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**Thursday, 17 November 2022**

**Chairman: Councillor R White**

**Vice-Chairman: Councillor Mrs P Rainbow**

**Members of the Committee:**

Councillor L Brailsford  
Councillor L Brazier  
Councillor Mrs B Brooks  
Councillor S Carlton  
Councillor M Cope  
Councillor D Cumberlidge  
Councillor Mrs L Dales  
Councillor P Harris  
Councillor S Haynes  
Councillor Mrs L Hurst  
Councillor J Kellas  
Councillor N Mison  
Councillor M Pringle

**Substitute Members:**

Councillor M Brock  
Councillor Mrs R Crowe  
Councillor L Goff  
Councillor T Wildgust  
Councillor Mrs Y Woodhead

**MEETING: Policy & Performance Improvement Committee**

**DATE: Monday, 28 November 2022 at 6.00 pm**

**VENUE: Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road, Newark,  
NG24 1BY**

**You are hereby requested to attend the above Meeting to be held at the time/place and on the date mentioned above for the purpose of transacting the business on the Agenda as overleaf.**

If you have any queries please contact Helen Brandham on [helen.brandham@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk](mailto:helen.brandham@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk).



## **AGENDA**

### **Page Nos.**

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declaration of Interest by Members and Officers
3. Notification to those present that the meeting will be recorded and streamed online
4. Minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2022

5 - 7

### **Reports and Presentations**

5. Newark Town Investment Plan and Town Deal
6. Climate Emergency Update
7. Gas Servicing Update
8. Newark & Sherwood District Council's Tree Strategy
9. Community Plan Performance Q2
10. Financial Performance Report Q2
11. Review of HRA Business Plan Assumptions

8 - 19

20 - 29

Verbal Report

30 - 82

83 - 138

139 - 146

147 - 149

### **Reports from Working Group**

12. Members Digital Tools Working Group
13. Anti-Social Behaviour Review Member Working Group
14. Customer Strategy Working Group

150 - 154

155 - 164

Verbal Report

### **Review of Cabinet Work Programme and Recent Decisions**

15. Cabinet Forward Plan (November 2022 to February 2023)
16. Minutes of Cabinet Held on 4 October 2022

165 - 172

173 - 180

### **Topic Suggestions**

None

17. Items for Future Agendas

Tenant Engagement Strategy

Tenancy Satisfaction Measures

Tenancy Agreement Review

Tenant Annual Report

Medium Term Financial Budget Setting



## NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Policy & Performance Improvement Committee** held in the Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road, Newark NG24 1BY on Monday, 17 October 2022 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor R White (Chairman)  
Councillor Mrs P Rainbow (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor L Brailsford, Councillor L Brazier, Councillor Mrs B Brooks, Councillor M Cope, Councillor D Cumberlidge, Councillor Mrs L Dales, Councillor P Harris, Councillor S Haynes, Councillor Mrs L Hurst, Councillor J Kellas, Councillor N Mison and Councillor M Pringle

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor L Goff

APOLOGIES FOR Councillor S Carlton (Committee Member)  
ABSENCE:

### 31 DECLARATION OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no declarations of interest.

### 32 NOTIFICATION TO THOSE PRESENT THAT THE MEETING WILL BE RECORDED AND STREAMED ONLINE

The Chairman advised that the proceedings were being recorded by the Council and that the meeting was being live streamed and broadcast from the Civic Suite, Castle House.

### 33 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26 SEPTEMBER 2022

Councillor N. Mison advised that in the minutes he was shown as being present, when in fact he had sent his apologies.

AGREED that having noted that Councillor Mison had not been present, the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2022 were a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 34 KERBSIDE GLASS COLLECTION: OPTIONS APPRAISAL

The Committee considered the report delivered by the Director - Communities & Environment and the Environmental Services Business Manager presenting the PPIC with the different options for, and implications of, implementing a kerbside glass collection, and for PPIC to consider and endorse the Officer recommendations.

The report reminded the Committee that at the September meeting of the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee a presentation had highlighted the results of the Residents' Survey, from this and listening to feedback from residents, officers investigated the options available to the council to be able to deliver a kerbside glass recycling service. The report also outlined options for the implementation of a kerbside glass service, to then be able to establish which is the most effective and cost-efficient option.

The report looked at the current service, the wider considerations, type of collection, the frequency of collection, options for the recycling of the glass, income and next steps.

The appendices to the report also provided the Committee with glass recycling rates for other councils in Nottinghamshire as well as recycling figures.

The Committee discussed with the Officers in more detail the options for consideration in the report including that of further consultation which the Members thought would be beneficial.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee recommended to Cabinet that if a kerbside glass collection service is to be introduced that:

- a) an eight weekly collection frequency be adopted;
- b) a 140 litre bin is used in the collection methodology;
- c) the Council does not provide the service in the ROB area as it may have a detrimental impact upon the objects of a long-established charity, but;
- d) the Council works alongside ROB to try to improve knowledge of the ROB service; its take up in the communities it serves; and the furtherance of its charitable objects;
- e) revenue and capital costs identified with the proposed methodology are recommended to Cabinet for inclusion in the budget for 23/24, however;
- f) before a final decision is undertaken, Members of PPIC wish to recommend to the Cabinet that consideration be given to a period of public consultation on the recommended service option given the significant capital and revenue costs involved and the need to effectively interface with ROB and the communities it serves, and;
- g) furthermore, that a market research company is commissioned to undertake a consultation exercise at a maximum cost of £15,000 funded from existing budgets.

*Councillor M Cope joined the meeting at 6.07 pm – part way through the above item and therefore did not participate in the unanimous vote.*

## 35 REVIEW OF THE TOWN CENTRES STRATEGY

The Committee considered the Topic Request Form proposed by Councillor P Harris and seconded by Councillor M Brock to request a review of the Town Centres Strategy.

The Chairman advised the Committee this proposal would not go ahead as it was already in the public domain.

36 REVIEWING OUR CUSTOMER COMMUNICATION

The Committee considered the report presented by the Director - Customer Services & Organisational Development providing Members with additional detail on the Customer Communication topic raised by residents in the 2022 Resident Survey consultation.

It was recommended at the meeting that a working group be set up, with the Chairman of the Committee asking which Member would be interested in chairing the group. Councillor P. Harris put his name forward for the role of Chairman and Councillor Mrs L. Hurst for the role of Deputy Chairman.

The Chairman and Deputy Chairman will work with Officers to produce a scope, then offer it out to other Members who want to be part of the working group.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) Members set-up a working group to review Customer Communication experiences and feed those reflections into the development of the Customer Strategy; and
- b) Members add a review of the Communications Strategy to the Committee Work Programme to ensure the Strategy appropriately considers/responds to resident feedback.

Meeting closed at 6.38 pm.

Chairman



Report to: Policy & Performance Improvement Committee - 28 November 2022

Director Lead: Matt Lamb, Director - Planning & Growth

Lead Officer: Neil Cuttell, Business Manager - Economic Growth & Visitor Economy  
Frances Davies, Town Investment Plan Programme Manager

Report Summary	
<b>Report Title</b>	Newark Town Investment Plan and Town Deal
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To inform of work done to date on developing the Town Investment Plan (TIP), to update on the delivery of the identified priority projects in the TIP through the Newark Town Deal (NTD), to report on the assurance of the Towns Fund and Levelling Up Fund Round 1, and to advise on related future interventions and opportunities.
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p>That the Policy &amp; Performance Improvement Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) note the process followed in the development of the Town Investment Plan (TIP); and</li><li>b) note and welcome the progress made in the delivery, assurance, and monitoring of the Town Deal (NTD) and other proposals within and related to the Town Investment Plan (TIP)</li></ul>

## 1.0 Background

### Creating a Newark Town Investment Plan

- 1.1 Members will recall that the Newark Town Investment Plan (TIP) was developed in Spring 2020, following a Towns Fund opportunity made available to all Council's to submit a package of proposals on a town-scale basis for capital programs and projects that would offer genuine transformational change for communities. This was a competitive process, with Council's invited to submit bids in 3 submission rounds (a 4<sup>th</sup> was added later). The Towns Fund guidance was clear in setting a role for the Council as coordinator and bid curator, alongside and on behalf of a locally convened forum represented by a range of partners, notably the private sector. This led to the formulation of the Newark Towns Board in January 2020 (details at **Appendix 1**) and consultation with different audiences and stakeholders, much of which was as the Covid-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns took hold.

- 1.2 The preliminary stages of developing the TIP included a series of workshops aimed at different groups of stakeholders to gather their ideas and priorities, including Members. The national lockdowns provided an opportunity to innovate, with schools running on-line forums to seek the ideas of children and their families; the CVS undertaking telephone interviews with clients; and the Council and its appointed consultancy team hosting multiple on-line groups, briefings and workshops.
- 1.3 The final Newark TIP captured a clear ambition to target legacy projects (those which create an ability to provide opportunity and ongoing benefits) across 4 pillars of Intervention:
  1. Business, Education & Skills
  2. Connectivity
  3. Town Centre Regeneration
  4. Residential (inc. within the Town Centre)
- 1.4 10 Priority projects were identified as:
  1. **Newark Construction College** – offers training, retraining and work experience placements to facilitate Newark residents getting jobs in high-demand, stable sectors such as plumbing, bricklaying and gas engineering.
  2. **YMCA Community & Activity Village** – offers leisure facilities, education and training and access to crucial services such as integrated health care to Newark residents and young people.
  3. **Air & Space Institute** – a state of the art educational facility offering further and higher educational pathways in highly paid, future proofed sectors: aviation engineering, cyber security and pilots.
  4. **Newark Southern Link Road** – a long-standing aspiration to unlock growth and ease congestion, connecting the A1 and A46
  5. **Relocation of Newark Police Station** (subsequently withdrawn) – proposals to co-locate public services at Castle House and redevelop the existing site for a new residential offer on the edge of the town, close to Newark Northgate rail station
  6. **20 minute Cycle Town** – a scheme with Brompton Bikes to provide a high quality offer and brand within the town, in conjunction with transport providers, employers, and developers.
  7. **Newark Cultural Heart** – enhanced activities and events and associated infrastructure to establish Newark's reputation as a vibrant town, increasing footfall and pride of place.
  8. **32 Stodman Street Redevelopment** – repurposing a significant and vacant retail space to create high quality town centre residential homes, ground floor commercial opportunities, and new public realm and legibility improvements.
  9. **Smart Innovation Supply Chain & Logistics Enterprise Zone SISCLOG** – establish at a key Gateway into Newark a high-tech businesses zone bringing more and better paid jobs into the town.
  10. **Castle Gatehouse** – making it more accessible the Castle, alongside a raft of educational and interpretation offers.
- 1.5 The TIP also included a list of 30 potential future projects which could emerge and/or be prioritised beyond the initial 10, setting a likely up to 30-year time-frame for activity and focus.

- 1.6 The Council-backed Newark TIP was submitted to Government (Department Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) in July 2020 as part of national cohort 1. We were the only Council in Nottinghamshire within this cohort.

#### Successful Announcements

- 1.7 Members will recall the welcomed announcement in the March 2021 budget that Newark had been successful in its full bid for the full £25m grant funding ask. This was in addition to £750k of accelerated funding provided in advance of the announcement to deliver the Construction College and preliminary works at 32 Stodman Street. Funding was assigned, in principle, to all ten priority projects via a Heads of Terms (HoT) document offered to the Council and Newark Towns Board by the government. It was for the Towns Board, in consultation with the Council, to determine spend across some or all of these projects.
- 1.8 The HoT's to creating the Newark Town Deal (NTD) were entered into by this Council and the Newark Towns Board on 20 April 2021. All 10 priority projects were retained at that time.
- 1.9 The relocation of Newark Police Station was removed as a project after the announcement by the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) in September 2021 that it was no longer going ahead. A project adjustment request (PAR) to reflect this was submitted to government (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) in December 2021, following approval by the Council's s151 officer and Newark Executive Town Board on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2021. The PAR sought the reprofiling of the £1m originally allocated to the Police Station across three other existing Town Deal projects (Gatehouse, SiSCLog, and 32 Stodman Street). This was agreed by Government in April 2022. The table below at Figure 1 details the total grant available for each of the remaining 9 projects reflecting this first PAR.
- 1.10 In addition to the Towns Fund the Council successfully competitively secured £20m of Levelling Up Round 1 Funding for the Newark Southern Link Road. Thus, whilst the SLR remains a priority project of both the Newark TIP and Newark Town Deal, no Towns Funding has been apportioned to this project. Rather, this has been secured by other means.

**Fig. 1: Project Updates Finance:**

Project	Towns Fund Grant (£m)	Match Funding (£m)	Project Adjustments (£m)	Comments
Construction College	£0.389	£0.133 Lincoln College Group	N/A	Opened in September 2021. Actively exploring future expansion linked to growth around Newark.
YMCA Community and Activity Village	£2.0	£2.2 LEP £10.4 YMCA	N/A	Opened in July 2022, monitoring and evaluation ongoing
Air and Space Institute	£10.6	£2.6 Lincoln College Group £2.3 Industry Partners	Name change from IASTI to ASI, June 2022	Construction started in October 2022

20 Minute Cycle Town	£0.200	£0.50 Private businesses	N/A	Three bike docks in place, the final dock to be placed at Newark Northgate Station late 2022
Stodman Street Redevelopment	£2.2	£0.284 One Public Estate £5.3 NSDC	Additional £0.20m reprofiled from Newark Police Station, April 2022	Tender returns for the demolition and construction phase expected in the coming weeks.
Newark Cultural Heart	£2.1	£0.60 Newark Town Council (=£0.2 p.a.)		Programme Development officer in post at Newark Town Council. Events and Activities programme for 2022 and 2023 planned and costed.
SISCLOG	£4.4		Additional £0.40m reprofiled from Newark Police Station, April 2022	Outline Business Case is going through the assurance process.
Castle Gatehouse	£3.0	£1.385m NLHF £1m NSDC	Additional £0.40m reprofiled from Newark Police Station, April 2022	Progressing to the second stage of the National Lottery Heritage Fund application. Full Business Case planned for late 2023.
Southern Link Road	£0	£20m LUF 1 £6m from LEP £5m NSDC £39.9m U&C (inc. Homes England loan facility)	N/A	Tender returns for the contractor of the road expected shortly.
Programme Management	£0.5			
Total	£25.389m	£97.702m*	£1m	

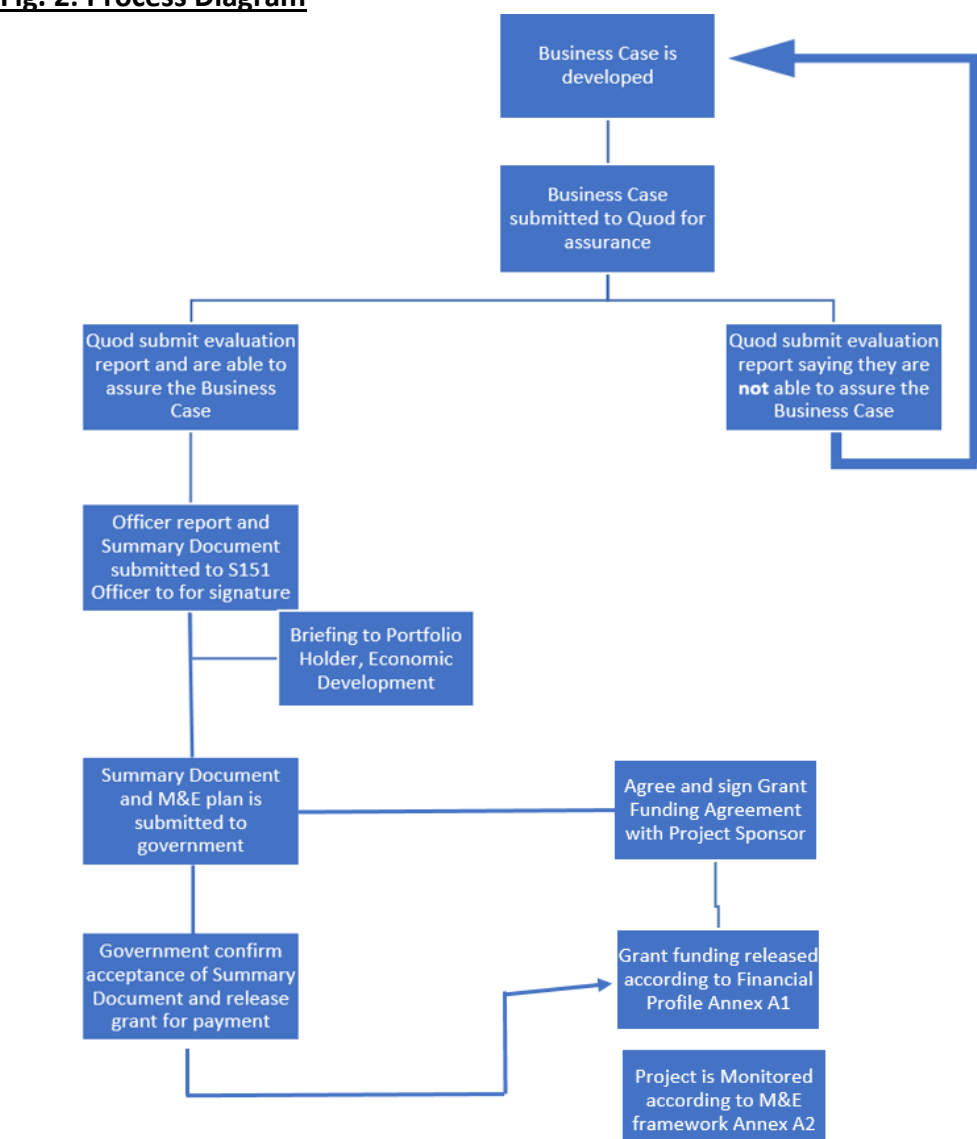
\*this figure is exclusive of revenue created from SISCLOG development

#### Grant Funding Process

- 1.11 The Newark Towns Deal makes clear that the Council is the accountable body for the purposes of assurance and management of any Towns Fund grant spend and associated outputs. In other words, the Council, via its s151 Officer and Portfolio Holders for Strategy, Performance and Finance and Economic Development & Visitors must be satisfied that the proposals represent value for money and have been underpinned by a 5 Case Green Book Business Case Model, the approved methodology against which overall value for money is assessed nationally through the production of an Outline Business Case (OBC) followed by a Full Business Case (FBC). The Council must also ensure spend and delivery of identified and agreed outputs.

- 1.12 NSDC, through its then Committee system of Governance, determined early the importance of an Assurance and Governance framework, informed by expert '5 Case' providers. NSDC and the Towns Board developed and adopted a Newark Towns Fund Local Assurance Framework which all projects are required to follow. Independent experts in '5 Case' planning were also commissioned.
- 1.13 Hatch consulting were appointed for the development of the Business Cases alongside and on behalf of project sponsors. Separately Quod consulting were commissioned to independently assure any submitted Business Cases, offering a view on value for money and deliverability demonstrated by each Business Case and advising the s151 Officer accordingly.
- 1.14 Upon assurance by the s151 Officer (informed by Quod) of a first Business Case (Outline or Full) the Council, on behalf of the Newark Town Board, submits to Government (Department Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) a 'Summary Document' and 'Monitoring & Evaluation' form. Upon acceptance of these documents, funding is then released from government to the Council in accordance with a prescribed funding profile for the project and grant release dates identified by government. The overall process is captured below:

**Fig. 2: Process Diagram**





- 1.15 For completeness, Members are advised that at the time of writing a scope for an Assurance Audit of the Towns Fund and Levelling Up Fund Round 1 is being agreed with the Council's auditors. This is expected to investigate and conclude a review of the level of assurance on the processes involved in the Towns Fund and Levelling Up Fund Round 1 to date in early 2023.

#### Progress to Date

- 1.16 All Towns Fund projects are progressing well, with only one Summary Document (for the SiSCLog project) outstanding. This is expected to be submitted to government by November 2022. Subject to approval, government will then have approved and committed to funding releases for all projects. Thereafter, it is for the Council, in consultation with the Newark Towns Board, to monitor progress and spend, including any reallocation of funding required.
- 1.17 Regular meetings between the government and Town Deal Programme Managers from the D2N2 area show that benchmarked against nearby towns, Newark's progress is advanced and held in esteem by central government colleagues.

**Fig. 3: Progress to date**

Project	OBC Assured	Summary Doc Approved by Government	FBC Assured
Construction College	Implemented prior to signing of the Newark Town Deal via accelerated funding. Approval process via Newark Town Board, Policy & Finance Committee on the 24.09.20, s151 officer and Grant Funding Agreement, (February 2021)		
YMCA Activity Village	N/A	December 2021	December 2021
Air and Space Institute	January 2022	January 2022	September 2022
20 Minute Cycle Town	December 2021	January 2022	Not required given OBC detail
Stodman Street	N/A	May 2022	February 2022
Newark Cultural Heart	April 2022	May 2022	Expected March 2023
SISCLOG	Expected Nov 2022	Exp Nov/Dec 2022	Expected summer 2023
Castle Gatehouse	May 2022	July 2022	Expected December 2023

- 1.18 Officers are in the process of reprocurring expert support for all projects still requiring an FBC (Newark Cultural Heart, SiSCLog, and Gatehouse).
- 1.19 As Members will appreciate with capital projects of this scale, within a fluctuating market, over a 5-year spending period, there will remain risks to identify and mitigate. Risk management registers and ongoing meetings between the Council and Project Sponsors remains critical. The table below captures in summary form some key matters which Officers and project sponsors are mindful of in progressing each scheme.

**Fig. 4: Project Update Outputs and Risk**

Project	Outputs in Towns Deal	Completion date (Original)	Main Risks/ Comments
Construction College	Build a new educational facility offering courses in plumbing, gas engineering and bricklaying Provide training to over 700 learners over 5 years	September 2021	The construction College is progressing well, with 78 students having been through the facility to date. The college is aiming to expand into other sectors, with car mechanics commencing at the Newark site in the 2023/24 academic year. A down-turn in student uptake may lead to less learners. This is monitored regularly with the college continually looking at promotion, course content, enrichment opportunities (work experience), and working with the Council to liaise with housebuilding and road contractors to maximise opportunities given the planned growth around Newark
YMCA Community and Activity Village	136 FTE new jobs (of which 14 directly funded by Towns Fund contribution) by 2024 38 apprentices by 2024 Deliver training to 1200 new learners by 2024 57,400 annual visits by 2024	July 2022 (original: May 2022)	The Village is now open and is currently on target to deliver the required outputs. Regular monitoring and evaluation meetings will be taking place over the coming years. The Council and YMCA are also working to track the journey of young people over many years to capture real case studies of the difference this project will make.
Air and Space Institute	370 Level 2 qualifications in engineering and computing. 1,304 Level 3 qualifications and T-Levels 204 Level 3 Apprenticeship Standards in aviation engineering. 632 Higher Level Technical Qualifications (Level 4-6) Create 38 new jobs	January 2024 (original: September 2023)	The ASI welcomed its first student intake from temporary facilities in September 2021. To date 121 students have been enrolled. Course details are available at <a href="https://asi-newark.co.uk/curriculum">https://asi-newark.co.uk/curriculum</a> The ASI has now started on site. As with all construction projects, the main risk is in cost of construction materials and labour. Close interactions between the programme manager, the project sponsors and the contractor will identify issues early and help to mitigate them. Monitoring learners, promotion, and new course content will continue. The college will also track the journey of learners throughout their career, allowing longitudinal case studies of the difference this project will make.

			It is anticipated that both FE and HE provision will be accommodated within the ASI.
20 Minute Cycle Town	Number of bike hires Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support Number of sponsored social inclusion membership packages £ co-funding committed (private and public) Number of transport nodes with new multimodal connection points	December 2022 (Original: March 2022)	The main risk is in encouraging uptake of the cycle hire, especially as the cost of living crisis bites. Work is ongoing with Brompton's marketing team to target local employers who may want to partner with the scheme, coinciding with the 4 <sup>th</sup> dock installation. Work continues with employers and developers who have expressed an interest to support the scheme.  Monitoring will continue in accordance with the Towns Fund Monitoring and Evaluation Plan.
Stodman Street Redevelopment	29 new residential units Public realm improved 40 new jobs 590sqm new retail space	October 2024	The Council is out for tenders at the time of writing. Cost of construction, and any unexpected delays, such as with the asbestos removal, could delay the project or raise prices. Contractor monitoring will be required.  Some risks have been reduced by pre-sale of the residential apartments. Prior to completion marketing of commercial opportunities will be required via NSDC's Corporate Property Team.
Newark Cultural Heart	Number of full-time equivalent (FTE) permanent jobs created through the projects Number of full-time equivalent (FTE) permanent jobs safeguarded through the projects Number of improved cultural facilities Increased collaboration with employers	March 2025	The project aims to secure the ongoing legacy of an enhanced events programme within the town to drive vibrancy and footfall. Two posts will be appointed to at the Town Council to progress the projects, alongside partners. There remain risks around the appropriate model and appetite for funding beyond the towns fund, matters which are monitored and managed by Newark Town Council in consultation with the District Council.
SiSCLog	The outputs from the Heads of Terms agreed with government are: Increase in capacity and accessibility to new or improved skills facilities Increased and closer collaboration with employers Increase in the breadth of the local skills offer Increase in the amount of shared workspace or innovation facilities Remediation and/or development of abandoned or dilapidated sites Working age population with qualifications	March 2026	The dependency of this project on the A46 Newark Northern Bypass means that it has been delayed whilst the extent of the land take from the SISCLOG site is determined. Until a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the A46 is agreed post a Summer 2023 Public Inquiry, the exact detail and status of the A46 improvements is uncertain. Irrespective the Council continues to work closely with National Highways and remains committed to progressing with planning and a Full Business Case in the first half of 2023.

	Number of start-ups and scale ups		Indicative outputs for the Business Case are: 5660sqm flexible commercial units; 1460sqm high tech offices; a hotel; a coffee shop.
Castle Gatehouse	Number of skilled volunteer roles in heritage sector Improved cultural facilities Number of events and reach annually	March 2026	The Castle Gatehouse project is funded partly through Towns Fund and partly through the National Heritage Lottery Fund. An application for NHLF has passed the first stage, and is progressing to the final stage, but the outcome will not be final until early 2024. The Towns Fund Full Business Case will be developed alongside this.
Southern Link Road	Construction of an adopted road linking A1 and A46. Unlocking 2550 additional homes, 2 million sq ft employment space, county park, sports facilities, and 5000 new jobs	Jan 2023 – March 2024	The cost of construction is the main outstanding risk for this project commencing, a risk being managed by the pending tender process. A specialist monitoring surveyor has been appointed by the council to support the governance of the grant, ensuing appropriate spend.

- 1.20 As can be seen in the table above, progress against each of the projects is good, and whilst some projects are experiencing small delays, these are able to be absorbed into the programme without affecting the overall outputs and outcomes. It should also be noted that since all the projects are in different stages, work on managing the programme often operates at several different levels at once.

#### Promotion

- 1.21 The promotion and marketing of the projects, and their fit within the wider reasons for intervention within the town, is crucial to their success. Significant time and resource is being focussed on this part of programme delivery as follows:
- Newark Town Board website ([www.newarktownboard.co.uk](http://www.newarktownboard.co.uk)) was launched in July 2022, and acts as an information hub for all the detail surrounding the Town Investment Plan, the Town Deal and each of the projects. Agendas, meeting papers and minutes from Newark Town Board meetings are saved on the website, along with the Terms of Reference and Assurance Framework.
  - Promotional videos have been created for each of the projects, and one [overall video](#) to explain the programme as a whole. These can be found on the website and are used by the NSDC communications team at intervals to reference and explain each of the projects.
  - A consistent brand has been developed for all site activity to promote both the specific project and wider Towns Fund programme context. The aim is to build knowledge and excitement as the construction projects get started and become more visible around the town.

## 2.0 Next Steps for Town Deal projects

- 2.1 The funding for the Town Deal runs until March 2026, by which time the priority projects will have commenced, be nearing completion, or be complete. The Town Programme Manager will continue to ensure that all projects are managed appropriately and that the contracts applied to third parties are monitored and evaluated to deliver and assure the requirements the government. The monitoring and evaluation reporting schedule to government is bi-annual, and the Programme Manager will ensure that the Council and Newark Town Board briefed before these returns are submitted. This regular schedule will start next financial year, 2023/2024, once all summary documents have been submitted and all first project payments will have been received. The monitoring and evaluation will include updates on outputs and with case studies of those students, residents, or users who benefit, including following journeys throughout future lives and careers.
- 2.2 It is proposed that Newark Town Board will continue, albeit in an ever-evolving role. Having firstly been convened as a steering board to lead the development of the TIP, it is now largely focussed on ensuring delivery. Board members also have an advocacy and ambassadorial role to explain and champion the town deal projects and encourage co-ordination and added value through their own networks. Moving forward, it is proposed that the board and its role be repurposed to take a wider place shaping remit. Accordingly, the Terms of Reference for the Board will be reviewed.
- 2.3 Given the move from the aforementioned business case development to delivery many projects will now become more visible to residents, businesses and visitors. An associated heightened awareness will be accompanied by promotional communications also detailed above. It should also be noted that the Southern Link Road project, and subsequently, the A46 improvements, will come with challenges, creating inconvenient roadworks and delays in travel in and around Newark whilst these works are ongoing. Whilst such issues will be managed and communicated they are necessary in order to reap identified rewards.

### Beyond the Towns Deal

- 2.4 Whilst the Town Deal projects rightly remain the priority, the aspirations of the TIP and the town runs beyond them. Work on many of the other projects continues, with the Council acting as developer, advisor, and curator. Some projects which have already progressed are detailed below:

**Fig. 5: Additional Newark TIP Projects**

Name of Project	Project Sponsor	What is happening	Expected completion
Newark Town Centre Vision & Masterplan	NSDC	The Masterplan will allow the Council to capture, in a single document, a holistic approach bringing together existing and future strategies. It will also address the current disconnect between extant town centre policy and the direction of travel to accept, curate, and offer market clarity on what high street	Jan 2023-June 2024.

		changes and reduction of retail may mean. The town centre masterplan is funded, including some match from Historic England and will be tendered in later 2022.	
Repurposing of the Buttermarket	NSDC	The first phase of the Buttermarket saw successful occupation of the full ground floor, with Tambo Lounge, Iquazo, and Specsavers being secured. The latest phase of the Buttermarket redevelopment has concluded (November 2022), with Inspire being welcomed to the former public house at the upper floor to provide adult education provision. Officers are working up plans for the final phase, allowing completion of the upper floor. The Council is also liaising with Newark Town Council to understand plans for building retained by them.	October 2024
Whole-town High Speed Fibre Broadband	City Fibre	Funding has been secured to make Newark a Full Fibre Town. Starting in November CityFibre will deliver a £10m rollout of high-speed fibre broadband on a town-scale.	2025
Relocation of Newark Lorry Park	NSDC	Linked to the SiSCLog Gateway redevelopment it remains the intention to relocate Newark Lorry Park in order to mitigate likely future impacts from the A46 Newark Northern Bypass. Full details of the proposals will be presented to Cabinet in due course, with a planning application expected in early 2023.	2025

### **3.0 Implications**

#### **Financial Implications (FIN22-23/5205)**

- 3.1 This report does not, in itself, generate the need for any additional funding. The funding profile and impacts of all Towns Deal projects is reported separately to Cabinet and/or Portfolio Holders, in addition to the Newark Towns Board. All projects are independently ensured in order to satisfy value for money. Any future financial implications will be considered by Cabinet if and when required.

#### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972. Any documents that contain confidential information or personal information about individuals should not be included in this list.

Please see the Newark Town Board [website](#) for:

- Town Investment Plan, July 2020
- Local Assurance Framework
- Minutes of Newark Town Board meeting, 15 June 2022

Please see the following Committee/Cabinet Reports:

- Economic Development Committee – 19 January 2022 – Newark Town Fund Update
- Policy and Finance Committee 27 January 2022 – Newark Town Fund Update and Approvals
- Policy and Finance – 17 March 2022
  - o Towns Fund Update
  - o Castle Gatehouse Update
  - o Cultural Heart Update
  - o Newark Gateway Update
  - o 32 Stodman Street Redevelopment
- Economic Development 23 March 2022
  - o A46 Newark Northern Bypass Preferred Route Announcement
  - o Towns Fund Projects Update
- Cabinet – 7 June 2022 – Newark Town Fund Update and Lorry Park Relocation Options
- Cabinet – 4 October 2022
  - o Newark Town Fund Update and Lorry Park Relocation Options
  - o Newark Southern Link Road Project



Report to: Policy & Performance Improvement Committee 28 November 2022

Director Lead: Matthew Finch, Communities and Environment Director

Lead Officer: Briony Ashton, Environmental Policy and Projects Officer

Report Summary	
<b>Report Title</b>	Climate Emergency Update
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To provide an update to members on the progress of the Climate Emergency Strategy and associated Action Plan.
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p>That the Policy &amp; Performance Improvement Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Endorse the inclusion of Southwell Leisure Centre and new Council services in our net carbon neutral target and incorporated into the annual carbon footprint calculation going forwards; and</li><li>b) Note the progress on the action plan and its key projects.</li></ul>
<b>Reason for Recommendation</b>	The inclusion of Southwell Leisure centre and new services within the carbon footprint calculation allows transparency and incorporates all buildings and services for which the is Council responsible. This work aligns with the Council's Community Plan objective to "enhance and protect the district's natural environment". There is a specific activity under this objective to reduce the Council's carbon emissions by implementing an environmental strategy and carbon reduction action plan to achieve carbon neutrality.

## **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 Newark and Sherwood District Council (NSDC) declared a Climate Emergency at the Full Council meeting of 16 July 2019. At this stage, the declaration did not include a target for net zero for the Council but recognised that the UK Government had, the preceding month, agreed a target of 2050.
- 1.2 Following the declaration, the Carbon Trust were appointed to work alongside officers and members to develop a Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan. The Climate Emergency Working Group (CEWG) met on several occasions to review the data and findings from the Carbon Trust, as well as to seek out views from partners, businesses, and local groups. The CEWG comprised of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Opposition Spokespersons of the Policy & Finance, Leisure & Environment, Economic Development, and Homes & Communities Committees. Members of the



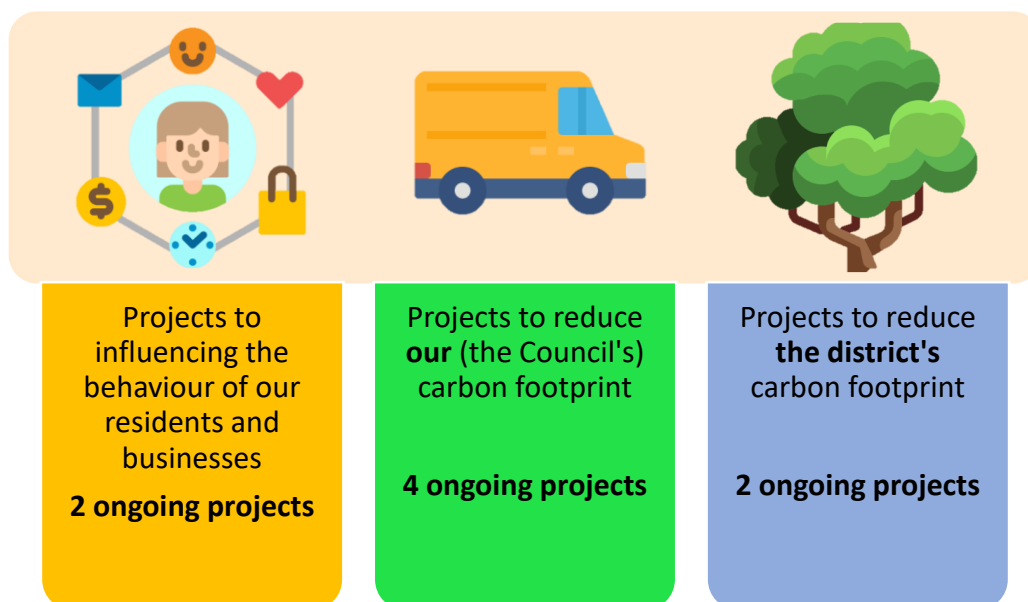
working group recommended the carbon net neutral target date of 2035, and a emissions reduction target in line with this aspiration. The Climate Emergency Strategy and both targets were approved by Policy and Finance Committee in September 2020 and Full Council in December 2020.

