

WAR ON THE GROT SPOTS

Planning chief pledges action over eyesores

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Eyesores which disfigure the face of Tunbridge Wells are to be urgently tackled.

The town's new planning chief vowed this week to go to war on the hated Grot Spots.

Robert Cottrill, who joined the borough council four weeks ago as head of planning and development, has already had discussions "with as many developers as possible" about their plans for empty properties. He said: "A bad environment is going to encourage crime. We have had a number of successes. It's about using carrots and sticks with developers and making them aware of the strength of local feeling."

Among the property owners Mr Cottrill has consulted are the developers of the old cinema site opposite the Town Hall.

The closure of Morrison's supermarket near the station on October 28 has prompted fears the town will sink further into decay.

Grot Spots have become a burning issue in Tunbridge Wells, with high-profile criticism from the Civic Society, MP Greg Clark and residents. Areas including the cinema, the Greyhound Pub and the disused Aldi property have been described as "a public embarrassment".

Mr Cottrill promised success with a number of the sites, including the Greyhound and Aldi, and said he intended to use "planning powers more creatively" to tackle the worst offenders.

In an exclusive interview with the Kent and Sussex Courier he also spoke of tackling the town's north-south divide, working more effectively with developers and a strategy for the town.

Is this Royal Tunbridge Wells?

<http://www.townforum.org.uk/focusgroup/slideshow/slideshow291105.html>



Top Eyesores in Royal Tunbridge Wells
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for Town Forum Meeting 29 November 2005

Highways - High Standard?

<http://www.townforum.org.uk/focusgroup/highways270306/highways270306.html>



Highways Grots in Royal Tunbridge Wells
- Pavements, Lampposts, Dirty Signs, Fly-posting, Street Furniture
for Town Forum Meeting 27 March 2006