

Appendix 1

Pesticide Use Across the Borough

The Council uses pesticide products to support weed management across parks, open spaces and cemeteries, as well as on behalf of Nottinghamshire County Council across the adopted highway network and town centres. While pesticide use supports the maintenance of safe, accessible and well-managed environments, the majority of applications are associated with works undertaken on the adopted highway network.

The Council primarily utilises three herbicide products:

- Rosate, containing the active ingredient glyphosate
- Valdor Flex, containing glyphosate
- Icade, containing Triclopyr as a non-glyphosate alternative

Glyphosate-based products account for the majority of pesticide use due to their effectiveness in controlling a broad range of weeds across hard surfaces and managed landscapes.

The use of pesticides, and glyphosate in particular, is subject to increasing national scrutiny in relation to environmental and health considerations. In Great Britain, glyphosate remains approved for use, but its authorisation has been extended only until 15 December 2026 pending a full regulatory review by the Health and Safety Executive¹. This creates uncertainty regarding its long-term availability and reinforces the need for a more sustainable approach to weed management.

There is growing evidence that prolonged or widespread pesticide use can have environmental impacts, including effects on soil and water², and on biodiversity through impacts on non-target species³. Reducing reliance on chemical controls therefore supports wider objectives around habitat protection, ecosystem resilience and sustainable land management.

Reducing pesticide use aligns with the Council's strategic priorities, including the Climate Change and Green Futures Strategy (2023–2027)⁴ and the Blue and Green Infrastructure Strategy (2025)⁵. These strategies support more sustainable, nature-led management of green spaces.

Within this context, there is a clear need for a more consistent and strategic approach to pesticide use across Council operations. The proposed development of a Pesticide Usage Policy will provide this framework, ensuring that use is minimised and applied only where necessary.

The proposed trial of reduced pesticide use will inform this work by providing evidence on the operational, environmental and resource implications of alternative approaches.

The outcomes of the trial will support future decision-making, including the development of the Policy and a longer-term approach to sustainable land management.

Pesticide Usage Trends

Figure 1 shows that pesticide use on Council-managed land has remained broadly consistent over the reporting period, with minor variations reflecting extended growing seasons and changing weather conditions that increase vegetation growth.

Figure 2 shows that highway pesticide application follows a consistent annual programme in terms of frequency. However, total volumes have increased in the most recent year due to additional reactive work identified through routine inspections, rather than a change in the programmed approach.

The majority of pesticide use is associated with highway maintenance, which is important in understanding overall use across the Borough. These trends highlight the influence of external factors, including longer growing seasons, on operational demand.

The proposed trial will provide an opportunity to assess alternative methods under these conditions and inform future approaches to maintenance, resource requirements, biodiversity and public expectations.