- 1.3 The Council's agreed target for reduction is 2,165 tCO<sub>2</sub>e (gas and fuel consumption from scope 1, purchased electricity from scope 2, and waste and water from scope 3).
- 1.4 The Greening Newark and Sherwood Action Plan was developed to deliver the vision outlined in the Climate Emergency Strategy. This action plan is being progressed and an annual report of progress is made to members. This report informs members of the Council's progress towards the 2035 carbon neutrality target and provides an update on work ongoing to date to tackle Climate Change.

## 2.0 Ongoing Projects

Members can refer to previous update reports (March and September 2021) for previous works. This section of the report updated members on going work.

These ongoing projects fall into three themes as outlined below.



### 2.1 **Green Rewards App** (Behaviour change in residents)

- 2.1.1 The Green Rewards App is an online platform designed to incentivise and encourage users to undertake positive behaviour change by enabling users to log carbon reducing activities and gain points for these activities. Residents collect points for undertaking carbon avoidance measures, such as having a sustainable commute, learning about recycling or buying eco-friendly products. The points collected are honesty based and rely on users logging completed tasks. For some tasks you can only gain points once, for example completing the carbon quiz, whilst for other tasks, such as a recycling, users can connect points every week. The Green Rewards App launched to the rest of the County in November 2021, to coincide with COP26, and it launched to Newark and Sherwood residents on 16 February 2022. This made Nottinghamshire the first county to have a carbon focused platform available to all residents.

- 2.1.2 The platform features a leader board which enables residents to view where they sit in relation to other residents. Winners are selected on a monthly basis by the platform operator. There are two winners a month, both receiving a £20 voucher.
- The resident with the most points (each resident can only win once bi-annually), and
  - A randomly selected resident that has logged activities in the last month.
- 2.1.3 The project team will continue to review the progress of the App on a monthly basis to monitor uptake, analyse trends and ensure the App's continued promotion. So far 381 our residents have signed up and 26 tonnes of carbon has been avoided (as of 10/10/22). The next steps are to utilise ward data to promote healthy competition within the district and to work with transport providers to provide discounts for Green Rewards users.
- 2.1.4 We have signed up to the App for one year, this expires in January 2023, before expiry the success of the App will be reviewed. This review will consider the carbon savings attained, impact achieved and take up across the geography and demographics of the district. A recommendation on whether to continue with Green Rewards will then be taken to the Portfolio Holder for decision. If applicable in future years this review will consider the findings from an ongoing dissertation. A Sheffield University student is carrying out a dissertation project to study the effects and validity/feasibility of rewards-based incentivisation on positive climate change mitigation behaviour. The findings of this research will help inform use of the Green Rewards App.
- 2.2 Carbon Reduction Support** (Behaviour Change in businesses and community groups)
- 2.2.1 We want to support businesses and community groups to make sustainable decisions. Firstly, we developed a new informational [webpage](#) which we circulated via our networks. As a second step, we are consulting with local businesses, community groups and parishes to understand what support and resources they would like to help them with their individual carbon reduction ambitions. As such, a survey went out to businesses, community groups and parishes throughout October 2022.
- 2.2.2 The next step, once the data has been analysed, will be to determine the individual requirements of each group, and decide if the establishment of a carbon neutral network would be beneficial for Newark and Sherwood. A report will be provided if the appetite from the survey respondents is deemed to be significant enough to allocate the resource to establish and maintain a group.
- 2.3 Solar PV installation** (Reducing the Council's carbon footprint)
- 2.3.1 Our Climate Emergency Strategy Action plan outlines recommended carbon reduction initiatives which the Council can undertake in order to improve energy efficiency and reduce its overall carbon footprint. This includes the installation of Solar PV. As such the we undertook feasibility works in collaboration with specialist consultants to consider the intricacies of Solar PV installation on a range of its corporate and leisure sites in order to gain further understanding in relation to costs involved, payback, carbon savings and if installation is practical.

2.3.2 The outcome of the feasibility study was presented to members at Policy and Finance Committee in November 2021 with a £685,250 expenditure approved for installation on the below sites:

- Newark Sports and Fitness Centre
- Southwell Leisure Centre
- Dukeries Leisure Centre
- The Beacon
- Vicar Water

2.3.3 The installation contract has been awarded and we are currently in the process of finalising the contract, works are expected to begin at the chosen sites in 2023. The installation of the Solar PV will generate in excess of 400,000 kWh and save an estimated 90 tCO<sub>2</sub>e per annum. The completion of this project will assist the Council with making carbon savings and generating renewable energy which will assist us with reaching our 2035 net carbon neutrality target.

## **2.4 Decarbonisation Plan (Reducing the Council's carbon footprint)**

2.4.1 As part of the Climate Emergency action plan we are committed to delivering and installing low carbon heating measures at a range of Council buildings before 2035. The Carbon Trust recommended Air Source Heat Pumps as the low carbon technology. However, before installing this technology on large scale sites (which require significant heating) we must ensure this new technology is appropriate and consider all fossil fuel free options.

2.4.2 As such, work is underway to develop a specification document for the creation of a Newark and Sherwood Decarbonisation Plan for our corporate and leisure buildings. This plan will be created by specialist and will advise on the energy efficiency measures and carbon reduction improvements we can put in place at each site.

2.4.3 Over the past year we have submitted two separate bids to government funding streams, to fund the developed of this plan, both of which have been unsuccessful. The Council allocated significant resource into developing the bid, only to be left disappointed by the 'first come first serve' nature of the funding streams. This has been fed back to the funding pot operators and has been raised via our MP. As our bids for funding the development of this plan from central government have been unsuccessful this will now be funded from the Climate Change budget.

## **2.5 Brunel Drive Master Plan (Reducing the Council's carbon footprint)**

2.5.1 The Climate Emergency action plan commits us to exploring the implementation of electric vehicles within the Council owned fleet of vehicles. It was agreed at Leisure and Environment Committee on 16 March 2021 to adopt a phased approach towards electrification. This began with the pilot of two vehicles which have been used by our Community Protection team for short journeys in the district within the past year.

2.5.2 This pilot is part of a long-term project to consider the Brunel Drive Depot site, and the surrounding area, and how we can accommodate electrical charging for our fleet as well as considering changes to the waste streams which we are currently collecting.

A project group was set up to consider the future of the site considering this aspiration. The group have met on several occasions and have appointed a contractor to provide detailed designs and an options appraisal, considering the site as is and the sites ability to meet future requirements.

- 2.5.3 A progress update will be presented to Cabinet in December 2022. Once a steer has been provided by members the project group will continue to work collaboratively to reach the preferred solution for the site to meet the future needs of the Councils fleet.

## **2.6 Climate Awareness Training (Reducing the Council's carbon footprint)**

- 2.6.1 Climate Awareness training has been introduced to the internal training programme for the first time. This training will help ensure decision makers are aware of the Climate Emergency and are considering carbon reduction in decision making. For example, considering the impact that the implementation projects and policy may make on the district's carbon footprint. The training will be for both members and officers and will be rolled out from 2023.
- 2.6.2 The intention is that the training will encompass elements of the well-established and accredited 'Carbon Literacy' training and Newark and Sherwood specific element related to current and future projects and ambitions of the Council. Consideration will also be given for the new Climate Fresk training course which gained momentum following the COP26 event in 2021.

## **2.7 LAD2 Energy Efficiency Improvements to Homes** (Reducing the district's carbon footprint)

- 2.7.1 LAD2 is a scheme which aims to raise the energy efficiency of low income and low energy performance homes. Focusing on homes with energy performance certificate (EPC) ratings of E, F or G. The Midland Energy Hub allocated Newark and Sherwood £724,850 of funding to carry out this work which enables cost saving for householders as well as carbon reduction, and the creation of green jobs via Regional Energy Hubs.
- 2.7.2 The LAD2 programme of works completed in September 2022, in partnership with Eon, and a total of 50 properties have been retrofitted with energy efficiency measures, enabling cost savings on energy bills and to support low-income households in Newark and Sherwood. This comprised of energy efficiency improvements in 36 private sector housing properties. 15 properties benefited from External Wall Insulation (EWI) and 21 properties had Solar PV panels installed. Whilst 14 properties owned by the Council (part of the Council's social housing portfolio) benefited from the installation of Solar PV panels.

## **2.8 Tree Planting (Reducing the district's carbon footprint)**

- 2.8.1 As part of the Community Plan and Climate Emergency Strategy the Council committed to planting 10,000 trees by 2023. By the end of the 2021/22 planting season over 7,919 trees had been planted directly by the council. A further 10,133 trees have been given away as part of the free tree scheme to residents and local community groups.

- 2.8.2 We are now approaching the 2022/23 planting season, and the free tree giveaway will run again. Residents and community groups can already request a tree, to be planted for spring, and we have received 441 requests so far.
- 2.8.3 We are also taking part in the Sherwood Forest Trust project 'Trees for Climate' helping to identifying suitable areas for planting and woodland development in the district.

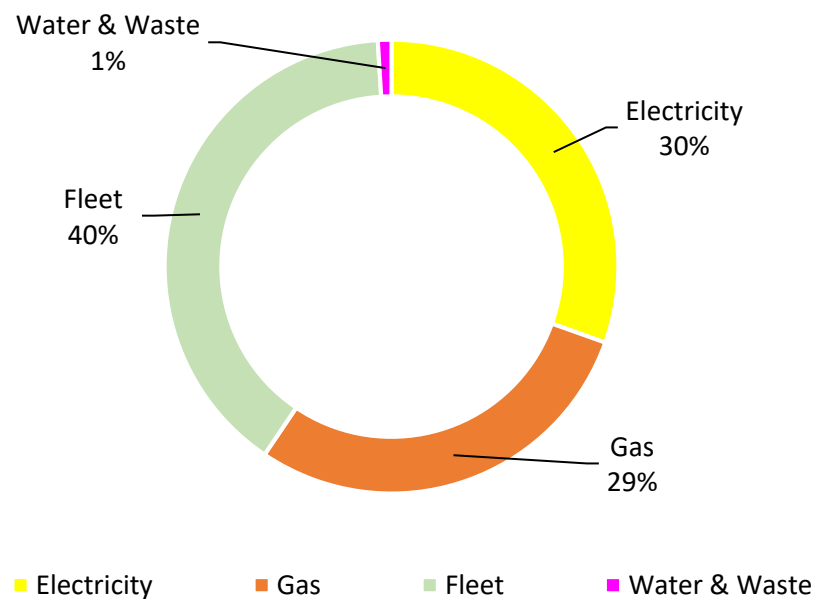
### **3.0 The Council's 2021-22 Carbon Footprint**

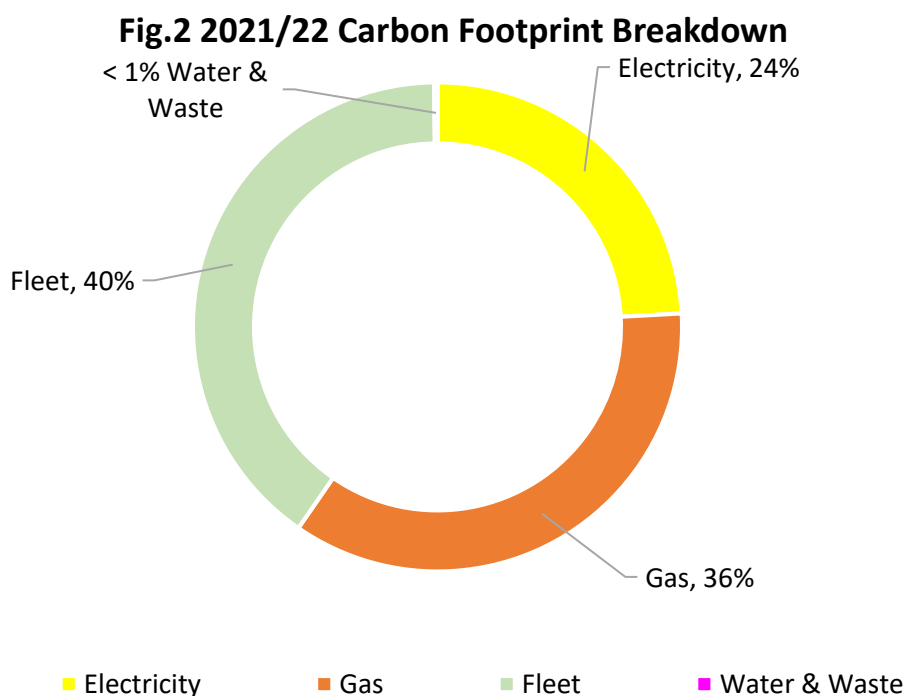
- 3.1 As part of the Climate Emergency Strategy, and associated action plan, we have committed to monitoring and measuring our carbon emissions. This helps us be accountable to our residents. It also helps us identify areas of high carbon emissions suitable for targeted action.
- 3.2 Our target for reduction is 2,165 tCO<sub>2</sub>e (gas and fuel consumption from scope 1, purchased electricity from scope 2, and waste and water from scope 3).
- 3.3 Full Council decided that the Council's housing stock would be excluded from this target. This decision still stands due to the estimated associated costs (circa £55million based on a 2020 estimate) and the requirement for clear direction and funding from national government to progress with this agenda.
- 3.4 The baseline carbon emissions (meaning the carbon footprint of the Council), was first measured in 2020, and the baseline was agreed at Full Council in December 2020. However, since the setting of this baseline with the Carbon Trust, the Council has undergone some key service changes impacting on its emissions, such as;
- We now deliver our garden waste service in house, which increased the fleet by two waste trucks,
  - We have increased the scale of our Grounds Maintenance works, including taking on the maintenance of HRA land, which increased the fleet by five vehicles,
  - The addition of the 4 Community Protection Officers, and their 2 vehicles,
  - An additional vehicle to run the targeted action street scene team,
  - Management of Southwell Leisure Centre, and
  - The installation of a pool at the Dukeries Leisure Centre.
- 3.5 These approved key service changes have undoubtedly had an impact on our carbon footprint, these changes nonetheless have been essential in order to provide these essential services to our residents.
- 3.6 It is important to recognise the significance of the decisions we have made since 2018/2019 and that these have had an impact on our carbon footprint, as seen in the table below.

<b>Newark and Sherwood District Council's Carbon Footprint</b>		
<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2021/22</b>
2,165 tCO <sub>2</sub> e	Not gathered due to Covid	2,483 tCO <sub>2</sub> e

- 3.7 Therefore, we have increased our carbon footprint by 15% since 2018/19. However, if we do a 'like for like' comparison. This means measuring our footprint without the vehicles purchased for new services and energy spent on new facilities, such as the pool. When comparing like-for-like, our carbon footprint is 2,060 tCO<sub>2</sub>e. This is a 5% reduction since 2018/19.
- 3.8 Please see the graphs below for a breakdown of the carbon footprint this year and in the baseline year.

**Fig.1 2018/19 Carbon Footprint Breakdown**





3.8 The setting of the target and the annual monitoring has shown how we need to be mindful of our energy consumption in both our operational practices and strategic decision making and how these decisions will impact upon our carbon footprint. Moving forwards we plan to consider energy efficiency recommendations from the Decarbonisation Plan, recruit a decarbonisation Project Surveyor with responsibility for energy and our Corporate property team will continue to review energy consumption and understand energy profiles for each building and determine a tolerance level to carry out investigations. Cabinet reports now also feature an environment section for report authors to consider when submitting reports for decision.

- 3.9 We remain confident that our 2035 target for net carbon neutrality is achievable, particularly with the projects presented in this report, the decarbonisation of the electric grid network in 2030 and our ability to offset any residual emissions if absolutely necessary at a point in time.

#### **4.0 Financial Implications (FIN22-23/3110)**

##### **4.1 Green Rewards**

- 4.1.1 As outlined, this is a joint procurement exercise between all Nottinghamshire Councils and the continued subscription to the App the cost will be subject to review. Subsequent years' expenditure has been included in the Transformation Revenue budget for 22/23 and 23/24 should we decide to continue.

##### **4.2 Climate Change budget allocation**

- 4.2.1 The Capital Programme has a budget for Climate change of £330k. Current actuals and commitments to date against this project are listed below:

	<b>Original Budget</b>	<b>Revised Budget</b>	<b>Spend to 30 September 2022</b>	<b>Commitments</b>
Climate Change	330,000	205,000	36,900	60,000
LED Lighting – Beacon		53,500		
Boiler - Beacon		71,300		
<b>Total</b>	<b>330,000</b>	<b>330,000</b>	<b>36,900</b>	<b>60,000</b>

Expenditure to date relates to Solar PV Consultation and Procurement. Commitments are £30,000 for the Decarbonisation Plan and £30,000 for the Brunel Drive Review.

##### **4.3 Solar PV**

- 4.3.1 Solar PV installation budget is £685,250 approved at Policy and Finance Committee in November 2021, the projected completion date is 2023. A full breakdown of the costs presented to that meeting is below.
- 4.3.2 some further work needs to take place to investigate whether the electricity savings given the current costs of electricity need to be revised, along with the annual maintenance costs.



	To Progress					
Narrative	The Beacon	Vicar Water	Newark S&F	Southwell LC	Ollerton Dukeries Leisure Centre	Total
Construction	85,050.00	47,550.00	228,800.00	185,050.00	116,300.00	<b>662,750.00</b>
Project Management	4,500.00	4,500.00	4,500.00	4,500.00	4,500.00	<b>22,500.00</b>
<b>Capital Costs</b>	<b>89,550.00</b>	<b>52,050.00</b>	<b>233,300.00</b>	<b>189,550.00</b>	<b>120,800.00</b>	<b>685,250.00</b>
<b>Financing</b>						
Annual MRP (25 year life)	3,582.00	2,082.00	9,332.00	7,582.00	4,832.00	<b>27,410.00</b>
Interest - 2.23%	1,996.97	1,160.72	5,202.59	4,226.97	2,693.84	<b>15,281.08</b>
	<b>5,578.97</b>	<b>3,242.72</b>	<b>14,534.59</b>	<b>11,808.97</b>	<b>7,525.84</b>	<b>42,691.08</b>
Cost of Maintenance	366.00	183.00	1,067.50	854.00	518.50	<b>2,989.00</b>
<b>Annual Costs</b>	<b>366.00</b>	<b>183.00</b>	<b>1,067.50</b>	<b>854.00</b>	<b>518.50</b>	<b>2,989.00</b>
<b>Total Annual Costs</b>	<b>5,944.97</b>	<b>3,425.72</b>	<b>15,602.09</b>	<b>12,662.97</b>	<b>8,044.34</b>	<b>45,680.08</b>
<b>Annual Electricity Savings</b>	7,274.40	3,609.95	19,701.50	15,761.20	9,569.30	<b>55,916.35</b>
<b>Net Annual Surplus/Loss</b>	<b>1,329.44</b>	<b>184.23</b>	<b>4,099.41</b>	<b>3,098.24</b>	<b>1,524.96</b>	<b>10,236.27</b>

## Background Papers and Published Documents

Climate Emergency Strategy

Greening Newark and Sherwood Action Plan



Report to: Policy & Performance Improvement Committee Meeting, 28 November 2022

Director Lead: Matthew Finch, Director - Communities & Environment

Lead Officer: Matthew Adey, Development Manager, Environmental Services - x5253

Report Summary	
<b>Report Title</b>	Adoption of an NSDC Tree Strategy
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	For the committee to review the NSDC Tree Strategy and its implications.
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p>That the Policy &amp; Performance Improvement Committee recommends to Cabinet that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) support be given to the Council's green ambitions to 'enhance and protect the district's natural environment', as stated in the community plan;</li><li>(b) the Tree Strategy (<b>Appendix A</b>) be released for public consultation via the Council's website; and</li><li>(c) the proposal to fund the increase in budget for essential tree survey and maintenance work be approved.</li></ul>

## 1.0 Background

- 1.1 Having adopted a carbon reduction plan in 2019 in response to the climate emergency, with the aim to be carbon neutral by 2035, the Council has placed an increase emphasis on the planting and care for new and existing tree cover throughout the Council. Our Community Plan sets out the Council's objectives to enhance and protect the district's natural environment, including a commitment to plant over 10,000 trees by 2023. This target has already been met through community giveaways and direct planting. This included the creation of a new woodland at Vicar Water Country Park in conjunction with Sherwood Forest Trust.
- 1.2 Throughout the process of identifying sites and funding, it was identified that the council lacked clear strategies and policies on the planting and care of trees, both on its own land and in the wider district. To begin the process of addressing this shortfall, this strategy has been developed.

## **2.0 Proposal/Options Considered**

2.1 The Tree Strategy for Newark & Sherwood has been developed by the Environmental Services Team in conjunction with the Planning Development and Planning Policy & Infrastructure teams to establish the Council's objectives towards trees in Newark and to provide an action plan setting out the pathway to achieve those objectives. The objectives are:

- Objective 1 - Establish robust dataset of trees within the District, identifying:
  - Trees under District control (numbers and species composition)
  - Canopy coverage of remaining land
  - Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees in our control
- Objective 2 - Develop policies and procedures to ensure:
  - The Council has a robust approach to biosecurity measures when planting or supplying trees
  - Trees are maintained and protected, where appropriate, to protect both biodiversity and public safety
- Objective 3 - Review of upcoming changes to national and regional policy and guidance with regards to trees within the District.
- Objective 4 - Work within the planning system to not only support and maintain the biodiversity of the District but actively improve it.
- Objective 5 - Work with residents and partner organisations to maintain and improve the biodiversity of the District.
- Objective 6 - Continue to plant more trees in suitable locations and encourage others to do the same.

2.2 The strategy sets out a series of actions designed to achieve these objectives and support the long-term health of tree within the district and to maintain coverage. Key actions to note are:

- A new target for planting at least a further 6,000 new trees over the next ten years (2022 to 2032).
- Develop a new Design SPD including guidance about street trees with consideration to be given to a minimum canopy cover target.
- The Council continues to commit to funds of £1,500 a year to the free tree give away scheme and continues to plough back money from Christmas tree recycling into environmental improvement works with the aim of providing a further 8,000 trees by 2032.
- Increase the trees survey budget to £10,000 every three years to develop a full tree asset register for District Council trees and to maintain the health and safety of our tree stock.
- increase investment in tree health and public safety by increasing the tree maintenance budget to £30,000, to ensure essential tree maintenance and safety works can be conducted. This new maintenance fund will enable us cover about 6% of our tree stock each year.

2.3 These actions will help us build on our existing successes and developments including the annual free tree giveaway, target hardening work and existing partnerships and joint working such as the recent secondment for Lynn Preece to the Sherwood Forest Trust.

- 2.4 For context we estimate the new maintenance fund will cover about 4% of our tree stock each year. The work is targeted by need with the tree survey identifying works on an urgency basis, with Red (Immediate) works being targeted immediately after the survey followed by Amber (Urgent) and then Green (Maintenance) works. The Council will be liable for any damage or injury which occurs following failure to act upon the risks identified by the survey or issue which occurs.
- 2.5 For context our budget for tree maintenance on housing land (not including trees in gardens) is over £26,000pa and this covers 1325 trees identified on the last survey. The last survey conducted on trees outside of housing areas identified around 1,400 trees in our parks and gardens which are near footpaths, walkways and other accessible areas, however, this survey did not include groups of trees shielded by vegetation where no individual survey was possible, but where the public still have access (which we estimate brings the total up to around 2000). If our woodland areas are added to this figure the figure is likely to be over 4,000.
- 2.6 With additional trees being planted on NSDC land (over 7,900 so far) additional care and maintenance work is also required to ensure that these trees grow on into the future. The £38,000 would fully fund both the survey and maintenance works required to ensure that our tree stock is well maintained into the future.
- 2.7 One of the issues discussed in the strategy is the implementation of Biodiversity Net Gain which may necessitate a review of some council strategies, including this one. On this basis it is recommended that the strategy and action plan be reviewed on an annual basis.

### **3.0 Implications**

#### **Financial Implications (FIN22-23/449)**

- 3.1 There is currently no set budget for maintenance on trees that are owned by the District Council that are not covered by the HRA. Budget is found from other areas where works are necessary, albeit this approach is therefore very reactive rather than proactive.
- 3.2 The proposal above is to add £38,000 into the General Fund budget to fund both a tree survey, once every three years, together with an annual allowance for maintenance work to be completed.
- 3.3 The tree survey is estimated to cost £10,000 every three years order to assess the health of the Council's tree stock and identify trees that require maintenance work completing in order to reduce the risk of injury from falling trees.
- 3.4 To supplement this, an annual allowance would be required to complete work identified from within the surveys on the higher risk trees within the Council's stock. This would allow for maintenance of around 4% of the stock each year. This figure would need to be reviewed depending on the outcome of the survey work, as clearly if there were a higher proportion of red risk trees, work would need to be carried out as urgently as possible. This annual allowance would range between £38,000 (in years where a survey does not need to be carried out) and £28,000 (once in every three years when the tree survey needs to be completed).

- 3.5 This would need to be included within the General Fund budget from the 2023/24 financial year.

**Background Papers**

None

APPENDIX A

**Newark and Sherwood District Council**

# **Tree Strategy**

**2022 to 2032**



## Contents

<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. THE IMPORTANCE OF TREES</b>	<b>2</b>
a. <i>The bigger picture</i>	2
b. <i>Trees in a national context - the race is on to reforest Britain</i>	2
c. <i>The Woodland Trust's Emergency Tree Plan for the UK</i>	3
d. <i>Trees in Newark and Sherwood</i>	5
<b>3. OBJECTIVES OF THIS STRATEGY</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4. CURRENT SITUATION</b>	<b>7</b>
a. <i>Where are the District's trees?</i>	7
b. <i>Where are the District council owned trees?</i>	8
c. <i>How do we protect trees within the District?</i>	9
d. <i>Planning policies for trees</i>	9
<b>5. IDENTIFYING THE GAPS</b>	<b>11</b>
a. <i>Baseline survey of the District</i>	11
<b>6. PROTECTING TREES</b>	<b>12</b>
a. <i>Protecting trees through development</i>	12
Tree Preservation Orders (TPO)	12
b. <i>Felling licenses</i>	13
c. <i>Protecting ancient trees and woodlands</i>	13
d. <i>Protecting trees by reducing biosecurity risks</i>	16
<b>7. PLANTING TREES</b>	<b>17</b>
a. <i>Creating well planned quality woodland</i>	17
b. <i>Site surveys and planting plans</i>	17
c. <i>Landscape character</i>	18
d. <i>Natural regeneration</i>	18
e. <i>Planting projects</i>	18
f. <i>Securing additional trees through development</i>	20
g. <i>Tree canopy coverage policy</i>	20
h. <i>Tree pit size</i>	21
i. <i>Local Nature Recovery Strategies</i>	21
j. <i>Biodiversity Net Gain</i>	21
k. <i>Urban greening</i>	22
l. <i>Air Quality</i>	22

<i>m. <a href="#">Flooding</a></i>	23
<b>8. <a href="#">ENGAGING WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES</a></b>	<b>26</b>
<i>a. <a href="#">Promoting trees and tree planting</a></i>	26
<i>b. <a href="#">Supporting healthy lifestyles</a></i>	27
<i>c. <a href="#">Community Orchards</a></i>	28
<i>d. <a href="#">Miner 2 Major</a></i>	29
<i>e. <a href="#">Park volunteering</a></i>	29
<i>f. <a href="#">Park and woods friends groups</a></i>	30
<i>g. <a href="#">School engagement and Forest School</a></i>	30
<i>h. <a href="#">Encourage and support tree partnerships</a></i>	31
<i>i. <a href="#">Green Champions</a></i>	31
<i>j. <a href="#">External Funding for planting</a></i>	31
<b>9. <a href="#">MAINTAINING DISTRICT COUNCIL TREES</a></b>	<b>32</b>
<i>a. <a href="#">Tree and woodland policies</a></i>	32
<i>b. <a href="#">Tree risk surveys</a></i>	32
<i>c. <a href="#">Staff expertise and capacity</a></i>	33
<i>d. <a href="#">Aftercare of newly planted trees</a></i>	34
<i>e. <a href="#">Further ongoing considerations</a></i>	34
<i><a href="#">Ash dieback</a></i>	34
<i><a href="#">Other pests and diseases</a></i>	34
<i><a href="#">Invasive species</a></i>	35
<i><a href="#">Thinning new plantations</a></i>	35
<i><a href="#">The importance of dead and decaying wood</a></i>	36
<b><a href="#">CONCLUSION</a></b>	<b>38</b>
<b><a href="#">Appendix1 - List of current and potential future partners</a></b>	<b>39</b>
<b><a href="#">Appendix 2 - List of currently available funding opportunities</a></b>	<b>41</b>



## • INTRODUCTION

Trees are essential to human life. They clean our air, store carbon, provide shade and provide a home for wildlife. They stabilise our soils and can help prevent flooding.

Having adopted a carbon reduction plan in 2019 in response to the climate emergency, with the aim to be carbon neutral by 2035, this Strategy sets out why trees are important and why emergency action is needed to protect, manage and plant more trees within the District.

This tree strategy has taken into account global environmental issues and the changing local landscape that we live in but also builds on the ongoing work that the Council is already doing under the Greening Newark and Sherwood agenda. From declaring a Climate Emergency in 2019, launching free-tree giveaways, managing and maintaining four Green-Flag award winning parks, helping communities look after their own patch through the work of Cleaner, Safer, Greener action days, and successfully applying for funding for tree planting, this Strategy is the next step in meeting our environmental aspirations.

Most importantly the Strategy will help us increase tree cover in the District and help us maintain and protect our existing trees. It will help us benefit residents and visitors through the opportunity to observe and enjoy nature, and it will help us raise awareness of local environmental and conservation work that is being undertaken.

The Strategy considers the importance of all the District's natural spaces and not just Council managed land. It considers urban areas, parks, woodlands and farmed land. It considers a variety of natural habitats and the role of the planning system in protecting trees and hedges. There is scope for enhancing the District for trees and wildlife with appropriate long-term funding, and whether it is the creation of a whole new woodland or a single tree planted in a resident's garden, every action has a value in enhancing the District's natural assets. In essence we want to see the *right tree in the right place*.

We acknowledge that we cannot deliver all of the elements of the strategy alone or all at once. We will continue to play a key role in strengthening our partnerships with tree agencies and trusts, regulatory organisations, parish councils, residents and landowners. We aim to lead, inspire and invite others to join us in this process. The Strategy includes a staggered action plan for short, medium and longer term actions.

The tree strategy provides us with an unprecedented opportunity to transform our District into a better place for people and wildlife.

- **THE IMPORTANCE OF TREES**

- ***The bigger picture***

Trees are often referred to as the lungs of the planet, taking in carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen into the atmosphere. Trees are a powerful tool in combating the effects of climate change, such as storm events, flooding, changes in weather patterns, and rising temperatures. Trees help by capturing carbon from the atmosphere and storing it (sequestration) along with providing cooling shade in urban areas.

The value of trees and nature came into sharp focus during the Covid-19 pandemic. Green spaces gave people respite and hope through difficult times. Trees play a vital role in the health and well-being of individuals and society as a whole.

An abundance of research shows that trees not only improve our air, soil and water quality but also improve our physical and mental health and provide a sense of place. Trees have been found to enhance mood, reduce stress, improve self-esteem and lower blood pressure. Research in the Netherlands and Japan indicated that people were more likely to walk or cycle to work if the streets were lined with trees, feel better and live longer as a result<sup>1</sup>.

Trees and woodlands are home to a wealth of wildlife, from shade-loving plants and delicate fungi, to nesting birds, elusive mammals and rare species of flora and fauna. Ancient woodland, in particular, supports more species than any other land-based habitat in the UK. Often ancient trees and woodlands provide environments that are totally unique and irreplaceable.

However according to the Woodland Trust, a third of all woodland wildlife species are in decline, and one in ten are at risk of extinction. Working to protect ancient trees<sup>2</sup> and woodlands is of vital importance along with creating new habitats to try to maintain biodiversity and bridge the gap between the oldest trees and the next ones to come along.

On 28 September 2020, the UK Government signed the Leaders Pledge for Nature, at the United Nations Summit on Biodiversity seeking to reverse Biodiversity Loss by 2030. The Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) states “that the climate emergency and biodiversity crisis are inextricably linked and must be addressed together” and calls for “action through nature-based solutions”.

In summary having a Tree Strategy is not just about carbon emissions but also the opportunity for creating a better place for people and wildlife to live. The Council believes that urgent action is needed on a bold scale to prevent irreversible damage to climate and nature.

- ***Trees in a national context - the race is on to reforest Britain***

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<sup>1</sup> Van den Berg et al. 2003, Environmental preferences and restoration: (how) are they related? Journal of Environmental Psychology 23, 135-146.

<sup>2</sup> An ancient tree is one that has passed beyond maturity and is old, or aged, in comparison with other trees of the same species, a veteran tree typically it will have a wide trunk, small crown and signs of decay. A veteran tree is a damaged tree which has developed some of the features found on an ancient tree, not necessarily as a consequence of time, but of its life or environment.

The UK Government has ambitious targets to plant trees, committing to 30,000 hectares per year by 2025. This is the equivalent to planting 50 forests the size of Sherwood Forest, every year. This was the annual rate recommended by the Committee on Climate Change in 2019 to help the UK meet their target of net zero emissions by 2050<sup>3</sup>. The government is committed to increasing UK woodland land cover, for England the aim is to increase from 10% to 12% by 2060 in the 25 Year Environment Plan<sup>4</sup>.

Government research shows that we need to go further and faster than we are now. Landowners, including local authorities, need to be assessing their land to determine what options there are for tree planting and protecting existing trees.

During summer of 2021 the government released the [England Tree Action Plan](#) outlining the Government's long-term visions for trees, woodland and forestry.

The role of local authorities within the action plan:

- Be part of Nature Recovery and Landscape Recovery Networks (the Government's commitment to protect 30% of UK land by 2030)
- Develop local tree and woodland strategies
- Plant trees particularly where they make the most difference, understanding what canopy you have and set targets to increase it
- Apply for grants and invest more funding in trees
- Join woodland creation partnerships
- Plant trees in urban spaces so that people can connect with nature
- Support community-led tree planting schemes
- Use planning and Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) to protect increasing numbers of trees
- Protect, manage better and improve public woodland for resilience and wildlife
- Protect ancient and veteran trees and woodland
- Act for greater tree resilience by following UK Forestry Standards
- Plant the right tree, in the right place for the right reason(s)

We have used the Government's Tree Action Plan to help develop and plan our ambitious strategy.

