

PORTFOLIO REPORT - ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES 2022-2023

This report is a brief run through some of the highlights of the last year's work in the areas of waste & recycling, street cleansing, parks & open spaces, and public protection.

WASTE & RECYCLING

Priority: moving towards zero residual waste to landfill and incineration

- Finally took delivery of our second new fully electric bin wagon and shared our experiences of owning and operating them at the Lancashire Waste Partnership forum.
- While we continue to wait for national government to confirm changes to waste collection requirements under the Environment Act, started a wheelie bin recycling trial in Heysham on the same footprint as last year's food waste trial.
- Battery recycling added to kerbside collections with £18K start-up funding from Lancashire County Council - 1.6 tonnes collected to date. The waste team is now working on adding small electrical waste to kerbside collections.
- Continued working with Freegle to encourage reuse/free exchange of unwanted items by sponsoring our two local groups (Lancaster & Morecambe; Carnforth).

STREET CLEANSING

Priority: keeping our district's neighbourhoods, parks, beaches and open space clean, well maintained, and safe

- Successful implementation of Keep Britain Tidy fly-tipping interventions trial showing significant reductions in fly-tipping in targeted areas. This year our partnership with KBT will continue, with further pieces of work on developing values-based communications and a full fly-tipping strategy.
- Separate project started with Keep Britain Tidy and Lancaster BID on the 'More Bins' initiative to work on reducing cigarette litter in Lancaster city centre.
- Meetings held with Lancashire County Council regarding poor performance of street weed-spraying contractor despite increased budget, resulting in City Council being commissioned to deal with back alley vegetation. We understand that County has procured a different contractor for the 2023 season.
- Mini review of street sweeping schedules and methodology to improve performance, with plan to do route optimisation work when resources are available.
- Supported the Great British Spring Clean with staff and community events and continue to support ad hoc community litter picks throughout the year.

PARKS & OPEN SPACES & FOOD

Priorities: increasing the biodiversity of our district; working in partnership with residents, local organisations and partners, recognising the strengths and skills in our community

- 5 Green Flag accreditations: Williamson Park, Happy Mount Park, Regent Park, Ryelands Park and Torrisholme Cemetery.
- Signed up over 50 Tree Wardens and organised two well attended hedgerow management training sessions with the Tree Council, and tree/hedge planting sessions at Ryelands Park, Miss Whalley's Field, and Scotch Quarry.
- Helped community and friends groups to obtain grant funding, and installed new playground equipment at Greaves Park, Ryelands Park, Torrisholme Park, Lymm Avenue, Crag Bank, and Portland Drive; with Scotch Quarry and Fairfield playgrounds funded and equipment on order.

- Working with community and friends groups carried out green space improvements at Regent Park, Alexandra Square, Sibsey Street, Miss Whalley's Field, Crag Bank, the Storey Gardens, and Happy Mount Park.
- Helped set up two new constituted friends groups at Happy Mount Park and Clay Pitts Park, bringing the number of active green-space friends groups in the district to 26.
- Worked with Lancaster School Sports Network to provide planting sites for more than 20 local primary schools to design and plant seasonal flower beds celebrating the Commonwealth Games.
- Supported more than 120 events on Council land, including the new Baylight event which attracted more than 25,000 visitors to Morecambe over three evenings.
- Grassland Management wildflower seeding and planting continued, with large volunteer seeding events at Sunny Slopes and Tarnbrook Kingsway; seeding at various other locations around the district; plug planting at Wray, Silverdale, Slyne, and Kingsway; bulb planting at Bleasedale Kingsway.
- Continued our commitment to match-fund the core coordinator role at LESS FoodFutures, helping to enable the successful £1.1 million National Lottery bid for its Closing Loops local food economy programme; now working with LESS to support its Closing Loops composting project.
- White Lund Deport nursery continues to host a growing site for the FoodFutures FarmStart project, training a next generation of market gardeners, and also the community pollinators project, which is helping the City Council grow 1000s of wildflower plug plants to support the Grasslands Management Strategy.

PUBLIC PROTECTION

Priorities: focused on serving our residents, local organisations and district

- £39K funding obtained from Police & Crime Commissioner fund for CCTV on the cycle path between Carlisle Bridge and Morecambe as a crime deterrent; CCTV installed in Priory Churchyard where there has been a long history of ASB issues.
- £455K grant funding obtained from DEFRA for electric taxi project, enabling drivers to try out electric vehicles on short leases from the Council.
- £485K grant funding for Community Health Champions delivered through a number of projects around health and vaccinations.
- Community Alcohol Partnership established and district Suicide Prevention Plan designed.
- Work has been ongoing to update the City Council's Enforcement Strategy.

Once again, huge thanks to Will Griffith and his teams for their ongoing enthusiasm and commitment to improving services, despite the significant financial, social, and environmental challenges that continue to come our way.

Cllr Dave Brookes
Cabinet Member for Environmental Services

April 2023