



Gloucester Heritage  
Urban Regeneration Company

# Year Book 2005

Spring Edition



# Welcome to the Gloucester Renaissance Year Book

“This is the first Gloucester Renaissance Year Book and it is designed to provide a range of essential information about the work of the Gloucester Heritage Urban Regeneration Company and its partner organisations.

This is the start of a ten year adventure during which the GHURC plans to attract £100m of new investment to Gloucester and bring about the long awaited regeneration of this great city.

It is a unique mission. Gloucester is the first and only ‘Heritage’ Urban Regeneration Company in the UK and, together with our regeneration partners, we aim to breathe new life back into nearly 100 historic buildings in the city centre, as well as developing over 100 acres of brownfield land with historic associations.

We are off to a great start and have already created a real sense of confidence within the city as well as attracting very significant private sector investment. The redevelopment industry, the media and the Government, are taking notice of what is happening in Gloucester.

I was delighted to be asked to Chair the GHURC’s Board of Directors – there can be no more fulfilling task than steering the regeneration of a living city and witnessing the opportunities that are being created here for future generations of Gloucesterians.”

**Greg Smith**

**Chairman,**

**The Gloucester Heritage Urban Regeneration Company**

# The 2005 Gloucester Renaissance Year Book

A pocket guide to the regeneration of the city of Gloucester and the work of the Gloucester Heritage Urban Regeneration Company.

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## The Vision of the Gloucester Heritage URC is:

*"To bring life back to historic areas of Gloucester, reflecting their special character whilst creating a new, prosperous, attractive, safe and sustainable urban centre for the 21st century."*

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## Introduction

The Gloucester Heritage Urban Regeneration Company was sanctioned by Central Government in February 2004.

Its purpose is to bring life back to the many historic areas of Gloucester, and to help create a new and prosperous city for the 21st century.

But, this regeneration must reflect the special character of the city and the people of Gloucester must be involved in creating the vision for this renewal and in the governance of the Gloucester Heritage Urban Regeneration Company.

Gloucester, uniquely, is the only Urban Regeneration Company to have the word 'Heritage' in its name and no other regeneration area can claim to have played such an important role in the history of England (see 'Gloucester's Heritage').

The Gloucester Heritage URC is a highly focused partnership organisation, funded by:

- English Partnerships,
- Gloucester City Council,
- Gloucestershire County Council, and
- the South West of England Regional Development Agency.

Specific targets for the GHURC comprise:

- 100 acres of brownfield land reclaimed and developed
- 82 historic buildings repaired and re-used
- 300,000 sq ft of retail floor space developed
- 3500 new homes built
- 2000 new jobs created
- £1 billion of private sector investment levered-in
- 300,000 sq ft of comparison goods retail developed
- 150,000 sq ft of commercial floorspace developed
- A new college campus for further education
- 4.25km of waterfront area upgraded and accessible
- A new mainline railway station and restored services
- The completion of Gloucester South West Bypass

# Rethink Gloucester

## Reasons to Invest in the City

- A sub-regional centre for growth
- A strong and growing economy
- A young and growing population
- A vibrant community with rich cultural diversity
- A beautiful natural setting
- A strategic central location
- Good access, by road, rail, air and water
- Over 400,000 people living within 15 miles
- 10,000 new houses to be built in Gloucester by 2016
- The largest labour force in the county
- National recognition as a centre for investment
- High national and international awareness
- The location for several company headquarters
- The University of Gloucestershire and Gloscat campuses
- Clear evidence of developer interest in Gloucester
- One of the finest historical city centres in England
- A single point of contact for developers – the GHURC
- Served by three junctions of the M5 motorway
- Unrivalled cultural, heritage and leisure assets
- Positive planning frameworks
- Nearly 100 ha of available largely brownfield land
- Under-used heritage and environmental assets
- Major tourism and leisure potential
- Business Parks and commercial sites close to M5
- A nationally important waterfront development
- Large scale transportation infrastructure
- A high growth retail sector