#### ○ ***The Woodland Trust's Emergency Tree Plan for the UK***

The Woodland Trust published an Emergency Tree Plan for the UK in early 2020<sup>5</sup>. The plan is directed at all levels of government and aims to address both climate change and the nature emergency.

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<sup>3</sup> Committee on Climate change, 2020, "Land Use: Policies for a Net Zero UK"

<sup>4</sup> HM Government, 2018, "A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment"

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>)

<sup>5</sup> Woodland Trust 2020, Emergency Tree Plan for the UK

(<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/publications/2020/01/emergency-tree-plan>)

It contains a number of key recommendations for local authorities:

- Look after the trees we have by protecting trees and restoring existing woodland
- Prioritise the protection and restoration of ancient and veteran trees<sup>6</sup>
- Create new policies and funding for woods and trees
- Have quality and quantity targets for new tree cover
- Lead the way by using public land to help with climate action and nature recovery
- Write an emergency tree plan or strategy
- Ensure all development land includes a minimum 30% tree cover
- Support the core principle that new trees should seek to maximise future wildlife value
- Consider all trees, including woodlands, hedges, urban trees and individual trees

The Woodland Trust has also issued a stark warning about ‘planting by numbers’ and advise that we must always plant the **right tree in the right place**.

In 2021 they issued the [State of the UK’s Wood and Trees 2021 Report](#).

The key findings are

- Existing native woodlands are isolated, in poor condition and there has been a decline in woodland wildlife
- Woods and trees are vital for a healthy, happy society. They lock up carbon to fight climate change, improve our health, wellbeing and education, reduce pollution and flooding, and support people, wildlife and livestock.
- Woods and trees are subject to a barrage of coinciding threats. Threats range from direct woodland loss through building developments and farming to more insidious influences from climate impacts, imported diseases, invasive plants and air pollutants.
- Not nearly enough is being done. The report warns that we urgently need to scale up the initiatives to create native woods, put more individual trees back in the landscape, and restore damaged woods.

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<sup>6</sup> An ancient tree is one that has passed beyond maturity and is old, or aged, in comparison with other trees of the same species, a veteran tree typically it will have a wide trunk, small crown and signs of decay. A veteran tree is a damaged tree which has developed some of the features found on an ancient tree, not necessarily as a consequence of time, but of its life or environment.

Priority actions:

- Expand woodland tree cover
- Enhance and protect existing woods and trees
- Improve the evidence with improved tree data and regular wildlife assessments
- Invest time, money and people to take on the challenge and create opportunities for woods and trees

We have used the Woodland Trust's reports to help develop and plan our new Tree Strategy.

○ ***Trees in Newark and Sherwood***

Our Tree Strategy will form part of the Council's response to the incoming governmental policy, but it will also set out our approach and leadership in terms of managing and protecting trees.

We will use our own assets and estate for tree planting, continue to use our powers as a planning authority and we will embrace partnership working. We will set our own targets and implement our own policies.

The Council's Community Plan (2020 to 2023) includes the objective to "enhance and protect the District's natural environment" – this is important, but also for the benefits created for residents and businesses in so doing.

The objective is supported by the action to "contribute to the Emergency Tree Plan for the UK by identifying sites and planting at least 10,000 trees". Through a mix of direct planting and community involvement Newark and Sherwood District Council passed this target in early 2022. This included the development of a new woodland at Vicar Water Park on the Vicardale site. In response to this success this Strategy sets the objective of planting or providing for planting a further 8,000 trees by 2030.

The creation of a Tree Strategy also supports the strategy and action plan produced in response to the declared climate emergency. The Climate Emergency Action Plan recognises that the Council will have some residual emissions requiring offsetting and although tree planting is not a means of offsetting at this time, the World Resource Institute and the Carbon Trust are developing a new accounting standard for greenhouse gas (GHG) removal, which is expected to be published in 2023.

- **OBJECTIVES OF THIS STRATEGY**

This Strategy has been developed with the aim of establishing the Council's objectives towards trees in Newark and Sherwood District and setting out an action plan to implement those objectives.

- Objective 1 Establish robust dataset of trees within the District, identifying:
  - Trees under District control (numbers and species composition)
  - Canopy coverage of remaining land
  - Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees in our control
- Objective 2 Develop policies and procedures to ensure:
  - The Council has a robust approach to biosecurity measures when planting or supplying trees
  - Trees are maintained and protected, where appropriate, to protect both biodiversity and public safety
- Objective 3 Review of upcoming changes to national and regional policy and guidance with regards to trees within the District.
- Objective 4 Work within the planning system to not only support and maintain the biodiversity of the District but actively improve it.
- Objective 5 Work with residents and partner organisations to maintain and improve the biodiversity of the District
- Objective 6 Continue to plant more trees in suitable locations and encourage others to do the same

- **CURRENT SITUATION**

- ***Where are the District's trees?***

The name of the District being Newark and ***Sherwood*** gives a clue as to the woodland distribution within our District. Using the National Forest Inventory for Woodland 2017, Map 1, shows the extent of woodland cover around the western edge of the District. Notable woodlands over 100 hectares include Clipstone Forest (314ha), Sherwood Forest (600ha) and Wellow Wood (128ha). These are the remains of ancient hunting forests and wooded grazing land which would have been widespread across the Mercia Mudstone area of the District along with more modern Forestry England evergreen plantations.



Map 1: National Forest Inventory for Woodland 2017

The land to the east of the District is less wooded (although Stapleford Woods does provide 90ha of woodlands to explore). The trees and woodland within the Newark area are primarily found within parks and open spaces such as Sconce and Devon Park, and Beacon Hill Conservation Park (managed by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust).



- **Where are the District council owned trees?**

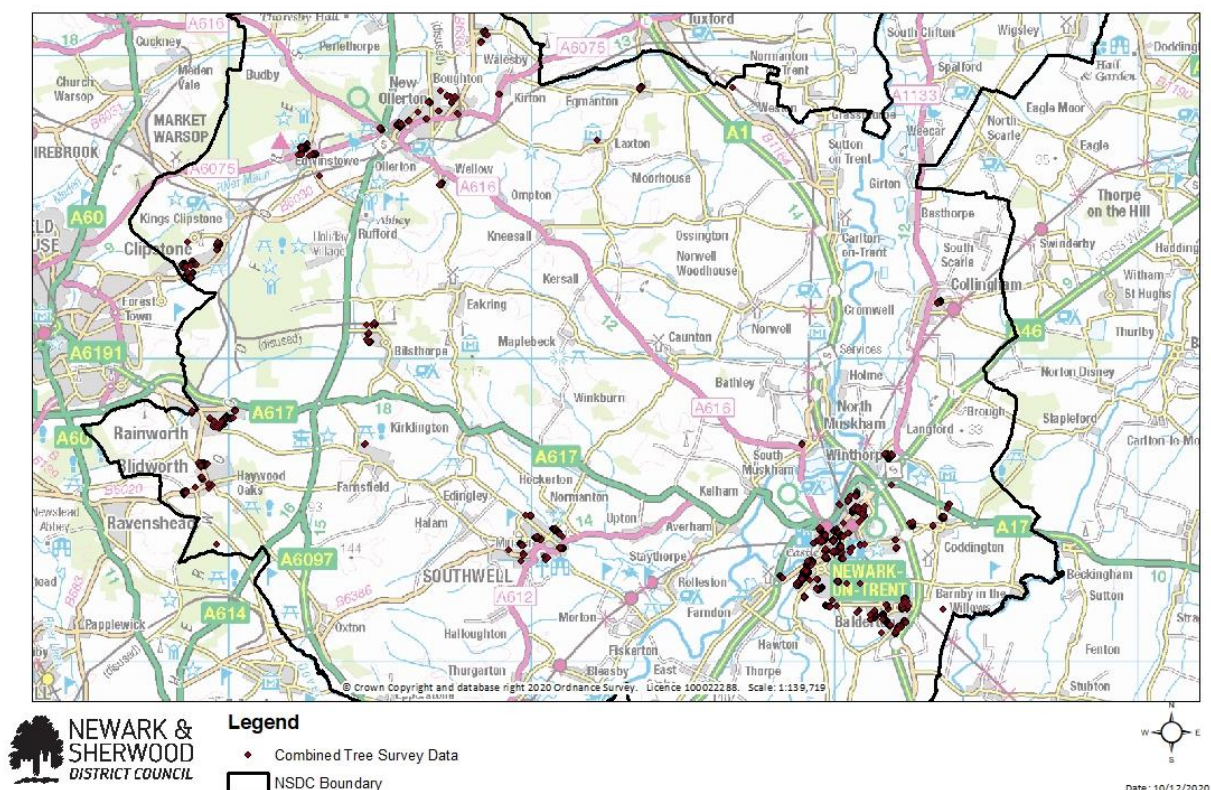
Current practice for the Council is that every three years a Tree Risk Survey is carried out. For District Council land, excluding housing land, the latest survey in early 2020 covered 892 trees, or groups of trees, conducting a visual tree assessment looking for gross or remedial defects.

The survey primarily looked at the risk to people and buildings, fences, highways and public footpaths so does not cover all of the trees on Council land and is only looking at trees with a diameter larger than 75mm. Trees on land managed as part of our housing stock were surveyed in a similar way in March 2022

These surveys have been used to identify where immediate tree work is needed and this work is then being carried out in priority order, ramping down to less immediate work prior to a new survey being carried out.

Combining data from tree risk surveys over the past few years, including housing land, shows the extent of where some of the District Council tree stock can be found, as shown in Map 2. Based on this combined data it is estimated that around 4,000 mature or semi mature trees, or groups of trees, that are managed by the Council.

**Newark & Sherwood District Council Tree Survey Combined**



Map 2: Combined Tree Survey Data

As these surveys are not looking at all sites, and only selected trees within some of those sites it is thought that this may only cover 70% of the District Council tree stock. However, it does



show that we do have a significant number of sites within the Newark area, and with Newark generally being less wooded, these sites become far more important than ever.

- ***How do we protect trees within the District?***

As the Local Planning Authority, we are responsible for Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) under the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012. The law helps protect valuable trees which contribute to an area's landscape and amenity. A tree with a TPO applied is one which has significant public amenity value or potential for amenity value.

Currently Newark and Sherwood has over 350 TPOs but each one of them can include woodland areas (known as 'group TPOs') so across the District thousands of trees are covered by TPOs and are offered a level of protection, whereby any works to be carried out on them must be approved and agreed with by the Council.

Conservation Area legislation also provides some protection to trees. Conservation Areas are generally designated based on historical value of the buildings, structures, and spaces that form the setting of these elements. Trees form an important part of the character of a Conservation Area and for those trees that are not individually protected by a TPO, before an owner does any works on them, they must inform the Council. The Council will consider if the proposed works are acceptable or if the tree needs to be protected by a TPO.

- ***Planning policies for trees***

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. A principle, set out in the NPPF, is that "Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment" and which includes "minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures".

The NPPF seeks to ensure that the major pressure for significant housing development, to address the housing crisis, is balanced against the need to protect and enhance the environment. It expects new development to be well designed and to provide open space that "reflect current and future needs and support communities health, social and cultural well-being." Clearly trees play an important role in this.

The Council through its planning policy sets out, in the Amended Core Strategy and the Allocations and Development Management DPD, to protect trees and woodlands and to ensure new development is designed to ensure that it respects biodiversity assets already onsite.

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
Core Policy 9 Sustainable Design	Requires high standard of sustainable design that both protects and enhances the natural environment
Core Policy 12 Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure	Protection of Ancient Woodland and seeks to secure development that maximises the opportunities to conserve, enhance and restore biodiversity.
Sherwood Area Policy 1	Promotes sustainable development which helps deliver the conservation aims of Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC (Sherwood Forest National Nature Reserve) and the other designated nature conservation sites
Policy DM 5 - Design	Part 5 Trees, Woodland, Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure seeks to secure natural features (such as trees) are protected and enhanced and integrated into GI. Part 7 Ecology requires developers to access onsite biodiversity and seek to ensure that significantly harmful effects are designed out.
Policy DM 7 – Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure	Sets out the decision making criteria for the various nature conservation designations.

Alongside the District Council's planning policy individual communities can prepare Neighbourhood Plans which set more localised policies. These plans can include policies which protect important features of a village or town including identifying trees which are considered locally important.

Where sites come forward for development the Council will seek to ensure that trees are integrated into the development; an assessment of existing trees and hedgerows will identify those trees that are worthy of retention. It will not always be possible to retain all trees, particularly if the trees are of a poor standard, however the Council will seek to secure new trees as part of any landscaping scheme. The Council will seek to ensure that existing trees which are to remain as part of the development continue to be maintained by placing them in the public realm, securing their ongoing maintenance via separate arrangement or through protection via a TPO.

In terms of new tree planting, planning conditions can be included in new developments so that landscaping plans have to include tree planting, along with other appropriate green spaces.

- **IDENTIFYING THE GAPS**

- ***Baseline survey of the District***

With the UK Government aiming to increase woodland cover it is important to understand what the District's canopy cover is as a whole. England's cover is estimated at 10%, and in 1998 Nottinghamshire woodland was stated as being 8% of total landcover<sup>7</sup>. We currently only have a limited understanding, based on the small sample of our own trees found within the Tree Risk Survey. The Woodland Trust has also identified a lack of data for the Sherwood Forest area. A baseline figure needs to be obtained for the District, allowing us to compare and measure future planting and changes.

We know from previous research that the canopy cover across Newark Town is approximately 8%<sup>8</sup>, however the information for rest of the District is patchy, which means we don't have a clear assessment of the District's canopy cover. To rectify this, we will carry out a base-line audit to measure the canopy cover across the District. This survey will be carried out using i-Tree methodology<sup>9</sup>, which is the analysis of aerial photographs. This is the accepted method by many organisations, including the Woodland Trust, as the quickest way to estimate existing tree cover.

This baseline figure can be used to measure our own tree planting programmes over time but also enable us to compare the District's tree canopy with neighbouring authorities and national levels. It will help us prioritise areas for tree planting and demonstrate if we are achieving national requirements and goals set out by the Government's Climate Change Committee and England Tree Strategy.

The Woodland Trust is currently running a campaign to map the UK's ancient and veteran trees. We will encourage our residents to take part in this scheme and work with the Woodland Trust to share this information so that trees can be monitored and given tree preservation orders if appropriate.

**ACTION – Carry out a baseline study in the short term with i-Tree.**

**ACTION – To work with the Woodland Trust and others to review collected data and identify gaps and shortfalls in ancient tree coverage identifying potential ancient trees for additional prevention measures.**

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<sup>7</sup> Forestry Commission 2001, National Inventory of Woodland and Trees for England. ([National inventory of woodland and trees - England - Forest Research](#) )

<sup>8</sup> The Canopy Cover of England's Towns and Cities: baselining and setting targets to improve human health and well-being [Various Authors](#)

<sup>9</sup> iTree Canopy, (<https://canopy.itreetools.org/>)

- **PROTECTING TREES**

The Council will prioritise the protection and restoration of existing trees and woodland within the District. An older, larger tree fixes significantly higher levels of carbon compared with smaller and mid-sized trees. Similarly in terms of biodiversity, larger and older trees have far greater value for wildlife. A large oak tree for example can support up to 2,300 species for at least part of their life. Like every species all trees will eventually decline and may require felling or remedial work for a number of reasons including disease and safety.



*Photo 1: Mature Oak tree at Sherwood Forest 2022*

- ***Protecting trees through development***

*Tree Preservation Orders (TPO)*

The Environmental Act was published in 2021 (although not all sections are currently in force), this and future planning reforms may mean changes to the TPO system, with the scope being widened with the aim to increase the number of protected trees.

The England Tree Action Plan states that the Government wants to make sure trees in the urban environment are no longer seen as a management liability because of the costs, rather that they are seen as an important asset.

Whatever the outcome of the national review it is acknowledged that the current Newark and Sherwood TPO list has not been comprehensively reviewed for many years meaning that

there may be trees that don't necessarily need the protection of a TPO or that new trees or woodlands need adding. Currently we register new TPO's when they are at risk and identified as important as part of new development, when a Tree Works in a Conservation Area application identifies a tree of amenity value or when a tree is nominated and assessed as being important by a town/parish council or member of the public and is at risk.

The review of current TPOs in the District, in line with tree regulations, requires capacity and expertise within the Planning Development Business Unit. This expertise was previously restricted to advice on current tree works applications. A dedicated Tree and Landscape Officer has been recruited to help provide this capacity. This will help ensure that the Council has the necessary resources to regularly review protected trees, consider trees as part of new development and assist the Council in the delivery of parts of this Strategy.

A TPO list review will also aim to ensure that all protected trees are available for the general public to view on a map based system via our website. Planning Development is working on upgrading the Council's GIS infrastructure and this will allow the Council to create interactive maps allowing local residents, developers and landowners to search and view GIS data on TPO's.

- ***Felling licenses***

Better regulation of tree management protecting and sustainably managing existing tree and woodland cover requires strong regulation. The Government introduced Felling Licence Online in 2019 to modernise the customer journey for felling licence applications.

The Environment Act (2021) contains several measures to improve enforcement against illegal tree felling. The England Tree Action Plan suggests reform of the felling licence system and controls, introducing greater flexibility, improved clarity around felling controls and UK Forestry Standard requirements, and improved enforcement capability.

The Act introduces 'Duty to Consult' which will give the public the opportunity to understand why a street tree is being felled and express any concerns regarding this. The Act also introduces Forestry Enforcement Measures which strengthens the Forestry England's power to clamp down on illegal tree felling across England.

- ***Protecting ancient trees and woodlands***

Ancient trees in wood pasture and parkland are totally unique and have decaying wood found nowhere else. They produce crucial habitats with very rich biodiversity.

Projects such as 'Back from the Brink' which is a £4.6 million, lottery funded, 4 year conservation project aims to protect 20 endangered species in the UK and has included 'ancient of the future' as one of its projects<sup>10</sup>. The project has targeted tree-dependent species to protect including invertebrates, lichens, fungi, mosses, bats and birds.

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<sup>10</sup> Natural England/ National Lottery Heritage Fund (<https://naturebftb.co.uk/>)



Tree species in ancient woodland commonly include Oak, Ash, Sweet Chestnut, Beech, Lime, Birch, Hawthorne and Willow. Nineteen sites have been identified as part of the project including Sherwood Forest in our District. Sherwood Forest is one of the Woodland Trust's 10 priority landscapes within the UK, with the ancient trees being a primary reason.

In Newark and Sherwood, we need to help identify, map and protect ancient woods, veteran trees and others of valued wildlife habitat. We need to ensure they are on national and local inventories by working with the Woodland Trust. As part of this process, we will identify 'future' ancient and veteran trees for protection.

A comprehensive District-wide tree survey would help us identify and record the most valuable ancient and veteran trees within the District.

In 2018, the UK Government strengthened protections for ancient woodland when considering planning decisions for development by amending the National Planning Policy Framework and seeking to do more to continue to raise the importance of this habitat.

The England Tree Action plans states the Government will:

- Introduce a new category of 'Long Established Woodland': woodlands that have been in situ since 1840, alongside ancient woodland
- Consult on the protections these woodlands are afforded in the planning system, recognising their high ecological and societal value
- Update the ancient woodland inventory to cover the whole of England. This will include mapping smaller ancient woodland sites of 0.25 hectares
- Update the Keepers of Time policy on management of ancient woodland and other semi natural woodland.

If we can identify ancient and veteran trees within Newark and Sherwood, we can work with landowners to help protect and care for them and promote their value to local residents.

**ACTION – Protect ancient and long-standing woodlands, veteran trees and others of valued wildlife habitat in the District.**

**ACTION – Tree and Landscape Officer to carry out and then continue to maintain records of the District's TPOs and ensure that TPOs are easily assessable to the wider public.**

**ACTION – Review changes being brought about by the Environment Act (2021) and consider additional ways that the Local Planning Authority can protect trees as part of new development.**



*Photo 2: An example of an ancient Oak tree, Sherwood Heath 2020*

○ ***Protecting trees by reducing biosecurity risks***

Biosecurity risks are increasing due to increased international trade of plant materials, and as climate change is altering the geographical range of many pests and diseases. Protecting our new and existing trees from biosecurity risks will be vital to delivering our long-term vision for trees and woodlands.

The Government is aiming to publish a new GB Plant Biosecurity Strategy during 2022 and drive higher international standards of biosecurity.

We will take the following steps to avoid being exposed to problems:

- We will commit to buying UK sourced and grown trees where possible from nurseries with clear Plant Health Management Standards in place. We will also use local nurseries and suppliers where possible and will ensure any partner organisations do the same
- We commit to procuring UK sourced timber from FSC (sustainable) sources and encourage use of hardwood timber sourced from existing and new woodland in the area
- Our Tree and Woodland Inspection Policy will include regular checks for new pests and diseases, with any issues requiring closer monitoring highlighted
- We will report unusual symptoms on Council trees to Forestry England via the online Tree Alert system

Education around biosecurity is an important element and we will encourage and communicate key biosecurity messages to local communities such as:

- Don't risk it: never bring any plants or cuttings back to the UK from abroad
- Buy safely: Source your new trees carefully. Collect local seed and grow your own trees whenever possible. When you buy trees, ensure that your trees have been grown in the UK and that you check the biosecurity policy of the organisation supplying you with trees. Don't just buy online and hope for the best
- Be vigilant: Report any unusual symptoms on trees to the Forestry England's Tree Alert system. <https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/tree-alert/>

**ACTION – We will implement and communicate a robust approach to biosecurity risks across the District, both in our own planting schemes and through advice and partnership.**



- **PLANTING TREES**

- ***Creating well planned quality woodland***

As a local authority we need to be clear on our objectives for planting trees and woods

- **Climate change** – the capability of trees to affect climate is becoming ever more important
- **Biodiversity loss** – trees and hedges provide habitat, shelter and food for wildlife
- **Impact on air quality in urban settings** – trees are oxygenating, and they metabolize pollution
- **Reducing flood risk as our climate changes** - trees reduce the rate at how rain falls to the ground, slows it and absorbs it
- **Water quality and soil erosion due to run off**- planting trees along rivers and streams
- **Cooling affect in urban areas** - the shade value of trees is important and increasing as the climate warms up
- **Noise reduction** – trees and hedges can help reduce excessive noise from traffic or other sources
- **Landscape, amenity and recreation** - creating woodland and green spaces for locals to connect with and enjoy

Based on the survey work we would need to identify areas that need trees to be planted, and ensure we met these targets by setting our own targets.

Our core principles will be to plant the right tree in the right place and all new trees should seek to maximise future wildlife value.

The actual process of planting a young tree is not difficult although it must be done properly and with care. However, the success of planting will depend on choosing the right species for the site, and on providing after care and the right environment in which the young trees will thrive. This will include keeping the ground around young trees weed-free, watering during dry spells and providing protection from animals and vandals.

Over the last 3 years though Newark and Sherwood District Council have given away over 10,000 trees and have planted over 7,900 trees on land we maintain. Although the number of currently identified sites provides some restrictions on additional direct planting, we plan to increase this figure by at least 6,000 trees by 2032.

- ***Site surveys and planting plans***

Work has already started on auditing Council owned land, parks and green space for additional tree planting and improved biodiversity opportunities.

When a site has been allocated for potential tree planting a thorough site survey is undertaken. We consider factors including soils, topography, exposure, existing flora and habitats, scale, landscape and sense of place, access (current and future), species, the planting process and aftercare requirements.

When choosing trees for a particular site we will choose the best suited species, species that will contribute to the wildlife value of the site and species that will look right.

The need to plant trees while being sensitive to nature means that we will prioritise native tree species, preferably grown locally and but also consider longevity, oaks and yews for example can live for 1000 years and are great choices. We will always plant a diversity of tree species for future resilience. Note during 2020 Forestry England planted over 42 different species of tree.

We must also not forget the importance of hedges, urban trees and individual trees.

Greening urban areas is an important development area for the Council. Trees in gardens, streets, schools, shopping centres, town parks, and other publicly accessible places will provide shade, reduce air and ground temperatures, improve air quality by absorbing pollutants and help mitigate surface water flooding.

#### ○ ***Landscape character***

The Council's [Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Document](#) (LCA SPD) provides an objective assessment of the varied landscape in Newark and Sherwood. It also gives a greater understanding of what makes our landscape locally distinctive and provides a list of the most appropriate tree species for planting schemes in the area.

#### ○ ***Natural regeneration***

In addition to planting new trees, we will encourage natural regeneration in our larger parks and woodlands. Natural regeneration is the process by which existing woodland regenerate and it offers many benefits including:

- It provides a variety of different habitats
- It supports genetic mixing and natural selection
- Reduces the risk from bought trees
- Reduced costs



*Photo 3: Naturally regenerated Birch trees, Sherwood Heath 2020*

#### ○ ***Planting projects***

In response to objectives within the council's Community Plan work is already taking place to identify Council managed sites with the potential to plant new trees.

**Urban Tree Challenge** - in early 2021, in partnership with Newark Town Council we planted over 3,300 trees as part of a match funding bid through the Urban Tree Challenge. This involved planting on five sites in Newark and Coddington. The planting has created small, wooded areas within some of the town's key open spaces. The Government is expected to extend the Urban Tree Challenge fund in 2022.

**Trees for Climate** – in 2022, in partnership with Nottinghamshire County Council and the Sherwood Forest Trust 4000 trees will be planted at Vicardale in Clipstone.

**Local Authority Treescapes Funding** – in 2022, in partnership with VIA East Midlands a minimum of 38 large standard trees will be planted in urban parks and green spaces in Newark, North Muskham and Winthorpe.

**Target Hardening** – in 2022 a number of key sites will undergo natural landscaping including Newbury Road and Autumn Croft in Newark and Thorpe Oaks in Coddington. The landscaping will include the creation of wildflower bunds with additional tree planting.

**Town and Country Parks** – ongoing work will continue at key Council parks including Sconce and Devon Park and Vicar Water Country Park to renew hedgerows, create community orchards and plant memorial trees.

**Corporate Property managed sites** - the Corporate Property Team is undertaking an audit of their retail and workshop space in 2022 with a view to managing the sites with nature conservation in mind and assess opportunities for planting trees. This is a collaboration with Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust. There may be pockets of land that the Council own but are not a commercially viable option to rent, these could be potential sites for further trees.

The Council is also supporting tree planting on private and third-party land by working with local town and parish councils, schools, community groups and homeowners.

**Annual free-tree give-way** – the annual free tree give-away has taken place since winter 2019 and has given out over 9000 whips so far.

**Trees for schools** – each year the annual Christmas Tree Recycling project helps raise funds for tree planting in schools and with community groups.

**Queen's Green Canopy** – in addition to planting our own commemorative tree the Council will encourage all local parishes, schools, communities and businesses to plant a tree for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022.

- ***Securing additional trees through development***

The Government is currently reviewing the NPPF and is proposing to insert the following statement:

“Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible. Applicants and local planning authorities should work with local highways officers and tree officers to ensure that the right trees are planted in the right places, and solutions are found that are compatible with highways standards and the needs of different users.”

This clearly sets out an approach which expects the provision of new trees as part of new development. There are a number of ways that this can be implemented and the Council has already incorporated new policy wording on this in the Amended Allocations & Development Management DPD and will provide guidance within our upcoming Design Supplementary Planning Document.

- ***Tree canopy coverage policy***

The Woodland Trust recommends that all local authorities implement planning policies to secure delivery of 30% canopy cover on all new developments. This is a highly ambitious target, and as of September 2020 the highest agreed canopy cover target the Woodland Trust had seen approved was 25%, at Wycombe District Council<sup>11</sup>. They came to that conclusion having undertaken a tree canopy assessment and found, in order to maintain a status quo, then new developments (away from town centres and on sites above 0.5ha) would need a 25% canopy cover to match their existing assessed cover.

Different trees clearly have different canopies and at different ages. Any assessment of canopy cover would need a time element as it will take many years for trees to grow to their potential. Guidance could be written on species and sub species which assumes certain canopy cover would be achieved over time.

There is the very obvious risk that if trees are being planted in private gardens once the property is occupied and the developer has left there is nothing to stop that tree being removed. This will decrease the overall canopy cover for the area; however, this should not stop the District from aspiring to increase canopy cover on new developments.

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<sup>11</sup> Wycombe District Council, and Forest Research , “Canopy Cover Assessment & Recommendations for Wycombe District”. (<https://www.wycombe.gov.uk/uploads/public/documents/Planning/New-local-plan/Tree-canopy-cover-assessment-report.pdf>)

- ***Tree pit size***

There is a direct relationship between how well a tree can grow above the ground and the health and resources of the root system below. Trees need enough room at three levels, below (for roots), at ground level (for the stem), and above (for the crown). All of these elements must come together for success. Often trees on new developments may only be planted in a small pit, which is then surrounded by compacted inhospitable soil, as a result the trees barely grow to their full potential. This can also have the wider benefit of improving onsite drainage through uncompacted soil.

Recent developments such as Middlebeck has included some street trees. Street trees have the potential to provide great value to developments, not only helping with the visual appearance but also achieving all the benefits described earlier such as reducing pollution and mitigating urban heat. The NPPF has been updated with an expectation that new streets should be tree-lined, the District Council will need to work closely with the County Council to implement this approach. The Council's Planning Policy and Infrastructure Business Unit are working on a new Design Supplementary Planning Guidance which is due to be completed in the next 3 years and it will include guidance about street trees including guidance on tree pit size.

- ***Local Nature Recovery Strategies***

The Environment Act (2021) introduces provisions requiring the development of Local Nature Recovery Strategies across England. Local Nature Recovery Strategies will be produced locally to help identify priorities and opportunities for conserving and enhancing nature. This will of course include the consideration of new trees and woodlands.

The proposals focus on creating local collaboration with a partnership of organisations across roughly 50 Local Nature Recovery Strategies in the UK. A lead 'responsible authority' for each will be appointed. In Nottinghamshire, Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust submitted a proposal to pilot the Local Nature recovery Scheme in the Sherwood area. Newark and Sherwood have agreed to be a partner in this pilot scheme which is currently being held as a 'first reserve scheme.'

In 2020 officers from Planning Policy and Environmental Services took part in a BOM (Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping) exercise for Newark and Sherwood. The findings and a full report are now available on the Notts BAG website.

[Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group](#)

In Nottinghamshire, the County Council together with Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust and Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group (Notts BAG) are following developments very closely and even if the LNR pilot does not go ahead, there is value to be gained through the partnerships and information gathering conducted as part of the bid process.

- ***Biodiversity Net Gain***

The Environment Act's wider biodiversity provisions include the requirement that new development will need to achieve a 10% net gain in biodiversity. This requirement will lead to developers having to demonstrate how they have met the 10% net gain as part of the consideration of the planning application. This approach will, in many circumstances, lead to the planting of trees to increase biodiversity, and the Council will need to consider how this works with any canopy cover proposals. It is feasible that a biodiversity strategy will be required which could supersede this document. On that basis this strategy and the associated action plan should be reviewed annually.

- **Urban greening**

It is important for trees, planting and wildlife to be considered and encouraged during all Council building and development programmes including town centre developments. This includes a proactive approach towards new green spaces for residents to enjoy, new street trees and individual trees, biophilic<sup>12</sup> architecture and other urban greening opportunities.

Achieving biodiversity net gain in urban areas will help us find and create 'green routes' through town centres, which will greatly improve the options for walking and cycling.

The England Tree Action Plan talks of future planning reforms to ensure more urban trees are planted and ensure strong protections for existing trees.

*"Protecting and improving our trees outside of woodlands Trees outside of woodlands are among the most valuable to society. People place great value on trees and green spaces in their local communities, which also provide connections in our fragmented treescapes and vital habitat for threatened biodiversity. Yet they often slip through the gaps between funding mechanisms, contributing to their long-term neglect and decline. We need to reclaim our neglected public land, create tree-based community green spaces and encourage new trees in non-woodland settings, for people and nature."*

*We will: open the Local Authorities Treescape Fund, to work in partnership with organisations, local land-owners and community groups to deliver strategic planting and natural regeneration of trees outside of woodlands for the benefit of local communities and nature"*

- **Air Quality**

Currently the Council measure air quality across the District at 13 monitoring stations (mainly close to residential properties), measuring NO<sub>2</sub> in accordance with Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) guidance. We currently do not have any sites above the limit of 40mg/m<sup>3</sup> and therefore do not have to declare an air quality management area with DEFRA. However, trees do have the potential to reduce air pollution at a local level.

Our higher level areas include Ollerton roundabout, Beaumont Cross road junction and Bowbridge Road in Newark and Newark town centre. Tree planting and urban greening

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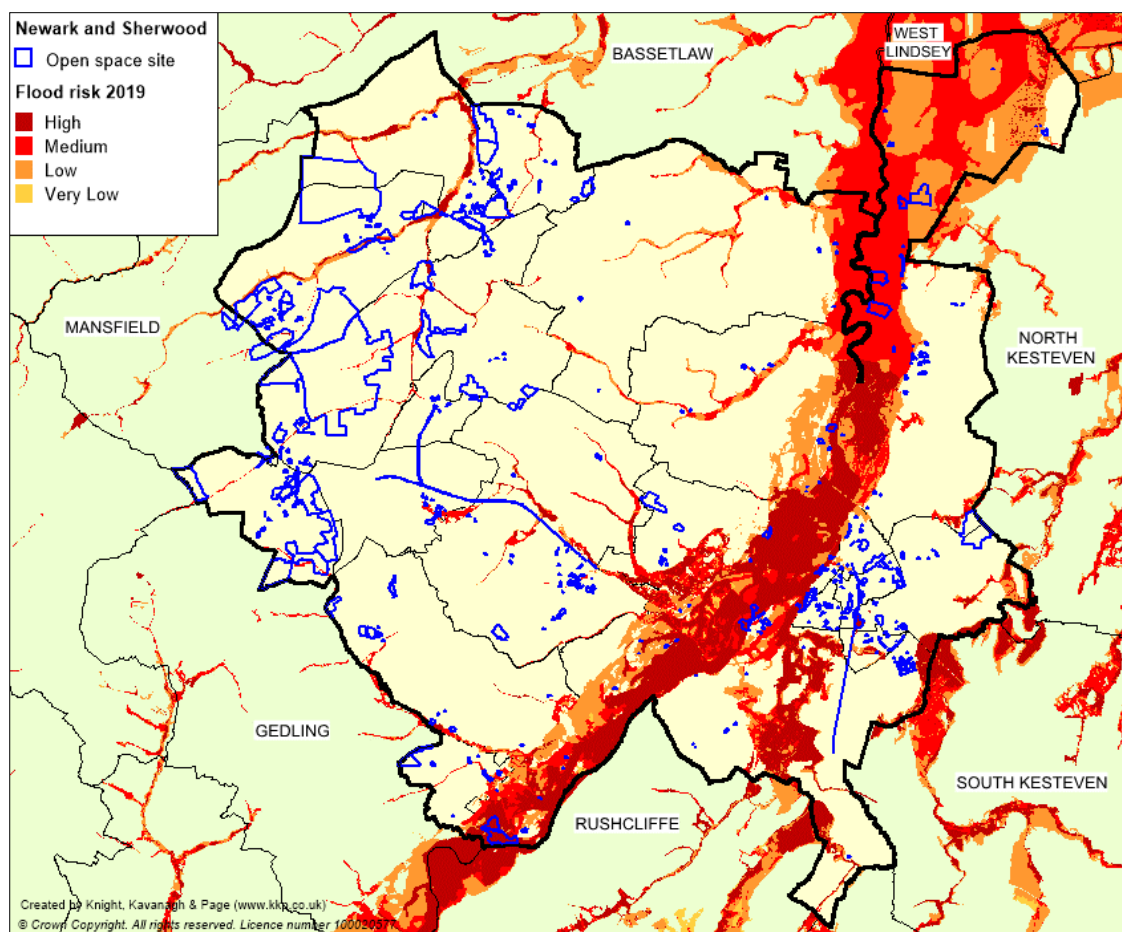
<sup>12</sup> Biophilic design is a concept used within the building industry to increase occupant connectivity to the natural environment through the use of direct nature, indirect nature, and space and place conditions.

should take place wherever possible around the areas of the District with the highest air pollution.

