

Thank you Gloucester Services' customers!

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



Gloucestershire
Gateway
Trust

NEWSlines

Summer/Autumn 2025

A £5million milestone



Last year we celebrated 10 years since Gloucester Services first opened, and now we have another reason to celebrate and to thank all of our customers and supporters.

As of June 2025, our unique partnership with Westmorland Family – as part of which we both have a stake in the business of Gloucester Services and how it is run – has now reached an impressive landmark and has generated **£5million** for community development work in Gloucestershire.

New hub opens



Brand new community and sports hub now open in Podsmead! More on pages 4&5

The sweet taste of success



Hetty and the Gloucester Academy Limited Edition course students with (inset) the bestselling new brownie

Limited edition brownie is selling fast

The Fudgey Crunch Brownie – created by students from Gloucester Academy working alongside Hetty's Kitchen – hit the Gloucester Services Farmshops this summer. But make sure you snap yours up quickly, as they are on sale for a limited time only and they're selling fast!

• Full story on page 2.



Gloucester Academy x Hetty's Kitchen presents...

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Now in its fourth year, the 2025 Limited Edition hit the Gloucester Services Farmshops in June, and it's delicious! After the success of working with Gloucester Academy in 2024, this year a new group from Year 9 completed the Limited Edition course and, working alongside Gloucester Services customer favourite Hetty's Kitchen, they created the Fudge Crunch Brownie!

Hetty, founder of Hetty's Kitchen said: "I've absolutely loved working with the students on this! I thought it would be quite a challenge to come up with something we've not done before, given that we've got over 200 flavours in our archives, but they did it! I hope the students are very proud of themselves. I have a feeling this will be a best seller!"

Lucy Blick, Associate Assistant Head Teacher at Gloucester Academy said: "I cannot express enough how much of a difference the project has made for our students. We've seen their confidence bloom through dedicated tuition and inspiring visits.

"It's heartwarming to witness not only their personal growth but also tangible improvements like increased school attendance. We are incredibly grateful to Gloucestershire Gateway Trust for their support in making such a difference in our students' lives."



I cannot express enough how much of a difference the project has made for our students

The Limited Edition course was created by Gloucestershire Gateway Trust and Gloucester Services to inspire and give opportunities to aspiring food producers of the future, particularly in the communities we work alongside.

This Limited Edition course was funded by the Gloucestershire Employment and Skills Hub, and delivered with help from The Engine CIC and Fair Shares Community Timebanks.



The spice is right for Shakera

Back in 2023 we introduced Shakera and her incredible samosas to the buyers at Westmorland Family, who loved her produce made locally in Gloucester.

We supported Shakera to get her business and kitchen ready for larger orders and a range of her products hit the deli just before Christmas that year.

Since then Shakera Catering has gone from strength to strength, making and selling more than 1,000 samosas a month for Gloucester Services, and has just introduced a new product, the Spicy Spring Roll!

As a result, Shakera has had to expand her family business and has employed two local people – showing what a great result supporting small local entrepreneurs can have on the local economy.

Making the most of the daily grind

Through all of our work, including our partnership with Westmorland Family, we are always looking for ways to work together to reduce food waste.

Due to the many freshly made coffees bought at Gloucester Services, there are lot of leftover coffee grounds, packed with nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium, making them a fantastic natural fertiliser.

So we got in touch with with local gardens and allotments, our community partners who grow – such as Fair Shares – and other community groups, and have arranged a weekly pick-up for the coffee grounds.



Rachel collects grounds for use at the Fair Shares allotment

In the first two months of running this initiative 834 buckets totalling 2,387kg of coffee grounds were collected and put to use in growing spaces and community projects.

Aaron Hunt, Operations Manager at Gloucester Services, said: "We're really pleased to support this initiative – not only does it help cut our own waste and costs, but it also plays a small part in our wider sustainability efforts. Coffee grounds are rich in nutrients and great for soil health, making them a natural fit for community growing."



Everything needed for a small project with children – Curly the Glove Puppet and the Travel Bear

From scrap to sustainable products

We have more new community-made, sustainable products in the Farmshop! Created by our friends at the Gloucester Resource Centre (GRC), the Travel Bear and Curly the Glove Puppet are perfect gifts and holiday makes – the Travel Bear even comes with its own travel diary!

Beth from GRC said: "Our 'Make Your Own' Sparrow craft packs idea came from visiting Gloucester Services and seeing an opportunity to create something bespoke, which includes everything needed for a small project with children. They are perfect to do on holiday, while travelling,

or as a gift to take when visiting family or friends.

