

Thank you Gloucester Services' customers!

Up to 3p in every £1 you spend supports local communities



Gloucestershire
Gateway
Trust

NEWSlines

Spring 2025

What a decade!

There's so much to celebrate

You might have heard that last year was a big one for Gloucestershire Gateway Trust for a number of reasons, not least as it marked ten years of Gloucester Services.

We celebrated with colleagues, community partners, producers and many of the special people that supported the early vision for the Gloucester Services project and helped us, through our partnership with Westmorland Family, to make it a reality.

We also took time to reflect on what has been achieved during that time. As well as creating over 400 sustainable local jobs, seeing over 100 participants go through our Bridging the Gap employability skills course and enabling three Limited Edition products to be created by aspiring food entrepreneurs, we've been able to make a significant financial reinvestment back into the communities we work alongside.

Our unique partnership with Westmorland Family means we both have a stake in the business and how it is run. Our royalty agreement, through which we receive up to 3p in every £1 of non-fuel sales from Gloucester Services, has generated £4.2m of investment into community capacity building in Gloucestershire since 2017. This has also enabled us to secure a further £31m of community investment to run and manage contracts including the GEM Project and more recently, taking on Youth



No party is complete without a really great cake



Xavier from The Patisserie Box with the Gloucester Services birthday cake

Services and Children and Family Centres for Gloucester and the Forest of Dean. Read more about our partnerships on page 2.



Gloucester Services colleagues who have been with us since opening, with Mark Gale of Gloucestershire Gateway Trust and Sarah Dunning of Westmorland Family

Coming soon...

The brand new Blackbridge Community and Sports Hub will open in Podsmead later this year, supported by GGT. More on page 2.



Partnerships that make a difference

At GGT, we've always believed that we're stronger when we work together, be that with other community organisations, residents or businesses.

In November last year we hosted an event at the House of Commons in London to showcase some of the fantastic cross-sector partnerships we are proud to be a part of, with support from Alex McIntyre (MP for Gloucester) and Dr Simon Opher (MP for Stroud) who made the event possible.

As well as MPs and Ministers, residents from the communities we work alongside, colleagues from Gloucester Services and Westmorland Family, and community partners, all came along to speak about our partnerships.



Alex McIntyre, MP for Gloucester, welcomes guests to the event



Sarah Dunning, Chair of the Westmorland Family, outlines our business partnership

Our business partnership

Perhaps the most well-known, our unique partnership with Westmorland Family came about when GGT's Chief Executive Mark Gale went in search of a business partner to bring the vision of Matson residents for a motorway services with a difference, to life.

Mark said: "There was a real opportunity to create something special on the motorway. We went to find a business partner who held the same values as us, believed in locality, local people and local food. The Westmorland Family – they're the only business that share the same set of values as us."

Since then, our unique partnership between a charity and a family business has often been called a pioneering model of social investment, as we both have a stake in the business of Gloucester Services and how it is run, working together on initiatives like Bridging the Gap and Limited Edition, and reinvesting over £4m from our share of site sales into community development.

Our community partnership

We have 12 – soon to be 13 – community partners, some of whom were with us right at the start of the Gloucester Services journey, campaigning with us to make it happen. The partners with us from the beginning have already received eight years' continuous sustainable funding.

We've just confirmed a further three years of funding for all of our partners and will also be adding Blackbridge Charitable Community Benefit Society (CCBS) based in Podsmead, Gloucester from 1st April 2025.

Our community partnership isn't just about funding. The partnership is also about working together on ideas, projects and initiatives, sharing skills and widening the offering of what's available in the community.



Blackbridge CCBS Youth Worker Kelly shares her story



Celebrating our cross-sector partnerships at the House of Commons in London

Our community and government partnership

In the Podsmead area of Gloucester our Trust has strongly supported the Podsmead Big Local's development of the Blackbridge Community and Sports Hub, using our skills and connections to help raise the £6.5 million building cost and committing £100,000 per year until the end of the decade to support a new local youth work team to work operate from the site.

Our partnership with government has meant that nearly half of this funding has come from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's Youth Investment Fund who have proven to be great partners.

Our public services and community partnership



Gloucestershire
Gateway
Partnership

Communities know what they need and when services need improving, but don't always have an organisation that they can get involved with to make it happen. This is why 18 months ago we brought together 40+ community partners and schools with the goal of improving services for families and young people, and created the Gloucestershire Gateway Partnership. Our partnership has now taken over running open access youth provision in Gloucester and the Forest of Dean, and will do the same for and Children and Family Centres from 1st April 2025.

A big thank you



Stroud MP Dr Simon Opher (right), with Government Minister Daniel Zeichner, who opened the event

Needless to say it was a lot to pack into a couple of hours, but we felt the tenth birthday year of opening Gloucester Services was also the perfect time to celebrate both these wonderful partnerships, and the ripple effect it has enabled us to have. A big thank you to our local MPs for supporting the event, and also to Westmorland Family and the fantastic team at Gloucester Services for topping off the event with the incredible 'Taste of Gloucestershire' buffet, bursting with local products – another example of what makes our county so special.