- **Flooding**

Many areas of the District are often seasonally affected by flooding, and with climate change impacts, this is only going to be more prevalent.

The Council's incoming Open Space Assessment and Strategy highlights the risks that much of the District faces, as show in Map 3. The map identifies 24 sites of open space that are at high risk to flooding. These are the same areas that are affected year after year with the difficulties and costs of dealing with flooding.



*Map 3 Flood Risk and Open spaces, taken from the Open Space Assessment and Strategy 2020.*

There is the potential with tree planting to target some of the often affected areas and to try to reduce the risk of flooding, whether this be on our land or encouraging others to do the same.

The Open Space Assessment and Strategy goes further to identify 16 sites within the District that have potential for greater climate resilience. This includes simple measures such as more

tree planting and wildflower meadow creation to potentially help reduce CO<sub>2</sub> levels, provide flood reduction, mitigate impacts of urban heat island effects, and poor air quality.

*Table 1: Site with Potential for Climate change resilience, as taken from the Open Space Assessment and Strategy, 2020*

Ref	Site name	Settlement	Resilience measure
15	Riverside Park A	Newark	Planting/meadow creation
23	Barnby Road Community Park	Newark	Greater planting
31	Cleveland Square Playing Field	Newark	Greater planting
32	Former Sconce School Playing Field	Newark	Greater planting
67	Jericho Road	Balderton	Greater planting
72	Hollowdyke Lane	Fernwood	Greater planting
88	Old School Lane	Newark	Planting/meadow creation
96	South Collingham Open Space	Collingham	Greater planting
105	College Close	Newark	Greater planting
214	Corner Chestnut Dr & Whitewater Rd	Ollerton & Boughton	Greater planting
260	Marina/rear of Sandhill Road	Farndon	Greater planting
294	Mill Field	Ollerton & Boughton	Meadow creation
303	Sherwood Heath	Ollerton & Boughton	Greater planting
305	Ollerton Pit Wood	Ollerton & Boughton	Greater planting
458	Willow Holt	Farndon	Planting/meadow creation
460	Millennium Wood	Farnsfield	Greater planting

**ACTION – set a new target for planting at least a further 6,000 new trees over the next ten years (2022 to 2032).**

**ACTION – Develop a new Design SPD including guidance about street trees with consideration to be given to a minimum canopy cover target.**

**ACTION – Review the findings of the BOM mapping exercise and work with partners to secure new woodland development and tree planting opportunities.**



**ACTION - Work with Notts Wildlife Trust and other partners on the information gained from the Local Nature Recovery Network scheme and seek to secure new woodland planting and development opportunities.**

**ACTION - Review changes being brought about by the Environment Act (2021) and Biodiversity Net Gain and consider ways that the Local Planning Authority can secure new trees as part of new development.**

**ACTION – Continue to apply for appropriate funding for urban tree planting such as the Local Authorities Treescape Fund.**

**ACTION – Consider Street trees, biophilic architecture and other urban greening opportunities during all Council building and development programmes.**

**ACTION – Review the findings within the Open Space Assessment and Strategy and work to secure new woodland development and tree planting opportunities.**

**ACTION – This strategy and action plan should be reviewed annually to ensure its continued relevance.**

- **ENGAGING WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES**

There is only so much land that the Council can plant on ourselves, it is important that all landowners do their bit, from residents, community groups, town and parish councils, farmers and businesses. We can use our position to try to positively influence local landowners to consider the options for tree planting or meadow creation.

We will continue to encourage residents to understand the benefits and value of planting trees and hedges in domestic gardens, allotments and community orchards across the District.

In 2019 the Council launched the first of its free tree giveaways, handing out over 4,000 trees to residents and community groups. This has been repeated in the winters of 2020 and 2021, with a further 5000 trees being given out.

Also starting in 2019 our Christmas Tree Recycling service not only helps ensure that all real Christmas trees can be recycled but it also raises money for more tree planting and conservation work within the District.



*Photo 4: Tree planting at Chuter Ede School December 2020 funded by the Christmas tree recycling scheme*

- **Promoting trees and tree planting**

We want to celebrate trees and help focus attention on trees at a local level. We will join in with national events and campaigns such as National Tree Week (23 November to 1 Dec). National Tree Week is organised by the Tree Council and promotes the winter tree planting season.

Other campaigns and celebrations include Clean Air Day, World Environment Day, Love Parks, Green Flag, Free Tree Give-aways, Southwell Bramley Apple Festival, the Major Oak Festivals, tree planting events and volunteer task days.

- ***Supporting healthy lifestyles***

We will support healthy lifestyles by promoting woodland access for recreation, exercise, engagement with nature and wellbeing.

The Environmental Services Team works with colleagues in the Health and Communities team and external partners including Newark and Sherwood Community and Voluntary Service, the Sherwood Forest Trust, Forestry England, Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust and local schools.

We will continue to promote local woodlands and encourage locals to explore local woodland walks and cycling opportunities at sites across the District.

Local woodland sites with good access include:

- Boughton Brake
- Clumber Park
- Farnsfield Millennium Wood
- Haywood Oaks and Blidworth Woods
- Intake Wood in Clipstone
- Ollerton Pit Woods
- Sconce and Devon Park
- Sherwood Forest
- Sherwood Heath, Cockglade Wood and Rotary Wood
- Sherwood Pines
- Stapleford Woods
- Thoresby Park
- Vicar Water Country Park
- Wellow Wood

Where suitable and feasible we will seek to improve access to these sites and work with our partners and landowners to ensure interpretation and communication boards are deployed where needed.



*Photo 5: Boughton Brake family walk and orienteering trail, 2020*

The District is fortunate to have many community organisations that carry our valuable nature conservation work within the District. The Council's Environmental Services team and the Health and Communities team supports, offers advice and promotes the work being undertaken by these groups and volunteers.

Our parks rangers offer outdoor school education opportunities and Forest School activities for children at our parks in Newark, Clipstone and Ollerton.

- **Community Orchards**

The Biodiversity Action Plan for the UK highlights community orchards as hotspots for biodiversity in the countryside, supporting a wide range of wildlife and containing UK BAP priority habitats and species, as well as an array of Nationally Rare and Nationally Scarce species.

We will investigate and support the development of community orchards within the District. Fruit trees have long been planted in gardens and orchards, and as well as contributing to our diet, provide the same important environmental benefits as other trees.

Fruit trees tend to be more expensive to buy and can require careful formative pruning for at least three years to form a balanced framework of branches. Fruit trees are also often prone to a variety of pests and diseases. The additional costs and maintenance requirements need to be considered when planting orchards. The District owns and maintains an ancient orchard



on Sconce and Devon Park and an additional orchard located within the Hawton Holt area of the park.

We assist the Tree Council by sharing their 'Orchards for Schools' programme and help promote the Woodland Trust's 'Free Trees for Schools' scheme.

We help promote The Bramley Fund (via the Notts Community Foundation) which offers small grants to grow apple trees locally.

- ***Miner 2 Major***

We are a partner in the Miner 2 Major (M2M) landscape partnership. This is an exciting five-year project (2019 to 2023) supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The scheme is delivering a range of projects that celebrate and help protect the diverse wildlife, important habitats and rich heritage of Sherwood Forest.

There are many opportunities for local people to get involved with volunteering, have-a-go activities, restoring natural habitats, monitoring threatened species, planting hedges and trees, improving walking trails, free training and up-skilling courses, surveying historic woodland and learning traditional woodland crafts. There are opportunities to take part in activities at locations including Rainworth Heath, Budby South Forest, Sherwood Forest, Vicar Water Country Park, Intake Wood and Sherwood Heath.

Hedgerows and hedgerow trees are a key features of Sherwood's agricultural landscape. They are important not only for their wildlife and landscape value but have practical benefits such as reducing windblown soil erosion and water runoff. Miner 2 Major is delivering a number of projects with local farmers and landowners, one of them being trees and hedges.

Currently, we have limited information about hedgerows and hedgerow trees throughout Sherwood. Miner2 Major is working with landowners and managers to improve understanding of the number and condition of hedges. Trained volunteers including Council staff are undertaking surveys, recording information such as species, condition, connectivity, wildlife value and location of hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Hedgerow Health Reports are then given to the farmer or landowner.

The Miner 2 Major project is also helping the District Council with managing invasive species in our woodlands, wildlife surveying, volunteer maintenance tasks, Forest School Training opportunities and signage, community engagement, interpretation and trail access at Vicar Water Country Park, Intake Wood and Sherwood Heath.

[Miner2Major website](#)

- ***Park volunteering***

We have a well-established and rewarding volunteer programme in four of the Council's larger parks and woodlands – Sconce and Devon Park, Vicar Water Country Park, Intake Wood and Sherwood Heath. The park rangers work with regular volunteers, drop-in volunteers and organised groups including Duke of Edinburgh students and National Citizen Service (NCS) participants. Often the tasks involve tree care and tree planting for example thinning new

plantations, coppicing willow, creating dead-hedge habitats, creating log pile habitats and planting new trees.

The volunteering is open to all and no experience is needed, only enthusiasm.

- ***Park and woods friends groups***

We have park friends groups in our larger parks. The friends volunteer their time to meet up regularly, usually once a month and help us manage and maintain the parks and woods. This may involve providing us with feedback and giving us ideas for improvements, fundraising for new projects, helping with park events, helping to plant trees or simply joining us for organised walks and wildlife surveys. The friends groups are free to join and as the name suggests they are very friendly. We actively promote the activities undertaken by the friends through the park communications channels. As part of the new ten year management plan for Intake Wood we will aim to establish a new friends group for the wood.



*Photo 6: Winter bird walk with the Friends of Sherwood Heath, 2020*

Involvement in community action, community tree planting and conservation, volunteer task days, friends of groups, celebration events, school programmes, awareness raising, interpretation boards and so on will require funding to be available.

- ***School engagement and Forest School***

The Environmental Services team offer support to schools including visits, tree planting, regular newsletters, advice on school gardens in addition to outdoor activities in our parks including habitat building, pond dipping, wildlife surveying and nature trails.

Uniformed groups enjoy regular visits to our three main parks in Newark, Clipstone and Ollerton for guided activities. We plan to ensure park staff are Forest School trained and continue this offer in future years.

- ***Encourage and support tree partnerships***

Around the Newark and Sherwood area there are a large number of committed organisations and groups that have expertise in not just trees but all aspects of work that protects and enhances the natural environment.

Some of these groups are regularly contacted for advice and support and for partnership working on joined-up projects relating to trees and woodlands. For others there are opportunities to create new partnerships or to develop existing relationships.

- ***Green Champions***

2022 will see the launch of our Green Champions scheme. This scheme will provide a gateway for our environmentally minded residents to interact with the council. As the scheme develops we will work with its members to be our eyes and ears on the ground, reporting issues with existing trees, and planting or finding locations for new ones.

- i. External Funding for planting***

With an increased focus on trees nationwide, there are a growing number of funding opportunities available for certain groups. We will continue to monitor and apply for funding to help with tree planting where possible.

**ACTION - The Council continues to commit to funds of £1,500 a year to the free tree give away scheme and continues to plough back money from Christmas tree recycling into environmental improvement works with the aim of providing a further 8,000 trees by 2032**

**ACTION - We will continue to promote tree schemes and volunteer days, using the Green Champions scheme as a resource to encourage residents to get involved with increasing tree coverage in their area.**

**ACTION – continue to build our community engagement, volunteering and ‘friends of’ offers to help more local residents connect with trees.**

**ACTION – Ensure all park rangers are Forest School trained. Develop and extend the Council’s school education and Forest School offer.**

**ACTION – Continue to monitor and review tree funding opportunities and work in partnership with others to increase tree planting in the District.**

- **MAINTAINING DISTRICT COUNCIL TREES**

- ***Tree and woodland policies***

The Council follows national and local policies on the management of trees but there some identified opportunities to develop new tree policies and procedures to support this strategy.

New tree policies could include:

- **Tree Pruning and Felling Policy** the aim to establish a transparent approach of when we will do tree work and for what reasons.
- **Diseased tree management policy** ensuring management options are available in response to any tree die back and disease and bio security threats.
- **High Winds Policy** many of our woodland areas create a risk to site users from falling branches and trees. Having a procedure in place to respond to weather warning helps to mitigate that risk.
- **Tree and Woodland Inspection Policy** a clear procedure for Council staff to follow when inspecting trees and carrying out any associated works, such as the removal of ad hoc rope swings.
- **Approved tree supplier list** ensuring all trees purchased by the Council come from an approved supplier with the required bio-security checks.
- **Approved contractor list** ensuring all tree works are undertaken in line with industry standards for health and safety, tree health and wildlife regulations.

Developing a proactive approach to managing and maintaining the Council's tree stock will help us stay on track with the surveying and maintenance. If a member of the public complains about a tree blocking out light, for example, or dropping leaves the Council will have the policies in place to support our decisions.

- ***Tree risk surveys***

As identified earlier, the most recent Tree Risk Survey does not include all of the Council tree stock of around 4,000 trees. A new wider, all-inclusive survey combining all land within Council remit will give a clearer picture of the current situation. This will enable us to properly manage our trees as the assets they are into the future.

Moving forward, a planned full tree survey every three years will cost approximately £10,000. This could be staggered so that the costs are spread over a number of years in a rolling programme of inspections.

There is a risk at the moment, without specific tree policies in place that critical tree work is being missed. More regular and wider tree inspections will help keep trees on Council managed land in a healthier state for the future. It will also reduce the potential for costly health and safety issues.

While some of the current survey data can be mapped, as the survey is carried out by an external contractor, so we do not have full control of the data. We will develop and maintain a full tree asset register using current data that will then be built on over time. This register



will store the location, tree id, species, approximate age, canopy cover, records of work undertaken, all providing with readily available information to the Council.

○ ***Staff expertise and capacity***

We need to ensure we have enough qualified staff, contractors or partner resources available to implement our ambitions. Additional tree work being identified through wider surveys will have budgetary impacts.

The Planning Development Business Unit has recently recruited a new Tree/Landscape Officer. This role will deliver the majority of the Council's TPO and Tree Works in Conservation Areas service with assistance from the Planning Technical Support team in addition to initiating a review of historic TPOs keeping this under continuous review. As well as these core functions the role will also: -

- Provide technical arboricultural advice to colleagues in the Council's planning teams on planning applications and the development of planning policies which encourage trees as part of new development
- Provide technical arboricultural advice to colleagues in Environmental Services with regard to Council owned and managed trees and woodlands
- Be an advocate for trees within the Council and the community supporting tree planting schemes, conservation activity and owners of protected trees

However, there is concern that one person will not be able to achieve anywhere near this amount of work. The implications of this work and biodiversity net gain are currently being assessed.

For the Environmental Services Team, the Tree Risk Survey carried out in early 2020 highlighted approximately £60,000 worth of essential tree work that needs to be carried out. Having used the risk rating to identify where the immediate work is, some of this has been completed, by in-house staff or contractors. The work is prioritised so that the immediate and dangerous work is done as a priority and less important work is diarised for a later date. This is not simply tree felling work, but essential safety work to ensure trees are safely maintained and healthy so they can continue to be enjoyed and provide benefits to all.

Failure to conduct this work and to maintain the Council's tree stock puts residents, visitors and workers within the district at risk. Unlike our housing land where a dedicated budget exists for tree works, there is no budget set aside for tree works covering the rest of the district. It is proposed the maintenance budget for essential tree work needs to be created of at least £30,000 each year. For context it is estimated that this work will cover around 6% of the District's tree stock per annum.

- ***Aftercare of newly planted trees***

All newly planted trees require aftercare and on-going maintenance. The main priority in the first three years is weed control and watering. As we plant more trees the time and costs for ongoing care and maintenance will increase.

Newly planted trees ideally require a weed-free area of at least 1m diameter around the stem. Weeds, especially grasses compete strongly with new trees for water, light and nutrients. There are a number of options for weed control including herbicides, mulch mats, loose mulch and hand weeding. We will continue to use a combination all methods.

New trees and especially larger standard trees require regular watering during the growing season and during prolonged dry periods, saturating the ground if practicable. This is labour intensive and requires specialist equipment including a water bowser and water tanks.

The newly planted trees will need to be regularly checked for pest and diseases including predation by mammals such as rabbits or deer.

- ***Further ongoing considerations***

#### *Ash dieback*

Ash is the third most common broadleaved tree in Britain. There are an estimated 60 million ash trees outside woodlands in the UK. Ash trees are found in woodland and non-woodland settings, in both urban and rural landscapes across the District.

Ash dieback is a fungal disease affecting the common ash tree (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and other *Fraxinus* species. It is caused by a fungus called *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* (formerly known as *Chalara fraxinea*) which is native to eastern Asia.

The disease is now widespread across Nottinghamshire and is starting to have a huge impact. Trees in woodlands with high proportions of ash are likely to decline more quickly as spores spread. Ash trees growing in open areas such as streets and hedgerows will probably deteriorate more slowly. A small proportion of trees will have a genetic tolerance to the disease. All infected trees can dramatically deteriorate in condition in as little as four years

As well as the cost of felling, the loss of benefits provided by Ash trees will also be costly for example air purification and carbon sequestration. Many wildlife species rely on Ash trees. As a Council and landowner we must consider our Ash dieback management options.

#### *Other pests and diseases*

We need a good awareness and regular checks for other pests and diseases such as Oak processionary moth (*Thaumetopoea processionea*).

The oak processionary moth was first found in London in 2006 and has been spreading ever since. It was accidentally imported to the UK in egg form in the canopy of trees for planting. The Council need to help tree health authorities identify and manage outbreaks early.

Acute oak decline is another example of problems Council staff must look out for. Acute oak decline is essentially a tree's response to environmental stresses including drought,

waterlogging and pollution. Insects, fungi and bacteria then move in on the vulnerable tree and push it into decline. We can help by planting as many new oaks as possible and manage areas so that oaks can naturally regenerate to make sure that the next generation of trees is better adapted to our changing climate.

Some tree pests and diseases are notifiable, which means that, in England they must be reported to Forestry England. The preferred way to make a report is with TreeAlert the online pest and disease reporting tool.

<https://www.forestryresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/fthr/tree-alert/>

### *Invasive species*

The park ranger team undertake an annual woodland maintenance plan that involves controlling invasive species. For example, at Vicar Water Country Park there is invasive Italian Alder in Portland Meadow. Removing alder saplings each winter helps keep the meadow as grassland and protects the early Marsh Orchids which are quite rare in Nottinghamshire. Italian Alder was often planted on former pit tips to stabilise the ground as they can survive on nutrient poor and compacted ground. They can soon take over though and herb-rich grassland is more valuable and precious for wildlife.

Similarly at Sherwood Heath we undertake a programme of tree thinning to protect the important health and grassland of this SSSI site.

Himalayan Balsam is a very invasive plant found on riverbanks, ditches and in woodlands, where it prevents native species from growing. We have balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) in Intake Wood and on Sherwood Heath. The park's team has however recently joined forces with conservation officers from the Miner2Major Project, Notts Biodiversity Action Group (BAG) and the Sherwood Forest Trust to try and eradicate the plant via a 3 year programme of 'balsam bashing' with volunteers beginning in the spring of 2021.

Although not currently recorded on any of our parks or green spaces Japanese and other Knotweeds are highly invasive species which can grow from a piece of rhizome (root) as small as 1cm.

### *Thinning new plantations*

The Council's park ranger team work with volunteers to thin new plantations at Vicar Water Country Park, Intake Wood and Sherwood Heath. All the wood is left in the woodland or made into habitat piles which helps mimic the conditions in natural woodland.

The Council's Street Scene team work to thin and manage small woody areas on council managed green spaces across the District. Thinning can help let in light to the woodland floor and help strong trees thrive.

As we plant up more areas of the District with new trees it is recommended that the sites are thinned after around 10 years. This involves selecting some of the poorer, struggling trees and removing them. The timber from these trees will usually be sold on for paper pulp or stacked on site for habitat creation. On occasion it may be sold on as firewood which will result in a release of the carbon which has been captured over the trees life, however, by removing these smaller trees you promote healthier growth in the remaining stock. These stronger

trees will be able to capture more carbon throughout their lifespan and should mature specimens need to be felled their trunks may be suitable for timber which will result in any carbon being held indefinitely.



*Photo 7: Tree at Sherwood Heath marked for removal, 2021*

### *The importance of dead and decaying wood*

As part of our tree and woodland maintenance programmes we will value the importance of standing dead wood, fallen branches and log piles. Dead and decaying wood has huge ecological and wildlife value. This is why we do not remove it and 'tidy up' our woodlands too much, where appropriate.

Decaying wood is a hive of activity, food and home to huge a range of fungi, thousands of invertebrate species and even birds and mammals. It can also look beautiful and be a sculptural feature of our parks, woodlands. Where appropriate, fallen trees and branches will be left.

Retrenchment is the very slow decline of aging trees and it is an enormously important phase of their lifecycle. We will not be too eager to cut down aging trees and replace them. Dependant on location, we will only remove a tree in decline if it creates a risk to the public.





Photo 8: Deadwood covered in moss, winter at Vicar Water Country Park, 2021

**ACTION – Create and adopt policies for District Council managed trees and woodlands**

**ACTION – Increase the trees survey budget to £10,000 every three years to develop a full tree asset register for District Council trees and to maintain the health and safety of our tree stock**

**ACTION – increase investment in tree health and public safety by increasing the tree maintenance budget to at least £30,000, to ensure essential tree maintenance and safety works can be conducted.**

## CONCLUSION

It is time to take action for trees and woodlands. On both a national and local level, targets are being set for expanding UK tree cover and the District Council can help.

Often in the past, local authorities have viewed trees as a burden rather than as an asset but things have significantly changed. The climate emergency and the biodiversity crisis require urgent and prolonged action. Now councils are being asked to provide a long-term commitment to investing in trees and woodlands. If the Council wish to become carbon neutral by 2035 then time is critical.

The value of trees and nature has also come into sharp focus during the Covid-19 pandemic. Green spaces have helped us through difficult times. We must all do more to protect, plant and restore new woods and trees, for people, nature and climate. The District needs a green recovery and trees need to be a part of it.

It is easy to rush in to planting trees but we need to be clear on the Council's objectives and undertake due diligence in assessing our base-line tree data. Our tree objectives will prioritise climate, wildlife and people.

Our strategy is comprehensive and considers trees and woodlands across the whole District as well as specifically the trees and woodlands on Council owned land. We will also consider urban greening provision and crucially the landscape of the District with its local characteristics, constraints and opportunities.

We will aim to lead, inspire and enable local communities, businesses and landowners to become involved with trees. The enormity of climate change and biodiversity crisis can be terrifying to people and so making people feel empowered and able to help, even if it just means planting an acorn and growing a tree is incredibly important.

Some trees can live for hundreds and even thousands of years. Such timescales dwarf human lifetimes and so we aim to deliver this Strategy not for ourselves but for generations to come.

## Appendix1 - List of current and potential future partners

- **The Environment Agency** – looking at natural flood prevention through Natural Flood Management, advice of riverside trees and tree planting
- **Natural England** for advice and guidance, licencing, wildlife conservation and protected species, tree planting, funding and maps and data and Countryside Stewardship grants (from the Rural Payments Agency)
- **DEFRA** for funding and nature recovery schemes
- **Nottinghamshire County Council** for highway trees, woodland management advice, rights of way and wildlife conservation advice, tree planting and funding support
- **Notts Biodiversity Action Group (BAG)** for wildlife and special habitat advice, help with invasive species, biodiversity opportunity mapping (BOM), partnership work and the local biodiversity action plan (LBAP)
- **Forestry England** – for advice, licenses and information, community engagement, joined up events and volunteering opportunities
- **The Woodland Trust** for advice on tree and woodland strategy, tree data, community tree planting, protection of ancient and veteran trees and general tree advice
- **Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust** for advice and support on local flora, fauna and habitat on all Council managed green space, wildlife walks and talks in our parks, joined up projects, habitat mapping, funding opportunities and local nature recovery networks
- **RSPB Sherwood Forest** for wildlife advice and support, woodland events and community engagement
- **Sherwood Forest Trust** our partner organisation helping with the management of our Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in Ollerton, Sherwood Heath. Also, assistance with community engagement, ecological expertise, tree planting, woodland events, wildlife expertise and volunteering
- **Local environmental groups** that look after parish trees and woodlands including Green Southwell, Friends of Southwell Trail, Bilsthorpe Green Spaces and Farnsfield Green Spaces
- **Nottingham Trent University** we link in with the NTU species recovery team, and NTU provides staff education opportunities through the Miner 2 Major partnership. In turn we offer student volunteering opportunities within our parks.

- land owners to protect and maintain their existing trees, plant new woodland and undertake more agroforestry
- **Neighbouring authorities** – explore partnership opportunities at the District's borders and information sharing.
- **Miner2Major** are helping to deliver a number of projects including Trees and Hedges, Better Habitats and Connecting Trails
- **Schools and uniformed groups** we help with education on climate change, nature and the importance of trees in order to help inspire future generations



## **Appendix 2 - List of currently available funding opportunities**

### **England Woodland Creation Offer**

Landowners, land managers and public bodies can apply to the England Woodland Creation Offer (EWCO) for support to create new woodland.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/england-woodland-creation-offer>

### **Urban Tree Challenge Fund (UTCf)**

This is a government fund (which requires match funding) to plant trees in urban environments.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/urban-tree-challenge-fund>

### **Local Authority Treescapes Fund**

This fund is aimed at establishing more trees in non-woodland settings such as in riverbanks, hedgerows, parklands, urban areas and beside roads and footpaths.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-authority-treescapes-fund>

### **Trees for Climate (Nottinghamshire County Council) part of the Government's 'Nature for Climate Fund'**

Ambitious plans to plant 280,000 over five years starting in 2021.

**The Woodland Trust MOREwoods** - Where 500+ trees are planted as woodland on at least half a hectare. The Woodland Trust can help us design the woodland, create a bespoke species mix, supply the agreed trees and tree protection and cover up to 75% of costs.

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/large-scale-planting/morewoods/>

**The Woodland Trust MORE hedges** – The Woodland Trust can subsidise up to 75% of the cost if we plant more than 100 metres of new hedging allowing a large tree to grow every six metres.

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/large-scale-planting/morehedges/>

The Woodland Trust also offer free support and tree packs to community groups and schools.

### **Woodland Carbon Code**

For businesses with a carbon reduction strategy. Creating woodland with the Woodland Carbon Code allows you to sell the carbon units from your woodland.

<https://www.woodlandcarboncode.org.uk/>

### **Woodland Carbon Guarantee (WCaG)**

The woodland carbon guarantee is available in England and is an additional income stream for woodland owners, with thirty-five year contracts for guaranteed payments of woodland carbon budgets.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/woodland-carbon-guarantee>

### **Tree Appeal**

Free trees for schools, community green spaces and nature reserves.

<https://www.treeappeal.com/index.html>

**The Tree Council**

Grants for planting and orchards for schools

<https://treecouncil.org.uk/>

**Crowdfunding and local fundraising**

Other local authorities have invited members of the public to help fundraise for local trees

Objective	Action	Business Unit	Target	Resource Requirements
Objective 1 Establish robust dataset of trees within the District	Carry out a baseline study in the short term with i-Tree.	Environmental Services	Apr-23	Officer Time
Objective 1 Establish robust dataset of trees within the District	Protect ancient and long-standing woodlands, veteran trees and others of valued wildlife habitat in the District.	Environmental Services	To begin May-23	Officer Time
Objective 1 Establish robust dataset of trees within the District	Tree and Landscape Officer to carry out and then continue to maintain records of the District's TPOs and ensure that TPOs are easily assessable to the wider public.	Planning Development	Ongoing	Officer Time
Objective 1 Establish robust dataset of trees within the District	Increase the trees survey budget to £10,000 every three years to develop a full tree asset register for District Council trees and to maintain the health and safety of our tree stock	Environmental Services	Apr-23	New fund to be established
Objective 1 & 5 Establish robust dataset of trees within the District & Work with residents and partner organisations to maintain and improve the biodiversity of the District	To work with the Woodland Trust and others to review collected data and identify gaps and shortfalls in ancient tree coverage identifying potential ancient trees for additional prevention measures.	Environmental Services	To begin May-23	Officer Time
Objective 2 Develop policies and procedures to ensure - Trees are maintained and protected to protect both biodiversity and public safety	Increase investment in tree health and public safety by increasing the tree maintenance budget to £30,000, to invest in upskilling staff in Environmental Services and invest in appropriate arboricultural equipment and tools.	Environmental Services	Apr-23	New fund to be established
Objective 2 Develop policies and procedures to ensure - Trees are maintained and protected to protect both biodiversity and public safety	This strategy and action plan should be reviewed annually to ensure its continued relevance.	Environmental Services/Planning Policy/Planning Development	Dec-23	Officer Time

Objective 2 Develop policies and procedures to ensure - Trees are maintained and protected to protect both biodiversity and public safety	We will implement and communicate a robust approach to biosecurity risks across the District, both in our own planting schemes and through advice and partnership.	Environmental Services	Formal Policy to be developed by June 23	Officer Time
Objective 3 Review of upcoming changes to national and regional policy and guidance	Review changes being brought about by the Environment Act (2021) and consider additional ways that the Local Planning Authority can protect trees as part of new development.	Planning Development	Currently Ongoing	Officer Time
Objective 4 Work within the planning system to not only support and maintain the biodiversity of the District but actively improve it.	Develop a new Design SPD including guidance about street trees with consideration to be given to a minimum canopy cover target.	Planning Policy / Environmental Services	To begin in 2024	Officer time and LDF budget
Objective 4 Work within the planning system to not only support and maintain the biodiversity of the District but actively improve it.	Consider Street trees, biophillic architecture and other urban greening opportunities during all Council building and development programmes.	Planning Development	Nov-23	Officer Time and subject to appropriate staffing resource
Objective 5 Work with residents and partner organisations to maintain and improve the biodiversity of the District	We will continue to promote tree schemes and volunteer days, using the Green Champions scheme as a resource to encourage residents to get involved with increasing tree coverage in their area.	Environmental Services	Ongoing	Officer Time
Objective 5 Work with residents and partner organisations to maintain and improve the biodiversity of the District	Continue to build our community engagement, volunteering and 'friends of' offers to help more residents connect with trees.	Environmental Services	Ongoing	Officer Time
Objective 5 Work with residents and partner organisations to maintain	Ensure all park rangers are Forest School trained. Develop and extend the Council's school education and Forest School offer.	Environmental Services	Ongoing	Officer Time

and improve the biodiversity of the District				
Objective 6 Continue to plant more trees in suitable locations and encourage others to do the same	Review the findings of the BOM mapping exercise and work with partners to secure new woodland development and tree planting opportunities.	Environmental Services	Ongoing	Officer Time
Objective 6 Continue to plant more trees in suitable locations and encourage others to do the same	Set a new target for planting at least a further 6,000 new trees over the next ten years (2022 to 2032).	Environmental Services	Ongoing	TBC
Objective 6 Continue to plant more trees in suitable locations and encourage others to do the same	Work with Notts Wildlife Trust and other partners on the information gained from the Local Nature Recovery Network scheme and seek to secure new woodland planting and development opportunities.	Environmental Services	Ongoing	Officer Time
Objective 6 Continue to plant more trees in suitable locations and encourage others to do the same	Review changes being brought about by the Environment Act (2021) and Biodiversity Net Gain and consider ways that the Local Planning Authority can secure new trees as part of new development.	Planning Policy	Ongoing	Officer Time
Objective 6 Continue to plant more trees in suitable locations and encourage others to do the same	Continue to apply for appropriate funding for urban tree planting such as the Local Authorities Treescape Fund.	Environmental Services	Ongoing	Officer Time
Objective 6 Continue to plant more trees in suitable locations and encourage others to do the same	Review the findings within the Open Space Assessment and Strategy and work to secure new woodland development and tree planting opportunities.	Environmental Services/Planning Policy	Ongoing	Officer Time
Objective 6 Continue to plant more trees in suitable locations and encourage others to do the same	The Council continues to commit to funds of £1,500 a year to the free tree give away scheme and continues to plough back money from Christmas tree recycling into environmental improvement works with the aim of providing a further 8,000 trees by 2032	Environmental Services	Apr-23	Officer Time

Objective 6 Continue to plant more trees in suitable locations and encourage others to do the same	Continue to monitor and review tree funding opportunities and work in partnership with others to increase tree planting in the District.	Environmental Services	Ongoing	Officer Time
Objective 6 Continue to plant more trees in suitable locations and encourage others to do the same	Create and adopt policies for District Council managed trees and woodlands	Environmental Services	Policy set to be drafted by June 23	Officer Time



Report to: Policy & Performance Improvement Committee Meeting, 28 November 2022  
Director Lead: Deborah Johnson, Director - Customer Services & Organisational Development  
Lead Officer: Ryan Ward, Transformation & Service Improvement Officer  
[ryan.ward@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk](mailto:ryan.ward@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk) tel:01636 655308

Report Summary	
<b>Report Title</b>	Community Plan Performance for Quarter 2 22/23
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To present the Quarter 2 Community Plan Performance Report (July - September 2022).
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p>That the Policy &amp; Performance Improvement Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) review the Community Plan Performance Report attached as Appendix 1 and the supplementary documents (Appendices 2-4) highlighting customer complaints; and</li><li>(b) consider the Council's performance against its objectives highlighting any areas of high performance and identifying areas for improvement that can then be raised to cabinet for consideration.</li></ul>

## 1.0 Background

We continue to deliver an approach to performance that is used to drive improvement rather than being simply used as a counting device. We are doing this by analysing data and progress against key activities as well as building a picture of the context of performance using district statistics, customer feedback and workforce information.

## 2.0 Proposal/Options Considered

That Policy & Performance Improvement Committee review the Quarter 2 Community Plan Performance report (**Appendix 1**) and the supplementary documents highlighting customer complaints (**Appendices 2-4**).

## 3.0 Implications

None

## Background Papers and Published Documents

None

# Newark and Sherwood District Council Performance Report

2022-23 Q2

1 July to 30 September 2022



## Contact Us

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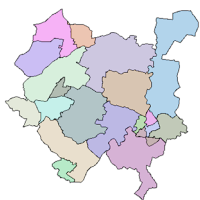


# Introduction

We, Newark and Sherwood District Council, aim to do everything we can to enable local residents and businesses to flourish and fulfil their potential, as well as encourage visitors to enjoy all that our area has to offer. How we intend to achieve this purpose is laid out in our [Community Plan](#) (2019-2023). This plan was informed by the views of residents and lays out the Council's objectives over four years as well as the activities that will help achieve these objectives.

This report examines how the Council has been performing against the Community Plan. It examines data to look at the performance of key services and delivery against the activities outlined in the plan. This report examines the Council's performance and achievements from 1 July to 30 September (Quarter 2).

We know the value of understanding our performance as this knowledge allows us to embed and disseminate good practice and quality service delivery as well as identify and tackle areas for improvement. The Council's performance is measured in four parts;



## Our District

A basket of data indicators which allow us to examine how our district is performing in key areas, acting as a form of 'health check'.