"Our packs have been carefully put together by our group of amazing volunteers here in Gloucester, using materials and offcuts reclaimed from businesses across the county. We already work with Gloucester Services and some of their food suppliers to collect and re-use items that would otherwise go to waste. We're incredibly grateful to have support and funding from Gloucestershire Gateway Trust to get our first two products up and running.



Volunteers at the Gloucester Resource Centre with their sustainable products

"Volunteering at GRC gives me the opportunity to get out of the house and spend time with like-minded people. Cutting and processing the materials is really therapeutic and I feel I'm doing something worthwhile that supports the community on my doorstep. The atmosphere is warm and welcoming, and I can meet with other creative people in a safe space."
Gayle, GRC volunteer

Partner funding set to continue

In April we started a new three-year programme of community investment, whereby we guarantee funding of up to £69,000 for community development over the period for our core-funded community partners.

After an end-of-programme review we were delighted to agree to continue funding all of our existing 12 partners from the previous programme, plus adding Blackbridge Charitable Community Benefit Society (CCBS) as our 13th partner.

Blackbridge CCBS is the legacy organisation set up to continue the community development work started in Podsmead in Gloucester by the Podsmead Big Local, and as part of that have led the development of the brand new Blackbridge Community and Sports Hub.

Their mission is to enable Podsmead to flourish by bringing communities together, supporting health and wellbeing, and creating opportunities for skills, development and local enterprise. This will include a big increase in youth work, in which GGT will invest an additional £100,000 a year for the next four years, based at the Blackbridge Community and Sports Hub.

Our community investment programme is made possible thanks to our unique partnership with Westmorland Family, through which we receive up to 3p in every £1 spent at Gloucester Services, which we then reinvest through our community partnership as well as a series of one-off community development grants to other organisations and projects.



Open for business: The new Blackbridge Community and Sports Hub



Sporting activities and wellbeing for all



HUB, HUB, HOORAY!

New centre brings fantastic range of facilities to Podsmead

After years of planning, the Blackbridge Community and Sports Hub opened its doors at the end of April – bringing a fantastic health and wellbeing facility to Podsmead. It offers a fitness gym, a programme of fitness classes for all ages, a state-of-the-art 3G sports pitch and a hireable social space for community activities.

It's also the new home of the Blackbridge CCBS Youth Team, who currently run two youth clubs per week – one open access and one calmer inclusive session – with plans to introduce a new Fit Friday session from Autumn 2025. The youth team also offer confidential one-to-one

support and daytime provision using informal education for those not in education, employment, or training.

Debbie Etheridge, Head of Youth Provision at Blackbridge CCBS said: "This hub is more than just a space; it's a catalyst for positive change, empowering our youth to thrive and make a lasting impact on their lives and the community."

Blackbridge CCBS run the Blackbridge Community and Sports Hub in partnership with Freedom Leisure, a not-for-profit leisure trust. Visit www.blackbridge.org.uk to find out more.



Youth club sessions run several times a week at the new Blackbridge Community and Sport Hub



Gloucestershire Gateway Trust Our Community Partnership

Thanks to our unique partnership with Westmorland, Gloucestershire Gateway Trust receives up to 3p in every £ of non-fuel sales from Gloucester Services, which we reinvest in local people, projects and neighbourhoods with the help of our community partners.

www.gloucestershiregatewaytrust.org.uk

BLACKBRIDGE CHARITABLE COMMUNITY BENEFIT SOCIETY

- Active and creative community play
- Play nurture and play sanctuary
- Promoting the importance of play

Read with me

- Supporting primary schools with twice weekly one-to-one reading for children
- Not Go Secret Book Club holiday provision
- Rhyme With Me for preschoolers

THE NELSON TRUST

- Residential addiction treatment
- Women's centres
- Family support and hub enterprises

Gloucestershire Gateway Trust

Fair Shares community time banks

- Sharing skills and helping each other
- Meeting people and making friends
- Acts of kindness

The Venture Community Hub

- Space for indoor and outdoor play
- Arts, crafts, sports and games
- Community and family activities

GL Communities BUILDING TOGETHER WITH LOCAL PEOPLE

- Wellbeing and community
- Advice services
- Skills, training and employability support

All Pulling Together

- Community and special interest groups
- Job vacancies and training information
- Debt and benefit advice
- Community food hub

Together in Matson Faith, hope & community

- Developing skills and talents
- Support and advice
- Community and youth activities

Residents Group

- Live arts and culture events
- Youth participation
- Community engagement

Matson, Robinswood and White City Community Partnerships

- Discussing the needs of the ward and how to address them
- Community events and engagement
- Driving bottom-up economic and social plans

A great day out at the family centres

On the 1st April 2025 Gloucestershire Gateway Trust became the new service provider for Children and Family Centres in Gloucester and the Forest of Dean. After a short period of bedding in, we had an open day celebration event at each of the nine centres, and wow did we have a great turnout!

