

Portfolio for Environment and Climate Change Councillor H Skinner

Report to Council – 11 December 2024

Environment

The Environment team continue to work hard to deliver on their commitment to Protect the Environment for the future, engaging with residents on sustainability issues as well as working on ways to enhance biodiversity and increase carbon capture using the Borough's natural assets. These are some of the key projects that have or will be taking place.

Waste and Recycling

Recycling Update on the Campaign

I am pleased to inform Members that the recycling campaign launched in October for National Recycling week has proved really popular. The recycling campaign is now in full swing and has benefited from a large amount of exposure, including a spot on BBC's East Midlands today. Social media reactions to the videos have been positive and have attracted a lot of attention on Facebook. I will be able to update Members in the spring as to the affect that this campaign has had on recycling results.

Having a Sustainable Christmas

45% of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions relate to the things we buy, how we use them, and how we dispose of them – from food to fashion. By recycling, re-using, cutting food waste or not buying things in the first place, we can all make this year's Christmas a more sustainable one. Making small changes add up to a big difference, so if you are not sure if an item can go in the recycling bin, residents can either check online using Broxtowe's A to Z of waste or check the front of their new bin collection calendar, which has been delivered to all householders in November.

Cleanliness Survey

I am pleased to inform Members that the recent cleanliness survey results have shown a marked improvement compared to the same period last year. The teams this year have achieved an average score of 99.5% (96% for the same period last year) for litter and 95% (87% for the same period last year) for detritus.

This improvement has been due to the implementation of a hot spot list, which allows teams to respond proactively to areas needing attention. If Members notice any areas in the Borough that require attention could they please notify 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>)

Parks and Open Spaces

Winter works planned by Grounds Maintenance

The Grounds maintenance teams are currently gearing up for autumn and winter works. Whilst the grass and hedges have slowed their growth, winter works are just beginning. These are important because it helps to prevent any hazards and helps to prepare the parks and open spaces for healthy growth in the spring. These include:

- Pruning and planting shrubs and trees.
- Sweeping paths and car parks.
- Weeding.
- Mending fences, tying back climbing plants, repairing holes and bare patches in grass areas.
- Sports pitch maintenance. The pitches and facilities still need to be maintained through the winter.
- Snow clearance - if there are falls of snow, the Council's teams have to be ready to clear paths and roadways to provide access at the crematorium, cemeteries and at sheltered housing accommodation.

Trees

In November 2024, the Council received confirmation from Forestry England that it had been successful for the fourth consecutive year in obtaining funding for trees under its Urban Tree Challenge Fund (UTFC). This funding will be used to plant 57 trees at the following locations:

- Jubilee Park, Eastwood.
- Smithhurst Road Open Space, Giltbrook.
- Banks Road Open Space, Toton.
- Leyton Crescent Recreation Ground, Beeston.

The funding not only pays for the purchase and planting of the trees but also three years of maintenance, allowing the trees to fully establish.

Over the last four years the Council has been successfully granted £152,250 from Forestry England.

This winter, there are also a number of other tree planting schemes taking place across the Borough. This includes a community orchard, replacement of trees that have failed, along with some under planting in existing woodland and hedging.

The sites that will receive this work are the following:

- Brinsley Headstocks, Brinsley
- Colliers Wood, Moorgreen
- Banks Road Open Space, Toton
- Pit Lane Open Space, Trowell
- Manor Farm Recreation Ground, Toton
- Spinney Crescent, Toton
- Bramcote Hills Park, Bramcote
- Hetley Pearson Recreation Ground, Beeston
- Ilkeston Road Recreation Ground, Stapleford
- Archers Field Recreation Ground, Stapleford
- Queen Elizabeth II Park, Stapleford

Blue infrastructure

As part of a £25million Environment Agency funded Natural Flood Management Programme, Nottinghamshire County Council are looking to provide the Boundary Brook catchment area in Trowell with a natural flood management solution. This would include the installation of natural flood management measures to reduce flood risk for Trowell. These measures use processes that protect, restore and mimic the natural functions of catchments and floodplains to slow and store water. (Source: [Natural Flood Management Programme](#))

A positive meeting with Officers from the Council, Nottinghamshire County Council and the Environment Agency looked at the potential to implement measures to retain water on the catchment site for short periods of time during episodes of extreme rainfall. This included using tree planting and the creation of shallow pools and scrapes to slow the flow. The works would have additional biodiversity benefits as it would create new habitats.