**Page 3**



## Our Performance

How we are delivering against the objectives we outline in the Community Plan.

**Page 4**



## Our Customers

A look at what our customers are telling us about the services they receive and insight into how we are learning from customer feedback

**Page 23**



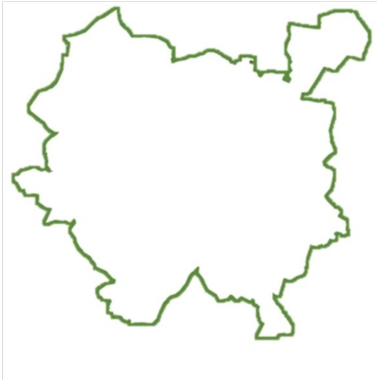
## Our Workforce

To understand how the Council's staff are performing and how we are supporting staff. This is important as a positive and motivated workforce is more likely to be high performing.

**Page 26**

# Our District

## About Newark and Sherwood...



A resident population of 122,900 (15.3% of Nottinghamshire's population).

55,759 dwellings of which around 10% are owned by the Council (social housing).

There are on average 189 people per square kilometre within the district. This is sparser than the England average of 395 people per square kilometre and the Nottinghamshire average of 396 people per hectare.

7.6% of the population are within the age range 55-59 which is the highest across all the district age ranges. This is also different to the England average where 50-54 is the highest age range at 7%.

79.3% of the district's working age population (16 to 64) are qualified to a Level 2 or higher. This is 5.1% higher than the county average and 1.1% higher than the England average.

The gross weekly pay for residents is £589.80. This is 2.8% higher than the Nottinghamshire average but 4% lower than the England average.

## How is our district?

This data tell us something about our district in quarter 2 (July-Sept 2022). Most of these indicators are not factors we can directly affect, only influence, but they add context to the work we undertake.



The number of planning applications we receive gives an indication of the level of construction planned in the district. When compared to the same period of last year, commercial applications have increased by 9, residential applications have increased by 44, non-major applications have increased by 240 and major applications have increased by 8.

**14 commercial planning applications** were validated

**98 residential planning applications** were validated

**37 major planning applications** were received

**530 minor planning applications** were received



**As of June 2022, 2,000 people were currently unemployed** across the District. This is a reduction of 300 since March 2022 and a reduction of 1,100 compared to June 2021.



Nationally, the town centre footfall has not recovered, as it has done in previous years, following the annual drop off in town centre footfall in January. On average, **footfall in 2022 starts the year above last year's totals, it falls beneath 2021 figures in April 2022 and does not recover.** However, for **Newark it doesn't fall below the 2021 figure until August** which shows a positive start to the year for our towns and businesses.

## Interactions with the Council

This information gives an indication of rising demand for council assistance:

- **3,242 face to face contacts** were held at Castle House. This is a 8% increase since quarter 1.
- **32,044 calls** were made to the contact centre and **6,551 calls** were received by responsive repairs. When compared to the same period of last year, call volumes have **increased by 4,468** for the contact centre.
- **6,411 digital web form transactions** were completed by our customers, this is comparable to quarter 1.

How are we performing against our objective to...

Create vibrant and self-sufficient local communities where residents look out for each other and actively contribute to their local area



### What we have been doing this quarter;

- ⇒ This quarter saw staff undertake the Resident Survey 2022. A 3-pronged piece of district wide consultation to gather the view of residents. The open survey was completed by 4,577 residents and a representative sample was gathered to sense check the open survey. The Council also undertook a series of focus groups to gather the views of underrepresented groups. The results of this consultation were analysed and shared with the Policy, Performance Improvement Committee. The results will now be used to inform 2023/34 business planning. The results of the findings will also be used to develop the next Community Plan post the May-2023 elections.
- ⇒ The Humanitarian Assistance Response Team's (HART) support system continues to be operated with its primary focus around homes for Ukraine. We are currently supporting over 130 families and all referrals have been actioned within 24 hours. Alongside our primary focus, HART has recently seen an increase in referrals related to the cost of living challenges, predominantly for access to emergency food supplies. For context, in quarter one we only had one HART referral for support with food, in quarter two we had 23 referrals from individuals requiring support. This need is also shown externally to the council as all of our supported Food Clubs are also seeing an increase in requests for support.
- ⇒ Significant resources have been utilised to further support both residents and business during the cost of living challenges. As of the end of September 2022:-
  - 46,198 mandatory council tax energy awards had been made totalling £6.9 million.
  - 6,715 discretionary council tax energy awards made totalling £196,438.
  - 428 discretionary Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF) awards totalling £1.89 million had been made to businesses that did not qualify for any business rates relief under other Covid Relief schemes (mainly retail, leisure, hospitality relief).
  - 241 referrals had been made to Nottinghamshire County Council for assistance through the household support fund.
- ⇒ Following the closure of the Parish and Town Council Initiative fund in April, we held our first round of Community Grant Scheme applications. The scheme aims to support groups, charities and not-for profit organisations with projects or initiatives that align to the Council's Community Plan objectives, giving grants of up to £5,000. We supported 20 applications in round 1 to the value of £73,543. Applications for round 2 have now closed and the outcome will be reported to Cabinet in November 2022. These scheme will provide support for a range of schemes that will improve communities and support the lives of residents.
- ⇒ Flood mitigation works at Lowdham continue to progress. Detailed design work has taken place on the up stream water holding element of this scheme. The Environmental Agency Project Team are in the process of securing the licences, consents and permissions ahead of construction, and they are continuing environmental monitoring for protected species at the site. The current timetable has a completion date of summer 2024. For Southwell, the main elements of this scheme are now approaching completion.
- ⇒ To increase the resilience of local communities to floods, the list of local flood wardens is being checked and compared with that held by the county council. The flood plan is also being reviewed. Last year flood stores were re-stocked where required. A further audit of the stores will take place in quarter 3.
- ⇒ The day of action planned for Boughton on the 14th October will deliver a range of activity to improve the local area, one of those includes some Speedwatch activity to monitor drivers and provide enforcement where required.
- ⇒ In line with our digital declaration, we are training involved tenants to train other tenants to improve their digital skills. The more focused approach to tenant digital workshops has improved take-up and promotion continues. From January, six tenants had four further hours of training and three 1-2-1 sessions. In this quarter, positive outcomes include tenants supporting others to successfully set up an account on MyNS

How are we performing against our objective to...

Create vibrant and self-sufficient local communities where residents look out for each other and actively contribute to their local area



and then completion of online training. We will also be introducing the opportunity for tenants to use the digital equipment at the Hub during the weekly drop in sessions and we are exploring other digital equipment like Alexa/Google and how they could be utilised.

- ⇒ The 3 Local Influence Networks met in July with a total of 27 tenants taking part across the district. To support these networks, the Network chairs have now completed a chairing skills course with the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS). The chairs also attended their first Tenant Engagement Board meeting in August with an agenda agreed and work programme in progress.
- ⇒ We continue to engage and involve our tenants on numerous projects and initiatives. This quarter, we had 257 interactions with tenants with 29 new tenants becoming involved on a more formal basis and 82 first time contacts. Tenants have also been involved in the procurement of a carpet contractor to support our starting well project, monitoring our grounds maintenance service, Bakewell Court (Balderton) Spruce up day and The Hub at Chatham Court one year anniversary. At the spruce up day, 6 tenants, alongside officers from Street Scene, Tenancy and Estates, and Environmental services delivered a range of activities. This included; clearing rubbish, a tidy up of the communal areas, removal of tree stumps, grass cutting and litter picking. Two raised beds were also installed and tenants helped to plant them up with plants secured through the Community Chest. We also added some picnic tables into the communal areas.
- ⇒ The Newark and Sherwood Community Lottery launched in 2021. We now have 63 good causes signed up. We have seen a slight decline in ticket sales with 1,002 sold per week, however, this will continue to generate an annual income £31,262 for these good causes. The team continues to promote the lottery and have recently been interviewed by Bowe Radio to help with promotion of the scheme and to reach a larger audience.
- ⇒ Staff organised the signing of the district's book of condolence as well as coordinating the district's Proclamation of the Accession which took place at 3pm on Sunday 11 September at Castle House, Newark. Air Chief Marshal Sir Andrew Pulford GCB CBE, Deputy Lieutenant, led the tributes to Queen Elizabeth II and the Proclamation of the King was delivered by Chairman of Newark and Sherwood District Council, Councillor Sue Saddington. This followed the Nottinghamshire County Proclamation, which took place at County Hall, and the district Proclamation was followed by Proclamations across the District. The Proclamation of the new Sovereign is an old tradition which can be traced back over many centuries and Council staff and members were honoured to be part of this important process.

How are we performing against our objective to...

## Deliver inclusive and sustainable growth



### What we have been doing this quarter;

⇒ As a part of the Newark Town Investment Plan, eight priority projects were identified for funding. The projects continue to move forward and be delivered with progress as follows;

- The Construction College opened in September 2021 and continues to deliver skills development and training. A second cohort of students started in September 2022.
- The Full Business Case for the Air & Space Institute (ASI) has been completed and was assured on the 26th September 2022. The building contractors started on site in October 2022.
- The outline Business Case for the Smart Innovation, Supply Chain and Logistics (SiSCLOG) project is on track to be completed by October 2022. The project has experienced delays following the announcement of the preferred route for the dualling of the A46 and the designs of the project have been amended to accommodate this adjacent Department for Transport project.
- Work has started on site for the redevelopment of Stodman Street, with the project progressing according to the delivery plan. Archaeological surveys are being undertaken, the results of which are expected by September. The building tenders are due to be returned by the 7 October.
- The Cycle Town project is progressing with three docks already installed, one at Castle House, one at the bus station and one at the new development at Middlebeck.
- The project to enhance the visitor experience at Newark Castle is progressing. The first round bid to the National Heritage Lottery fund was successful, leading to an invitation to progress to the second round of the fund. The outline Business Case has been completed and submitted to central Government in June 2022. The full business case will be developed by December 2023.
- The outline Business Case for the Newark Cultural Heart project has been completed and the full business case aims to be developed by March 2023. Newark Town Council, the delivery partner, has developed an events plan and is implementing a series of activities designed to increase vibrancy in the town centre leading to more footfall, longer dwell time and greater consumer spend.
- Funding of £31 million, has been secured for the Newark Southern Link Road. Tender returns from contractors are currently being assessed, with the anticipation of an on site start date in January 2023 working for completion in late 2024.

⇒ We have been providing funding through the towns fund and support to Newark Town Council to develop a new and enhanced Event Plan for 2022-2025. These events intend to drive up footfall, dwell time and promotion of the Town. The successful implementation of the Newark by the Sea event in August has had a welcome increase in footfall, dwell time and shopper perception. For context, 35,221 people per week visited Newark Town Centre during the Newark-on-Sea event, compared to the 2022 weekly average of 31,425, this was an increase in weekly footfall of just over 12%.

⇒ The Levelling Up Bids for Sherwood were submitted in early August 2022 for the Ollerton Town Centre Scheme, the Clipstone Employment Land Project, and the Clipstone Regeneration, Leisure and Health Programme. The bid sought £20 million of Levelling Up Funds and the outcome is expected in autumn 2022.

The focus of the Ollerton project will be:

- encouraging a strong retail offer,
- making the high street a destination for residents and visitors,
- ensuring accessibility for all, and making our town centres as environmentally friendly as possible.

The proposals include a pedestrianisation of Ollerton Town Centre alongside a mixed-use development and a public services hub. Alongside this proposal, public realm enhancements and support to businesses in Ollerton are being considered as part of the Shared Prosperity Fund proposals.

A planning application for the redevelopment of Ollerton Hall has also now been received, with a decision pending for its conversion to apartments following agreement of terms between the Council and a developer.



How are we performing against our objective to...

## Deliver inclusive and sustainable growth



The focus of the Clipstone project will be:

- delivering new sports and leisure facilities,
- providing new modern workshop space,
- delivering new connections to local pedestrian and cycle routes and ensuring the highest environmental standards and sustainability.

The redevelopment proposals aim for enhancements in employment and sports & leisure with an ability to link into education pathways, land management utilising the Vicar Water Country Park and links to Sherwood Forest.

⇒ Transformative work on the Buttermarket in Newark town centre is nearing completion as part of the Council's commitment to transform the building into a space suitable for the town. Following the extensive maintenance work carried out by the Council to the building's upper floor, including the strip out, restoration and renovation of the mezzanine, 'Inspire: Culture, Learning and Libraries' are set to take occupancy in October. 'Inspire: Culture, Learning, and Libraries' deliver cultural and learning services across Nottinghamshire and are set to transform the upper floor of the Buttermarket into a brand-new centre that will offer a range of courses, workshops and events to young people and adults in Newark. The space will include three brand-new learning spaces and fully accessible state-of-the-art facilities. The Atrium will be reserved for community use and flexible use retail pods.

⇒ We continue to lead, shape, influence or in some cases directly deliver key required infrastructure including;

- Holding discussions with the A46 Newark Northern Bypass Project Team about the design of the proposed scheme and the forthcoming statutory consultation. The Council and National Highways teams meet regularly to ensure the project remains on program.
- Executed the Grant Funding Agreement in relation to the Southern Link Road to enable the developers to access the Levelling Up funding to begin construction, subject to tender returns.
- Officers are in discussion with National Highways and their consultants Amey to produce an options appraisal and design works for the A1 Overbridge.

⇒ We are providing support to CityFibre by organising and facilitating conversations with local stakeholders for a multi million pound project for Newark. City Fibre are the UK's largest independent carrier-neutral full fibre platform, they have named Newark as the next town in line for a multi-million-pound investment into its digital infrastructure. A move that will see Newark join the nation's growing list of full fibre enabled communities. They are set to invest £10 million in a new town-wide network that will bring fast and reliable full fibre-enabled internet services within reach of almost every home and business in Newark.

⇒ We continue to offer a comprehensive programme of support to ensure sustainable economic growth for local businesses. Some of the key activities this quarter included;

- The development and exploration of a package to support the business community with cost of living assistance.
- Signposted and supported 5 businesses to access Grantfinder, this site is Europe's most advanced grants and policy database.
- Supported 43 businesses with a range of information advice and support.

⇒ An engagement and master planning workshop for the Sherwood Forest Corner was held in September 2022 with key partners including Nottinghamshire County Council and the Wildlife Charity RSPB to further develop the scheme. The County Council have commissioned a movements strategy and will report on progress during quarter 3. We have joined a cross organisational project team that has been formed to develop the activities and milestones required to drive the programme forward in a phased and collaborative way.

## Measuring Success



### Spotlight benchmarking

As of June 2022, the unemployment rate was 3.5% in Newark and Sherwood, seeing a 1.2% reduction since March 2022. Overall there has been an unemployment rate of 3.9% in England with a reduction on 0.3% when compared to the same period.

	Year to Date Quarter 2 20/21	Year to Date Quarter 2 21/22	Year to Date Quarter 2 22/23	Year to Date Tar- get 22/23
% of Town Centre retail premises vacant across the NSDC District	New for Q4 20/21	6.9%	6.8%	9.0%*
The performance of our assets which contribute to the economic growth of the district:				
Total number of admissions - National Civil War Centre	New for Q3 20/21	2,016	6,196	5,000
Total number of admissions - Palace Theatre	0	3,456	16,573	15,000
Newark Beacon - % of occupied units	New for Q3 20/21	86.0%	97.2%	85.0%
Sherwood Forest Arts and Crafts - % of occupied units	New for Q1 21/22	100.0%	100.0%	90.0%
Commercial Property - % occupied units	New for Q1 21/22	97.0%	98.6%	95.0%

\*Target is the national/England average

### Exploring our performance...

Across our 'deliver inclusive and sustainable growth' all performance indicator remain green and above target.

The percentage of town centre retail premises vacant remains in a comparatively strong position being lower than the national average by 2.2% and is comparable to last quarter and the same period of the previous year. The 6.8% for quarter 2 equates to a total of 84 retail premises vacant across the district.

The admissions to the National Civil War Centre remains above target by 1,196 admissions. Residents responded positively to the summer campaign with some events being free entry, and year to date figures are already 3 times higher than this period in 2021/22, demonstrating the continuing recovery of this sector. The team continues to expand its outreach offer, and the year to date cultural outreach numbers are over 12,000, predominantly through free activities in the Castle gardens.

Palace Theatre ticket sales remain variable. Several shows have over-achieved and therefore, despite some unavoidable cancellations, the theatre remains on target to achieve its admission numbers. However, it is likely that Covid-19 will play a more significant role in the ability of shows to successfully tour through the autumn and winter.



### Our Customers said:-

"We attended the cycle races on Friday the 29th to watch our granddaughter take place in the under 12s and wanted to pay our thanks to the whole team who put the event together, that's everyone from the organisers to the security guys, the council employees, and anyone I've missed. A well run event in a beautiful venue"

Agenda Page 91

How are we performing against our objective to...

## Create more and better quality homes through our roles as landlord, developer and planning authority



### What we have been doing this quarter;

- ⇒ Arkwood Developments, our property development company, have been impacted, along with several other organisations, with the liquidation of Robert Woodhead Construction (who ceased trading on the 14 of September 2022). Arkwood are currently working to secure a new main contractor and where possible retain the existing supply chain, to recommence works on site as soon as possible.
- ⇒ The HRA Development programme is progressing well with 39 homes currently in the planning process. We expect some delays with the last phase due to the need to procure a new contractor.
- ⇒ Work is undergoing to redevelop the temporary accommodation provision at Seven Hills in Newark. The development at this site was progressing well but paused mid-September due to challenges with the contractor. However, contractors were back on site from 10th October to erect the three main building structures and to make these waterproof. The site delays will extend the timescales for this project up to 12 months.
- ⇒ In September 2022, a report was presented to the Portfolio holder recommending the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol delivery model for this winter. It has been approved that the three bedroom maisonette (a temporary accommodation unit) will be made into a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO), in compliance with Environmental Health space standards to accommodate verified rough sleepers during the winter period. Support will be provided via the in-house tenancy support team and wrap around services such as Street Outreach and Rough Sleeping Initiative specialisms.
- ⇒ For the Yorke Drive regeneration scheme, Reserved Matters Planning was submitted in August 2022 and Consultee comments are currently being worked through by the design team with a response to planning and any revisions to be submitted 31 October 2022. Subject to planning permission being granted, a new access road will open up the estate from Lincoln Road with a centrally located sports pavilion and play area, right in the heart of the community. The development will deliver a total of 289 new homes across affordable, shared ownership and market sale properties and the estate will benefit from environmental improvement works and traffic control measures.
- ⇒ Our 'Starting Well' project to improve the success of tenants in new homes continues. The Early Intervention and Credit Union strands of the project have continued to progress over the last three months. The performance around new and introductory tenancies remain strong with arrears remaining low and the Credit Union local coordinator has been out in the community raising the profile of the service across the district. In addition, we have started work on two further strands of the project. The first is reviewing the Ready to Move process, this project works with applicants currently living in supported housing to ensure they are ready for their own tenancy. The review will look at the effectiveness of the process and look to see if any improvements can be made. The second new strand of work is looking at our pre-tenancy assessment process, this looks at what support a prospective new tenant might need to ensure their tenancy is a success. We currently have a well-established process, but we are looking at how this can be improved further and be better embedded into our housing management system.
- ⇒ The 3 tier priority timescales has now been in place for over a year. Priority 1 category continues to show a speedier timescale to repair and we continue to see a slight increase in attendance times for our Priority 2 & Priority 3 categories. Priority 2 and 3 are repairs that are appointed and are not of an urgent nature. *(P1 within 24 hours, P2 within 6 weeks and P3 for our planned works up to 6 months).*
- ⇒ The revised Empty Homes Standard continues to receive positive feedback. In terms of impacts, we are seeing an increase in void costs and how long it is taking to turn our empty homes around. We are reviewing the performance in detail to understand the reasons and take any steps to improve performance that we can without reducing levels of satisfaction.



How are we performing against our objective to...

## Create more and better quality homes through our roles as landlord, developer and planning authority



- ⇒ Community Development continues to support arrivals via the Homes for Ukraine scheme where over 130 groups have arrived within the district to date. Key activities include undertaking safeguarding and accommodation visits and the provision of wrap around support for guests through a caseworker model. In July, we delivered a successful careers fair for Ukrainian guests in partnership with Active4Today to promote current vacancies. In September, we delivered 3 information sessions to enable guests and sponsors to learn more about the Council's Housing Options process and support available. The team continues to collaborate with other District and Borough Council colleagues across Nottinghamshire to ensure a collaborative countywide approach to scheme delivery.
- ⇒ Community Development continues to deliver the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS), Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy and UK Resettlement Scheme schemes to support Afghan and Syrian refugees resettle within the district. The latest arrival via the ACRS scheme took place in September, following 4 other family arrivals earlier this year. We continue to collaborate with key partners, charities, and authorities to provide support to resettled families including English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision, caseworker support, engagement and summer activities and employment support.
- ⇒ The Hub at Chatham Court had its first anniversary in August. Since opening, the Hub has provided a wide range of opportunities for tenants, including volunteering at the Coffee afternoon, maintaining the raised beds on the estate, and being part of the Hub User Group. The Hub is well used, offering a number of sessions including ESOL classes and Step into School for young families by Homestart.
- ⇒ In order to provide high quality homes and environments and where people wish to live, we are reviewing the suitability of sites currently allocated for housing alongside employment and open space protection to ensure they continue to be deliverable. We continue to negotiate with developers on proposals submitted at both pre and full planning application stage to seek improvements to details submitted. For example, on the amount and location of landscaping, the layout of housing, parking provision and infrastructure needed for the future community. The advice we provide in relation to landscaping is likely to improve following the appointment of the Council's Tree/Landscaping Officer. Through the quarter, 99 applications for housing proposals were determined, of which 60 were approved. The number of proposals determined and approved is comparable to the previous quarter.
- ⇒ A draft amended Allocations & Development Management (DPD), which will include a number of sites to accommodate the Gypsy and Traveller community, will be presented to Cabinet in November. The Council is also developing proposals to deliver a public sector site in Newark which will also be presented to Cabinet in November.

Measuring  
Success

	Year to Date Quarter 2 20/21	Year to Date Quarter 2 21/22	Year to Date Quarter 2 22/23	Year to Date Target 22/23
Average time spent in temporary accommodation (weeks)	12.9	11.5	8.5	13.0
Average time (days) to re-let Council properties	39.3	26.4	25.1	28.0
% of rent collected from current tenants as a % of rent owed	100.6%	99.1%	98.3%	98.5%
Average "End to End" time for all reactive repairs (Calendar days)	8.4	27.5	15.3	11.0
% of repairs completed at first visit	96.0%	98.4%	88.5%	93.0%
% of planning applications (major) determined in time	New for Q1 21/22	92.0%	91.0%	90.0%
% of planning applications (non major) determined in time	New for Q1 21/22	97.0%	95.0%	90.0%
Average number of working days to process housing benefit change in circumstances	7.2	7.4	5.0	6.0
Average number of working days to process new housing benefit claims	New for Q3 20/21	18.0	18.3	17.0
Amount of current arrears as a % of annual rent debit	2.24%	1.88%	1.73%	2.20%
Amount of current arrears	£528,158	£440,921	£429,342	£500,000
Number of all tenants who have been evicted for rent arrears	0	2	0	2
% of all tenants who have been evicted for rent arrears	0.00%	0.04%	0.00%	0.05%
% of housing complaints resolved within agreed timescales	New for Q1 21/22	No Data Re- ceived	90.9%	100.0%
Number of evictions (anti-social behaviour)	0	0	1	Trend (Increasing)
% of homes with a valid gas certificate	New for Q4 21/22	New for Q4 21/22	87.5%	100.0%
% of homes with Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) certificates up to five years old	New for Q4 21/22	New for Q4 21/22	98.89%	100.0%
The performance of Arkwood, our property development company, which contributes to this objective:				
Arkwood - number of units delivered	New for Q3 21/22	New for Q3 21/22	29	Trend (No change)
Arkwood - plots commenced	New for Q3 21/22	New for Q3 21/22	87	Trend (No change)

**Exploring our performance...**

For two consecutive quarters, the average time to re-let has made significant improvements and remains above target. This quarter is now exceeding target by 2.9 days, sitting at 25.1 days, an improvement of 1.3 days against the same period of last year. Previously this performance was below target and was mainly attributed to the delivery of our enhanced empty homes standard coupled with managing a high quantity of voids.

The average "End to End" time for all reactive repairs remains above target by 4.3 days. We are currently working on initiatives to improve performance from our trades team by increasing the number of works carried out per day. However, we changed our priority time scales from 6 to 3 tiers (Emergency/Routine/Planned) and the vast majority of repairs fall into the routine category which are completed within 6 weeks. It will therefore continue to be a challenging target and one that will be reviewed as a part of the 2023/24 business planning process to account for the priority 2 repairs having a six week target response time (42 days). This level of performance has seen a significant improvement from the same period last year where it was at 27.5 days compared to this quarter at 15.3 days.

90.9% of complaints were responded to within the agreed timescale and this indicator remains within tolerance for two consecutive quarters. 66 complaints were received by the end of quarter 2 and 6 of these were responded to out of the time. A commitment was made at the start of the year to improve performance on the previous year. Compared to the end of quarter 2 last year, 60 out of 70 complaints (86%) had been responded to in time. This is an improvement of 5%. Areas of slippage are closely monitored in monthly meetings and, on the whole, non timely responses are becoming the exception.

The indicator for gas compliance is under target by 12.5%. There are currently 652 properties that are out of compliance. A new contractor has been in place since 1st August and we are now doing 130 gas services per week to get performance back on track by the end of October. This is being monitored on a daily basis and a meeting have also been arranged with the contractors leadership team to review performance to date including tenant satisfaction. Weekly progress meetings are being held with daily monitoring and where required chasing of the contractors. This performance is being regularly reported to SLT, the Portfolio Holder and the Leader of the Council whilst we recover our performance. We are also working closely with the Regulator of Social Housing to provide assurances around the health and safety of our homes.



**Our  
Customers said:-**

"For the 11 years I have lived here, I have always had an excellent service from the repairs team".



How are we performing against our objective to...

## Continue to maintain high standard of cleanliness and appearance of the local environment

### What we have been doing this quarter;

- ⇒ Continuing with the 'Not in Newark and Sherwood' Campaign, year to date, we have issued a total of 81 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) for fly tipping and 33 for failure to produce a Waste Transfer Note, indicating that they were not disposing of their waste correctly. We have also issued 45 FPNs for littering offences which includes side waste and some small fly tips. At the beginning of September, we undertook another 2 sessions of 'Operation Rogue' where Council colleagues worked in conjunction with the Environment Agency and Nottinghamshire Police over the 5th and 6th of September. In total, we stopped 21 vehicles. 17 were fully compliant and 4 FPNs were issued for not having the correct waste documents/licences.
- ⇒ Enviro-crime enforcement continues to be a priority for both Public Protection and Environmental Services Business Units. Within this quarter, 3 FPNs have been issued for abandoned vehicles and 2 prosecutions have been actioned for serious fly tipping.
- ⇒ Work is continuing with the implementation of the Green Champions Scheme. All the equipment is now in the depot stores ready to be distributed and ICT have begun development of the new forms which will be linked with the 'My Account' system allowing champions to easily request equipment and report bags for collection. In quarter two, 116 volunteers took part across 6 litter picking events and collected 64 bags of litter from sites across the district.
- ⇒ To help improve the appearance of the environment and improve recycling rates we have delivered a range of community projects. This quarter we have:
  - Worked with the Newark based REACH group to provide education on recycling and conservation.
  - Our summer Forest Schools programme ran again this quarter and was well attended by children from across the district at both Sconce and Devon and Vicar Water Country Park.
  - Facilitated a 'play in the park event' where our team was on hand to run recycling education games.
- ⇒ In partnership with Waste Investigations, Support and Enforcement (WISE), the district Council began a one-year pilot project in October 2021 to combat environmental crimes such as dog fouling and litter and enforce breaches of Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) relating to dog control. Since the pilot began, over 2,000 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) have been issued for several offences, including 1,689 for cigarette littering, 73 for food and food packaging litter and 24 for dog fouling. Following this successful pilot, in July, the Council confirmed that it will continue this vital work to clamp down on environmental crime in the district. The Council will now be seeking a range of tenders from enforcement providers to ensure perpetrators of environmental crimes continue to be issued with the punishments best befitting the crime.
- ⇒ We are once again celebrating after Newark Castle Gardens, Sconce and Devon Park, Vicar Water Country Park, and Sherwood Heath Cockglode and Rotary Woods were included in the UK winners of the Green Flag Award for another year. The award is the international quality mark for parks and green spaces. Newark Castle and Gardens also achieved the much coveted Green Heritage Site Accreditation, an award supported by Historic England, for the management of its historic features.
- ⇒ In July, we began to consult on proposals to develop the land adjacent to the Library Gardens, London Road, in Newark. This site has been the centre of much attention over the last year but now it is back in district Council ownership, and plans to move forward with making the area into a community space in the heart of Newark have been announced. The proposals include a range of improvements including; raised beds, hard standing areas, garden water feature, a pavilion, new trees and seating for visitors.
- ⇒ 2022/23 marks the second year that the Council will deliver a grounds maintenance service for the housing revenue account (HRA) and performance has continued to be high with all areas scoring within the "perfect – complete to specification" category. Of the joint monitoring inspections, delivered across 6 key service areas, performance has seen a marginal drop when compared to quarter 1 but the results are still overall positive.

How are we performing against our objective to...

**Continue to maintain high standard of cleanliness and appearance of the local environment**



#### Performance Outcomes of Monitoring Inspections for the Maintenance of Housing Land (HRA)

Service Area	Q2 2021/22	Q2 2022/23
Grass	1.29	1.46
Litter and Bins	1.20	1.10
Garage Site	1.32	1.73
Shrub Bed Maintenance	1.78	1.92
Weed Control	1.39	1.76
Hedge Cutting	1.70	1.83

Across the service areas highlighted above, the scoring is broken down into 5 levels of scoring with 1 being 'Perfect. Complete to Specification' (the highest level of performance) and 5 being the 'Requires rectification within 24 hours' (lowest level of performance).



**Our Customers said:-**

"I would like to give a big thank you to the tenants officer and Balderton grounds team for doing a great clean up and for providing improvements to our communal areas and parking spaces"

#### Measuring Success



	Year to Date Quarter 2 20/21	Year to Date Quarter 2 21/22	Year to Date Quarter 2 22/23	Year to Date Target 22/23
% fly tipping incidents removed within 72 hours	New for Q3 20/21	69.0%	97.0%	75.0%
Number of fly tipping incidents	759	787	1,121	900
Number of fly tipping enforcement actions	382	800	1,248	1,025
% of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	33.7%	38.2%	Waiting for External Data	40.0%
Number of missed bins (per 100,000 population)	New for Q1 22/23	New for Q1 22/23	63.0	45.0
Total number of garden waste subscriptions	New for Q3 20/21	16,621	19,042	17,000
% level 1 graffiti incidents removed within 36 hours	25.0%	88.0%	95.8%	100.0%
% level 2 graffiti incidents removed within 10 days	New for Q1 22/23	New for Q1 22/23	100.0%	90.0%
% of failing sites - street and environmental cleanliness - litter	0.7%	1.2%	2.1%	2.8%
% of failing sites - street and environmental cleanliness - detritus	0.7%	1.6%	0.9%	1.8%

Agenda Page 97

### Exploring our performance...

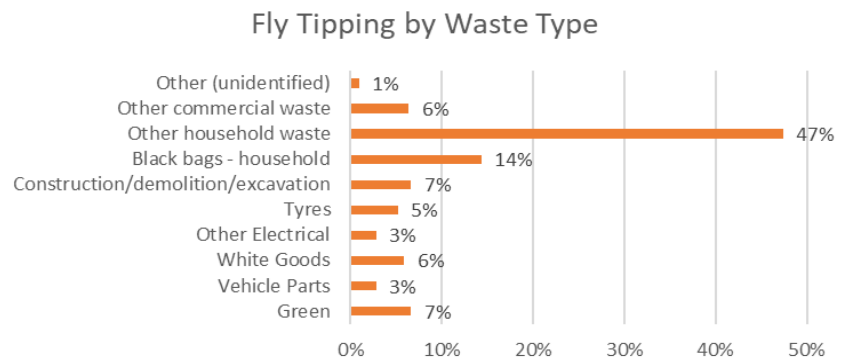
The number of fly tipping incidents have increased significantly when compared to the same quarter of the previous year but this is largely because we are now delivering more activity to find areas that have been fly tipped. Although the level of incidents are high, there has been a strong level of performance in terms of enforcement actions delivered for fly tips. By proactively identifying areas of non-reported fly tips ensures that these are cleared promptly enhancing the cleanliness of the district.

Of the incidents requiring action, the chart to the right shows the different type of waste that has been fly tipped. Although the majority appears to be household waste, this does not directly mean that the individual is the one that fly tipped the waste and this could be another individual/business.

In terms of where the fly tips were found, the top 3 land types were highways with 58% of fly tips, followed by 18% on council land and 18% on footpaths.

In relation to the size of fly tips this quarter. 42% were the size of a small van load , 19% were the size of a transit van load and 16% were the size of a car boot or less.

The number of missed bins (per 100,000 population) remains under target by 18. This has improved by 17.2 when compared to quarter 1. Just before quarter 1 of this year, we reviewed the methodology in which this indicator was calculated and achieved improvements to the accuracy and consistency in the way this is reported but the target remained the same. We will continue to review this target for this indicator and if it isn't achievable under the new methodology we will look to change later in the year. Although this indicator is currently red, the volume of missed bins within the quarter still remains low and very positive when benchmarked against our Nottinghamshire peers.



How are we performing against our objective to...



## Enhance and protect the district's natural environment

### What we have been doing this quarter;

- ⇒ We are progressing with a number of projects to achieve our 2035 carbon net neutrality target and meet the actions outlined in our Greening Newark and Sherwood Action Plan.
- As laid out in the Council's Climate Emergency Strategy action plan, the Council is working to improve its energy efficiency and reduce its overall carbon footprint by installing solar panels at 5 sites. We have awarded the contract and are in the process of finalising the contract with works on site commencing in 2023. This project will assist the Council in making carbon savings and generating renewable energy both of which will assist us with reaching our 2035 net carbon neutrality target.
  - Work is continuing to develop a Decarbonisation Plan for our corporate and leisure buildings to help us understand the energy efficiency and carbon reduction measures we can put in place at each site. Our bid for funding for the heat decarbonisation elements of this plan from central government was unsuccessful, therefore, we are returning to directly funding development of the plan.
  - We are continuing to explore options for the future of Brunel Drive, our depot site, to meet the future needs of the service in relation to the collection of additional waste streams and the electrification of our fleet of vehicles. Initial plans have been developed and an update on progress is scheduled to go to Cabinet in December.
  - We are part of the Nottinghamshire wide Green Rewards App which is an online platform designed to incentivise and encourage residents to undertake positive behaviour change by enabling users to log carbon reducing activities and gain points for these activities (which equate to prizes). The scheme has been live for nearly a year and continues to be successful with 372 households signed up to the app at the end of quarter two. 22 tonnes of carbon has been avoided to date through the app's carbon reduction activities. Work is ongoing to promote the app throughout the year in partnership with the other Nottinghamshire authorities and at various events across the district.
- ⇒ We continue to build on behaviour changes focusing on reducing car usage and getting more people cycling and walking. The Cycle Town project installing Brompton Bikes is progressing well with three docks already installed, one at Castle House, one at the bus station and one at the new development at Middlebeck. The two latest docking stations at Newark Bus Station and in the heart of the Middlebeck development will each hold 8 Brompton folding bicycles and residents can book out the bikes via the Brompton bike hire app. The Council is also in discussion with the County Council and Sherwood Forest Hospitals Trust to develop a range of projects to promote cycling in the District.
- ⇒ This quarter, in conjunction with colleagues around the Council, we delivered various activities to improve recycling levels in Collingham, Newark, Edgingly, Kirklington and Halam with doorstep communication work to encourage good recycling, as well as conducting Waste Transfer Note checks in the same areas to ensure compliance with waste disposal legislation.
- ⇒ Following the relaunch of the garden recycling service for 2022/23 at the end of last year, the current number of subscriptions stands at 19,061, up from 16,890 last year (a 12% increase). This is important as garden waste collected through the garden recycling service can be recycled and otherwise this recyclable material is lost within the general waste stream.