We welcomed between 200-400 people to each event. They were able to find out more about how we work and what's coming next, while enjoying a completely free day out, including healthy food from the Eat Well Wagon, activities with Read With Me, Play Gloucestershire and Mad About Art, facepainting and henna, as well as other free play activities. We hope everyone enjoyed it!

Our approach

Back in 2024 GGT put forward a community-led bid by bringing 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. It promised a 'whole neighbourhood approach' to ensure a sustainable and inclusive community-led service for children and families across the two districts.



To find out more and to see what's on at your nearest Children and Family Centre scan the QR code to follow our dedicated Facebook page or head to www.facebook.com/glosforestfamilyhubs



Get out and play – it's not just fun, it's essential!

"In recent years children's opportunities to play outside have been shrinking. Concerns about safety, traffic, screen time, and a lack of welcoming spaces mean many families are missing out on the joys and benefits of outdoor play. But across the county Play Gloucestershire's Play Rangers are creating safe spaces in parks and green areas where children, young people and families can come together, connect, and Get Out and Play!

Whether during school holidays or term-time after school, you can find your nearest play session by going to www.playgloucestershire.org.uk – these play sessions are FREE and open access which means you are free to come and go as you please.

Summer is the perfect time to head outdoors, longer days, warm evenings, and the freedom to explore. But play doesn't stop when the seasons change – the Play Rangers run their sessions all year round.

So why not visit a session, bring a friend, and rediscover what it means to play — together."

Ben Morris,
Director of Play, Play Gloucestershire



Gloucestershire Play Strategy: A county that plays together, thrives together

Play Gloucestershire, The Venture, Gloucestershire Gateway Trust, Gloucestershire County Council and other partners are proud to be developing a new county-wide Play Strategy that will help shape a brighter, more playful future for everyone. This will underpin the shared vision of Gloucestershire as 'a great place for children, young people and adults to thrive, play, and live lives of choice and opportunity.'

The strategy recognises that play is a right and an essential part of everyday life. It aims to embed play across communities, Family Hubs, early years settings, schools, services and spaces – supporting wellbeing, learning, and lifelong development.

Whether we're young or old, play helps us explore, express, build relationships and feel joy. This strategy is a call to action to protect, promote and prioritise play for everyone in Gloucestershire.

Young people lead the way

Gloucester Summer Youth Fund 2025

“Working with partners The Music Works and CHISPA CIC, The Venture Community Hub worked with 15 young people from across Gloucester to decide how a £35,000 grant pot should be spent.

Their mission? To fund projects that offer more things to do, more places to go, and more people to talk to – not just for summer, but into the autumn too.

Over ten weeks, they explored what’s already happening, identified gaps, and imagined what could be. They awarded 19 grants to ranging from £500 to £4,000, to individuals and organisations whose ideas best matched the criteria.

What made this so unique was that the team consisted of almost entirely of young people, and most of us being under 18. We weren’t just being consulted or



asked for opinions; we were trusted with real responsibility, and that felt powerful.

We know what’s missing in our communities because we’re living in them. Being involved not only gave us the chance to shape real change, but it also built our confidence, and shows that we’re capable of taking the lead.”

Warda, 17, Youth Panel Member

The next round of the Gloucester Summer Youth Fund will open in January 2026.

Want to get involved or learn more? Email rachel@theventurecommunityhub.co.uk



WIN

One of five vouchers



To celebrate hitting our very special milestone of £5million pounds generated and invested into community development in Gloucestershire, we’re giving away 5 x £25 vouchers that can be spent in the Gloucester Services Farmshops and Kitchens, or at any Westmorland site.

All you have to do is scan the QR code, head over to Facebook or Instagram and view the pinned post at the top for more details.



TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

- One entry per person on each social media channel, but enter on both to double your chances.
- No alternative or cash prize will be offered.

Want to join our mailing list?

Scan this QR code to visit our website and leave your details. You can unsubscribe at any time.



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