

# Laurie pens poetic plea for trees

**BEST-selling author Laurie Lee** has launched into verse in a bid to save Stroud's threatened Stratford Park trees.

Laurie, aged 75, is horrified at Stroud district council's plans to axe 12 beech trees for a road realignment scheme near a new Tesco store.

So the author of the best-selling *Cider With Rosie*, who lives in picturesque Slad, near Stroud, has dashed off a poem in protest. It reads:

**"I think that I shall never see,**

**"A Tesco lovely as a tree,  
"And if we're forced to cut  
ours down,  
"T"will shame the gateway to  
our town."**

Laurie, who works at his London flat during the week, could not be contacted yesterday.

But last night his wife Kathy said at their Slad home her husband felt strongly that the trees should not be chopped down.

"He loves landscapes," she said. "And there is no need to remove these trees.

"It is a very beautiful corner.

Why suddenly have a bare patch made?"

Despite a public outcry, Stroud council is insisting the trees must come down.

□ **ACTRESS Sarah-Jane Varley**, who played wheeler-dealer Sarah Foster in the sailing soap *Howards Way*, is far from all at sea while Royal Navy pilot husband Paul is away on duty. Sarah-Jane, aged 27, will be treading the boards of Yeovil's Octagon Theatre next month in a fashion show in aid of the BBC's Children In Need appeal. The show, to be hosted by BBC newsreader Jill Dando, will be held on November 11. Sarah-Jane divides her time between London and a cottage near Ilminster, Somerset.