

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 28 APRIL 2022

Report Title	Review of street or building names and monuments in the Stroud district			
Purpose of Report	The purpose of this report is to receive the recommendations of the Review Panel in the review of street or building names and monuments in the Stroud district.			
Decision(s)	Council RESOLVES to: a. Thank the Review Panel for their contribution to this work; and b. Accept all recommendations of the Review Panel outlined in section 4 of this report.			
Consultation and Feedback	A public consultation took place between 7 July and 1 September 2021 and over 1,600 responses were received. A separate consultation has been held with the residents and leaseholders of Blackboy House.			
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Options	1. To accept all recommendations of the Review Panel 2. To amend the recommendations of the Review Panel 3. To accept none of the recommendations of the Review Panel			
Background Papers	Report on the Significance of Blackboy Clock and associated Statue, Blackboy House, Castle Street, Stroud			
Appendices	Appendix 1 - Review Panel Report: Review of street or building names and monuments in the Stroud District - Appendix A – Survey Response Analysis - Appendix B – List of Consultees - Appendix C – Historic England Pre-application Advice - Appendix D – Suggestions for Commemoration - Appendix E – All Survey Responses - Appendix F – Equality Impact Assessment			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

1. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

- 1.1 As a response to the issues raised globally by the Black Lives Matter movement in 2020, the Leader of Council outlined some specific actions for the Council to act on which included:

‘Consult with the community on any street and building names, statues and architectural features that may be considered offensive and if actions need to be taken. And how we must consult on how best to educate ourselves about our history, the local legacy of slavery, and the local historical contribution of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities to our district.’

- 1.2 Following this, residents of the district raised concerns about an object called the Blackboy Clock on the front of Blackboy House, Castle Street, Stroud in terms of its appropriateness and called on the Council to consider its removal. The Council established a Review Panel in 2021 to undertake a public consultation and review of streets, statues and monuments across the district and included Blackboy Clock as part of this review.
- 1.3 The Review Panel was made up of three community representatives (recruited through an open application process), historians, academics, members of the Council’s Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group and the Council’s Specialist Conservation Officer. The Panel was supported by the Corporate Policy and Governance Team.

Individuals appointed to the Review Panel were:

Cllr Natalie Bennett (Chair)	Member of the District Council’s Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Working Group and Stroud District Councillor
Camilla Hale	Chair of Stroud Preservation Trust and Stroud Town Councillor
Dan Guthrie	Community Representative
Danae Savvidou	Community Representative
Elaine Gordon	Member of the Council’s Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Working Group & Senior Operations Partner (HR, Stroud District Council)
Jane Hoskin	Community Representative
Kate Russell	Specialist Conservation Officer (Stroud District Council)
Stuart Butler	Historian and member of Radical Stroud

2. PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- 2.3 A public consultation opened on 7 July 2021 and closed on 1 September 2021 and over 1,600 responses were received. The consultation was published widely and articles discussing the Review were published in local and national newspapers including the [Stroud News and Journal](#), the [BBC](#), [The Guardian](#) and [The Daily Mail](#).
- 2.4 A report on the Significance of the Blackboy Clock and Statue setting out what we know about the history and origins of the clock and statue was published alongside the consultation. Respondents were asked to describe in three words how the statue makes them feel and to provide their thoughts on what they think should happen to the clock and statue.

2.5 Survey questions asked for suggestions of street or building names and monuments within the Stroud district that should be reviewed for their appropriateness or links to the transatlantic slave trade and colonialism. The consultation also invited consideration for future recognition of individuals or events that celebrate diversity and important events in our history.

3. SURVEY FINDINGS

3.1 The responses received to the consultation were diverse and generally well considered. The Survey Response Analysis included at Appendix A of the Review Panel's report sets out the findings from the survey including visual recommendations in the form of word clouds and other analytics. As the survey allowed for open and free text responses, all the responses regarding what should happen to the clock and statue were categorised into broader themes, based on the comments made.

3.2 The key findings from the survey were:

- 77% of respondents felt the Blackboy statue should be removed
- 57% felt the Blackboy statue should be relocated to a museum
- 22% felt the Blackboy statue should remain where it is
- A broad spread of people or groups to potentially commemorate were suggested
- The consultation did not identify any individuals who were central to the Transatlantic slave trade as having have been commemorated, although there are beneficiaries of hereditary wealth and colonialism within the district.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REVIEW PANEL

4.1 The recommendations of the Review Panel are outlined below with a summary of the reasoning for the recommendations outlined in section 5 and 6 below.

