

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE PORTFOLIO COUNCILLOR H SKINNER

Report to Council – 13 December 2023

ENVIRONMENT

The Environment team continue to deliver on its commitment to 'Protect the Environment for the future'. In the aftermath of Storm Babet, the team have been especially diligent in their support for affected residents and businesses. In this report I will now highlight some key initiatives that have contributed to the Council's on-going commitment.

Flooding Response

The Environment Team have worked hard to help residents deal with the unprecedented flooding events that took place at the end of October, following Storm Babet. Initially, teams were deployed to deliver sandbags to affected areas but this quickly progressed to a recovery response, to support the 249 flood affected properties and businesses across the Borough.

Deployment of the sweeper team was the first phase of recovery. They cleared the affected roads and reported any clogged drains to Nottinghamshire County Council.

This was followed by the flood response team, who visited all the affected areas to collect damaged household items. To date, the team have collected 90 tonnes of bulky waste (including sofas, chairs and waste electrical items) as well as 74 fridges.

Whilst the last programmed collection took place on the 17 November 2023, many residents continue to wait for a visit from their insurance assessors. To support these residents, the team will continue with ad hoc collections over the coming weeks.

Support to businesses has also been provided. Six skips have been delivered to the businesses on Bessell Lane in Stapleford, which has enabled 30 tonnes of waste to be removed. A skip has also been provided to a business on Wellington Street, in Stapleford.

Glass Recycling at Christmas

There are now only 12 days until Christmas and over the festive season, households produce more glass waste than at any other time of the year. During this period, the recycling team collects 250 tonnes of glass across the Borough. That equates to a million glass bottles and jars! Recycling this amount of glass also helps to save 80 tonnes of CO₂ from being emitted that's because the energy required to recycle glass is substantially lower than the energy required to create a new product.

To help aid collections, please can Members remind residents that glass must be placed out in Council containers (either a glass bin or bags). Glass placed out for collection in bags for life or plastic boxes will not be picked up, this is due to our health and safety risk assessment and the need to keep our employees safe.

Residents can request additional glass bags at any time and householders can place out up to four bags for each collection.

If additional bags are needed, please contact the Environment Team.

Leaf Fall/Blocked drains and gullies

Autumn and Winter time is always a busy time for the sweeper and street cleansing teams, as they need to deal with significant amounts of leaf fall. As well as keeping carriageways and gullies clear, they also try to keep high footfall areas, such as the four town centres and the main pedestrian routes, free of leaves. This work is weather-dependant. At times, leaves fall steadily, which means that the team can keep up with the work, but at other times, large amounts of leaves fall very quickly across the whole Borough. This then results in an operational challenge for the section. Please can Members report any areas of concern to the Environment Team.

Can I also remind Members to report to the County Council, any blocked or full drains.

<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/transport/roads/report-a-flooding-or-drainage-problem>

Green Rewards and Free Trees

It has been a year since my last full update on the Green Rewards platform and I would like to update Members on current progress. Across the Nottinghamshire platform, there are currently 7,227 members who have undertaken 292,000 actions, which has helped to prevent over 850 tonnes of carbon from being emitted.

From a Broxtowe perspective, there are 2,670 households registered on the platform. This is a 34% increase on the previous year and shows how committed and invested our residents are in tackling climate change.

Since the launch of the platform in October 2021, Broxtowe residents have:

- Avoided emitting over 200 tonnes of carbon.
- Actively travelled 73,000 miles (by walking, cycling). That's nearly three times round the world.
- Travelled 124,000 miles by public transport. That's half way to the moon!
- By having a 4-minute shower residents have saved enough water to fill over 40,000 baths.
- By using a reusable cup or bottle, residents have avoided using 19,000 single use plastic items.

Green Rewards not only has a clear carbon reduction focus, but also supports actions around the themes of biodiversity and wellbeing. In August of this year, Notts Green Rewards users, in collaboration with platform users from each of the Nottingham universities, held a photo competition to capture the best biodiversity photo in Nottinghamshire. The winner received a National Trust membership and I am

pleased to inform Members, that both first and second place prizes were awarded to residents of the Borough, which is a fantastic achievement.

I am pleased to share with Members that Eastwood St Mary's are the latest Ward Prize winners for the Platform. The users chose to have a tree planting scheme for their area and this will be undertaken in the next couple of months.