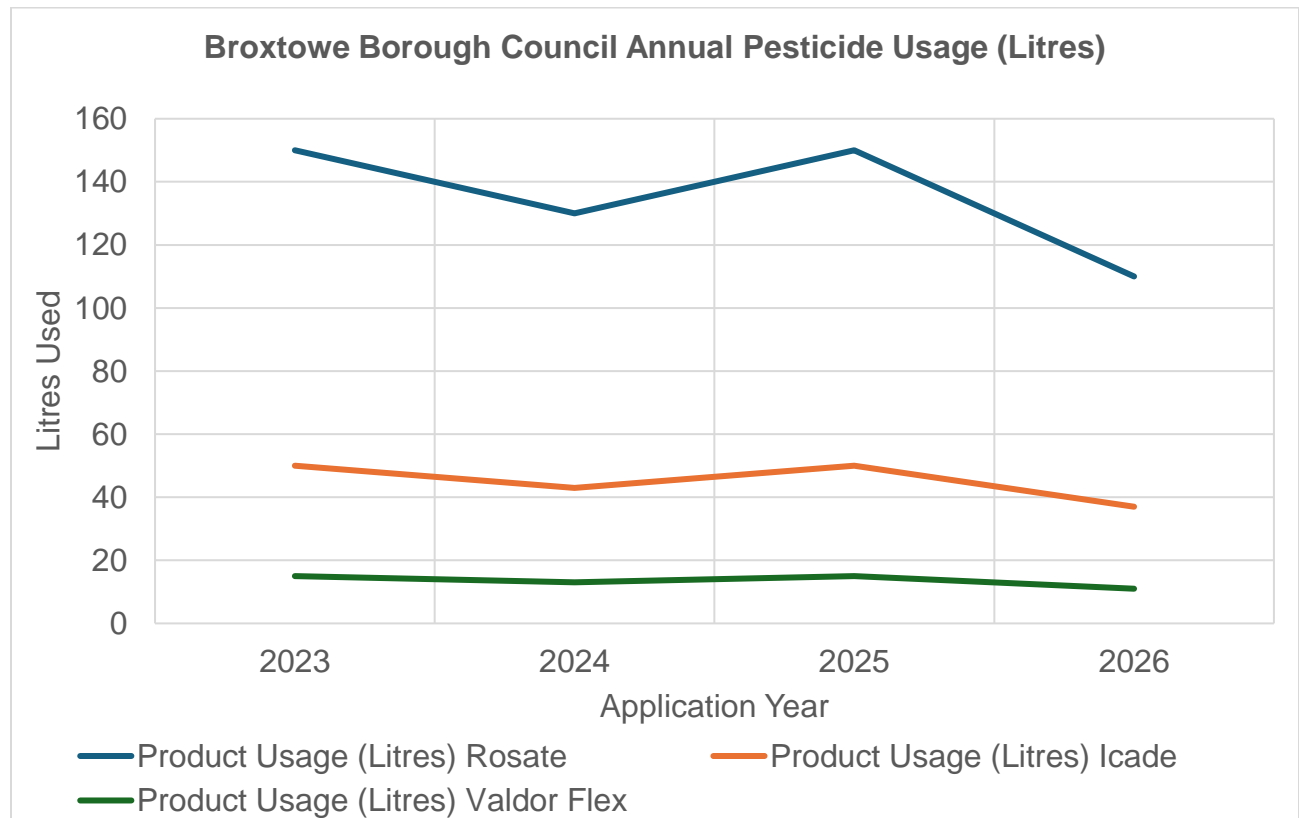


Figure 1: Pesticide usage on Council-managed land (parks, green spaces and cemeteries)