# The GHURC Board of Directors

## Chairman:

**Greg Smith** Gloucestershire College  
of Arts and Technology

## Directors:

**Peter Clarke** Gloucestershire County Council  
elected member

**Parmjit Dhanda** Member of Parliament  
for Gloucester

**Bernadette Hartley** Private sector

**Mark Hawthorne** Gloucester City Council  
elected member

**Jeremy Hilton** Gloucestershire County Council  
elected member

**Ricky Hunkin** Private sector

**Duncan Innes** English Partnerships

**Paul James** Gloucester City Council  
elected member

**Alan Jarman** Private sector

**Stan Jones** Gloucestershire First

**John Lancaster** British Waterways

**Ian Mean** Private sector

**Colin Molton** South West of England Regional  
Development Agency

**Mark Owen** Federation of Small Businesses

**The Right Reverend Michael Francis Perham**  
The Bishop of Gloucester

**Sally Pickering** Local Strategic Partnership

**Antonia Shield** Private sector

**Stephen Simmonds** Private sector

**Michael Tallett-Williams**  
Private sector

**Darren Thompson** Private sector

**David Warburton** English Partnerships

**Robert Bewley** English Heritage Advisor  
to the Board

## Scope and Vision

"Gloucester is a great historic city and in compiling a list of the top twenty English historic cities, Gloucester is a certain entry.

Its strategic significance attracted the Romans and the royal Saxon palace at Kingsholm played a national role before the Normans arrived and built St Peter's Abbey, which was to become the magnificent Gloucester Cathedral.

In this major mediaeval city, Parliament met, Kings were buried and commerce and industry boomed.

The city expanded and prospered, bolstered by the development of the docks, but by the end of the nineteenth century, its position at the centre of the national stage had diminished.

Industrial developments mainly passed it by and other achievements were modest during this period. Then, towards the end of the twentieth century the city rediscovered its historic environment and its redevelopment potential.

The opportunity now exists for the historic fabric of Gloucester to be enhanced by well informed modern development, restoring vitality to the city and providing a sustainable future in which people will want, once more, to invest and live in Gloucester, a great historic city."

**Chris Smith, English Heritage**

The Gloucester Heritage Urban Regeneration Company is leading the physical regeneration of Gloucester and has identified four broad redevelopment areas, comprising:

- The Historic City Centre
- The Western Waterfront
- The Railway Corridor / Triangle
- The Canal Corridor

The following pages describe these priority regeneration areas and their potential to change the face of Gloucester.

## The Historic City Centre

The Historic City Centre contains Gloucester's main historical and tourist assets, as well as large areas of under-used land of great redevelopment potential.

Specific sites include:

**Kings Square**, a 6,900 sq m public space designed in the 1970s, but which is now in need of major refurbishment and public realm upgrading. The square and its large disused water feature are surrounded by many of the city's major retail outlets and enjoy extremely high footfall.

Remedial work has begun and the full potential of the area as a major family retail centre is unfolding.



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**Gloucester Bus Station** is no longer used by many services but it still occupies a strategic central location between the city centre and the Railway Station. It contains many buildings in disrepair with unoccupied upper floors and several nearby vacant plots.

The opportunity exists here for a new retail development as part of a mixed use scheme and the repair of the built frontages of the streets. The use of the Bus Station itself is under review.

**Blackfriars Priory** occupies an important location between the city centre and the Docks and is an impressive ancient monument of national importance.

The surrounding regeneration area is a key location for an extension to the city's primary shopping area and is strategically significant in connecting the existing retail core to the docks. The mixed use development is expected to include housing and substantial city centre car parking.

SWRDA has recently acquired land in this area which, combined with City Council ownership, will considerably improve the chances of delivery of an appropriate project.



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**Greyfriars** is centred on the two sites currently occupied by the city's College of Further Education. The college plans to relocate to a new site on Gloucester Quays, thus releasing this land for redevelopment.

The sites lie between the existing retail centre and 'The Park' residential area. Potential uses and development opportunities for this very important city centre estate have yet to be established.