The 'Taste of Gloucestershire' buffet



Time for a little sightseeing at the Houses of Parliament

Children and family bid is a winner

Powerful consortium aims to support, encourage and strengthen neighbourhoods

As part of our commitment to children, young people and families, in 2024 Gloucestershire Gateway Trust put forward a community-led bid and were subsequently awarded the contract to deliver the provision of Children and Family Centres in Gloucester and the Forest of Dean, on behalf of Gloucestershire County Council.

To make this possible we brought together a powerful consortium of local schools, community organisations and statutory and specialist partners in every area where the centres operate, called the Gloucestershire Gateway Partnership. This promises a 'whole neighbourhood approach' to ensure a sustainable,



“ We are continually working towards creating stronger, more resilient and welcoming communities ”

innovative and inclusive community-led service is provided to children and families across these two districts.

Delivery will begin on 1st April 2025.

Mark Gale, Chief Executive of GGT said: “GGT is continually working towards creating stronger, more resilient and welcoming communities.

“Our aim is to support, encourage and strengthen neighbourhoods, by raising people’s aspirations and better connecting them with their local area, to ensure that everyone is valued and has the opportunity to influence decisions that impact their lives whilst creating lasting solutions to local challenges.

“This is an exceptionally positive transition towards the Family Hubs model in Gloucestershire, creating exciting future opportunities and prospects for our children, young people and neighbourhoods.”

We have also developed a strong partnership with Aspire Foundation – a local registered charity with over 20 years of experience – which will support the delivery of Targeted Family Support as part of the contract. This includes early help to identify issues children and families face and offer support to enable families to have a more positive future.

Youth Services look ahead to a bright future

GGT also recently led a similar community consortium of young people’s organisations to successfully bid for the delivery of open access Youth Services in Gloucester and the Forest of Dean, which began on 1st October 2024.

Working with The Venture Community Hub in Gloucester and the Forest Voluntary Action Forum in the Forest of Dean, this contract will bring back traditional youth clubs and activities as well as street-based services, with the voice of young people at the heart of everything.





Trying different roles at Gloucester Services on the Bridging the Gap course

Give your employment potential a power-up

The start of a new year is often a time for considering what we'd like to achieve or change in our lives. If you're thinking about your work goals – whether that's getting into employment, studying for new qualifications or even contemplating a complete change, there are lots of services available to help.

GGT Trustee Monique Smith, who is also an Operations Manager for the National Careers Service told us: "You can access the service online at nationalcareers.service.gov.uk or by calling 0800 100 900. It's a really helpful service, wherever you're at in your career."

Learning and work opportunities for local people have always been at the heart of GGT, since Gloucester Services was set up to create jobs and income for the local area, as well as through our initiatives like Bridging the Gap and Limited Edition. From 2025 it will become even more accessible through Children and Family Centres in Gloucester and the Forest of Dean.

Jason Dunsford, GGT Deputy Chief Executive said: "Education and employment are such important threads that run through our work with community partners and local people.

"Working with primary and secondary schools, we have connected them to our suppliers, other employers, community organisations, and the Gloucestershire Careers Hub.

"We have built partnerships delivering nationally-commended employability and adult education programmes for people furthest from work. We want everyone to raise their aspirations and to be supported to reach their full potential, and we are taking that mantra into a new era which will see us and our partners managing family support services and nine Family Centres across Gloucester and the Forest of Dean."

Don't forget you can also find out about job vacancies at Gloucester Services by visiting <https://careers.westmorlandfamily.com/>

Looking to return to work? Here are Monique's top tips:

- Have a plan and some small goals to keep you on track
- Set time aside to explore work and training options
- Think about what you enjoyed in your last roles
- Try and build confidence by doing a few short courses
- Consider completing a skills health check to give you more work options
- Seek advice from a professional



GGT Trustee Monique Smith, who also works as an Operations Manager for the National Careers Service

Need some inspiration? Why not try this fun quiz from Career Pilot to see what suits your personality: www.careerpilot.org.uk/information/buzz-quiz



Volunteering is good for you

Giving back is a win-win... It helps you and the community too

“Wellbeing is word that we are all very familiar with. It has become a high priority at work, in education and in our personal lives for ourselves and people around us.

One of the five ways to wellbeing is about giving back. It can be in a very small way, helping neighbours or friends, or an opportunity to try something new, meet new people and learn new skills.

We know that connecting with people is really important, and research shows it can help us emotionally, lower stress levels, boost self-esteem and support personal development.

Volunteering in a group takes you out of the world of work and personal commitments, it's a chance to take time for yourself as well as giving back. You don't have to be a leader or an organiser, you just need to be you and give your time, and you will be surprised what strengths you have and what you get out of it – whatever your age.