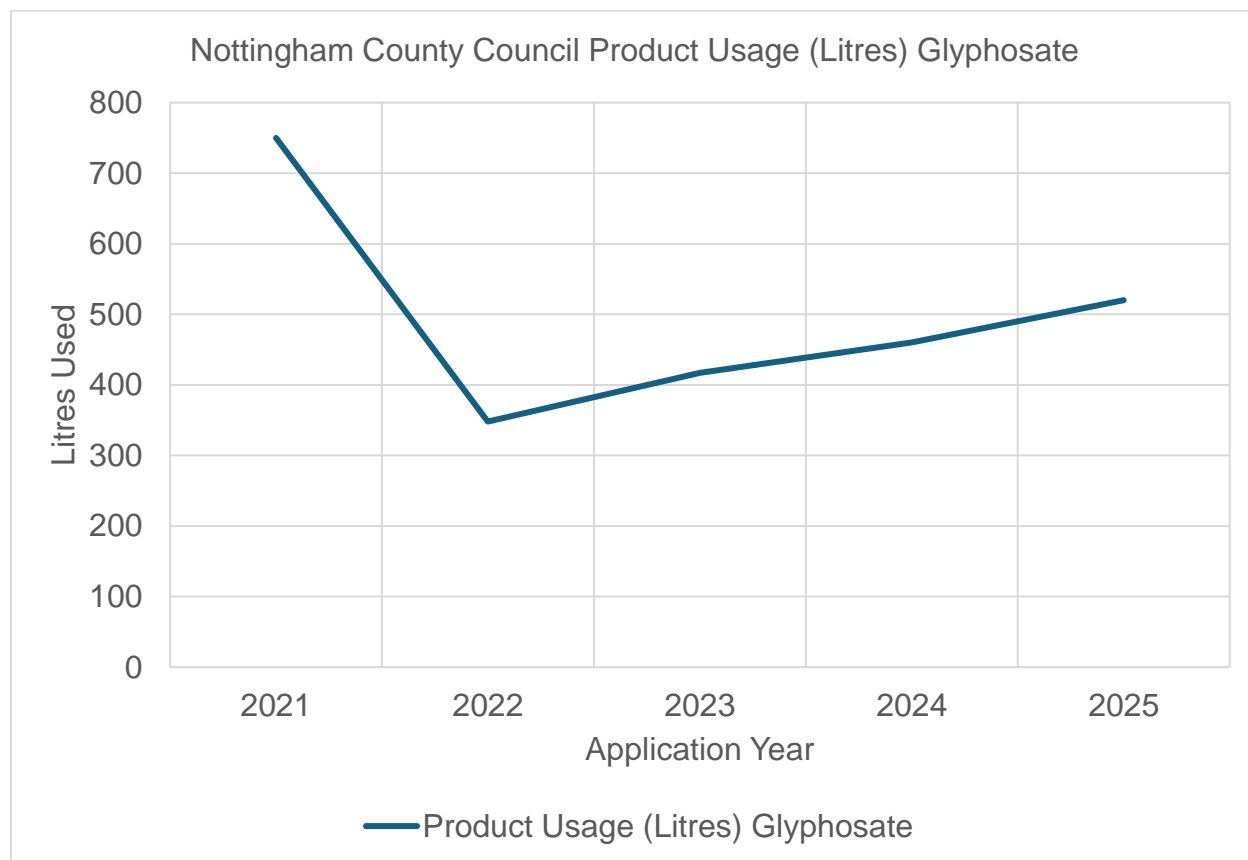


Figure 2: Pesticide usage on the adopted highway network (contracted services on behalf of Nottinghamshire County Council)

Trial Sites

Table 1 below identifies the sites selected for inclusion in the proposed trial of reduced pesticide use. These sites include high-use and priority locations across the Borough, including parks and open spaces with significant footfall, as well as all sites containing children's play facilities.

This approach ensures the trial focuses on areas where the impact will be most visible and where there is greater sensitivity due to the presence of children and other vulnerable users. The selection will provide an evidence base to assess the impacts of alternative approaches and inform the development of a future Pesticide Usage Policy.

The proposed trial will support a reduction in pesticide use by prioritising mechanical, manual and nature-based methods, with pesticide use limited to targeted applications where necessary to maintain safety, asset condition and site functionality. This aligns with the Council's Climate Change and Green Futures Strategy (2023–2027) and the

Blue and Green Infrastructure Strategy, supporting more sustainable land management, enhanced biodiversity and improved environmental resilience.

Site Name	Location/Ward
Archers Field	Stapleford
Banks Road	Toton
Barncroft	Beeston
Beeston Fields	Beeston
Bramcote Hills Park #	Bramcote
Broadgate Park #	Beeston
Cator Lane	Beeston/Chilwell
Central Avenue	Stapleford
Chester Green	Toton
Chetwynd Road	Beeston
College Way	Bilborough
Coronation Park #	Eastwood
Dovecote Lane	Beeston
Eastcote Avenue	Bramcote
Flixton Road	Kimberley
Hall Om Wong	Kimberley
Hetley Pearson	Beeston
Hickings Lane #	Stapleford
Ilkeston Road	Bramcote
Inham Nook	Beeston
Jubilee Park	Eastwood
King Georges	Bramcote
Leyton Crescent	Beeston Rylands
Long Lane	Attenborough
Lowes Estate	Bramcote

Site Name	Location/Ward
Manor Farm #	Toton
Mansfield Road Park	Eastwood
Pasture Road	Stapleford
Pippins, Judson Avenue	Stapleford
Queen Elizabeth Park #	Stapleford
Redbridge Drive	Nuthall
Salcey Drive/Trowell Park Open Space	Trowell
Sherman Drive	Beeston
Smithurst Road	Giltbrook
Summer Crescent	Beeston
Swiney Way	Toton
Templar Road	Beeston
The Spinney (Laurel Crescent)	Watnall
Windmill/Millfield Road	Kimberley

Table 1: Trial sites

Key

- G = Glyphosate (non-selective herbicide)
- S = Selective herbicide (broadleaf weeds)
- M = Moss treatment

#: Sites which represent high-use, priority locations with significant levels of public activity

Site Management Actions Supporting Reduced Pesticide Use in Trial Areas

Tables 2 to 7 set out the proposed management actions that will be delivered operationally across specific areas within the proposed trial sites.

Hard Surfaces and Infrastructure

Area/Feature	Issue Being Managed	Proposed Action	Frequency	Notes
Paths and hard surface edges	Weed growth causing	Mechanical brushing and targeted	Monthly / as required	Maintains safe and accessible routes

Area/Feature	Issue Being Managed	Proposed Action	Frequency	Notes
	obstruction and surface damage	trimming; pesticide use only where necessary		and protects infrastructure
Gravel paths and railings	Weed growth affecting visibility and access	Reduced and targeted application using controlled droplet application techniques where required	As required	Focus on maintaining safety and accessibility

Table 2: Proposed actions for hard surfaces and infrastructure

Trees and Planting Areas

Area/Feature	Issue Being Managed	Proposed Action	Frequency	Notes
New tree bases	Competing vegetation	Mulching and manual clearance	Twice yearly	Supports establishment, improves appearance and suppresses weed growth
Established tree bases	General vegetation growth	Manual management; mulching and/or naturalisation of tree pits where appropriate	Seasonal	Supports tree health and enables biodiversity enhancement