## The Western Waterfront

The Western Waterfront comprises a 60 hectare strip of land and buildings extending from the redundant Cattle Market in the north, along the River Severn frontage, through Gloucester Docks and on to the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal. Specific sites include:

### Gloucester Docks

The South West Regional Development Agency's purchase of the historic core of the Gloucester Docks area has led to rapid redevelopment principally for residential, leisure and retail uses with substantial public realm and infrastructure upgrading, ensuring a thriving visitor attraction.

British Waterways and Laings are developing a major residential scheme to re-establish the western edge of the main dock basin.

This extraordinary site has the potential to regenerate an unrivalled range of historic warehouses. With conversion of warehouses reaching completion, the first phase of new development by Crest Nicholson in the historic core of the docks is now underway.

By the end of 2006, up to 300 new homes will have been provided in the docks basin.

### Gloucester Quays

Rapid progress has been made on this exciting scheme by Peel Holdings and British Waterways, based on a £200m comprehensive project that will deliver 25 hectares of residential, leisure and retail developments and a new Gloscat Campus to an area straddling both sides of the canal, just south of Gloucester Docks.

1,000 new homes will be created by the scheme, which also includes a factory outlet centre, a food supermarket and conservation of a substantial chunk of Gloucester's waterfront heritage.

Work on the new college campus site will soon commence and when complete in 2007 it will attract approximately 6,000 students to the area each week.

## Westgate Quay

This area contains the western road approaches to the city and adjacent frontages to the River Severn. It also contains some important historic buildings such as the 1788 Almshouses and offers a waterside development setting.

This entrance to Gloucester from the west has been largely protected from development by the floodplain and the potential of this location has yet to be realised.

The development of the South West Bypass and St. Ann's Way Bridge link will enable the historic Westgate Street and the riverside Quay to be liberated from heavy traffic flows and the potential exists for the harnessing of the value of the river setting for residential, commercial and leisure uses.

## St. Oswalds Park (formerly the Cattle Market site)

This large redevelopment site covers nearly 26 hectares of ex-landfill on the north western flank of the city; just 10 minutes walk from the city centre with views to the Cathedral and out to open countryside.

The site has permission for a range of non-food retail, leisure, residential and employment uses, and the current comprehensive development proposals by Hammerson Plc will create 400 new homes, 17,000 sq m of retail warehousing, 7,500 sq m of leisure and 2.25 hectares of employment.

## The Railway Corridor and Railway Triangle

The rail corridor is a principal route into the city and has significant regeneration potential.

This area presents an opportunity to provide complementary development to the rest of the central zone and a potential for the development of a major gateway to Gloucester for both road and rail travellers worthy of a city with Gloucester's heritage.





## The Canal Corridor

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This entrance to the city from the south presents a traffic dominated environment, containing several vacant sites.

The development of the South West Bypass combined with the complementary development of this underused land will create a new entrance to the city from the south alongside the canal and stimulate the wider regeneration of this important commercial sector of Gloucester.

The corridor will connect the southern suburbs with the city centre through bus priority measures linked to the existing park and ride provision to the south of the city. The canal itself and its towpath present further opportunities to deliver sustainable transportation along this linear development area.

## Essential Infrastructure

### The Gloucester South West Bypass and St. Ann's Bridge

This critical road scheme opens up several major development opportunities within the Western Waterfront and will improve access to the city from the south. The Castlemeads section, providing access to the western side of the main docks basin, has been completed and completion of the final link is expected by October 2007.

### The Gloucestershire Parkway Mainline Railway Station

A proposal for a mainline intercity station to serve the whole of the county and linked to Gloucester and Cheltenham by high speed coach shuttle, with existing station retained.



## 2004 – A Year of Progress

An early success for the GHURC was English Partnerships' decision to purchase the current Gloscat Campus for £9m, thus initiating the College's move to a stunning new canal-side site, just south of Gloucester Docks. This was followed by the Learning and Skills Council awarding a record £14m towards the cost of the new £38m Campus.

The GHURC then demonstrated its ability to preserve Gloucester's unique heritage when it combined with the South West RDA and English Heritage to reveal views of the medieval cloisters of Blackfriars Priory that had been obscured for over a century.