Measuring  
Success



	Year to Date Quarter 2 20/21	Year to Date Quarter 2 21/22	Year to Date Quarter 2 22/23	Year to Date Target 22/23
Number of carbon reduction projects currently in progress	New for Q1 21/22	8	6	Trend

Agenda Page 99



How are we performing against our objective to...



## Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, and increase feelings of safety in our communities

### What we have been doing this quarter;

- ⇒ In July it was announced by the Home Office that the Nottinghamshire bid for Safer Streets had been successful and an award of £750,000 had been made to deliver the actions set out in the bid. The Newark and Sherwood share of this was £374,000 and the project must be completed by 30 September 2023. Since July, the project board and lead officers have been developing and delivering a range of local schemes and activities to ensure that the project aims are met. For Newark and Sherwood, these activities will include;
  - 3 new cameras, the locations of which have now been identified with the police and are being audited for suitability.
  - The replacement of 3 of the existing cameras in Newark Town centre.
  - Improvements to the 'Shop Watch' initiative to enhance information sharing in real time so 'live' incidents can be reported quickly. This project will help with reducing the levels of shop theft.
- ⇒ The district council also has a pipeline of projects that will be implemented to reduce crime and anti-social behavior. These projects include:
  - Target hardening at Tithe Barn and Queen's Court by upgrading the existing door entry system to provide remote video entry system and improved door closure and locking systems.
  - Addressing the St Mary Magdalene Church Gardens anti-social behavior hotspot. This is an area where poor lighting and a lack of CCTV has resulted in an overall feeling that the area is not safe. The scheme will deliver improved illumination by using 'Wayfinder' column lighting on the paths, installing additional CCTV and a joint project with the church to improve the lighting to the church and surrounding areas. Benches present within the gardens will also be relocated to improve the lines of sight for CCTV.
  - St Marks Precinct (the area used for parking and deliveries below the precinct) has been a location of crime, anti-social behavior and enviro-crime (graffiti and fly tipping). A scheme will be delivered to provide a new secure gated entrance that will restrict unauthorised access.
  - A series of training events and campaigns will be targeted towards night time economy staff to address feelings of safety and violence against women and girls.
  - Crime and anti-social behaviour is driven by many factors, one of which is the local environment, and as such localised improvements to the look and feel of the key areas will be undertaken. This will include additional litter bin provision, relocation of street furniture and improved lighting.
- ⇒ In response to reports of anti-social behaviour by young people within the Market Square, and the problems caused by street drinkers, regular patrols have been taking place within this area. Whilst patrolling the Community Protection Officers (CPOs) engaged with young people who gather in groups. The CPOs have not witnessed any ASB whilst present, apart from a couple of isolated incidents, and we have received no further reports. During other patrols, the CPOs also engaged with the street drinkers who tend to congregate in the St Mary Magdalene Church Gardens, Bede House Lane area, and near Morrisons. One of these patrols resulted in the arrest of one of them for being drunk and disorderly. The CPOs have also started early morning dog fouling patrols in three of our parks, Vicar Water, Sconce and Devon and Sherwood Heath. It is difficult to catch a dog walker in the act of not clearing up after their dogs but the CPOs will interact with dog walkers and ensure that they are carrying a poo bag.
- ⇒ A night of action is planned for 14 October in Newark. This will include licensing staff, police and members of the Licensing Committee undertaking checks on alcohol premises and late night takeaways. This event will also give members the opportunity to discuss town centre enforcement issues with licence holders.
- ⇒ Public Protection arranged a water safety event in partnership with the Police, Nottingham Fire and Rescue, Farndon Sea scouts and the YMCA. The event took place in mid-August in response to reports of young people jumping into the River Trent. The event was hosted by the Farndon Sea scouts. Nottinghamshire Fire

How are we performing against our objective to...



## Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, and increase feelings of safety in our communities

and Rescue demonstrated their rescue skills by boat rope and floats. The YMCA also attended and provided defib and lifesaving recovery training skills, and the Public Protection team had a stall offering safety advice and security items available for the public.

⇒ Bunds have been installed as a target hardening measure to help prevent illegal encampments. In 2022 we had no illegal encampments on the locations where target hardening works were carried out. These bund have also been hydro-seeded with grass and wildflowers to support natural wildlife. This quarter the wildflowers and grass were cut, left to settle and then collected. This will improve the spread of wildflowers for next years display. We will also be carrying out some improvements to the bunds, which include;

- Removing stone and debris,
- regrading the bund and then dressing with soil and fertiliser, and
- Bank stabilisation and re-seeding as required.

Measuring  
Success

	Year to Date Quarter 2 20/21	Year to Date Quarter 2 21/22	Year to Date Quarter 2 22/23	Year to Date Target 22/23
% reduction in anti-social behaviour <i>NSDC compared against County area*</i>	-75.0%	-20.0%	5.0%	11.0%*
% reduction in all crime <i>NSDC compared against County area*</i>	20.0%	17.0%	-20.0%	-9.0%*
% of businesses in the District with a food hygiene rating of 3 or above	New for Q3 21/22	New for Q3 21/22	92.72%	83.0%
% of businesses in the District with a 0 star food rating (major improvement necessary)	New for Q2 21/22	0.18%	0.09%	0.15%
% of food inspections undertaken in year	New for Q1 21/22	No Data Received	75.0%	100.0%
% of programmed inspections completed (all)	New for Q1 22/23	New for Q1 22/23	76.0%	Trend
% programmed pollution inspections completed	New for Q1 22/23	New for Q1 22/23	23.0%	Trend
CCTV - number of proactive incidents	New for Q3 21/22	New for Q3 21/22	153	200
CCTV - number of reactive incidents	New for Q3 21/22	New for Q3 21/22	609	625
Fixed penalty notices (number issued)	18	27	1,393	750
Community protection notices/warnings (number issued)	15	13	2	13
All other notices/warnings (number issued)	9	6	9	8

\*target is the County average and minus denotes an increase

### Exploring our performance...

Anti-social behaviour and crime figures are provided by Nottinghamshire Police and we utilise the County average (excluding Nottingham City) as our targets. To ensure that we are benchmarking locally with the current trends. Anti-social behaviour has seen a reduction of 5% against the same period in the previous year but is less than the county average reduction of 11%. The current ASB incident numbers are similar to those seen pre-Covid and both the Police and Council have initiatives in place to target ASB hotspots.

Crime has seen an increase of 20% when compared to the same period of the previous year and is 11% greater than the County average. Current crime numbers are similar to those seen pre-Covid. Regular performance review meetings take place between the Public Protection Business Manager and the local Policing Inspector where a more detailed analysis of crime type and prevalence is undertaken.

The percentage of food inspections undertaken sits at 75% against a target of 100%, however, it is anticipated that at year end the programme will be at 100%. The reason for this indicator being below target is caused by levels of annual leave within the team coupled with the reduction in opening hours of local food businesses.

The quantity of proactive incidents monitored for CCTV is under target by 47. The proactive monitoring is normally undertaken as a result of a request from the council or the Police as such this is not an indicator that we can directly influence.

Although the community protection notices issued indicator remains under target, these are only served in situations where they are required and the legal threshold is met.

How are we performing against our objective to...

## Improve the health and wellbeing of local residents



### What we have been doing this quarter;

- ⇒ Tenant arrears performance remains strong with performance this year consistently better than last year. As previously reported, we are starting to see tenants struggling more as we enter the autumn period. We are starting to see an increase in the number of Direct Debits failing or being cancelled which indicates that peoples' finances are being put under pressure. We will continue to respond quickly to cases where Direct Debits fail by working with the tenant to find a solution. We will continue to monitor the situation and support our tenants where necessary.
- ⇒ The integration of Southwell Leisure Centre in to Active4Today's leisure centre operational delivery model continues to develop positively and has just completed its first year of operation. Memberships currently stand at 3,378, of which 1,957 are adult members and 1,421 are junior members. This represents an increase of 372 against the 3,006 members of a comparable period in 2021. Currently the new intake of Brackenhurst College is taking place and early feedback from students signing up to the centre's membership package is positive. Improvements have been made at the centre with a refurbishment to the gym's free weights area and all weather facility. These improvements have been well received by customers and it is hoped the facilities will be well used by clubs as they begin their winter training programmes. Club membership and block bookings have also increased at the leisure centre with 34 clubs now on direct debit. This is a new initiative which was introduced during the first year of operation by Active4Today and one which has been positively received by clubs. 85% are now paying by direct debit. A review of the swimming pool programme has created additional capacity for public swimming. In addition to the changes to the public and laned swimming sessions, A4T has also introduced 1-2-1 swimming lessons for children with a disability, which has not been available at the centre for nearly 3 years.
- ⇒ The refurbishment of the hockey pitch was officially opened on Saturday 3 September during an opening event and game. The new facility for the academy students and the wider sporting community will enable Newark Hockey Club to deliver its development plans to increase hockey opportunities locally as well as further enhance the club's well established reputation in the local community and grow its membership base. The pitch is now fully operational and managed by Active4Today under a 15 year 'Community Use Management Agreement' which enables the Magnus Academy and Active4Today to work collaboratively to ensure that the facility is well used by the local sporting community. Regular meetings will take place to ensure that the operation of the facility delivers good outcomes for all concerned. Early indications are that bookings for the newly refurbished facility have increased.
- ⇒ We are collaborating with the County Council's Health and Wellbeing Hubs to run a number of Health and Wellbeing 'pop up' events in various locations across the district. These events provide residents with an opportunity to discuss their own health and wellbeing and be signposted to a wide array of local services. At a number of events, residents have been offered free Body MOT's which includes things like a blood pressure check.
- ⇒ Local companies, such as Bakkavor, have also engaged in our Wellness at Work programmes and the Council and Active4today colleagues provided 30 body MOT's and health signposting to attendees. Body MOT events have also been undertaken in community events, schools and residential establishments for the elderly. Two of these events included 22 MOT's at Baufields House and 24 at Barnby Road School.
- ⇒ Crop Drop restarted for the second year supporting all food clubs and food banks across the district providing free fresh produce to families. This scheme not only provides families and residents access to fresh produce, it also gives the allotment holders and growers an improved sense of wellbeing by donating and volunteering in their local community. Crop drop shares quality locally grown produce which reduces the district's carbon footprint whilst ensuring local families have access to fresh produce. Menus have also been provided for the less common vegetables to encourage people to experiment with new tastes and healthy options.
- ⇒ The Council's Health and Improvement team has increased its capacity and therefore a number of paused

How are we performing against our objective to...

## Improve the health and wellbeing of local residents



public health schemes are now restarting across the district including Breast Feeding Friendly and Health Option Takeaway (HOT). Southwell will be the focus for the HOT (Healthy Options Takeaway) when Public Health re-launch the scheme in the new year alongside the Breast Feeding Friendly Award. The Breast Feeding Friendly Award has re-launched post covid with the team updating the database of registered organisations. The initial focus for the roll out of the scheme will start with Edwinstowe and Newark to encourage new organisations to join the scheme. Following a recent social media campaign, the Council were approached by the 'CIC Support ME' who wishes to establish a presence in the district and to provide further support to communities with breast feeding and family activities. We will continue to work with 'CIC Support ME' to help them develop their presence and promote their service offering.

- ⇒ We have taken on the interim responsibility for 3 Food Clubs, undertaking the administration and volunteer management support with the key volunteers who will take on the clubs independently by the end of this financial year. The Council has provided finances for indemnity insurance and banking system administration which provides each food club with support on their journey to becoming independent.
- ⇒ A return visit to Southwell market for 'meat free Mondays' was requested and has been delivered in this quarter. A highly successful Saturday morning saw the Health and Improvement team supplying food and distributing menus to the public to encourage them to cook healthy meat-free meals. Following the event and reaffirming the success, a further return visit has now been requested.
- ⇒ To help support low-income residents who also suffer with a long-term health condition made worse by living in a cold home, the Energy and Home Support team has reviewed and extended the eligibility criteria for the 'Warm Homes on Prescription' service to ensure more households can benefit from home energy efficiency improvement measures this winter.
- ⇒ The Council continues to work collaboratively with the YMCA to develop the facilities and programme of activities available at the site. The café has now opened which will service the customer and user base. The Council has approved a capital contribution towards the installation of new covered stands and seating on the stadium pitch. This will enhance the facilities and provide additional spectator provision in order to host larger sporting and leisure events. New externally funded programmes are commencing with support from the Community Development team around the inclusion agenda and the progression of a research study about developmental assets. This programme will help inform what services and support can be made available to assist with the positive development of young people in the local community.
- ⇒ Work has started as planned on the refurbishment of the Bilsthorpe Maid Marian Way play park with the new pathways being created. The project, managed by Groundwork Nottingham, is expected to take approximately 8 weeks to complete and is currently on track for a successful delivery. All material from the site is being re-used and/or re-purposed, for example soil is being reused to create raised beds, in accordance with the Parish Council's desire for the project to be as environmentally friendly as possible.

How are we performing against our objective to...

## Improve the health and wellbeing of local residents



### Spotlight benchmarking

10% of resident adults over the age of 18 smoke compared with 11.5% in the East Midlands (2020)



Measuring  
Success



	Year to Date Quarter 2 20/21	Year to Date Quarter 2 21/22	Year to Date Quarter 2 22/23	Year to Date Target 22/23
Number of user visits - Active 4 Today (All)	New for Q3 21/22	New for Q3 21/22	492,064	450,000
Live Leisure Centre membership base (All)	New for Q3 21/22	New for Q3 21/22	11,024	11,500
Number of events held in NSDC parks	New for Q3 21/22	New for Q3 21/22	108	65
Number of children on environmental education visits to NSDC parks	New for Q3 21/22	New for Q3 21/22	405	400

### Exploring our performance...

The number of Active4Today user visits is above target by 42,064. This cannot be benchmarked to the previous year as this is a new performance indicator that also now includes visits to Southwell Leisure Centre. However, confidence in indoor leisure activities continues to improve post-Covid and user numbers are starting to increase and move towards the pre-pandemic levels previously reported.

The number of memberships is slightly below target by 4.14% but remains an amber indicator. This is due to slow recovery of the membership base with post-pandemic impacts on the leisure sector and the cost of living challenges adverse impact on membership numbers. We will continue to monitor the crisis and how this is likely to impact on the delivery of our leisure centres.



# Our Customers

In this section of the report we look at a few key measures of customer interaction to monitor how we interact with our customers, and we look at what our customers are telling us about the services they receive. We analyse these comments and show how we are learning from customer feedback.

	Year to Date Quarter 2 20/21	Year to Date Quarter 2 21/22	Year to Date Quarter 2 22/23	Year to Date Target 22/23
Website Sessions (total number of views)	257,598	209,403	404,920	200,000
Engagement rate with posts issued (NSDC Facebook and Twitter combined)	New for Q1 21/22	635,100	330,289	500,000
Number of digital web form transactions	New for Q1 21/22	No data Received	12,882	Trend
Telephony - average length of time to answer call (seconds)	New for Q4 20/21	125.0	142.0	60.0
Responsive Repairs - telephony - average length of time to answer call (seconds)	New for Q1 22/23	New for Q1 22/23	4.1	60.0
% invoices paid within 30 days - whole Council	N/A	96.6%	98.3%	98.5%
% effective response to careline calls within 180 seconds (industry standard)	98.5%	98.0%	99.4%	99.0%
% business rate collection	No Data Received	51.5%	57.7%	49.1%
% council tax collection	43.2%	52.5%	52.4%	48.7%
Average number of days to process new council tax support applications	New for Q3 20/21	19.2	19.6	18.0
Average number of days to process council tax support change in circumstances	New for Q3 20/21	4.6	7.7	7.0
Average number of working days to process housing benefit change in circumstances	7.2	7.4	5.0	6.0
Average number of working days to process new housing benefit claims	New for Q3 20/21	18.0	18.3	17.0

## Exploring our performance...

The engagement rate with posts issued on NSDC Facebook and Twitter combined indicator is below target by 169,711. The target for this indicator was based on actuals from years affected by Covid where interactions with our posts were high. Engagement rates vary significantly depending on what information we promote. Over quarter 3 engagement rates will be monitored and all opportunities maximised to see whether the target is still realistic and achievable. The total number of views on our website remains in a strong position with almost double the target. We have been actively seeking to direct residents to our website for information via a range of digital channels such as boosted Facebook posts and the e-newsletter. It is also possible that the cost of living challenges are having an impact as residents are turning to our website for information. Consistently, the 'homes available', 'housing support' and 'Council tax support' pages are appearing in the top ten most visited every week.

The average length of time to answer a call in quarter 2 was 142 seconds, this is 17 seconds higher than the same period of last year. However, this quarter (Q2 22/23) saw an increase of 4,468 calls when compared with the same quarter in 21/22. The number of calls received was impacted by ongoing queries relating to the energy rebate grant, Household Support Fund and the first council tax recovery run of the financial year.



# Customer Feedback

## Customer Feedback

Over quarter two we received 39 compliments, 11 suggestions and 121 complaints.

### Compliments

39 compliments were received this quarter. The teams attracting the highest volume of praise included;

- Housing and estate management with 7 compliments and themes around improvements to communal areas, caring behaviour from staff and general support provided.
- Housing maintenance and asset management with 13 compliments with similar themes to the above but also included responsive and quality works.
- Waste and environmental services with 4 compliments, two for prompt action following missed bins, one for polite and helpful behaviour from staff and one for the responsiveness of clearing a fly tip.

### Complaints

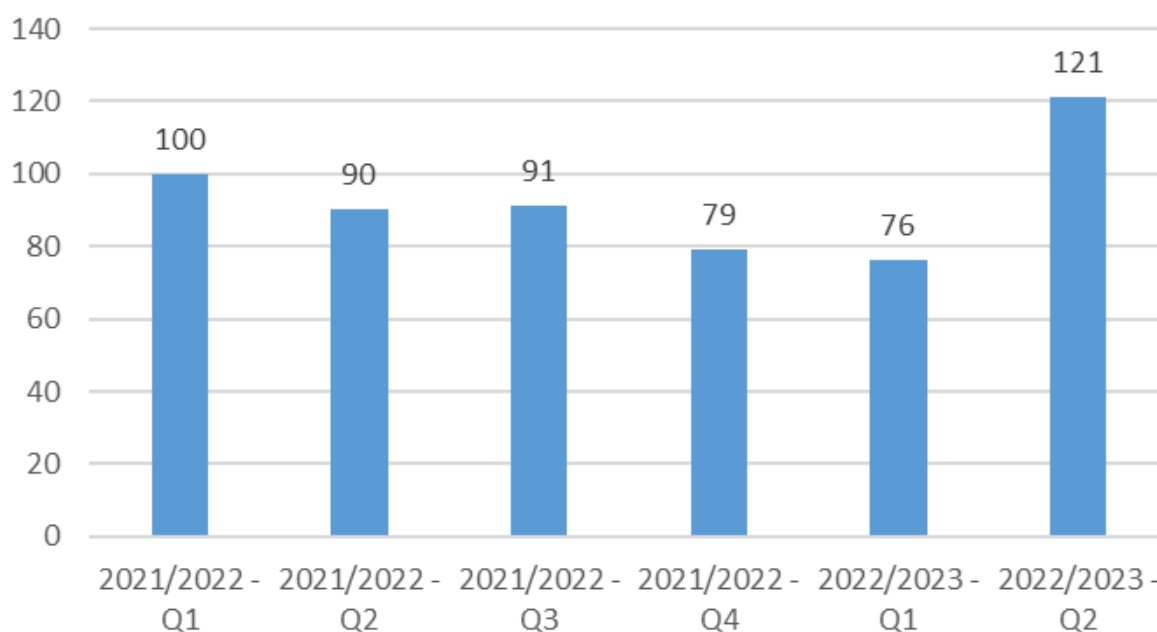
In quarter two of last year, 90 complaints were raised, this has increased to 121 for this quarters performance. The services receiving the most complaints were the most front facing, this is a usual pattern and is consistent with previous quarters. The most complaints were about waste and transport, housing maintenance and asset management, housing and estate management and council tax.

Council tax received 17 complaints this quarter which is 5 complaints higher than the same period of the previous year. Although these complaints have seen an increase, quarters 1 and 2 combined has seen a reduction of 10 complaints when compared to the same periods of the previous year. The topic themes of these complaints included; energy rebate, delays in processing, outstanding debt, decisions made and communication issues.

Public protection received 9 complaints in quarter 2, increasing by 5 from the previous quarter. The topic themes of these complaints included; our contractor WISE, a local music event and how we dealt with issues raised.

Housing maintenance received 25 complaints, rising by 12 since the previous quarter. Themes included; quality of work both internally and through contractors, responsiveness to deal with issues and communication with the customer.

## Total Complaints by Quarter



# Customer Feedback

Analysis of this customer feedback also enabled us to identify and tackle a specific issue

## Area of improvement...

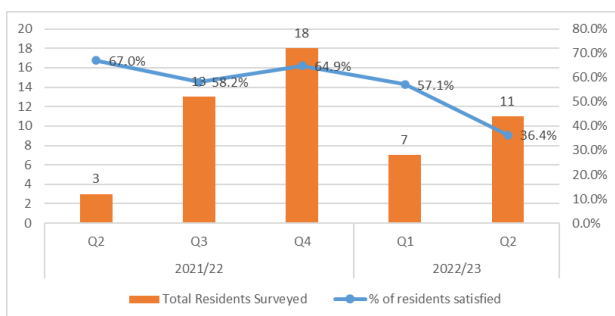
Complaints were raised for missed bin collections

## What we have done to improve...

Due the nature of routes and new developments being built, missed bins have to be managed in a reactive manner. Where these do occur and we see reoccurring issues, supervisors remind colleagues about the route instructions and follow up after the next planned collection to ensure these are completed.

## Tenant Satisfaction

Every quarter tenant satisfaction surveys are undertaken by Viewpoint to understand how we are performing for our tenants. Surveys are carried out on a random sample of tenants who received one of our key services. In quarter two, 853 surveys were conducted over 12 service areas, and the average service satisfaction across the areas was 91% (aka 91% satisfied or very satisfied). Services receiving higher than average satisfaction include Careline, right to buy, major and minor adaptations and lettings. The areas for improvement were identified as;

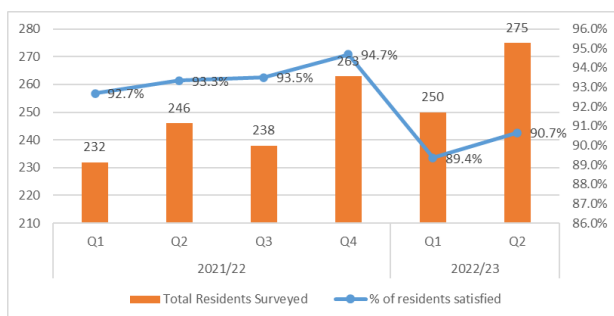
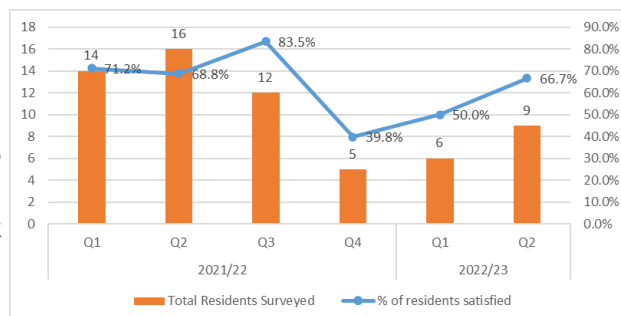


## Complaint handling

**36% of tenants surveyed were satisfied or very satisfied.** This was the lowest scoring quarter over the last year. Although the amount of individuals surveyed was low. This equated to 7 out of the 11 people being dissatisfied. 3 tenants were dissatisfied with outcomes, 2 tenants did not feel we listened to their views and 2 were dissatisfied with the lack of progress and delays.

## Antisocial Behaviour

**66.7% of tenants surveyed were satisfied or very satisfied.** This marks a drop of 2.1% when compared to the same period of the previous year but 7 more individuals were surveyed. In terms of those dissatisfied, 2 tenants were dissatisfied due to a lack of progress and 1 because of a lack of communication.



## Repairs to tenants homes

**90.7% of tenants surveyed were satisfied or very satisfied.**

Quarter 2 marked an increase of 1.3% when compared to the previous quarter. The main issues raised mirrored previous quarters, these were; lack of proactive communication with the tenant, slow service, quality of work and general dissatisfaction with the specifics of an enquiry.

## Customer Services

**86.4% of tenants surveyed were satisfied or very satisfied.**

This marks a drop of 4.1% when compared to the previous quarter. The main issues raised were; delay to/not receiving a call back, feelings that we aren't listening to their views, attitude of staff and ability to talk to the right people at the first contact.



# Our Workforce

A positive and motivated workforce is more likely to be high performing. To understand how our staff are performing and how we are supporting them we look at key indicators and recent activity.

## Staff Update

This quarter also saw us undertake an Internal Customer Satisfaction Survey which allowed colleagues to feedback on their experience with internal/support services. The results of these surveys will now be used to develop action plans that will help drive further improvements to both internal service delivery and overall satisfaction levels. We regularly seek the views of our residents about the quality and performance of the front-line services that we provide and therefore we also recognise the importance of providing this opportunity for 'support services' to hear from their customers and improve their services based on this feedback.

## Workforce Performance

Staff turnover in quarter 2 remains in a positive position and below target by 2%, but has increased by 1% when compared to the same period of the previous year. The main reasons being resignation for unspecified reasons, personal reasons, better pay and career progression. With the current cost of living challenges, there is the potential that we could continue to see staff move position for better pay but this is likely to be balanced with the stability in the public sector.

The outturn for sickness absence in quarter 2 is 3.5 days against a target of 3 days. This is a comparable level of performance when compared to quarter 2 of the previous year. Sickness absence has increased during this quarter with 1,059.5 days lost to sickness absence, Covid-19 accounted for 142 days of this total. If Covid-19 were not present this would result in a 3.24 day average, within tolerance, making this an amber indicator.

	Year to Date Quarter 2 20/21	Year to Date Quarter 2 21/22	Year to Date Quarter 2 22/23	Year to Date Target 22/23
% of staff turnover	2.5%	4.0%	5.0%	7.0%
Average number of sick days per employee (FTE) per year lost through sickness absence	2.2	3.5	3.5	3.0

**Ombudsman Annual Update (Local Government and Social Care & Housing)**

**1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 Each year the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) produces an Annual Review Letter for local authorities detailing the number, type and decisions made relating to each authority. The annual review letter for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 for Newark & Sherwood District Council is attached as appendix 3.
- 1.2 The Housing Ombudsman also produces an Annual Complaints Review. The most recent one was issued in 2022, covering the 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. It is attached as appendix 4.
- 1.3 During this period, the Housing Ombudsman did not make any determinations on any complaints for the Council. Due to this, the contents of this report highlight the LGSCO decisions only.

**2.0 LGSCO Annual Review April 2020 to March 2021**

- 2.1 The statistics provided with the Annual Review Letter show that for this period, the LGSCO received ten complaints relating to services provided by this Council and made decisions on twelve complaints. This compares to eight decisions made in 2020-21 and eleven received.
- 2.2 The received and decided figures are different due to a number of reasons, including:
- The complaint may have been received during 2020-21 but a decision will be made in 2022–23 (or later) and therefore this figure will show in a later year's report.
  - The complaint did not relate to a service by this Council e.g., highways and transport.
  - The complaint was classed as premature.
- 2.3 Likewise the received figures the LGSCO provide never align with the figures the Council hold. This is because the LGSCO numbers include enquires from people who the LGSCO signpost back to the Council but never contact us. These are captured in the “closed after initial enquiries” figures. There is no way of identifying who these customers are. The table below details the categories of the complaints received and decisions made in each of the Ombudsman categories.

<b>Ombudsman Category</b>	<b>Received by the LGSCO</b>	<b>Decided by the LGSCO</b>
Benefits and Tax	2	3
Planning and Development	5	2
Housing	1	1
Other	1	5
Highways and Transport	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>

- 2.4 The table below shows the outcome of each decision.

<b>Ombudsman Category</b>	<b>Closed after initial enquiries</b>	<b>Advice given</b>	<b>Referred for local resolution</b>	<b>Total</b>
Benefits and Tax	2		1	3
Planning and Development	3		1	4
Housing	1	1		2
Other		1	1	2
Highways and Transport	1			1
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>

- 2.5 None of the complaints decided were upheld the by LGSCO. Details regarding the nature of each complaint are detailed in the table below. The details are anonymised and brief in content in order not to be able to identify the complaint or the associated property. The hyper-link on the reference is to the LGSCO decision.

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Complaints				
Ombudsman Reference	Category	Summary of Initial Complaint	Decision	Decision Reason
<a href="#">20 012 836</a>	Housing	Incorrect service of improvement notices by the Council to a private landlord.	Closed after initial enquiries	The Ombudsman did not exercise his discretion to investigate this complaint. This is because it concerns matters which Mr X was aware of outside the normal 12-month period for receiving complaints and there were no good reasons why it should investigate outside this period.
<a href="#">20 013 270</a>	Highways and transport	Handling of matters related to a change of postcode to a property	Closed after initial enquiries	Late complaint and therefore outside of jurisdiction.
<a href="#">20 013 800</a>	Benefits and tax	Change to the amount housing benefit and council tax support received.	Closed after initial enquiries	Ombudsman will not investigate as complaint can appeal the decision elsewhere.
<a href="#">21 001 504</a>	Planning	The pre-application planning advice given and the handling of the planning application	Closed after initial enquiries	No evidence of fault in the pre-application advice given and if Mrs X wants to dispute the Councils decisions to would be reasonable for her to appeal.
<a href="#">21 003 848</a>	Planning	Granting of planning permission without taken account of the overlooking and loss of privacy that the new development will have on their property.	Closed after initial enquiries	Not enough evidence of fault in planning process to warrant an investigation.

<a href="#">21 004 655</a>	Planning		Closed after initial enquiries	The complaint does not meet the tests in the Ombudsman's Assessment Code. Nothing to suggest fault affected the Council's decision
<a href="#">21 014 051</a>	Benefits and tax	Reduction in the amount of housing benefit received following a change in financial circumstances.	Closed after initial enquiries	Ombudsman will not investigate as complaint can appeal the decision elsewhere.
21015612	Other	This enquiry was not received by the Council and the Ombudsman did not publish its decision.	Advice given	Signposted elsewhere
21011105	Benefits and tax	This enquiry was not received by the Council and the Ombudsman did not publish its decision.	Referred back for local resolution	Premature decision – Ombudsman provided advice
21012145	Planning	This enquiry was not received by the Council and the Ombudsman did not publish its decision.	Referred back for local resolution	Premature decision – Ombudsman provided advice
21012209	Housing	This enquiry was not received by the Council and the Ombudsman did not publish its decision.	Advice given	Signposted elsewhere
21012915	Planning	This enquiry was not received by the Council and the Ombudsman did not publish its decision.	Referred back for local resolution	Premature decision – Ombudsman provided advice

# Local Government & Social Care OMBUDSMAN

20 July 2022

*By email*

Mr Robinson  
Chief Executive  
Newark & Sherwood District Council

Dear Mr Robinson

## **Annual Review letter 2022**

I write to you with your annual summary of complaint statistics from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman for the year ending 31 March 2022. The information offers valuable insight about your organisation's approach to complaints. As such, I have sought to share this letter with the Leader of your Council and Chair of the appropriate Scrutiny Committee, to encourage effective ownership and oversight of complaint outcomes, which offer such valuable opportunities to learn and improve.

### **Complaint statistics**

Our statistics focus on three key areas that help to assess your organisation's commitment to putting things right when they go wrong:

**Complaints upheld** - We uphold complaints when we find fault in an organisation's actions, including where the organisation accepted fault before we investigated. We include the total number of investigations completed to provide important context for the statistic.

**Compliance with recommendations** - We recommend ways for organisations to put things right when faults have caused injustice and monitor their compliance with our recommendations. Failure to comply is rare and a compliance rate below 100% is a cause for concern.

**Satisfactory remedy provided by the authority** - In these cases, the organisation upheld the complaint and we agreed with how it offered to put things right. We encourage the early resolution of complaints and credit organisations that accept fault and find appropriate ways to put things right.

Finally, we compare the three key annual statistics for your organisation with similar authorities to provide an average marker of performance. We do this for County Councils, District Councils, Metropolitan Boroughs, Unitary Councils, and London Boroughs.



Your annual data, and a copy of this letter, will be uploaded to our interactive map, [Your council's performance](#), on 27 July 2022. This useful tool places all our data and information about councils in one place. You can find the detail of the decisions we have made about your Council, read the public reports we have issued, and view the service improvements your Council has agreed to make as a result of our investigations, as well as previous annual review letters.

### **Supporting complaint and service improvement**

I know your organisation, like ours, will have been through a period of adaptation as the restrictions imposed by the pandemic lifted. While some pre-pandemic practices returned, many new ways of working are here to stay. It is my continued view that complaint functions have been under-resourced in recent years, a trend only exacerbated by the challenges of the pandemic. Through the lens of this recent upheaval and adjustment, I urge you to consider how your organisation prioritises complaints, particularly in terms of capacity and visibility. Properly resourced complaint functions that are well-connected and valued by service areas, management teams and elected members are capable of providing valuable insight about an organisation's performance, detecting early warning signs of problems and offering opportunities to improve service delivery.

I want to support your organisation to harness the value of complaints and we continue to develop our programme of support. Significantly, we are working in partnership with the Housing Ombudsman Service to develop a joint complaint handling code. We are aiming to consolidate our approaches and therefore simplify guidance to enable organisations to provide an effective, quality response to each and every complaint. We will keep you informed as this work develops, and expect that, once launched, we will assess your compliance with the code during our investigations and report your performance via this letter.

An already established tool we have for supporting improvements in local complaint handling is our successful training programme. We adapted our courses during the Covid-19 pandemic to an online format and successfully delivered 122 online workshops during the year, reaching more than 1,600 people. To find out more visit [www.lgo.org.uk/training](http://www.lgo.org.uk/training).