Table 3: Proposed actions for trees and planting areas

Play Areas and Safety Surfaces

Area/Feature	Issue Being Managed	Proposed Action	Frequency	Notes
Play area edges and safety surfacing	Weed encroachment	Manual removal as part of routine inspections	Weekly inspections	Maintains safety and cleanliness
Woodchip safety surfacing	Weed growth within surface	Manual removal	Weekly inspections	Ensures safe and usable play environments

Table 4: Proposed actions for play areas and safety surfaces

Amenity Grassland

Area/Feature	Issue Being Managed	Proposed Action	Frequency	Notes
Amenity grassland – high use	Wear, presentation and safety	Regular mowing and responsive targeted management (non-routine)	Routine (as required)	Maintains high standards in heavily used areas
Amenity grassland – general	Visual weed presence	Reduced mowing frequency and tolerance approach, including increased cutting height	Routine	Supports a “managed but natural” appearance while maintaining usability
Amenity grassland – low use	Weed colonisation and maintenance intensity	Reduced mowing and introduction of no-mow or naturalised areas	Seasonal	Supports biodiversity, reduces resource demand and enables habitat creation

Table 5: Proposed actions for amenity grassland

Habitat and Naturalised Areas

Area/Feature	Issue Being Managed	Proposed Action	Frequency	Notes
Habitat areas	Invasive or harmful species	Targeted intervention, including limited pesticide use where necessary	As required	No routine application. Supports habitat restoration and biodiversity objectives; appropriate signage will be used where treatment is required

Table 6: Proposed actions for habitat and naturalized areas

Specialist Turf and Sports Areas

Area/Feature	Issue Being Managed	Proposed Action	Frequency	Notes
Fine turf areas	Weed invasion affecting turf quality	Integrated management including cultural practices (aeration, overseeding) and targeted pesticide application where necessary	As required	Maintains high-quality turf standards
Cricket and sports surfaces	Turf performance and safety	Targeted and controlled pesticide use supported by specialist turf management practices	As required	Ensures safe and consistent playing surfaces

Table 7: Proposed actions for specialist turf and sports areas

Summary of Proposed Management Approaches

The management approaches set out in Table 8 summarise and describe the key methods that will be applied across sites to support the reduction of pesticide use, as detailed in the preceding tables.

Management Approach	What This Involves	Where It Is Applied	Purpose
Mechanical Control	Use of equipment such as brushing, strimming and edging to remove vegetation without chemicals	Paths and hard surface edges; gravel paths and railings	Maintain safe and accessible surfaces and reduce reliance on pesticide use on hard surfaces
Manual Control	Physical removal of vegetation by hand or hand tools	Play areas, safety surfacing, new and established tree bases	Enable precise intervention in sensitive areas and protect assets
Reduced Intervention (Tolerance Approach)	Acceptance of natural vegetation where it does not affect safety or usability; reduced mowing frequency and increased cutting height	Amenity grassland – general areas	Reduce maintenance inputs and chemical use while supporting a more natural landscape
Naturalisation and No-Mow Areas	Introduction of long grass, wildflower areas and no-mow zones; reduced intervention	Amenity grassland – low-use areas; established tree bases; peripheral areas	Enhance biodiversity, support habitats and reduce long-term maintenance

Management Approach	What This Involves	Where It Is Applied	Purpose
Mulching and Non-Chemical Suppression	Application of mulch (e.g. woodchip) to suppress weeds and improve soil conditions	New tree bases; selected established tree bases	Prevent weed growth naturally, improve soil health and reduce maintenance around trees
Targeted Management (Non-Routine Intervention)	Reactive, inspection-led intervention focused on high-use and safety-critical areas rather than routine treatment	High-use amenity grassland; paths; priority sites identified through inspections	Maintain safety and standards while minimising unnecessary treatment
Limited and Controlled Pesticide Use	Targeted, minimal application of pesticide where alternative methods are not sufficient	Habitat areas; fine turf and sports surfaces; high-risk hard surfaces	Manage safety risks, invasive species and specialist turf requirements while limiting overall use

Table 8: Summary of approaches

Financial Implications

The current pesticide-based approach across the 38 trial sites is estimated to cost approximately £2,200 per annum, equating to around £550 over a three-month period. The proposed glyphosate trial will be delivered within the existing revenue budget, utilising current staffing and resources, and therefore no additional funding is required at this stage. A key objective of the trial is to understand the costs associated with the alternative approach and to assess its impact on frontline operational teams. These factors will be monitored throughout the trial period, with findings, including financial and operational implications, reported back to Cabinet following its completion.