The summer witnessed the start of major new-build projects in Gloucester Docks which began with the construction of a new car park, freeing the centre of the Docks for further residential and commercial redevelopment projects and public realm upgrade.

The new Gloscat Campus then received its planning consent and the Gloucester Docks project surged forward as residential and commercial schemes, with supporting car parking, obtained planning permission. New apartment buildings on the West Quay began construction as other residential units in converted warehouses quickly sold out.

12 In October 2004, 'Gloucester Renaissance' was adopted as the GHURC's new corporate identity and as a city-wide symbol of regeneration and renewal. October also witnessed the incorporation of the GHURC as a company and the appointment of Greg Smith, Principal of Gloscat, as its first Chairman.

Then, in late December, the massive £200m Gloucester Quays project received the unanimous support of the City Council. This scheme is being considered by the Government Office for the South West and if approved, it will deliver 25 hectares of residential, leisure and retail developments, a new Gloscat Campus, 1,000 new homes, a factory outlet centre and the conservation of a substantial chunk of Gloucester's waterfront heritage.

# Business Statistics and Information

## Size

Gloucester City has an administrative area of 4,071 hectares. It is approximately 8 miles long and 4 miles wide.

## Population

Gloucester is a growing city and the current population of around 109,890 (2002) is set to grow by nearly 4% by 2010.

The age profile is comparatively young with over 20% of the population aged 14 or under.

## Catchment Area

Over 400,000 people live within 15 miles of Gloucester.

## Employment

Unemployment in Gloucester stands at 2.5% (Jan 2004), just below the national average of 2.6%.

## Gross Value Added (GVA) per head

In 2001, Gloucestershire's GVA per head was £14,062, which is comparable with the national average and places it as fourth highest in the region.

## Key business sectors

Key business sectors for the Gloucester economy comprise:

- leisure and tourism
- finance and business services
- construction
- telecommunications
- public sector, and
- retail

## The Public Sector

The Public Sector is the largest employer in Gloucester and local government is well represented through the headquarters of both the City and County Councils.

The education sector in Gloucester has the new University of Gloucestershire Oxstalls Campus which has helped the sector grow by around 25% in the last five years.

The City has a larger than average health sector. The Gloucester Royal Hospital and the headquarters of the West Gloucestershire NHS Trust have also led to growth of more than 25% in the last five years.

## Tourism and Leisure

An estimated 315,000 staying visitors and 2.4m day visitors spend approximately £130m in the city each year.

Nearly 4,000 people are directly employed in tourism in Gloucester, mainly in hotels, restaurants and bars and representing 7% of all employment.

Awareness of the city internationally has increased dramatically during recent years thanks to the popularity of such images as Harry Potter and Beatrix Potter.

## Finance & Business Services

Gloucester is home to a number of major financial institutions accounting for higher than average levels of employment than found in the rest of the county. It contains many national corporate headquarters.

## Manufacturing

The largest manufacturing sectors in Gloucester comprise:

- food products and beverages
- publishing, printing, etc
- rubber and plastic goods
- fabricated metal products
- machinery and equipment
- medical, precision instruments, etc

## Information & Communications Technology (ICT)

ICT is underdeveloped in Gloucester, employing only 400 people (2002) and accounting for just 0.6% of total employment, compared to 2.4% for the County. The sector is dominated by the Software consultancy and is forecast to grow significantly.



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## Retail

The 2003 Experian survey of retail vitality shows that Gloucester is ranked as the 10th most significant retailing centre in the region. (Cheltenham is 3rd most significant)

## Housing growth

36,000 new dwellings must be built across Gloucestershire between 2001 and 2016, of which, around 9,800 are to be built in Gloucester.

## Location and transportation

One of Gloucester's greatest strengths is its superb location and excellent transportation infrastructure, comprising:

### Road

Gloucester is served by three junctions onto the M5 and central access to the nation's motorway network. Just under 19,000 cars a day make journeys to work into Gloucester and approximately 14,000 cars travel out of the city to other work destinations each day.