Blue/Green infrastructure

The Wilder Crow Hill habitat restoration project at Bramcote Hills Park is now well underway. A successful planting session with young people from nearby Foxwood School saw native spring bulbs and wildflowers planted in October. Local tree growing volunteers, Canopy 2050, will soon be on site to plant the saplings they have grown from locally sourced tree seed. The project aims to restore wildlife habitat and connect the woodland on Crow Hill to the more extensive woodland on the park.

New Gates

As part of the 2024/25 Capital Programme, a range of security improvements, including new gates, has been undertaken to deter unauthorised encampments across the parks and open spaces.

After an increase in the number of unauthorised encampments in recent years a thorough assessment was made of the existing security measures in 2023. Sites were ranked in order of vulnerability and estimates made for potential improvements. Work is now complete on all high risk sites and work on the majority of medium risk sites has also been completed.

Brinsley Headstocks

Works at the Brinsley Headstocks site continue. Ground investigation works took place Tuesday 11 October. The investigative works show that the Headstocks location sits on five metres of made ground, which possibly indicates the position of additional mine shafts. Despite this, conditions look good and the Environment Team are hopeful that a simple raft foundation will be sufficient for the new Headstocks.

Climate Change

Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP)

I am delighted to inform Members that work on the Local Area Energy Plan for Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe is now underway. Consultants Mott MacDonald and IES have been appointed to complete this fundamental piece of work across Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire.

A Local Area Energy Plan sets out to identify the most effective route for a local area to contribute to meeting the national net zero target, as well as meeting local net zero targets. The work will support key actions on retrofit, renewable energy and electric vehicle charging strategies.

Stakeholder engagement will be commencing in January 2025.

Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Project

Nottinghamshire County Council updated consortium members of the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Project also referred to as LEVI in the inaugural Board Meeting held on 24 October. This project is funded by the Department for Transport and focuses on standard (7-12kWh) chargepoint installations in residential areas without access to off street parking. Approximately 1,600 chargepoints are to be installed across approximately 800 sites.

This work supports strands within the Council's recently adopted Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (EVI) Strategy.

Current LEVI project milestones include;

- Going out to tender in December 2024.
- Tender evaluations and moderation in March 2025.

- Signed award of contract to be completed in December 2025.
- Chargepoint installations commencing from 2026 to be completed by 2030.

The initial chargepoint mapping exercise indicates that Broxtowe Borough will potentially benefit from 226 sites covering all four towns. This is an exciting and ambitious project for our residents and their transition to electric vehicles. The Board will meet quarterly and I shall update you all again in Spring 2025.

It is important to note that this project is being delivered separately to the electric vehicle cable channel pilot programme, which is also being delivered by Nottinghamshire County Council.

Seed funding

Three Secondary schools and one Primary school have received £200 each to support their environmental activities.

Alderman White school, in Bramcote have been in touch to say that the money has been used to purchase and install a new water butt and has helped to create a new micro pond. It has also been used to purchase additional plants and fruit bushes for their garden.

Progress on Carbon Management Action Plan

The Climate Change and Green Futures Programme Board met on the 1 October to discuss quarter 2 progress on the 88 actions within the Carbon Management Action Plan. Of the 88 actions, 2% are completed, 82% are in progress and 16% are yet to be started.

The Board will meet again on 14 January 2025. Programme Theme Leads have completed a review of the actions that they are responsible for. New actions for 2025/26 have also been considered and these, along with an update so far will be presented to Cabinet in March 2025.

Green Rewards

I am pleased to inform you that as of 19 November 2024 there are 3,155 Broxtowe Borough residents signed up to the Green Rewards platform. This takes us over the 3,000 milestone. Our residents have avoided emitting over 400 tonnes of carbon since the platform was launched in October 2021 (That's enough gas to fill 400 hot air balloons).