): Arrange to meet with them and explore options including co-designing a youth-friendly engagement materials and even a summary of the draft plan. They can run a peer-to-peer review sessions with the involvement of your team. Also see suggestions for Strough Youth Hub below.

Stroud Youth Hub (Ryelease Road): Arrange a visit their Tuesday evening open-access sessions for secondary and college students using some of the tools from the workshop particularly the early post it note exercise and mapping activity. We could support this on either 21st or 28th July.

Institutional Partners: Reach out to the student unions and geography/environmental studies departments at **SGS College (Stroud Campus)** and the **University of Gloucestershire** to frame the consultation as a real-world case study for local planning students.

2. Shift the Medium (Digital & Visual Engagement)

Younger demographics interact with information differently. If it isn't scannable, interactive, or optimised for mobile, it won't get responses.

- **Duplicate the real world mapping at the workshops with online** digital mapping tools (like *Commonplace* or *Engagement HQ* – GCC already have a subscription to the latter) where users can drop pins on a map of Stroud, Dursley, Stonehouse, etc., to say: "I want a bike path here," "This area needs affordable housing," or "Save this green space." This lowers the barrier to entry entirely.
- **The "Three-Minute Survey":** Create a separate, micro-survey specifically for social media. Strip out planning jargon (instead of "*Strategic Objectives for Spatial Development*", use "*Where should we build next?*").
- **Targeted Social Advertising:** Use highly localised Instagram and TikTok ads targeted geographically at under-35s in the Stroud district. Focus visuals on the issues they care about: the cost of renting/buying a home locally, public transport reliability, and climate action. We work with a marketing agency who would provide you with a free one hour consultation

3. Frame the Issues Around "Future Stroud"

To get a 24-year-old to care about a Local Plan, you have to make it personal to their future life in the district. Consider framing your engagement around three core hooks:

- **The Housing Hook ("Can you afford to stay?"):** Ask them directly about their housing security. Frame questions around affordable housing allocations, social rent, and entry-level homes so the "Generation Rent" cohort realises this plan dictates whether they will be priced out of Stroud.
- **The Green Hook ("Eco-Stroud"):** Stroud has a strong radical eco-identity. Younger demographics will respond to questions about biodiversity net gain, rewilding,

decentralised green energy (like Ecotricity's presence in the town), and active travel networks.

- **The Third Place Hook ("Somewhere to go"):** Ask what infrastructure is missing for socialisation, culture, and sports, tying it directly to Theme 9 and Theme 10.

4. Incentivise and Gamify

Older demographics respond because they have the capital, time, and immediate vested property interests. Younger cohorts often work gig-economy hours, study, or feel their voice doesn't matter.

- **Micro-Incentives:** Offer a prize draw (e.g., vouchers for local independent businesses in Stroud like the local eco-shops, or independent cinema) for under-35s who complete the interactive survey.
- **Gamification:** If doing in-person workshops, use 3D printing to allow participants to model what they want their local high street or neighbourhood to look like.

Implementation Checklist

Action Item	Target Audience	Key Partner
Mobile-first interactive pin-drop map	Ages 16–35	Internal Digital Team / Engagement HQ or Commonplace
Tuesday night drop-in pop-up	Ages 11–18	Stroud Youth Hub (Ryelease Road)
Peer-led Land Use & Housing workshop	Ages 16–25	Gloucestershire Youth Climate Group / SDYC
"Can you afford Stroud?" social media campaign	Ages 18–34	SDC Communications Team (Instagram/TikTok focus)

Quick survey

To make sure the feedback you get from a youth-targeted micro-survey is actually useful for a statutory Local Plan, the questions need to translate casual, everyday lived experiences into specific planning outcomes (such as spatial strategy, housing mix, site allocations, and infrastructure delivery).

Here is a 5-question framework designed for a mobile-first, 3-minute survey, alongside the planning objectives each question supports.

Question 1: The "Where We Live" Hook (Spatial Strategy)

What you ask: "If you want to live in the Stroud district in the next 5 to 10 years, what is more important to you?" (Rate or select up to 2)

- Being within walking/cycling distance of a train station or major bus route.

- Being close to town centres (Stroud, Dursley, Stonehouse) so I don't need a car.
- Being close to nature, green spaces, and rural walks.
- I don't think I will be able to afford to stay in the district anyway.

Why it matters for the Local Plan: This maps directly onto your **Spatial Development Strategy**. If option A and B dominate, it provides statutory justification for a "concentrated growth" model around transport hubs rather than dispersed rural development. Option D also captures vital sentiment data on local retention.

Question 2: The Housing Mix Hook (Affordable Housing & Density)

What you ask: "When thinking about new housing in your local area, what type of homes do you think we need most?" (Rank in order of importance)

- Small, affordable starter homes for first-time buyers.
- Social housing / genuinely affordable council homes to rent.
- Eco-friendly homes that have zero carbon emissions and lower energy bills.
- Shared-ownership or rent-to-buy schemes.

Why it matters for the Local Plan: This provides a localised evidence base for your **Housing Needs Assessment** and policies on housing mix/tenure split, justifying policies that require developers to build smaller, more sustainable units rather than executive 4-5 bedroom family homes.

Question 3: The Transport Hook (Active Travel & Infrastructure)

What you ask: "What would make you choose to walk, cycle, or take public transport around Stroud instead of driving a car?" (Select all that apply)

- Well-lit, dedicated cycle lanes completely separated from main road traffic.
- Cheaper, more frequent, and better-connected bus routes between smaller villages and main towns.
- Safer, wider pavements and better pedestrian crossings.
- Secure bike storage at local train and bus stations.

Why it matters for the Local Plan: This feeds directly into **Infrastructure Delivery Plans (IDP)** and active travel policies, allowing you to back up negotiations with developers for Section 106 or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding specifically for cycling and walking networks.

Question 4: The Climate & Environment Hook (Sustainability Policy)

What you ask: "Stroud is aiming to respond to the climate emergency. Which of these should the Local Plan prioritise?" (Pick your top priority)

- Protecting and rewilding local green spaces, woodlands, and river valleys to boost wildlife.
- Soft engineering solutions to flooding (ie rewiggling rivers) or extreme heat (eg street tree planting to provide shade)
- Ensuring all new buildings are built with solar panels, heat pumps, and green roofs.
- Allocating space for local renewable energy projects (like wind turbines or solar farms).

Creating more community allotments and local food-growing spaces.

Why it matters for the Local Plan: This justifies strict **Climate Change & Biodiversity Net Gain policies** in the plan. If younger residents overwhelmingly support green building mandates, it strengthens the council's position when defending high environmental standards against developer challenges at the independent examination stage.

Question 5: The "Third Place" Hook (Community Infrastructure)

What you ask: "What is missing in your immediate local area that would most improve your daily life and sense of community?" (Free text or multi-choice)

- Spaces for younger people to socialise safely in the evening (cafes, youth spaces, music venues).
- Outdoor recreation facilities (skate parks, outdoor gyms, public sports pitches).
- Co-working spaces or affordable studio spaces for creative/independent work.

Why it matters for the Local Plan: This informs **Community Facilities and Leisure policies** (Themes 8, 9, and 10), helping map out localised gaps in social infrastructure.

Tips for Launching This Survey

Keep Demographics at the End: Only ask for age, gender including options for non-binary / other, employment/education status, and the first half of their postcode (e.g., GL5, GL11) at the very end so they don't drop off early.

The "Hook" Intro: Use a punchy title on the landing page, like: *"Stroud 2040: It's your future. Tell us how you want to live, work, and travel."*