Car drivers now account for around 60% of all journeys to work in Gloucester and travel by bus is lower than national averages.

There is a centrally located Bus Station and substantial Park and Ride provision.

### Rail

Rail connections from Gloucester to London and all other major destinations are good. The Gloucester railway station is well located, and a new Parkway station at nearby Elmbridge is a county transport priority.

### Air

- 16 The Gloucestershire Airport is located nearby on the outskirts of the city. Its commercial use is constrained by its proximity to residential areas and it is therefore likely to remain an excellent general aviation facility, with important maintenance services.

For domestic and international commercial services, Bristol and Birmingham International Airports are both just over an hour's drive from the city, and Cardiff and Heathrow only one and a half hours by road.

### Water

Gloucester Docks are connected to the Bristol Channel by the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal and to the inland waterways system via the River Severn. The Canal has tremendous potential for economic regeneration throughout its length, especially the section through Gloucester.

## Media Information

The Gloucestershire media actively support the regeneration of Gloucester City.

### Newspapers

#### **The Gloucester Citizen (evening)**

St Johns Lane, Gloucester GL1 2AY

Tel: 01452 424444

Fax: 01452 420664

Email: [news@gloscitizen.co.uk](mailto:news@gloscitizen.co.uk)

#### **The Gloucestershire Echo (evening)**

1 Clarence Parade, Cheltenham GL50 3NZ

Tel: 01242 271900

Fax: 01242 271848

Email: [news@glosecho.co.uk](mailto:news@glosecho.co.uk)

#### **Western Daily Press (morning)**

Temple Way, Bristol BS99 7HD

Tel: 0117 934 3000

Fax: 0117 934 3571

Email: [wdnews@bepp.co.uk](mailto:wdnews@bepp.co.uk)

## Radio

### **BBC Radio Gloucestershire**

London Road, Gloucester GL1 1SW

Tel: 01452 308585

Fax: 01452 309491

Email: [radio.gloucestershire@bbc.co.uk](mailto:radio.gloucestershire@bbc.co.uk)

### **Severn Sound (Commercial)**

Bridge Studio, Eastgate Centre, Gloucester GL1 1SS

Tel: 01452 313200

Fax: 01452 313213

Email: [newsgloucester@creation.com](mailto:newsgloucester@creation.com)

## Television

### **Central TV**

23-25 Commercial Road, Gloucester GL1 2ED

Tel: 01452 309666

Fax: 01452 307675

Email: [centralnewssouth@itv.com](mailto:centralnewssouth@itv.com)

### **BBC West**

Broadcasting House, Bristol, BS8 2LR

Tel: 0117 973 2211

Fax: 0117 974 1537

Email: [pointswest@bbc.co.uk](mailto:pointswest@bbc.co.uk)

## Gloucester's Heritage

Gloucester has been shaped by its illustrious history. It has a rich inheritance of national importance that provides the foundation and inspiration for the Gloucester Heritage URC.

### The Roman Legacy

Gloucester owes its name, location and much of its physical layout to nearly five hundred years of Roman occupation. The first settlement, Roman Glevum, was a large Roman military fortress at Kingsholm, guarding the lowest crossing point of the River Severn and the route to Wales. This garrison was abandoned in AD65 and replaced by a Roman town where the city of Gloucester stands today.

Glevum became an important Roman town and one of only four Colonia to be established in Roman England, the others being Colchester, Lincoln and York. It was a powerful centre of Romano-British culture, containing all of the civic and public services that were the hallmarks of Roman life, including a basilica, forum and baths.

The existing street patterns of the city centre often follow those of Roman Glevum, especially along Southgate, Northgate and at the Cross. When the Romans retreated from the British shores, the Colonia and its great buildings were destroyed and the only visible remains of Roman Glevum to be seen today is a stretch of the city wall located under the City Museum.

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### The Anglo Saxon and Norman Legacy

After the Romans withdrew, the fortunes of Gloucester rapidly declined and its population abandoned the once magnificent Roman buildings. By the end of the fifth century the town was in ruins and in the sixth century it was overrun by the invading Anglo Saxons.