Yours sincerely,



Michael King  
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman  
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

Newark & Sherwood District Council  
For the period ending: 31/03/22

Complaints upheld
The Ombudsman carried out no detailed investigations during this period
Compliance with Ombudsman recommendations
No recommendations were due for compliance in this period
Satisfactory remedy provided by the organisation
The Ombudsman did not uphold any detailed investigations during this period

# **Housing**

Ombudsman Service

## **Annual Complaints Review**

**2020-21**

**March 2022**

## Contents

Ombudsman's foreword .....	2
Key issues identified.....	4
Executive summary .....	5
Landlord performance analysis 2020-21 .....	6
Individual landlord reports .....	6
National analysis .....	6
Analysis by complaint category .....	9
Property condition.....	9
Complaint handling .....	10
Tenant behaviour .....	12
Complaint Handling Failure Orders.....	13
Annual Resident Panel Survey .....	14
Accessibility.....	14
Awareness .....	15
Positive complaints culture .....	17
Annual Landlord Survey .....	20

## Ombudsman's foreword

Welcome to our first annual review of complaints.

Complaints provide governing bodies with valuable insight into the quality of their landlord's homes, performance of their services and their relationship with residents. Our Complaint Handling Code calls for a positive complaint handling culture to ensure fairness and that learning is identified when things go wrong, to improve landlord services for the benefit of all residents.

Creating and embedding a culture that values complaints and gives them the appropriate level of priority requires strong leadership and management. While our analysis and the accompanying landlord reports will be of particular interest to complaint handlers, I strongly encourage senior leaders and governing bodies to use it to facilitate a wider discussion about their organisation's success in handling complaints and how it can develop its approach.

This review considers the period between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021. It draws together insights from:

- our annual landlord performance reports – published for the second time alongside this review;
- the Complaint Handling Failure Orders (CHFOs) we have issued in the final quarter of the year; and
- our new annual surveys of our Resident Panel and landlord members.

Our analysis identifies the strategic and operational challenges to be overcome by the sector to achieve a positive complaint handling culture. It also contains a performance comparison by different types and sizes of landlord. In publishing this body of information, drawn from our unique and independent role as an Ombudsman, we are enabling landlords and residents to examine these insights in the context of their own intelligence and experiences.

The year examined by this report was dominated by the Covid-19 pandemic, which greatly affected residents and landlords; and it was also the year in which we published our Complaint Handling Code. This Code laid the foundations for a universal approach to complaint handling at a local level by social landlords, providing a consistent approach to defining a complaint, timescales for effective handling and expectation on the number of complaint handling stages. It also set expectations for putting things right and learning from outcomes to support landlords in developing their approach to complaint handling. A year on from the Code's publication, we have strengthened it in response to comments from landlords and residents, as well as our own experience; additionally, we have also updated our guidance on CHFOs and more details about both that can be found [here](#).

Introduced alongside the Code, CHFOs, and the associated escalation procedures prior to issuing them, aim to ensure a landlord's complaint handling is compliant with the requirements of the Code. The Ombudsman operated these in shadow when the Code was first published and went live on 1 January 2021. We have published [quarterly reports](#) on all CHFOs issued by type and whether they were complied with. In future reports, we will analyse the CHFOs we issued in the full year to provide further insight into complaints handling.

The introduction of the Complaint Handling Code and CHFOs, effective from 1 January 2021, has had a significant impact in the sector and on our service. Volumes for enquiries and complaints increased by 48% during the final quarter compared to the same period in 2019-20, while demand for formal investigations rose by 56%. The impact has continued unabated throughout

2021-22 with demand reaching unprecedented levels: an increase of 104% for all enquiries and complaints at the latest count; and an increase of 88% for formal investigations.

We believe the adoption of the universal definition of a complaint is a significant driver for this increase, demonstrating the latent demand for complaints processes. We also believe the required timescales have been a factor in bringing complaints through more quickly than had previously been the case.

While we expect the rate of growth in demand to stabilise over the coming year, we do expect growth to continue because of increased resident awareness, combined with the strategic challenges facing the sector, such as net zero and building safety; as well as the change to proactive consumer regulation. Our new corporate plan sets out the work we will do to help landlords improve complaints handling, including targeted engagement where needed and the creation of a Centre for Learning to increase the number of tools available to help all landlords develop their services.

**Richard Blakeway**  
**Housing Ombudsman**

## Key issues identified

We have identified the following key issues for all governing bodies.

Strategic issues:

- *Cultural*: not all landlords have adopted a positive complaint handling culture and see complaints as a vital window into the performance of their services. The unprecedented increase in demand for our service since the Code was launched indicates that complaints are now more likely to be recognised and dealt with on a timely basis, but there remain cultural challenges around putting things right and learning from outcomes.
- *Access*: the perceived ease of use and ease of access to landlords' complaints processes was rated as acceptable or above by over two thirds of survey respondents, but there were low levels of trust that complaining would make a difference and residents were clear that more needed to be done to raise awareness of both the landlord's procedure and the Ombudsman.
- *Procedural*: every complaint upheld represents at some level a procedural failing whether that is in the systems, policies, procedures or training. Uphold rates are particularly stark in relation to complaint handling and repairs which between them account for almost half of all complaints received. It is critical that the underpinning procedural aspects of service provision are kept under constant review to ensure they remain fit for purpose and the learning from complaints is acted on.

Operational issues:

- *Inadequate records*: a common finding across the spectrum of complaint categories is poor record keeping, particularly incomplete or missing repairs logs. This severely hampers landlords' ability to deal with individual issues effectively and efficiently and means subsequent complaints cannot be satisfactorily answered. For complaints handling, inadequate records will mean organisational oversight of complaint themes and trends will be limited and unreliable. This area is of particular concern given the proposed Access to Information Scheme for housing associations.
- *Missed or unproductive appointments*: too often, residents wait at home for an appointment to fix an issue only for the operative to not arrive or, if they do, lack the skills or equipment to deal with the issue reported.
- *Poor communication and lack of follow up*: we find consistently ineffective communication in our investigations, leading in a failure to manage residents' expectations, both in advising what will happen next and in any follow up to check that what was agreed has happened to the resident's satisfaction.



## Executive summary

### Landlord performance insight

In 2020-21, we investigated 2,185 complaints and made 3,872 findings. In 49% of cases, we found full or partial maladministration and, when individual findings are considered, 45% were upheld. These rates are high, and our analysis strongly suggests both complaints handling and service delivery need to be improved across our membership.

Responsive repairs is consistently the highest category of complaint we receive and represented 30% of the total in 2020-21 and was upheld at a rate of 45%<sup>1</sup>. If the number of reasonable redress findings are included, repairs services did not get things right first time in over 66% of the cases we handled. That is costly for landlords and frustrating for residents.

Our uphold rate of 66% for complaints handling sends a stark message that this is inadequate across our membership. Our Complaint Handling Code, the impact of which will be seen in the 2021-22 performance statistics, provides a universal set of expectations against which to determine complaints about complaint handling.

Complaints about the handling of tenant behaviour reports represented 12% of all complaints received in 2020-21, of which 34% were upheld. This suggests there might be a gap between the expectations residents have when reporting the behaviour to what is stated in the landlord's policy. Noticeably, larger landlords appear to have an uphold rate that is more in line our overall uphold rate – suggesting that residents of large landlords may be more informed about the likely outcome of a report of tenant behaviour and have their expectations managed and therefore only complain when there is basis for complaining that the report has been mishandled.

The reasons for upholding complaints are common – ineffective communication with residents, delayed and unsuccessful activities, and poor record keeping.

We issued 10 CHFOs in the final quarter of 2020-21 when they went live. They all related to failures to progress complaints through a landlord's process. Two of the CHFOs were not complied with and those complaints were taken into formal investigation at the Ombudsman's discretion.

### Landlord and Resident Panel survey insights

Our survey showed overwhelmingly that landlords found the Complaint Handling code easy to understand and apply. While just over half of the resident panel members surveyed agreed that complaints processes were effective and accessible, 70% felt there was more landlords could do to improve their complaint handling. Over 70% felt landlords could do more to raise awareness and accessibility, and 77% felt landlords could do more to learn from the complaints they received.

An effective process is not only accessible but also ensures landlords learn from the issues that arise in individual complaints to improve its services for the benefit all residents. To build trust and confidence with residents, we also encourage landlords to demonstrate this learning openly and set out any actions they have taken as a result.

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<sup>1</sup> An individual case can concern several issues, reflected in our findings in each case. The figures for our upheld rate are presented based on the proportion of findings rather than cases. The analysis excludes findings outside jurisdiction or where an aspect of a complaint is withdrawn.

## Landlord performance analysis 2020-21

### Individual landlord reports

Alongside this report, we have published individual performance reports for those landlords who received five or more determinations during 2020-21. We have not created individual reports for landlords with fewer than five determinations as meaningful performance interpretation is not possible – their figures are published in a table on our [website](#). If a landlord does not have an individual report or does not present in that table, we did not make a formal determination for them in 2020-21.

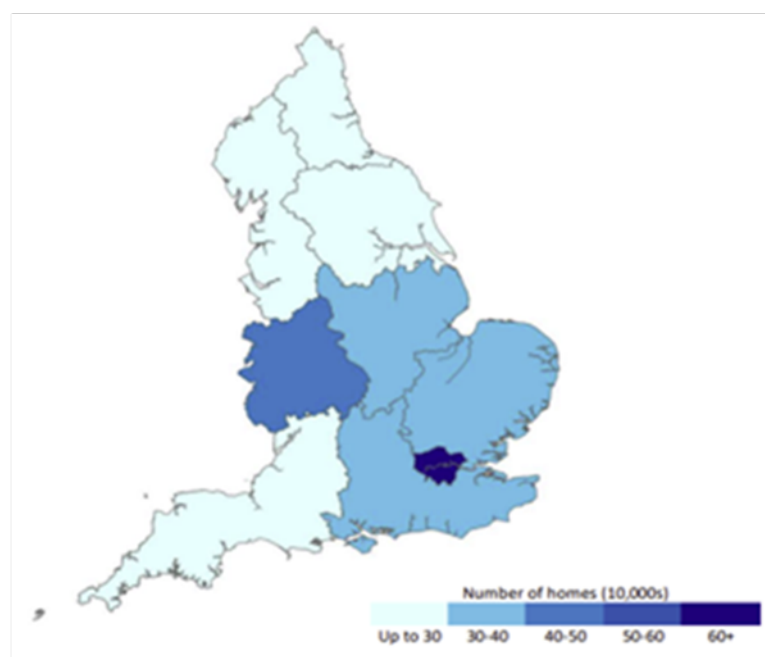
We have used housing association and local authority member data to analyse performance at a national level and draw out comparisons by both size and type. Voluntary members, as well as other types of mandatory members, such as Almhouses, have been excluded as they represented just 0.05% of all findings.

During our verification process for the individual performance reports, it became clear that there was a misunderstanding by landlords that a finding of ‘service failure’ does not represent maladministration. We will make it clearer in our reports that a ‘service failure’ finding is one of maladministration. Further guidance on our decisions can be found on our [website](#).

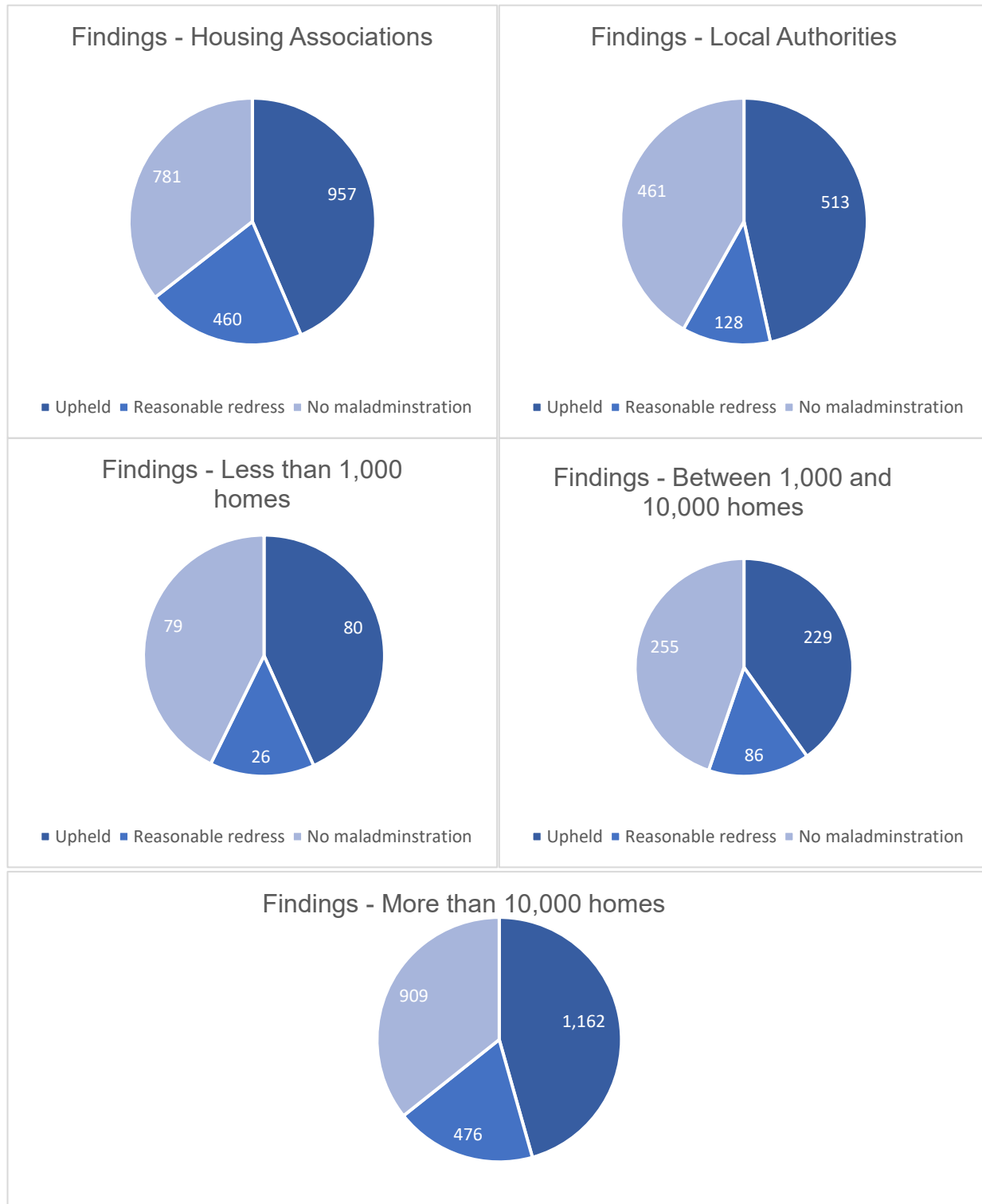
### National analysis

We determined 2,185 cases and made 3,872 findings for 320 landlords. The most cases determined for any one landlord was 122. There is an expected correlation between the number of complaints and landlord size – 76 (81%) of the landlords with five or more determinations are large landlords, managing or owning 10,000 homes or more. None of the landlords with five or more determinations owned fewer than 3,000 homes. As with last year, the number of determinations per 10,000 social homes was the highest in the London region.

#### Rate of complaints brought to us by tenants and formally determined by the ombudsman per 10,000 social rent homes for each region

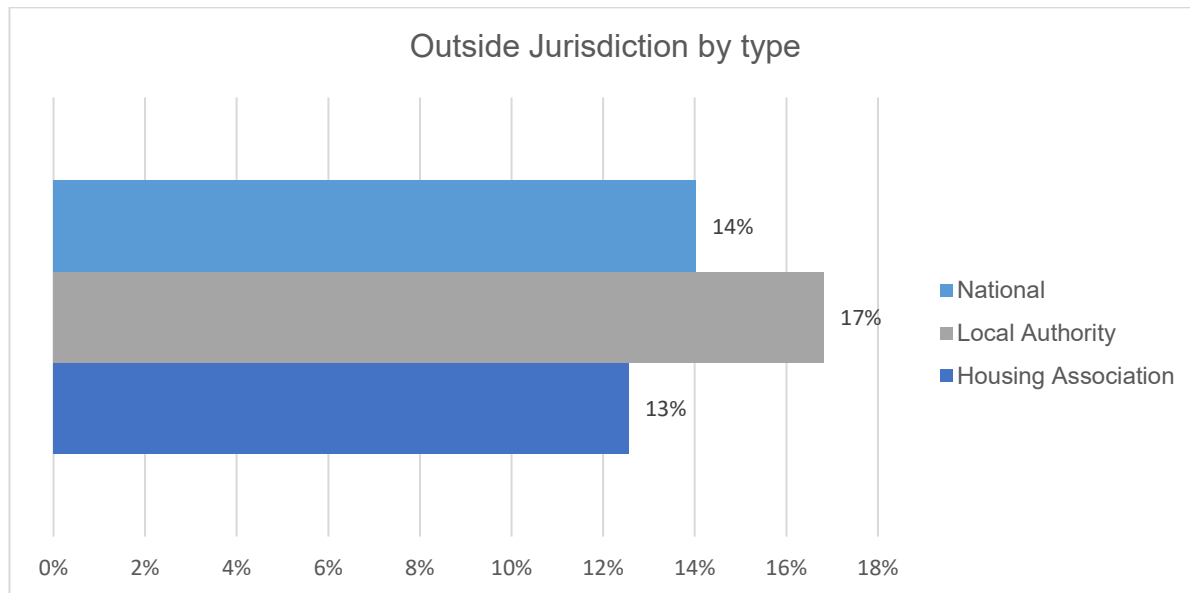


The Ombudsman upheld 49% of the cases investigated and 45% of the findings<sup>2</sup>. This rate is high and strongly suggests both complaints handling and service delivery needs to be improved across our membership; there is little difference in performance when analysed by landlord type or size. If, however, reasonable redress is taken into consideration – where something in the service provision went wrong but was recognised and subsequently put right on the complaints process – the failure to get things right first time is higher in housing associations (64%) compared to local authorities (58%) and large landlords (83%) compared to medium (55%) and small (57%) landlords.

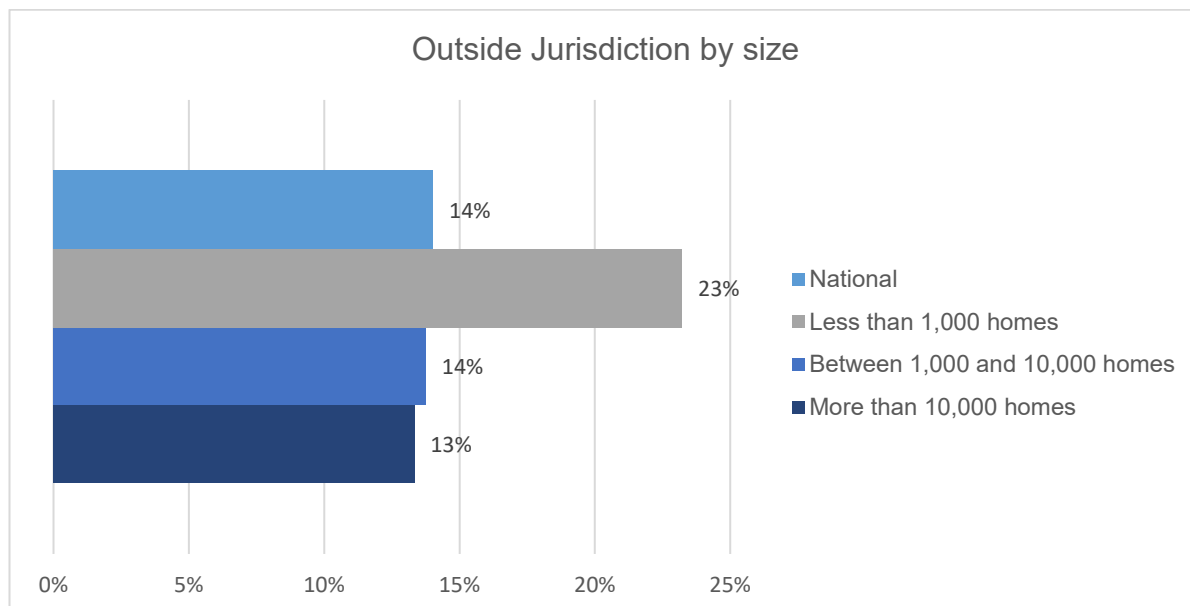


<sup>2</sup> a finding of service failure, maladministration, severe maladministration or settlement

We found a higher proportion of local authority complaints to be outside our jurisdiction to consider (17%) compared to those from housing associations (12%). Our remit for local authorities covers housing management only and the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) covers other areas such as allocations and homelessness. We work closely with the LGSCO at both an executive and operational level, signposting to each other as appropriate. Over the coming corporate planning period, we will explore a 'no wrong door' to improve the customer experience.



The rate of outside jurisdiction complaints was also significantly higher in small landlords with 23% of the complaints brought being declared as outside our jurisdiction to consider. This may be a lack of awareness of what can be considered under our Scheme by smaller landlords who may have less contact with the complaints process.



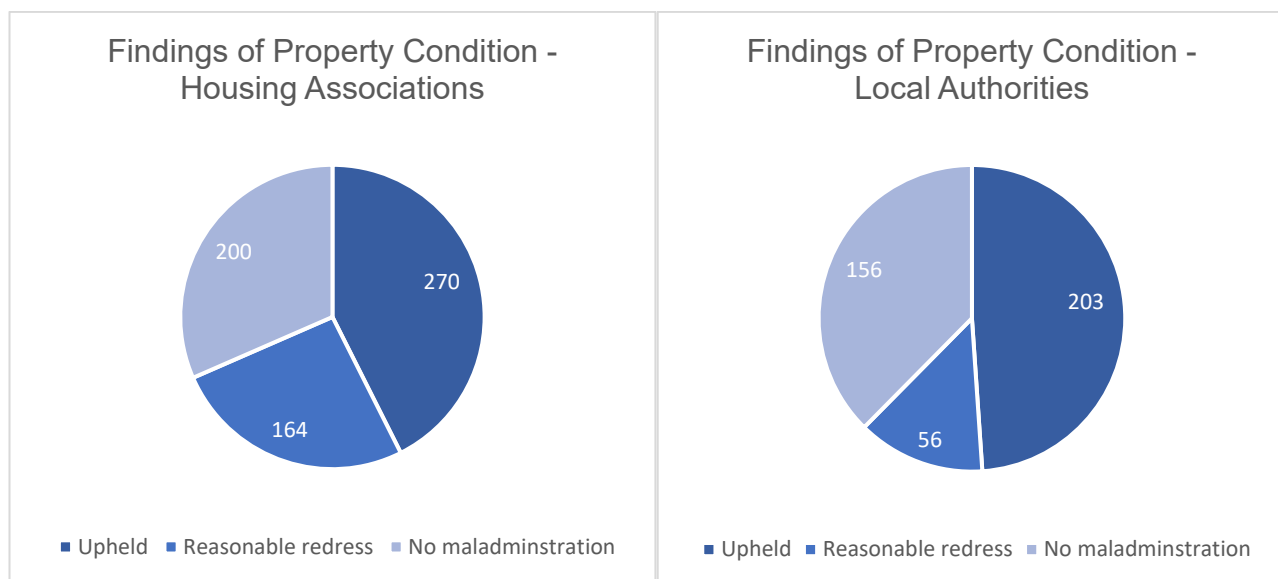
## Analysis by complaint category

The top three categories of complaint represented just over 60% of all complaints determined. We have revised our categories for 2021-22 and anticipate being able to provide more detailed analysis in future reports.

### Property condition

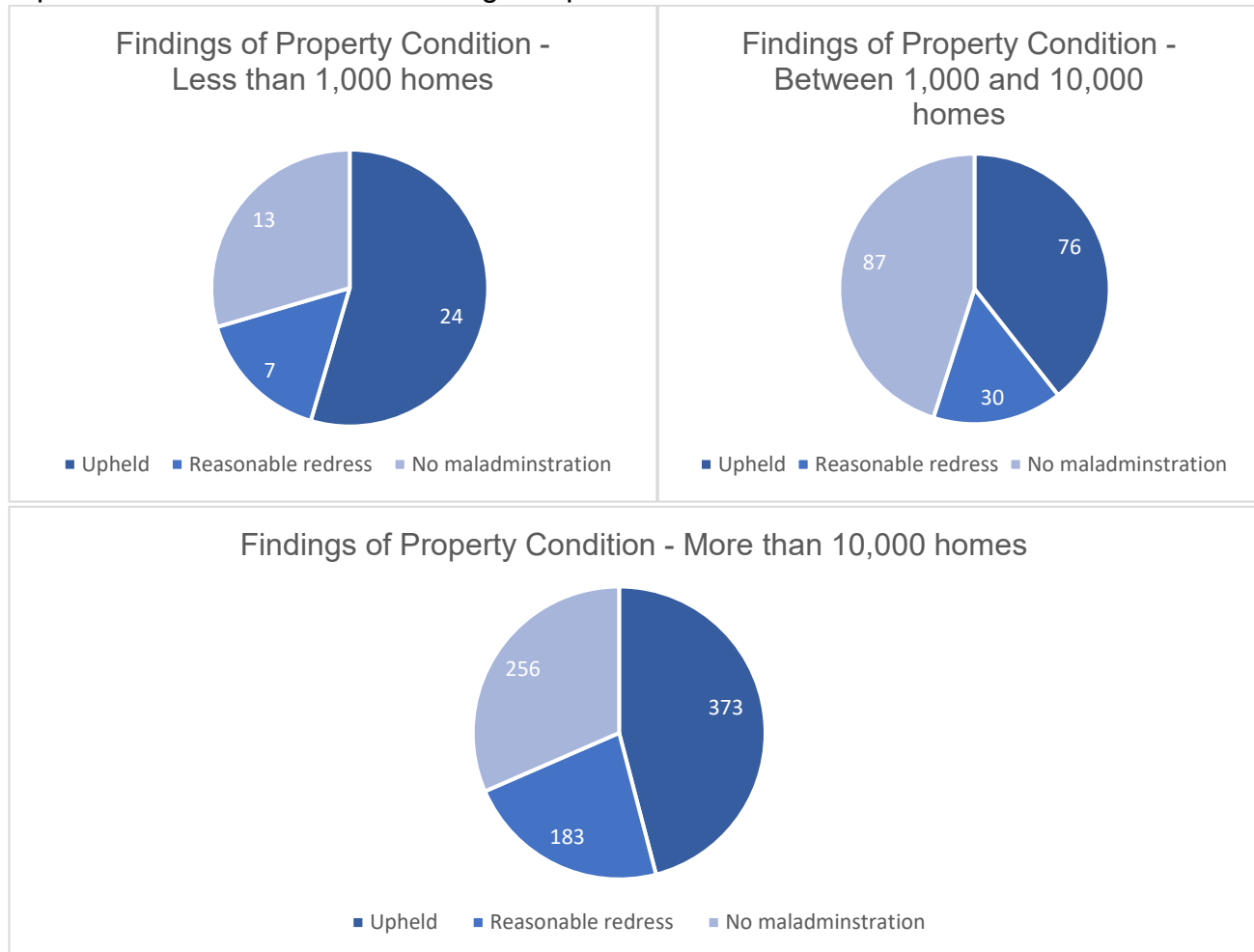
Complaints about property condition, including the responsive repairs to rectify the situation, are consistently the highest category of complaint we receive and represented 30% of the total in 2020-21. Uphold rates are consistent with the national average at 45% of findings and if the number of reasonable redress findings are included, repairs services did not get it right first time in over 66% of complaints, suggesting repairs services are not as effective as they should be - increasing costs for landlords and detrimentally affecting the landlord/resident relationship. We consistently found poor record-keeping, missed or unproductive appointments, poor communication, and lack of follow up as themes within repairs complaints. Ineffective repairs and missed appointments were a significant driver for maladministration in the Ombudsman's [Spotlight report on heating and hot water complaints](#). Issue 6 of the Ombudsman's [Insight Report](#) considered lessons on record keeping. Inadequate responses to repairs were found to be a driver for maladministration for shared owners and leaseholders, when the Ombudsman examined the issue in its [Spotlight report A new lease of life](#). In October 2021, the Ombudsman's [Spotlight report on damp and mould](#) found that residents may complain because the issue had reoccurred after the landlord had previously taken action. Landlords must tackle these issues. Record-keeping should be of particular focus for housing associations given the creation of an Access to Information Scheme.

We determined more repairs complaints, and upheld them at a higher rate, from residents of local authorities than housing associations. However, it is notable that the proportion of reasonable redress findings in housing associations is double that in local authorities (26% compared to 13%). Taken together, upheld and reasonable redress findings indicate something went wrong in repairs 68% of the time in housing associations and 62% of the time in local authorities.



Medium sized landlords have the largest rate of property condition complaints – 34%, compared to 32% for large landlords and only 24% for small landlords. However, their upheld rate is the

lowest at 39% and even when factoring in their reasonable redress rate, medium landlords fail to get it right first time less frequently than large or small landlords – 55% as compared to 68% for large landlords and 70% for small landlords. It is concerning that regardless of landlord size the majority of complaints about property condition are being upheld. The significant difference between small/large and medium size landlords suggests there is important learning from complaints that could be applied to improve their services. It also indicates that residents of medium landlords are more likely to bring complaints about property condition, but that when looked into, the repairs service has sometimes performed adequately. There may be any number of drivers behind this but it is possible that communication and managing expectations of what a repairs service can deliver is driving complaints in medium sized landlords.

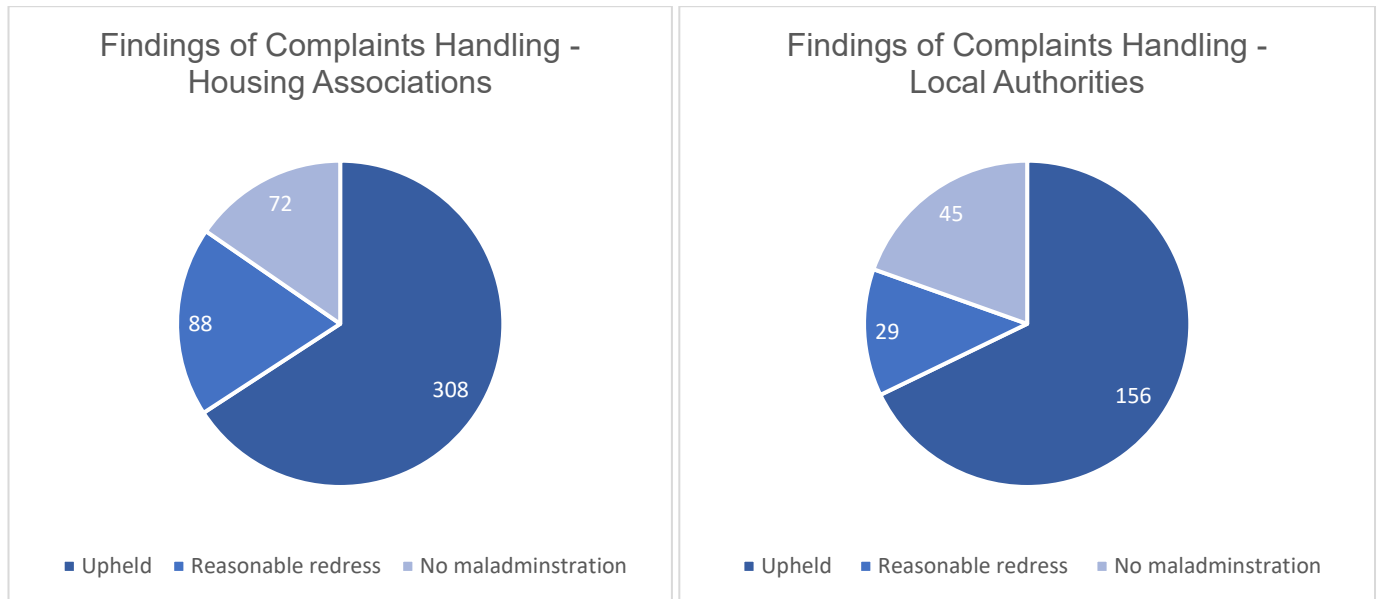


## Complaint handling

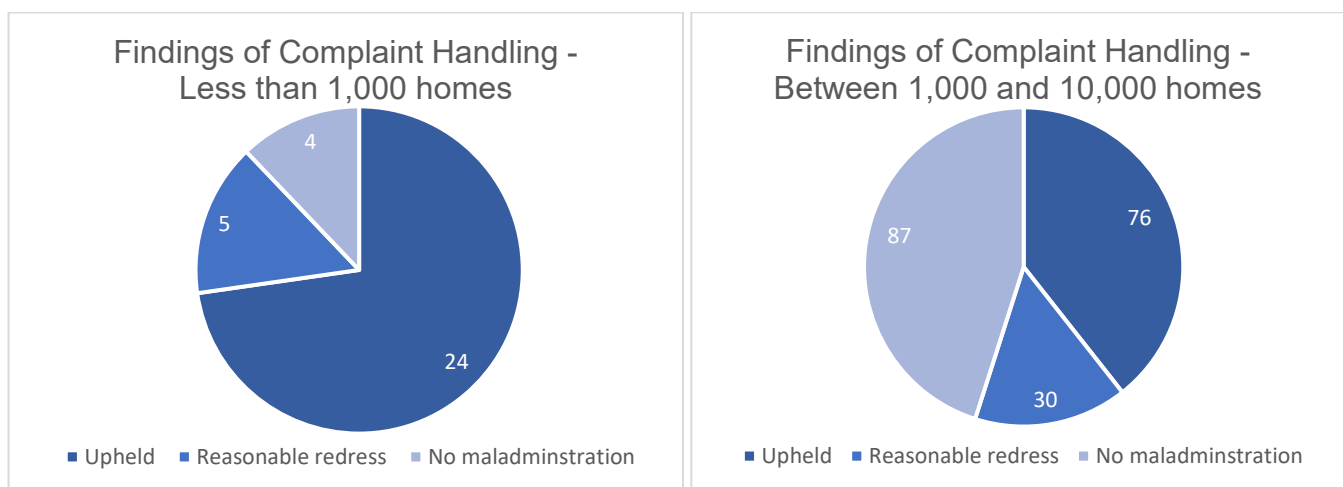
Complaints about complaint handling accounted for 19% of all complaints determined. The findings uphold rate of 66% sends a stark message that this is inadequate across our membership; poor complaint handling can considerably affect the trust residents have in their landlords to put things right. Common reasons for upholding complaints were a failure to address all aspects of the complaint, poor communication between the complaints team and other areas of the organisation, and unclear policies. In February 2021, the Housing Ombudsman published its Spotlight report on [complaints relating to heating, hot water and energy](#) where complaint handling featured significantly. Issue 8 of the Ombudsman's [Insight Report](#) set out the importance of a clear compensation policy, which allows for discretionary payments to be made based on the merits of the case. The Ombudsman published a [Spotlight report considering complaints from shared owners and leaseholders](#) in September 2020 finding maladministration in

72% of cases where complaint handling formed part of the investigation. Our Complaint Handling Code, the impact of which we should see in the 2021-22 statistics, provides a universal set of expectations against which to determine complaint handling.

The analysis by landlord type shows little difference between housing associations and local authorities, both in terms of the overall proportion of complaints and upheld rates.