1. **The council should consult with the legal owner of the Blackboy Clock and Statue to progress its removal, or if this is not possible, work with organisations including Historic England to secure a solution for the clock and statue:**
 - a. Delegated responsibility be given to the Strategic Director of Resources to consult with the legal owner of the Blackboy Clock and Statue to secure its removal. The indicative process outlined on page 22 of the Review Panel report to be followed as a guide.
 - b. A budget be allocated to support the removal and relocation of the statue and the clock.
2. **If listed building consent is received and the clock and statue removed, the clock and statue is offered to The Museum in the Park collection:**
 - a. In accordance with the National Museum Standards, once an offer is made to The Museum in the Park, the decision to acquire or not rests with the Museum to consider against its Collections and Development Policy which guides acquisitions.
 - b. As set out in the Museum's collection and development policy, the clock and statue cannot be offered to the Museum with any conditions attached.
 - c. The offer of either a loan or donation of an object can only be made by the legal owner and is subject to all necessary information being made available to the

Museum for its consideration, as guided by the code of ethics of professional bodies such as the Museums Association and Institute of Conservation.

- d. If the Museum in the Park are unable to accept the clock and statue, the reasons will be published on Stroud District Council's website.
- e. If the Museum in the Park are unable accept the clock and statue, the items will be offered in the following order to 1. The Museum of Gloucester or another museum within the County 2. The International Slavery Museum, Liverpool 3. The Clockmakers Museum, London (Science Museum).

3. Blackboy House is renamed:

- a. The current owners and residents of Blackboy House to decide on an appropriate name of the address.
- b. The owners of Blackboy House to apply for the building to be renamed.
- c. The council to pay for the name change (the current fee is £35.00) and provide copies of the official name change documentation to the owners of Blackboy House.
- d. The council to provide practical help and support to the owners and compile a detailed checklist of the organisations that need to be informed
- e. The council will make an *ex gratia* payment of £150.00 to each household of Blackboy House for any inconvenience the renaming may cause.

4. The council should undertake a review of the street name 'Blackboys', Dursley:

- a. The council to consult with the residents of the eight properties with a 'Blackboys' address regarding a potential street name change.
- b. The council to consult with Dursley Town Council regarding the consultation with the above properties.

5. The council should progress with its plans for the physical restoration of the Anti-Slavery Arch, Paganhill and take into consideration its historic and tourism potential.

6. A task force is established by the Council:

- a. To contextualise the statue and oversee the installation of an Information Plaque to be situated outside Blackboy House. The Information Plaque is intended to provide information regarding the statue and some details of this review and should be erected regardless of whether clock and statue are eventually removed, although the content will differ depending on the outcome.
- b. To develop a community project for the commemoration of an individual, group of individuals or event suggested in the survey responses.
- c. To consider how the Anti-Slavery Arch, its history and Stroud's involvement in the Transatlantic slave trade and the abolition of slavery can form part of the community project.
- d. The task force is to have no more than eight members and will include at least one member of the Review Panel. A recruitment exercise will be undertaken and members of the community and residents who live close to Blackboy House will be encouraged to apply. The task force will be supported by council officers.
- e. Recruitment of the task force should be undertaken by the council and members of the Review Panel.

- f. Members of the task force (excluding council officers) should each be remunerated for their efforts the sum of £800.00 (estimated 40 hours work each). The remuneration to be paid across three instalments: 20% after the first meeting of the task force; 35% once the design and content of the Information Plaque have been agreed; and 35% upon completion of the community project.
- g. The task force to be allocated a budget of £10,000 to fund the necessary materials, professional design, and instalment of the Information Plaque and the community project to commemorate an individual, group of individuals or event suggested in the survey responses.
- h. The budget allocated and any necessary procurement will be managed by the council.

7. The council's [street naming protocol](#) is reviewed to include:

- a. That street names will not be considered that may be construed, either in themselves or in association with particular political or historical occurrences, as discriminatory or offensive under the Equality Act 2010; or those which could be considered as 'not in the spirit' of this act, will not be considered.
- b. A consultation process to involve our communities in the selection of future street names with a particular aim to ensure future street names are inclusive and reflect diversity within the district and address any potential gender imbalance in the street names across the district.