The Anglo Saxons re-settled Gloucester and created a new town from the ruins of the Roman buildings and used their streets to create a new urban community. In fact, much of the layout of central Gloucester is from this period and the oldest standing structure in the city is the Anglo Saxon nave wall of St. Oswald's Priory.

Gloucester's strategic and attractive location ensured that it would grow in importance and by the end of the ninth century it was booming again. It was to become even more important after the Norman Conquest; a large Norman Castle was built where Gloucester Prison now stands and St. Peter's Abbey was founded in 1089 on the site of the present-day Cathedral.

In 1085 William the Conqueror held a Great Court in Gloucester where he commissioned the Domesday Book. St. Peter's Abbey, of which the crypt and the magnificent nave and arcades of Gloucester Cathedral still survive, was consecrated in 1100.

## The Medieval Legacy

Gloucester was a city of great prestige and importance during the mediaeval period. In 1216, Henry III was crowned in St. Peter's Abbey and he went on to allocate funds for the construction of the Greyfriars (1231), Blackfriars (1239) and Whitefriars (1268) monasteries. Blackfriars Priory is an extremely important Scheduled Ancient Monument in the centre of Gloucester and represents the largest and most complete Dominican Priory in England.



1327 witnessed the awful murder of Edward II in Berkeley Castle and his body was eventually brought to St. Peter's Abbey for burial. His tomb was to become a site of pilgrimage, creating great wealth for the Abbey and the city. St Peter's was greatly extended during the next 50 years, during which time the finest fan vaulting in England was created in its magnificent Cloisters.

Gloucester was a mediaeval city of great commercial and ecclesiastic importance. St. Peter's Abbey became the only church outside London to have witnessed the coronation and the burial of a Monarch and it was the birthplace of English perpendicular architecture. Its magnificent English Perpendicular Tower was completed in 1450 as was the New Inn, a timber framed courtyard hostelry which survives today almost complete.

## The Tudor and Jacobean Legacy

The Tudor period established Gloucester as a great entrepreneurial and mercantile city, much favoured by Henry VII who bestowed Cathedral status on St. Peter's Abbey in 1451. Several timber framed buildings from this period still survive to bear witness to the great prosperity of the city in the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

By 1600 many markets were held in Gloucester, where cattle, sheep, grain and farm produce were traded alongside goods brought up via the River Severn or made in the city itself. Textiles were manufactured in Gloucester at this time and by 1700 the city was also to boast many important professional and judicial services.

Gloucester was a Parliamentary stronghold in the Civil War and in 1643 it famously resisted a lengthy Royalist siege. This conflict damaged large areas of the city which was further compounded by the punitive post-reformation demolition of the city walls by a vengeful Charles II.

## The Georgian Legacy

In the eighteenth century the city experienced another revival and several fine brick-built town houses replaced the now unfashionable timber framed structures. Many fine public and ecclesiastical buildings were built in the classical style during this period of civic renewal.

The Georgian period was also a period of commercial expansion and the city had to be significantly remodelled to cope with increased traffic volumes. Westgate Street and the Cross were substantially widened and the historic Eastgate was demolished. By 1770, the appearance of the city had fundamentally changed as brick replaced timber in the city centre and urban sprawl developed.

## The Regency Legacy

A range of impressive Regency properties in the Brunswick Road area of the city give witness to Gloucester's brief attempt to promote itself as a Spa resort in the early 1800's, but the far more significant legacy from this period is the completion of the Gloucester to Sharpness Canal in 1827.

The canal, which enabled sea-going vessels to gain access to Gloucester without having to navigate the dangerous lower River Severn, was begun in 1791 and completed some thirty five years later as England's longest and deepest canal, heralding a century of intense commercial activity for the city.

The first of the massive warehouses, the North Warehouse, was built in 1827 and this was followed by at least a further twenty similar structures throughout the next forty years. The canal, the Docks basins and the Docks buildings expanded dramatically and quickly to cope with huge volumes of sea-born traffic that were attracted by Gloucester's strategic access to the English Midlands. Gloucester was booming again.

