

News Telegraph Comment Are we all on the right path?

SO A firm that has overseen some of Ashbourne's biggest ever developments has written an open letter publicly admitting it has a large sum of money burning a hole in its pockets.

Cedar House Investments agreed, when consent was given to build Ashbourne's retail park on land formerly occupied by the Nestle factory, that it would treat the community to a few new facilities to sweeten the deal it was making with our planners.

It's a standard legal process that falls under the infamous 'section 106' of the Town and Country Planning Act and, among a few of the developer's obligations at the time, was the construction of a footpath to ensure people could walk safely to the new commercial outlets.

To build this path to what Derbyshire County Council refers to as an 'adoptable standard' – meaning good enough so they're happy to take on its maintenance – it will have to be made of Tarmac and larger bridges will have to be constructed where the path crosses the River Henmore.

Cedar House Investments has not publicly revealed how much money it has set aside for this project but we're assured, in the letter on page eight, that it's been allocated as part of its budget and that it has no intention of shying away from a responsibility.

Rather, the firm wants to know whether building the path is what people really want. It's an unusual step to make but it's a company which knows Ashbourne and knows what makes it tick.

A big question now, is, if the people of Ashbourne do indeed choose not to have a footpath built, if the company's hunch that people would rather the money be spent elsewhere, will the authorities drop their on-going enforcement action and allow the public to have their way?

More to the point, how will we decide where the money will be spent?

It's over to you now to have your say.

Have your say

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Cartoon corner



If you're more comfortable with it we could call it a bedroom tax

Help on offer to keep floods away

FLOOD prone areas in and around Ashbourne are to be given a helping hand as a new initiative supporting woodland planting is developed.

The Forestry Commission has teamed up with the Environment Agency, the Woodland Trust and Natural England to develop the Midlands Woodland for Water programme, which is the first of its kind in England.

It aims to help landowners access grants and plan new schemes to help mitigate downstream flooding and improve the quality of rivers. The scheme is running across the Midlands with grants being prioritised for a limited period in East Staffordshire.

The programme offers up to £4,800 per hectare for new planting and up to £300 per hectare for 15 years for farmland converted to woodland. Through the programme the Forestry Commission will provide advice to farmers and other landowners on creating woodland areas that will reduce pollution, sedimentation and the risk of flooding.

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Flooding incidents double

RAINFALL and storms that have been frequenting the Ashbourne area have led to Severn Trent Water dealing with almost double the usual amount of flooding incidents, the company has said.

Chris Giles, waste water manager for Severn Trent said: "Over the last week or so, we've had to deal

with significantly more incidents of flooding that we would normally see at this time of year.

"We know that sewer flooding is one of the worst things that can happen to our customers, and although this situation is challenging for us, we are working hard to do everything we can."

Village hall's makeover

REFURBISHMENT of a village hall near Ashbourne is due to start, following a year of fund-raising.

The Rocester Village Hall Management Committee has announced that the first phase of a programme of improvements is to begin tomorrow.

Included in the refurbishment will be the installation of energy efficient heating and lighting, a new

ceiling and improvements to the roof.

There will also be new entrance doors fitted along with a redecoration of the main hall.

Future fund-raising activities planned to help raise funds for Phase two of the project include a swing band night.

The second phase will include an extension and improved facilities.

Can you help with a big charity motorbike ride?

By Gareth Butterfield

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THE ASHBOURNE News Telegraph's editor has revealed his hopes for a two-wheeled fund-raiser to support people like his wife, Katherine, who are suffering from leukaemia.

As part of our 'Take Five Minutes' campaign, which sets out to encourage more people to give blood and research bone marrow donation, editor Stephen Sinfield has revealed his hopes to hold a motorcycle rally in a bid to further raise awareness and cash for charity.

He said: "All I have at the moment is an ambition to stage an event which accomplishes a multitude of hopes.

"If we can get this dream from the drawing board to the Tarmac then my hope would be to run the rally from 'Queen's to Queen's'.

"Hence the Queen's Hospital in Birmingham and the Queen's Hospital in Burton – the two



Katherine's diary appears online

ashbournenewstelegraph.co.uk

institutions instrumental since April in the care of my wife.

"I came up with the wacky name of the 'Boneshaker MARROWthon' and hope the 35-mile ride between the two hospitals would raise vital cash for the charities Cure Leukaemia and the Anthony Nolan Trust as well as raise awareness and understanding of leukaemia and bone marrow donation."

Stephen admits that, as his time is taken visiting Katherine daily in Birmingham, planning of the event so far is minimal – without even a firm date in mind – and so he is hoping supporters of our 'Take Five Minutes' campaign will join together to make this dream a reality.

Stephen said: "I know that organising such a rally is a minefield of red tape.

"Firstly, I realise that starting and ending the rally at a busy hospital is out of the question, therefore the Queen's to Queen's link will have to be more of a ride-by rather than a static stop.

"It would be great if we could attract a few of the bikers who take part in the Ride to the Wall event to also support this rally – bikers are normally always up for a ride-out if the weather's good.

"So far I've secured the support of Suzuki GB who should be able to supply me with an impressive bike for the ride and I've tapped up many of the contacts I have acquired through writing motoring pages to get the event publicised nationally in some of the major specialist bike magazines."

Stephen is welcoming suggestions and offers of help and can be contacted by emailing editor@ashbournenewstelegraph.co.uk

•To see an on-going diary of his wife's progress as she continues her brave battle with leukaemia, turn to page 17

'FAT DADS' ARE A MONTH AWAY FROM THEIR CHALLENGE

WITH just one month to go before two 'fat dads' from Ashbourne head out on a nine-day, 879-mile bike ride from Lands End to John O'Groats a team of six riders say their training is going well.

Mike Gerard-Pearse and Philip Horsnall are part of a small group of riders calling themselves Fat Dads who have clocked up an average of 1,200 miles training for the fund-raising challenge, which they set off to complete on Saturday, September 7.

Through sponsorship from friends, family and colleagues the six riders are planning to raise as much money as possible for Derby Breast Cancer Support, Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Rutland Air Ambulance, Ashgate Hospice, Neuro Care and Derbyshire Community Foundation.

Team member Martin Speed said: "Our training is going well with rides of 80 and 100 miles being completed on a regular basis now. We have probably each done over 1,200 miles in training so far.

"Our average week must be 250 miles each with the intensity picking up during August."

To find out more visit www.fatdads-tours.co.uk



IN TRAINING . . . Ian Heap, Martin Speed, Nigel Stubley, Peter Botham, Philip Horsnall and Mike Gerard-Pearse make up the 'Fat Dads' who will cycle from Land's End to John O'Groats next month