The bulb planting for the previous Ward Prize winners, Nuthall East and Strelley took place on Woodhouse Way at the beginning of December.

Following on from last year's success, Environment are again running the free tree giveaway, with more trees to give away than ever before. 800, UK native trees, including Rowan, Elder, Spindle and Silver Birch are on offer to Broxtowe residents.

These species have been chosen because they are beneficial to local wildlife and great for pollinators. The trees will be provided in biodegradable bags (which will need to be removed before planting) and are suitable for planting in a large pot. Instructions on how to plant these trees will be included. They will be delivered using our fully electric fleet vehicles in early January 2024.

Green Festivals 2024

I am pleased to announce that following on from the success of this year's Green Festivals, the upcoming Green Festival dates for 2024 have been confirmed. The first festival is scheduled to take place at the Hemlock Happening, on Saturday 8 June 2024, featuring a dedicated Green Zone. Following that, the Green Festival event will move to Coronation Park in Eastwood, on Saturday 23 September 2024. I will provide Members with further updates on these events in the upcoming months.

Pride in Parks

Improvements and developments

This year has seen substantial investment to enhance our parks and green spaces. This funding has focused on improving recreational facilities, accessibility, climate resilience, carbon sequestration and biodiversity.

Access Improvements

At Long Lane in Attenborough, the car park has been extended and resurfaced, with new gates fitted to keep the site secure.

Archers Field in Stapleford has benefitted from a resurfaced path, improving the pedestrian link from Bessell Lane to New Eatons Road; a popular school and commuting route.

In Eastwood, work has taken place in Coronation Park to improve the access road, with extensive works planned in the new year to resurface and repair the paths throughout the park. Eastwood Cemetery will also see significant improvements throughout the site to its paths.

At Hetley Pearson and Dovecote Lane Recreation Grounds in Beeston, new gates and access points are in fabrication and are due to be fitted before the Christmas break. This to protect the sites from any future unauthorised encampments.

Works are also programmed at the start of this month at Leyton Crescent recreation ground in Beeston Rylands. This is to create a 300-metre long pedestrian path, which will enable year round use of the site and will provide an off road pedestrian link from Leyton Crescent to Meadow Road.

Play Area Improvements

At Banks Road in Toton, the play area has been improved with an accessible rubber surface and new toddler unit, which has low level, inclusive activities built in.

Just off Markham Road in Bramcote, the Lowes' Estate play area has been refreshed, with a new seesaw and roundabout. The step access has been improved and an inclusive group basket swing has also been fitted.

Queen Elizabeth Park in Stapleford, is also due to have a basket swing installed. Further accessibility and inclusivity improvements to this park will be finalised in the New Year.

Rubber surfacing will be installed later this winter, at Cator Lane Recreation Ground in Chilwell. This will help to improve accessibility to the site.

For Bramcote Hills Park, a £100,000 funding bid is currently being finalised. Following an extensive consultation exercise (over 1,000 responses were received for this project). The improvements for this area include the installation of challenging, dynamic and accessible play equipment along with accessibility enhancements.

Biodiversity and Carbon Sequestration

The first delivery of trees for the winter planting programme have recently been delivered to the depot. This comprises of 1,800 native trees which will be used to create two new copses and an avenue of Limes, at Archers Field in Stapleford. These trees have been funded by a £19,000 grant from the Trees for Climate fund and will provide an additional half an acre of tree cover at the site. Local schools and community groups have been recruited to assist with planting.

A successful funding bid to the Urban Tree Challenge has also provided a £60,000 boost to tree planting throughout the Borough. Aimed at increasing the urban tree canopy, 90, semi mature trees will be planted in more populated areas. This will help to provide instant impact, shade and urban cooling, which in turn will help to mitigate against the impacts of climate change. The fund covers all planting and establishment costs, including watering for three years. Helping to ensure the best chances of success.

On Crow Hill, at the Southern end of Bramcote Hills Park, work on our “Wilder Crow Hill” area has started, with 100 home grown trees having been planted by the Canopy 2050 volunteers. Seed collected from local trees has been grown on to ensure local provenance for the tree stock. Further work will take place throughout the winter to enhance biodiversity in this area, including woodland wildflower and bulb planting.