We are lucky to work with 12 fantastic community partners who all work with



Gloucester Services colleague Sarah volunteering at the Growing Communities Space on northbound with Ruth from GL Communities

volunteers and couldn't do what they do without them.

There are opportunities open for everyone to get involved, think about what you are interested in, and anything you would like to learn. You can volunteer with friends, colleagues, by yourself or with family members. Volunteer opportunities range from helping to cook at community meals, reading with children in schools, arts and crafts, gardening and nature or simply just talking to people. If you would like to find

out more about how to get involved with any of our community partners you can email office@ggtrust.org.

Another great source locally to find opportunities is Go Volunteer Glos www.govolunteerglos.org or look for something similar for where you live.”

Clare Skivington

Community Support Manager,
Gloucestershire Gateway Trust



Gloucester Services colleague Steve who helped to decorate a room at The Redwell Centre, along with other colleagues

WHY VOLUNTEER?

- It connects you with others, reducing isolation and a chance to meet new people
- It builds self-confidence and self-esteem
- It can benefit your physical health through being active and reducing stress, as well as your mental health
- It gives a sense of purpose which boosts happiness, as well as a deeper sense of perspective
- It can benefit your career, helping you to learn new skills and showing employers a willingness to take initiative and give your time to help

Tackling the challenge of surplus food waste

Food is always a core aspect of work in communities, as sharing food brings people together, and yet food waste is still a huge challenge affecting our wider environment.

Over the years, we have worked with several of our suppliers and producers to redistribute surplus food, which not only helps reduce waste but also strengthens our communities.

Hobbs House Bakery regularly delivers excess bread to Gloucester Services to be redistributed to the community. Anna Herbert from Hobbs House Bakery said:

“At our family bakery we bake every day, we try to make the exact amount of bread, but this is not always possible. Any surplus we gather and box up into mixed charity boxes of bread. We freeze these and then deliver them to Gloucester Services with our regular delivery. This is such a simple way for us to ensure no bread is wasted and supports local communities.”



Excess food is put to good use at the weekly Fair Shares lunch club

Among others, one of our community partners, Fair Shares in Gloucester, often use excess food donations as part of their weekly community lunch.

Reyaz from Fair Shares told us: “Having donations of good quality food has had a massive impact for our work. The food becomes part of the offer for the whole community. This makes a big difference in removing the barriers and stigma of food

poverty and we find as a result it reaches families who would otherwise be reluctant to ask for or receive this kind of help.

“It’s also really important to us to maximise all the resources available and minimise the environmental impact of food waste.”

We have also been working with Castle Fruit Farm who regularly donate their excess apples and pears which they are unable to sell.

Through Gloucestershire Gateway Trust, local primary schools in the areas are delivered fresh fruit on the same day it’s delivered to Gloucester Services. Giving young children fresh, locally-grown fruit is a real benefit to their wellbeing and adds to their education around food.



Apples that are too small to sell are perfect for little hands at local schools

If you are a food producer in Gloucestershire or work for one, and would like to discuss donating good quality surplus food, please contact Gloucestershire Gateway Trust’s Community Support Manager, Clare Skivington on 07464 497098 or email clare.skivington@gloucesterservices.com

Sarah has a passion for fabulous food

"I didn't enjoy school and just wanted to be earning money. I knew I wanted to be a chef and decided that I could have the best of both worlds if I enrolled on a YTS scheme.

I secured a place as a trainee chef at C&G Building Society and completed my NVQ level 2 and 3 through the Hotel and Catering training college, working my way up from trainee to second chef.

I left catering to pursue a career in care, always knowing I had my catering experience and training to fall back on.

After having my children I needed a job that fitted around school hours so I became a school cook. It was during this time I wanted to give my skills back to the community, so I volunteered at The Redwell Centre, cooking hot meals for the community during the school holidays.

From my involvement in community work was how GL4 CIC – which was formed to bring cultural events, run youth participation groups and community



Sarah O'Donnell: "I realised how much I missed being that passion for delivering high quality food."

engagement activities in Matson – was born and was my life for eight years.

In July 2023 I applied to work at Gloucester Services one day a week as a chef. Being back in the kitchen was great and during this time I realised how much I had missed being in the kitchen and that passion for delivering high quality food.

In September 2024 I made the decision to step aside from my role as Organisational Director at GL4 and go back to my roots full-time at Gloucester Services as Kitchen Manager. Now I get the best of both worlds, never be afraid to follow your dreams."

Sarah O'Donnell

Kitchen Manager, Gloucester Services

Keep in touch



@GlosGatewayTrust



@GlosGatewayTrust



@Gloucestershire Gateway Trust



Tap and donate

If you're inspired by the great work our community partners do, did you know you can tap and donate at one of our donation points when you visit Gloucester Services? You'll find one on both northbound and southbound, located by the leaflets racks on the way to the toilets. All donations will be received by Gloucestershire Gateway Trust and shared equally between our community partners.