Communications and Engagement Approach

The proposed trial of reduced pesticide use will introduce visible changes to the management of parks and open spaces at key locations. A clear and proportionate communications approach will therefore be required to ensure that residents, Members and stakeholders are informed and that expectations are appropriately managed.

Communications will focus on explaining the purpose of the trial, including the environmental and health rationale for reducing pesticide use, and how maintenance practices may differ. This will be supported through targeted measures such as on-site signage and information published on the Council's website. While some changes in appearance are expected, including increased visible vegetation in certain areas, communications will emphasise that safety and accessibility will be maintained and that the trial is controlled and monitored.

Feedback will be captured through existing channels, including Member enquiries, customer contact and officer observations, alongside public consultation through the annual Parks Standard Survey conducted in July and August. Additional questions will capture resident feedback on reduced pesticide use.

Complaints relating to the trial will also be monitored to help gauge public response and identify any emerging issues.

The outcomes of the trial, including issues and lessons learned, will be reported through regular updates to Cabinet and will inform the development of a future Pesticide Usage Policy.

Case Studies: Reducing Pesticide Use

The following case studies provide examples of how local authorities have implemented reduced pesticide use and alternative weed management approaches. These examples highlight both the opportunities and challenges associated with transitioning away from routine chemical use and provide context for the Council's proposed trial.

Newark and Sherwood District Council

Context:

A locally relevant herbicide-free maintenance trial was undertaken in Southwell in partnership with Nottinghamshire County Council and contractors.

Approach:

- Removal of glyphosate use in parks, cemeteries and housing land
- Reduced highway spraying
- Increased mechanical sweeping and manual maintenance

Outcomes:

- Improved biodiversity, including increased presence of wildflowers and pollinators
- Maintained safety through monitoring and inspection
- Demonstrated that different maintenance standards are appropriate across different site types

Key Learning:

Targeted trials, supported by partnership working, can successfully reduce pesticide use while maintaining safety and site condition.

Cambridge City Council

Context:

Following a Biodiversity Emergency declaration, Cambridge began reducing herbicide use across public spaces in 2019.

Approach:

- Trials of alternative methods including mechanical and thermal treatments
- Community involvement through local initiatives and volunteer schemes

Outcomes:

- Increased biodiversity and pollinator activity
- Greater public engagement in green space management
- Ongoing learning regarding the effectiveness of different methods

Key Learning:

A combination of operational change and community engagement is essential to delivering successful pesticide reduction.

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham**Context:**

The Council ceased routine glyphosate use in parks and open spaces in 2016.

Approach:

- Adoption of non-chemical methods including hot water, foam treatments and mechanical removal
- Integrated weed management approach

Outcomes:

- Reduction in chemical use
- Enhancement of biodiversity
- Increased operational costs and mixed public perception of site appearance

Key Learning:

Full removal of pesticide use is achievable but requires increased resource input and careful management of public expectations.

Brighton & Hove City Council**Context:**

The Council introduced a pesticide reduction and phase-out approach across the city.

Approach:

- Removal of pesticides from parks and green spaces
- Retention of targeted application on hard surfaces where necessary

Outcomes:

- Continued environmental benefits in green spaces
- Challenges in maintaining weed control on hard surfaces
- Development of a more balanced, targeted approach

Key Learning:

A phased and flexible approach, combining reduced pesticide use with targeted application where necessary, is more sustainable in the long term.

These case studies demonstrate that there is no single approach to pesticide reduction. Instead, a combination of methods tailored to local conditions is required, reinforcing the need for a trial-based approach within the Borough.

References

1. Health and Safety Executive (HSE), *Active Substance Renewal: Glyphosate*. Approval for glyphosate in Great Britain extended to 15 December 2026 pending reassessment of safety and regulatory compliance.
2. UK Government (Defra et al.), *UK Pesticides National Action Plan 2025: Working for a More Sustainable Future*. Sets out the UK approach to reducing risks from pesticide use, including impacts on human health, water quality and the natural environment.
3. Gunstone, T. et al. (2026), *Nature*. Study demonstrating widespread occurrence of pesticide residues and their impacts on soil biodiversity and ecosystem function across European sites.
4. Broxtowe Borough Council, *Climate Change and Green Futures Strategy (2023–2027)*. Identifies the protection of natural capital, reduction of environmental impacts and climate resilience as key strategic priorities.
5. Broxtowe Borough Council, *Blue and Green Infrastructure Strategy (2025)*. Promotes a connected network of multifunctional green and blue infrastructure, with emphasis on biodiversity, habitat connectivity and climate resilience.