Whilst nearby Cheltenham was developing as a fashionable Spa, the City of Gloucester, and particularly Gloucester Docks, was an economic and commercial powerhouse of national importance.



## The Victorian Legacy

The burgeoning Gloucester Docks was the stimulus for a period of almost uninterrupted growth that was to last throughout the nineteenth century and the city prospered as an important trading, engineering and commercial centre.

But, as the century drew to an end, ocean-going ships became too large to move through the canal and the docks rapidly declined as materials were transported by rail rather than water. The city remained a vibrant commercial centre and large-scale engineering moved into the south of the city, especially in the shape of the famous Gloucester Wagon Works.

The population of the city more than doubled between 1870 and 1890, from 7,000 to over 15,000 and a massive house building boom ensued, with crowded artisan houses springing up on the edge of the city centre and more affluent residencies extending its outskirts.

The city centre became a congested, heaving, commercial centre, crowned by many impressive new civic buildings, including the Eastgate Market portico (1855), the Guildhall (1892), the Science College (1872) and the City Library (1899).

## The Twentieth Century Legacy

The centre of Gloucester changed considerably in the twentieth century as much of its historic fabric was demolished to make way for some large and brutally modern retail developments. Vast new housing estates grew to the south and the east of the city and a network of ring roads were introduced to assuage traffic congestion.

The city centre became virtually unpopulated and by the First World War it was entirely dominated by commercial interests, many of which were waning, and Gloucester began to acquire a reputation as a city in decline.

This deterioration continued after the Second World War and the once magnificent Docks became a derelict wasteland. The city was failing to cope with large scale post-industrial decline and its centre was considered to be 'unworthy' of a historic city. This caused the City Council to commission the distinguished civic architect G.A. Jellicoe to construct a new Masterplan for Gloucester.

The 'Jellicoe Plan' was delivered in 1962 and presaged another period in which the historic fabric of the city was sacrificed to accommodate large scale redevelopment projects, notably Kings Square and two large pedestrian shopping precincts, with rooftop car parks linked by cross street bridges.



This rebuilding of the city centre was completed in the early 1970's and whilst these developments are now generally deplored, at the time of their construction they were celebrated as praiseworthy examples of civic modernism.

The opening of the first Severn Bridge in 1966 and the construction of the M5 in 1971 further relieved systemic traffic congestion, caused by a huge growth in the city population, housed in many large council estates, but the city centre remained largely unpopulated and culturally barren.

Then, at the end of the century, Gloucester's recovery began with the tourism led regeneration of the Docks and the City Council's courageous decision to transfer its activities to The North Warehouse, symbolically the earliest and most derelict warehouse in the historic port. The Victorian Guildhall was subsequently converted into a successful Arts Centre.

The city centre was successively pedestrianised in the mid 1990s and the city council obtained a £10.5m Sports Lottery Fund award to help finance the £17m reconstruction of Gloucester Leisure Centre and a number of smaller projects began to uplift the city.

Nevertheless, nearly all of the other major redevelopment projects in the city, including the regeneration the Docks, the remodelling of Kings Square, Blackfriars Priory, the Cattle Market and important transport infrastructure improvements were to fail or stumble, thus stimulating the involvement in the city of the South West of England Regional Development Agency and the launch of the Gloucester Heritage Urban Regeneration Company in early 2004.

## Useful Telephone Numbers

**British Waterways South West**

01452 318000

**City MP's Office**

01452 311870

**English Heritage South West**

0117 9750700

**English Partnerships (SW Region)**

0207 8811600

**Environment Agency**

01684 292767

**Gloucester Heritage Urban Regeneration Company**

01452 307309

**Gloucester City Council**

01452 522232

**Gloucestershire County Council**

01452 425000

**Gloucestershire First**

01242 864190

**Government Office South West**

0117 900 1700

**South West RDA (Gloucestershire)**

0117 933 0200

**Valuation Office, Gloucester**

01452 360200

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in association with Destination Marketing UK



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