8. The Council's Cultural Strategy, which is currently in development, should:

- a. Empower communities and individuals to celebrate and share their history, heritage, culture and identity
- b. Focus on increasing representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities as well as those from a range of social and economic backgrounds
- c. Celebrate aspects of the district's cultural and community diversity
- d. Engage with local organisations to encourage and support the creation of work that demonstrates collaboration across a wide range of diverse backgrounds

9. If approved, progress towards these recommendations should be reported to the council's Strategy and Resources Committee.

5.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BLACKBOY CLOCK AND STATUE

5.1.1 Blackboy House is a Grade II listed building meaning it is a building of special interest, warranting effort for preservation. The freehold of the building of Blackboy House was transferred to Blackboy House Management Company Ltd consisting of five flats in the main building and an Annexe at the rear of the property with a separate freehold title.

5.1.2 The survey responses to question two, asking for people's feelings about the statue, made clear that the object causes pain and offence, with words like 'uncomfortable', 'disgusted' and 'upset' occurring frequently. In response to question three, asking for people's thoughts on what should happen to the clock and statue, the strongest call was for removal (77%), and 57% of those said that they should be relocated to a museum, with many questioning the appropriateness of their current location and pointing out the lack of contextual information provided alongside them.

5.1.2 When making their decisions, the Panel paid particular attention to the weighing up of the physical harm to the Blackboy House building versus the wider public benefit that could come from the clock and statue's relocation. The Panel believe that due to the strong public opinion advocating removal that the clock and statue should be removed from the public realm but not hidden away. It should be re-displayed with detailed interpretation in place that provides learning and education so that we can continue to challenge what is no longer acceptable, provoke thinking and demonstrate that change is needed. The Panel strongly believe that locality would be of great importance to this relocation as the clock was made in the Stroud district, it should remain in the district. Many of the survey responses indicated that the Museum in the Park is an ideal location and the Panel agree that this would be the best place for the statue and clock to be contextualised and redisplayed.

5.1.3 The Museum in the Park met with the Review Panel and contributed to the discussions, the Museum prepared a list of considerations and ethical matters which would need to be addressed before they would be able to accept the clock and statue should the items be offered to them by the legal owner and if listed building consent for removal is achieved.

5.1.4 The leaseholders and residents of Blackboy House have been consulted since the commencement of the review. Once the public consultation closed, the Panel asked for the residents' views on the clock and statue being removed and the building being renamed. Most were in support of the renaming and removal of the clock and statue although some disagreed with the clock being removed. The Panel concluded that due to ethical considerations and the unlikelihood of a museum being able to accept a partial archive, they would not be recommending that statue and clock are separated.

5.2 Next steps if the recommendation to remove the statue and clock is approved

5.2.1 If the recommendation to remove the clock and statue is approved, it is important that the complexity of the process for removal is not underestimated. The council has no power to secure the removal of the clock and statue without consent of the legal owner and listed building consent.

5.2.2. It was learnt in January 2022 that the clock and statue were placed into The Blackboy Clock Trust in 2002. This has made the situation more complex as the main trustees are not available to comment on the removal at this stage although the council has recently been in contact with a family member of the Trust and will continue with these conversations if the recommendation to progress with the removal of the clock and statue is approved.

5.2.3 If the recommendation for the clock and statue to be removed is to be progressed, listed building consent must be achieved. The Local Planning Authority (Stroud District Council) must place considerable weight on the need for conservation meaning that changes to listed buildings which may result in harm should be avoided, or the impact minimised. In 2021, new laws were announced around items of cultural and historic heritage making clear that historic monuments should be retained and explained. If the council intends to grant permission for removal and Historic England objects, the Secretary of State for the

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities will be notified so they can make a final decision about the application.

- 5.2.4 The council proactively requested advice from Historic England's regarding the removal of the clock and statue and their pre-application letter in response stated that removal of the clock would remove the ability to appreciate the clock in situ and would harm the significance of the building although much of the building's historic and architectural interest would survive. This indicates that the council will need to provide strong supporting evidence and detailed justification that removal of the clock and statue for the public benefit outweighs the harm that will be caused to the listed building in its removal.
- 5.2.5 The Review Panel's report provides a flow diagram of the indicative process for removal. The diagram outlines the key steps that will need to be taken and illustrates that removal is not guaranteed even if council approves the recommendation. There are multiple steps in the process after which it may not be possible to proceed with removal due to the complications regarding ownership and planning considerations. It is also not possible to provide indicative timescales for any step in the process and if achievable, it should be recognised that the process from removal to display in a museum is likely to take several months or even years.

6. OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Other commemorations and street and building names for review

- 6.1.1 The survey asked respondents if there are any commemorations that should be reviewed to ensure they are appropriate. Several responses were received and after removing any which were outside the scope of the review, the Panel undertook research into the suggestions that remained. The Panel's report outlines these suggestions, the information submitted with the survey response, the Panel's own research and their responses to the findings.
- 6.1.2 The Panel only recommend for one street name to be reviewed and this is 'Blackboys', Dursley. The Panel found conflicting information on the origins for this name but concluded that the origins do not take away from the fact this street name causes offence. The Panel noted that a precedent has already been set for similar names with 'Blackboy Lane' in London and five 'Black Boy' pubs being renamed. In accordance with the council's Street Naming Protocol, the Panel recommends that residents of 'Blackboys' and Dursley Town Council are now consulted for their views on whether the street name should change.
- 6.1.3 It should be noted that the government launched a technical consultation on 12 April 2022 setting out plans to ensure that future street name changes are approved by local residents and the recommendation to consult with residents of 'Blackboys' is in line with these new proposals.
- 6.1.4 The Panel also agreed with a few responses that indicated more could be done to promote the Anti-Slavery Arch and to tell the story of the district in the transatlantic slave trade and made a recommendation to reflect this.

6.2 Suggestions for future commemoration

- 6.2.1 In order to ensure that the diversity of our communities is appropriately reflected, the consultation asked for nominations of other names, particularly of unrepresented or underrepresented groups who should be celebrated. The full list of suggestions can be found in Appendix A.
- 6.2.2 The Panel wished for communities to engage with the topics of representation and shared histories, and rather than choose one individual from those suggested to be commemorated, the Panel felt it was important to include two community-led approaches in their recommendations.
- 6.2.3 One of these recommendations was for the community to contribute to the district's future street naming by submitting suggestions to a 'pool' of street names which can then be considered by Town and Parish Councils and private developers when identifying new street names.
- 6.2.4 The other recommendation was for a community-led task force to be established to develop a community project with the purpose of telling the stories of one or more of the individuals put forward for commemoration in the survey responses. This task force would also look at how to contextualise the Blackboy Clock and Statue and install an Information Plaque outside Blackboy House.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The Review Panel have spent a significant amount of time analysing the survey responses, undertaking their own research and exploring all of the options before making their recommendations. The recommendations are a culmination of considerable work and it does not stop here. The Panel are now asking the council to progress with the recommendations should it choose to approve them. The community are also being asked to play a part, by contributing to a community project and by taking the time to learn and explore our shared history through collective education.
- 7.2 The Panel makes the recommendation for the removal of the Blackboy Clock and Statue in full knowledge of the sensitivity and complexity of the process and awareness that, for several reasons, removal may not be achievable. The council has no power to enforce the removal of the clock and statue but is being asked to explore if removal can be achieved.

8. IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Financial Implications

There are financial implications to this decision, not all of which are certain at this stage.

Recommendation 1 of the Review Panel says that budget should be allocated for the removal and relocation of the statue. These costs have been estimated at £33,500. In such a situation it is necessary for Council to identify a solution to funding a budget of this nature. It is therefore recommended that the Council's "repair and replacements" reserve be used to provide funding for the removal and relocation of the statue. The allocation of the budget can then be monitored by the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Chair of Strategy and Resources Committee and be reported back to that committee.

Funds required for Recommendation 3 total £785. It is expected that this can be met from existing resources.

The total budget required for the Task Force in Recommendation 6 is a maximum of £16,400. If the allocation is approved by Council, it will form part of general Council budgets and will be detailed in the “outturn report” to Strategy and Resources Committee.

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8.2 Legal Implications

The public sector equality duty and other duties arising under the Equality Act 2010 do not override planning law. Listed building consent has to be obtained before any alterations can be made to a listed structure. While the contents of the review clearly demonstrate the strength of public feeling, the recommendations in this report should not be seen as condoning public disorder or encouraging people “to take the law into their own hands”. Due legal process must be observed.

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8.3 Equality Implications

One of the intended outcomes of the review is to address representation of unrepresented or underrepresented groups within the public realm. The recommendation for a task force to undertake a community project will bring together a broad, inclusive group and the council will proactively seek to encourage participation from all sectors of the community. It is intended that the community project will make the Stroud district more representative and better celebrate diversity in the future.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is attached to this report as an appendix and additional equality assessments will be undertaken for individual decisions resulting from the recommendations of the Review Panel.

8.4 Environmental Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.