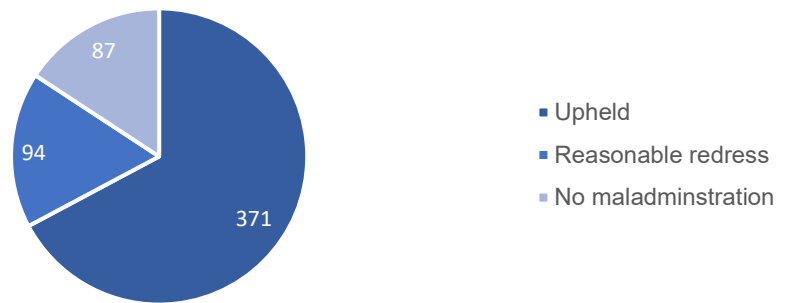


When considered by size, the proportion of complaints that are about complaint handling is relatively consistent across all sizes (18% for small, 20% for medium and 22% for large), but the rate of maladministration findings for medium sized landlords is noticeably lower at 39% compared to 73% for small landlords and 67% for large landlords. The high upheld rate amongst small/large landlords is concerning and there are significant lessons these landlords could learn from the complaints procedure to improve their services. An aspect of these complaints (noise) is something the Ombudsman is considering in a thematic report due to be published in 2022-23. As with property condition complaints, this may also indicate that medium sized landlords need to review their communication and how they manage expectations of the outcomes of making a complaint.





Findings of Complaint Handling - More than 10,000 homes

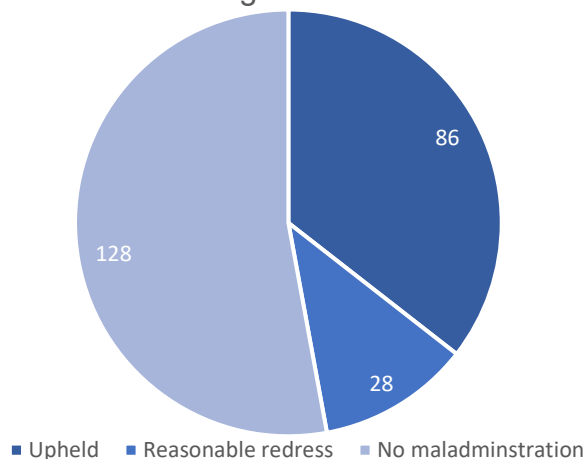


## Tenant behaviour

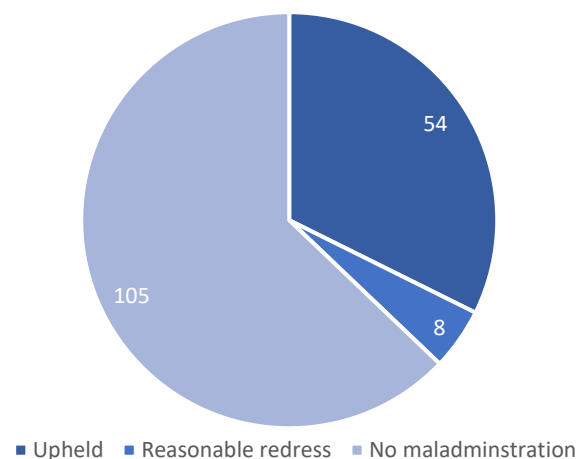
Complaints about the handling of tenant behaviour reports represented 12% of all complaints received in 2020-21, of which 34% of findings were upheld. This suggests there might be a gap between the expectations residents have when reporting the behaviour to what is stated in the landlord's policy. We have commonly recommended better risk assessment and more regular updates to residents in relation to these complaints. Issue 7 of the Ombudsman's [Insight Report](#) examined cases involving anti-social behaviour. As discussed in Issue 8 of our [Insight Report](#), landlords regularly offer mediation to residents involved in neighbour disputes which can be an effective way of resolving the issues. We intend to explore this further as part of our thematic work during 2022-23.

The proportion of these complaints received and upheld for local authorities and housing associations is broadly similar, but the rate of reasonable redress for local authorities is considerably lower – overall, local authorities are more likely to handle their tenant behaviour reports well, although, as stated previously, there is a potential issue with local authorities managing the expectations of residents about what will happen as a result of their report.

Findings of Tenant Behaviour - Housing Associations

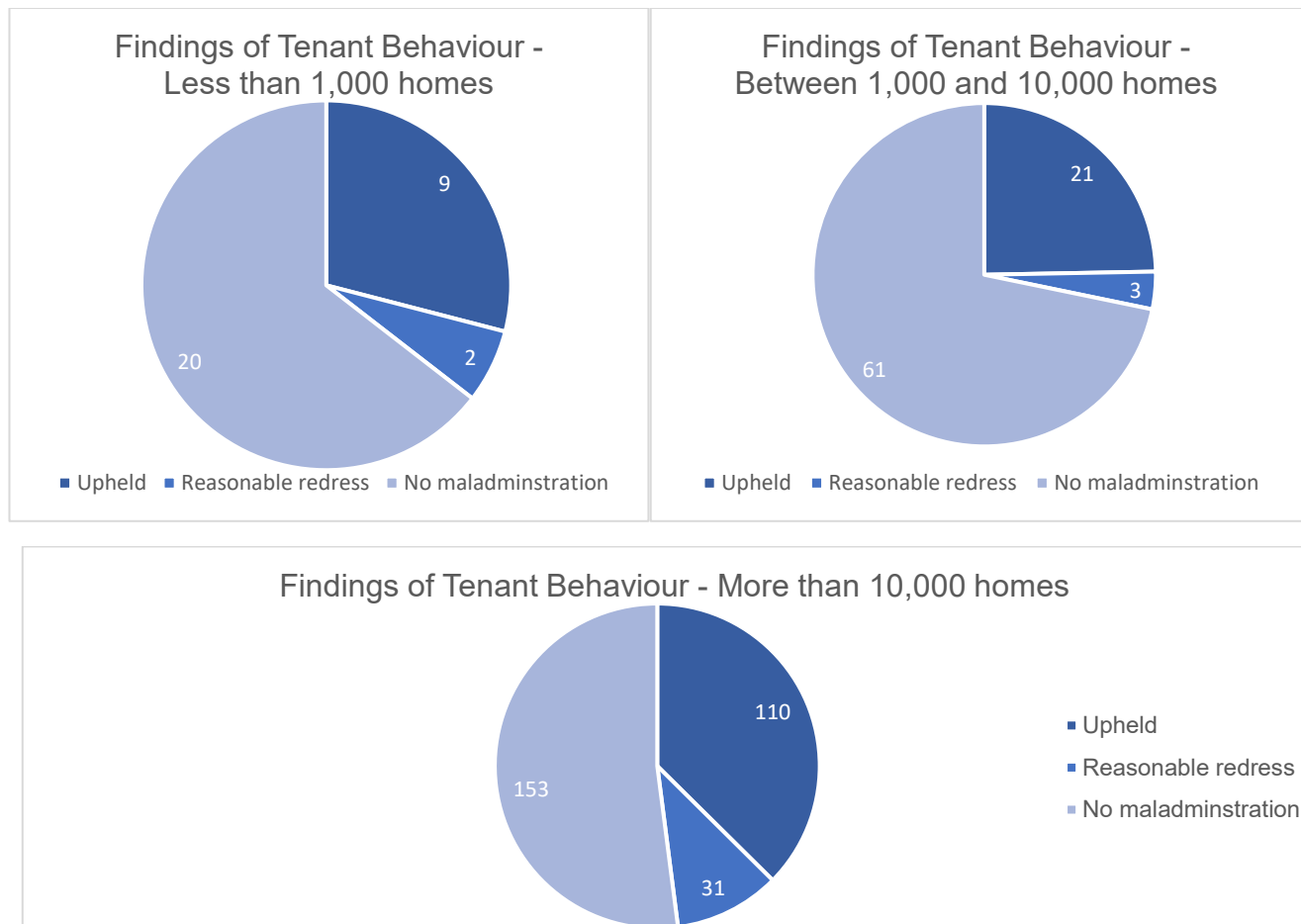


Findings of Tenant Behaviour - Local Authorities



When analysing by landlord size, large landlords had a marginally lower proportion of complaints (12% compared to 15% for medium and 17% for small) but had a significantly higher upheld and reasonable redress rate. This again suggests there is considerable learning these landlords could extract from their complaints for the benefit of service improvement. It may also indicate that the residents of large landlords are more informed about the likely outcome of a report of tenant behaviour and have their expectations managed. Accordingly, they only make a complaint when

they consider that the report of behaviour has been mishandled and the rate at which we find maladministration or reasonable redress is reflective of the fact that residents are well-informed about when they have a basis for a complaint.



## Complaint Handling Failure Orders

In the quarter from 1 January to 31 March 2021, we issued 10 CHFOS, all related to the speed with which landlords were progressing complaints through their complaints. Equal numbers were issued to local authorities and housing associations.

Eight landlords complied with these orders within the given timescales. Two local authority landlords did not comply and the Ombudsman exercised their discretion to take these complaints into its formal investigation stage, judging that the landlords' complaints handling processes had failed.

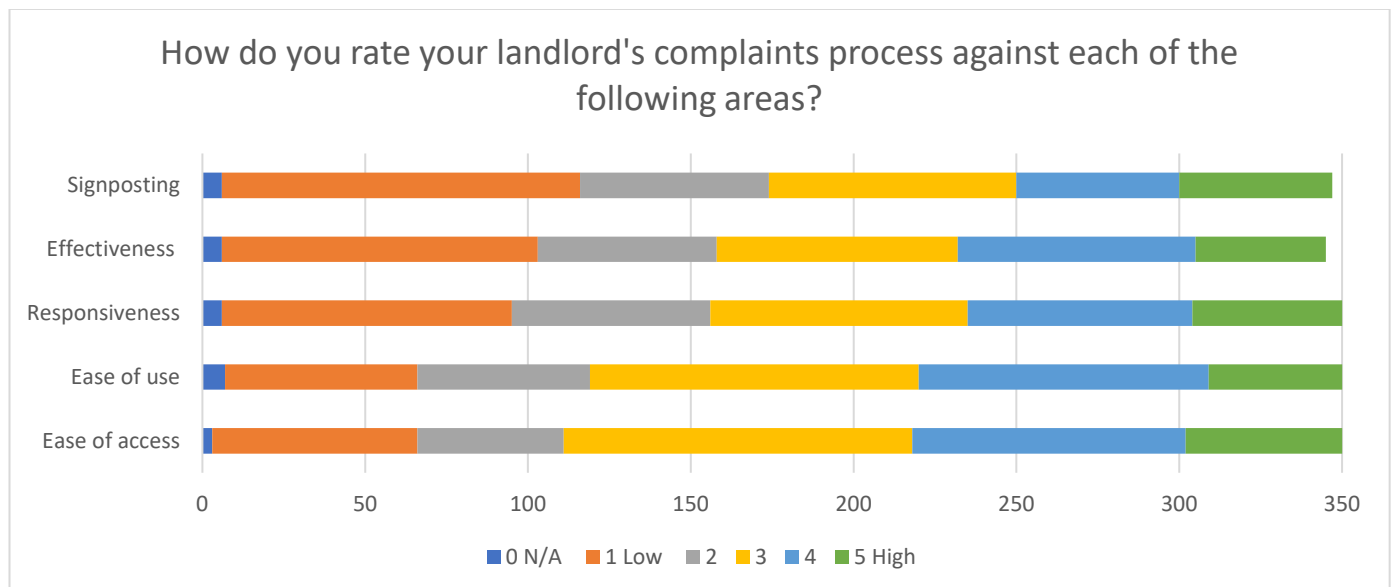
## Annual Resident Panel Survey

In 2021, the Ombudsman set up its first Resident Panel made up of more than 600 residents from across England. The Panel provides an opportunity for residents to be involved in the development of our service, as well as giving us direct feedback on their experience of using it. We invited all members to participate in our annual survey, asking their views on their landlords complaint handling, any changes during the previous period, and awareness of the Ombudsman, and received 350 responses.

### Accessibility

Access to the complaints process and ease of use scored relatively well with 68% and 66% of responses respectively rating these as acceptable or above. However, only 55% of respondents rated the responsiveness of their landlord's complaints procedure as acceptable or above, with its effectiveness rated at 54%.

Of particular concern, the lowest score in this section was signposting to the Ombudsman with only 50% of respondents rating this as acceptable or better. This is an area the Ombudsman has sought to strengthen through the changes to the [Complaint Handling Code](#).

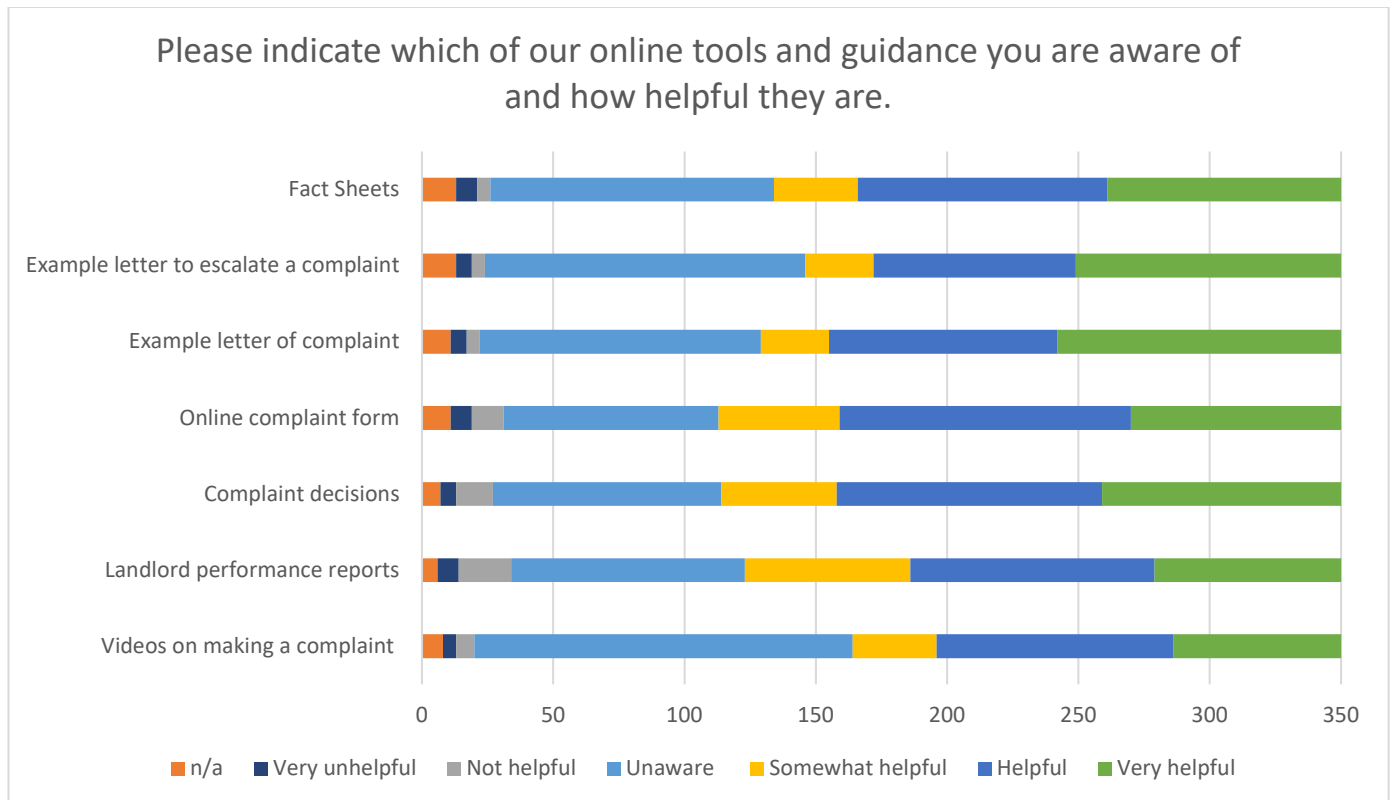


We asked the Panel why it thought residents may not escalate a complaint to the Ombudsman. Of the top three reasons cited by residents, awareness was again a feature but so too was a lack of confidence the complaints process would make a difference (18%) or that it would damage the relationship with the landlord or neighbours (17%).

The Ombudsman provides a range of tools and materials supporting residents to use the complaints process. This includes information to make and progress a complaint with a landlord, including example letters, an online complaint form and information, such as case reports and annual landlord performance reports, to promote accountability.

The most popular tools were the Ombudsman's online complaint form, landlord performance reports, example complaint letter and published decisions, with high scores for helpfulness. While respondents consistently said tools and material provided by the service were more helpful than not, awareness was lower for some of the information. This was notably the case for videos to support making a complaint and our fact sheets. We will continue to review the range of tools and

materials on our website throughout the three years of our next corporate plan, using this feedback to guide what we produce.



We also asked the Panel why it thought some residents may not be aware of the tools and information we provide. A general lack of awareness was identified by 34% of respondents, followed by concerns around digital exclusion and language barriers (24%). A significant proportion of respondents (18%) thought residents may seek advice or information from other bodies, such as advice agencies.

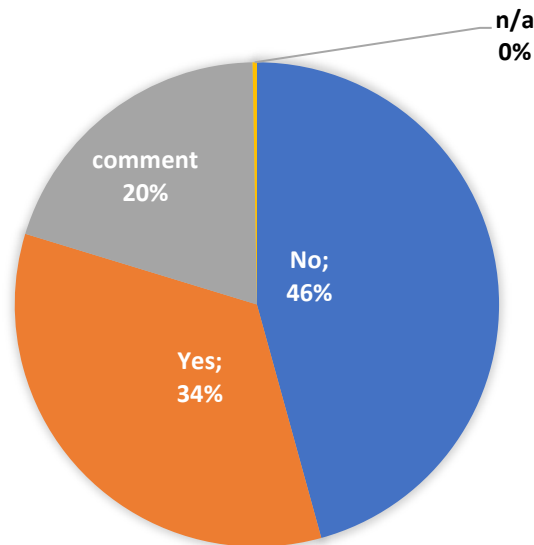
We also asked the Panel for their thoughts on residents, or groups of residents, who may especially struggle to access the complaints procedure. Several respondents raised concerns about elderly residents. Many also expressed concerns about residents with mental health problems and other health issues, such as impaired visibility. Digital exclusion and language barriers were also cited.

The Ombudsman has a project examining barriers to the complaints process and how access can be improved for residents or groups who may face specific challenges. We also plan to increase our awareness raising activities significantly over the next three years and will take all of these factors into consideration as part of our planning. We will also undertake further discussion with the Resident Panel.

## Awareness

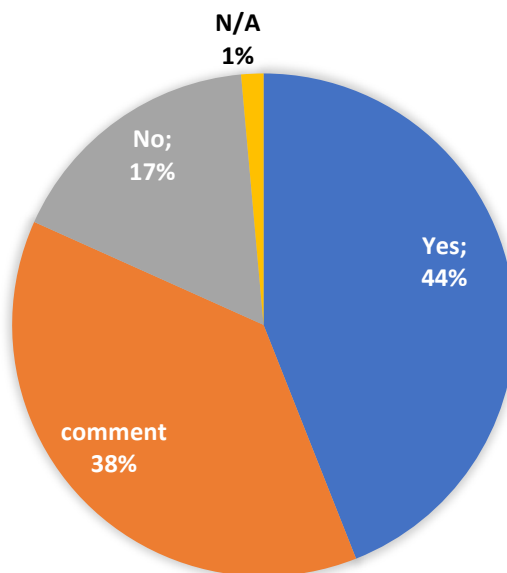
We asked the Panel whether it thought their landlord had done more to promote its complaints process, and the Ombudsman, in the last year. Of those residents that answered this question in a binary fashion, 57% did not believe that their landlord had done more to promote the complaints process. This reinforces the importance of awareness raising and provides the rationale for the changes we have made to the Complaint Handling Code to strengthen the promoting of redress.

### Landlord promotion of the complaints system and Housing Ombudsman in the last year



We also asked the Panel about their landlord's role in increasing awareness of their complaints procedure and the Ombudsman. Over 70% of respondents who answered this question in a binary fashion felt their landlord could do more than it did.

### Is there anything your landlord could do to increase awareness of its complaints process or the Ombudsman?



Seventy residents chose to submit qualified responses to the promotion question and 132 chose to submit comments on the awareness question. While some made encouraging comments about changes, others highlighted remaining challenges or thought things could be done better. Examples of these are:

*"My landlord sends out information if someone makes a complaint and there is a mention on the website but is not easy to find"*

*“Put a leaflet on notice board. Few read the board”*

*“There is only a tiny hidden reference about the Housing Ombudsman”*

*“Although the complaints team held specific training and awareness sessions on their complaints process and Complaint Handling Code... I feel that the wider resident base is still largely unaware the code.”*

*“I have never been made aware of the housing ombudsman by my landlord”*

There was a clear and consistent view amongst residents that the complaints process and the Ombudsman could be highlighted more clearly by landlords through newsletters, the website and social media. Residents raised concerns about only being told about the Ombudsman at the final stage of the process and the infrequency with which landlords made them aware of the procedure. Several suggested landlords should be made to do more to raise awareness of the Ombudsman. This is a condition of membership of the Scheme and fulfilling this more effectively is one of the issues addressed in changes to the Complaint Handling Code.

Some examples are:

*“It needs to highlight the Ombudsman not hide it away as the last procedure”*

*“Put detail on their website, maybe include a link factsheet linked to making a complaint produce newsletters which are sent out to residents not everyone has IT access or skills”*

*“I'd like to see the Housing Ombudsman referenced on the landlord's homepage”*

*“Make the public aware of the service it provides, advertise it”*

*“Force landlords to put details of Ombudsman Service on literature/website/letters”*

*“Leaflets through doors as not all customers have computers”*

*“Posters to signpost in landlords lobbies, and websites”*

*“Bigger campaign in media maybe? Highlight the idea that if you use Ombudsman you are not ‘starting a big difficult legal process’”*

*“... put on tutorials on YouTube”*

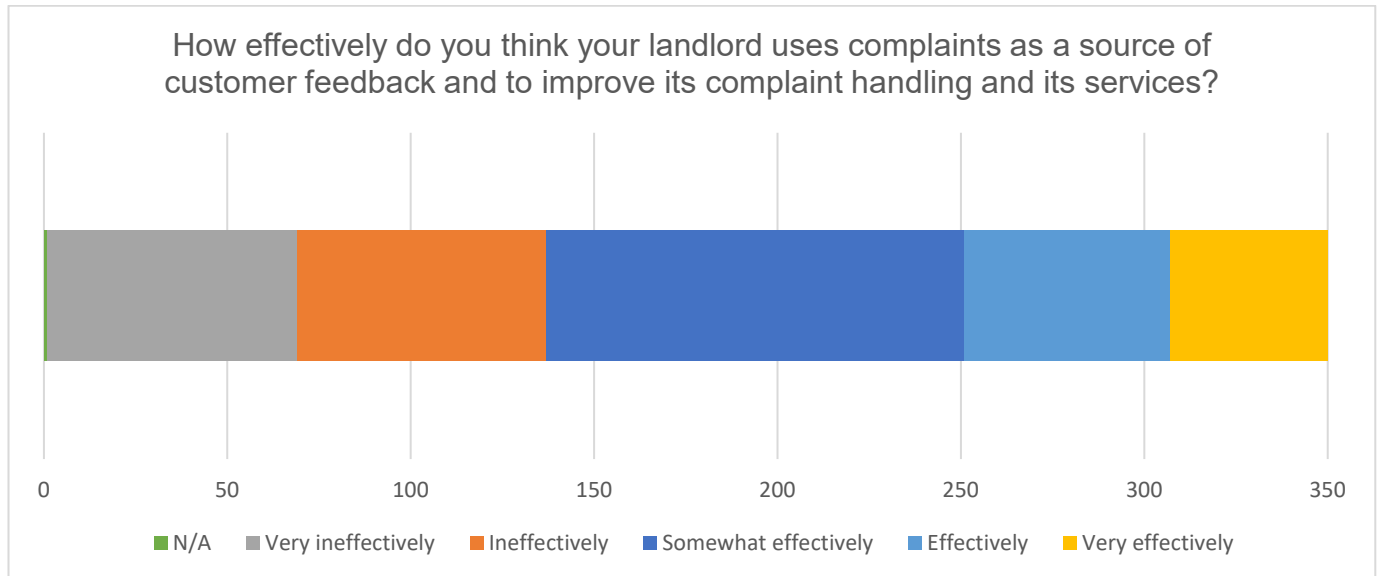
*“Leaflets / posters in Citizens Advice offices, in Health Centres (relating to housing issues causing health problems), in other local advice centres (such as centres for the elderly)”*

We further asked the Panel if there was anything we could do to improve awareness of the Ombudsman. Two thirds thought we could do more than we currently did. There was a strong desire amongst residents for more publicity about the Ombudsman through advertising and the media, and through posters and direct mailing, especially for residents with limited digital access.

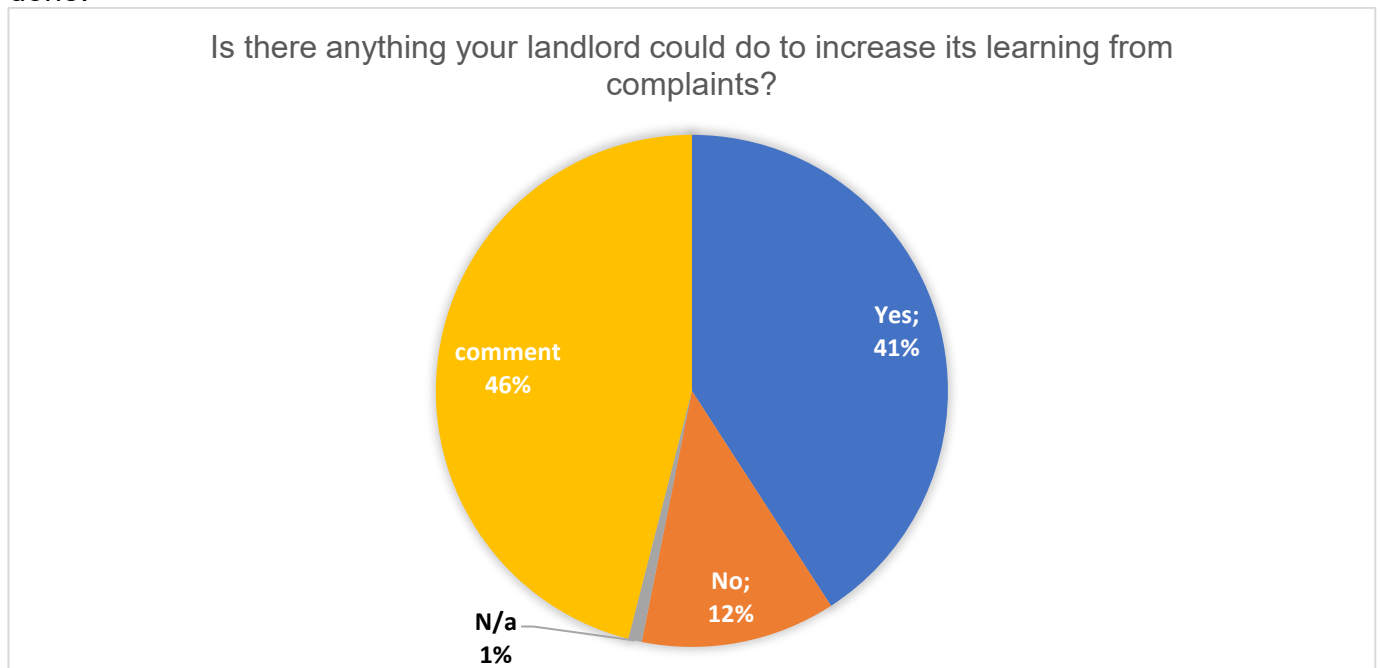
## **Positive complaints culture**

Residents were asked whether they thought making a complaint was more likely to make a difference compared to last year and 54% felt this would make no change or have less effect.

This is disappointing. The Ombudsman encourages landlords not to be defensive about complaints and to use the feedback to improve its complaint handling. However, at 61%, the majority of respondents did agree that landlords sought to use complaints as a source of feedback.



Learning from complaints is a critical part of a positive complaint handling culture. The Ombudsman has stressed the importance of this in its Complaint Handling Code and has provided numerous tools, from data to case studies, to encourage and enable landlords to do so more often and better. There was strong support from respondents for landlords to do more to learn from complaints – of the respondents who gave binary responses, 77% felt more could be done.



161 respondents gave qualified responses and suggested ideas and approaches to learning they would encourage landlords to consider, as well as encouraging the right behaviours to facilitate learning. Examples of these are:

*“Involve residents in looking at the complaints anonymised to look for trends”*

*“Be more transparent and open”*



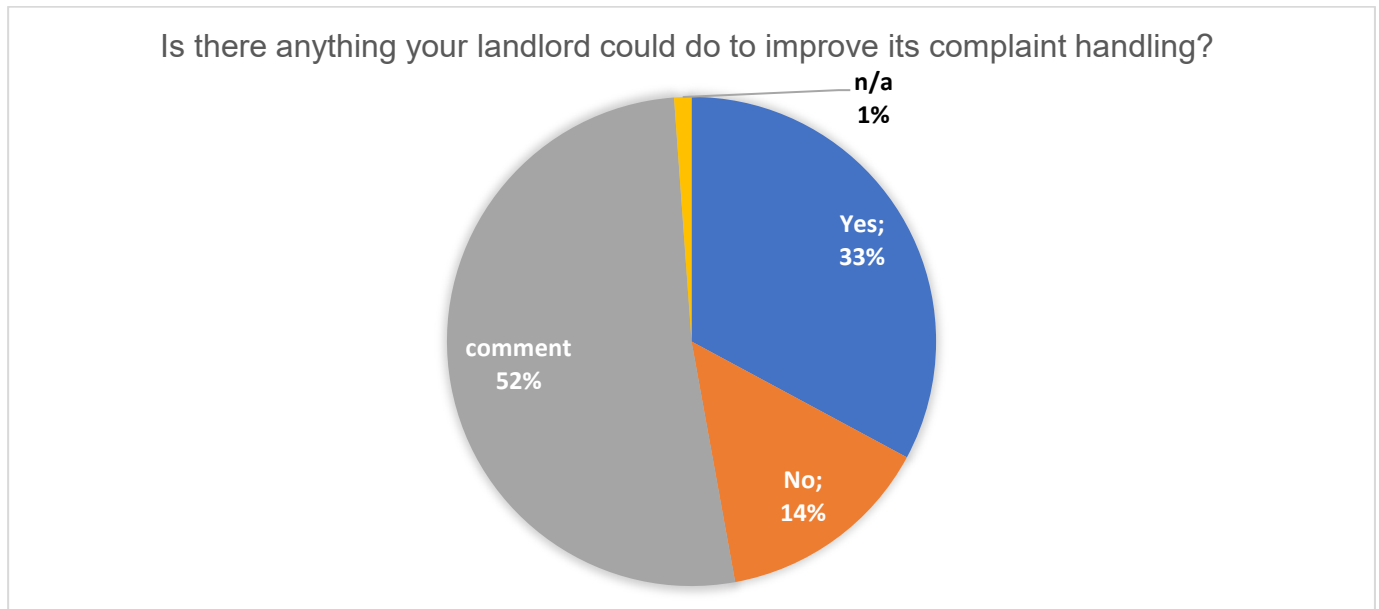
*“Greater use of the data”*

*“Publish ways they have rectified lessons learned”*

*“Bring it to the attention at managers meeting”*

*“Get the complaints-handling officers to train other officers”*

However, when we asked the Panel if landlords could do more to improve their complaint handling, of the respondents who gave binary responses, 70% felt more could be done.



181 respondents gave qualified responses and their comments often stressed the importance of landlords listening and strengthening communication. Timeliness was also frequently cited and well as the importance of continuous learning and improvement. Some examples are:

*“My landlord's staff appear to think a tenant complaint is an act of rebellion against our superiors, to which the only response is to try to prove the tenant is wrong. I genuinely don't know how they can correct this, as it's a symptom of a culture of overbearing bossiness seasoned with discourtesy.”*

*“Respond in a timely fashion, not make excuses and make improvements from complaints. Lastly do not use the same template letter for all complaints”*

*“Learn by common complaints and try to resolve complaints and then take preventive actions”*

*“Be less defensive and talk to residents, not just send a standard response. There should be some kind of accountability for the services provided”*

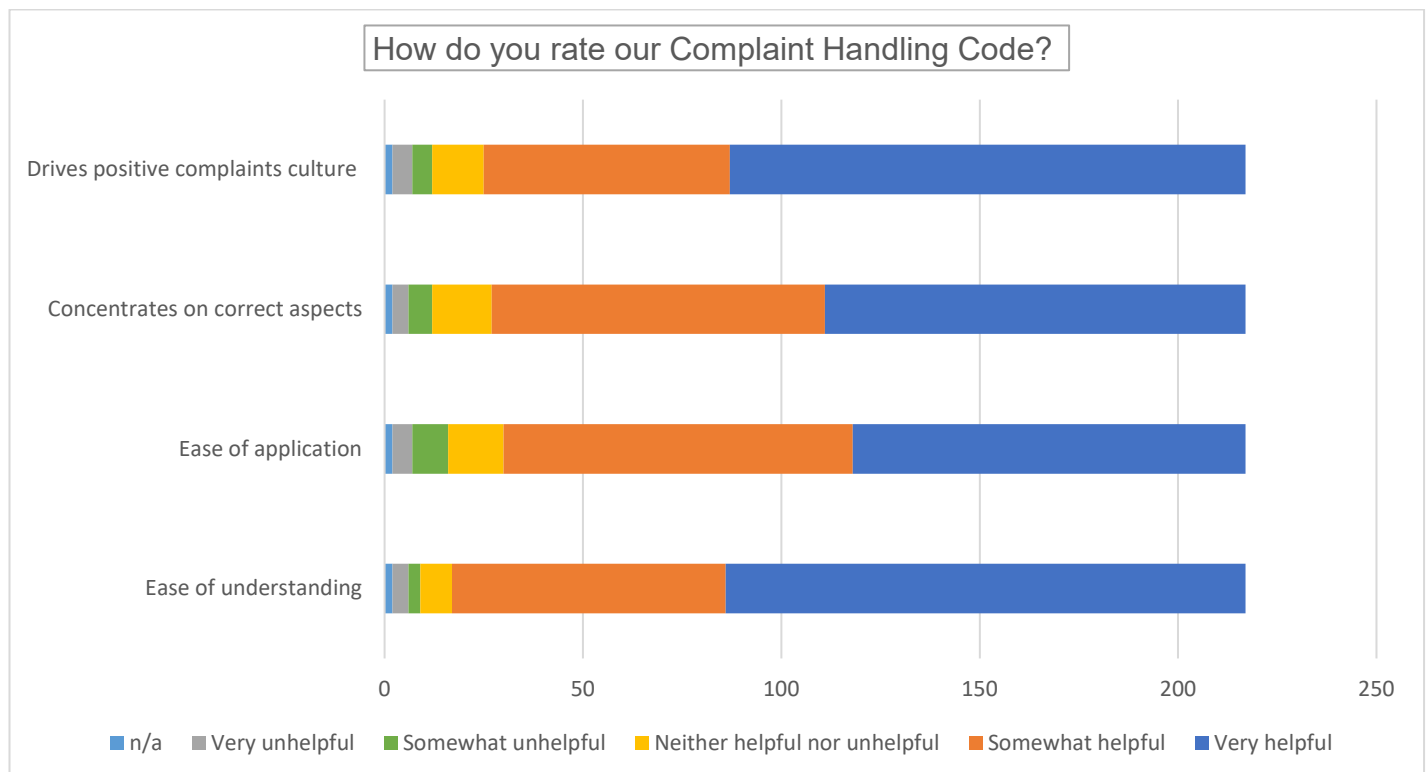
*“Train staff to know about complaints and most importantly, improve the service to reduce the need to complain”*

*“Needs to regularly promote access routes to the Housing Ombudsman including mail shots, social media and via meetings”*

## Annual Landlord Survey

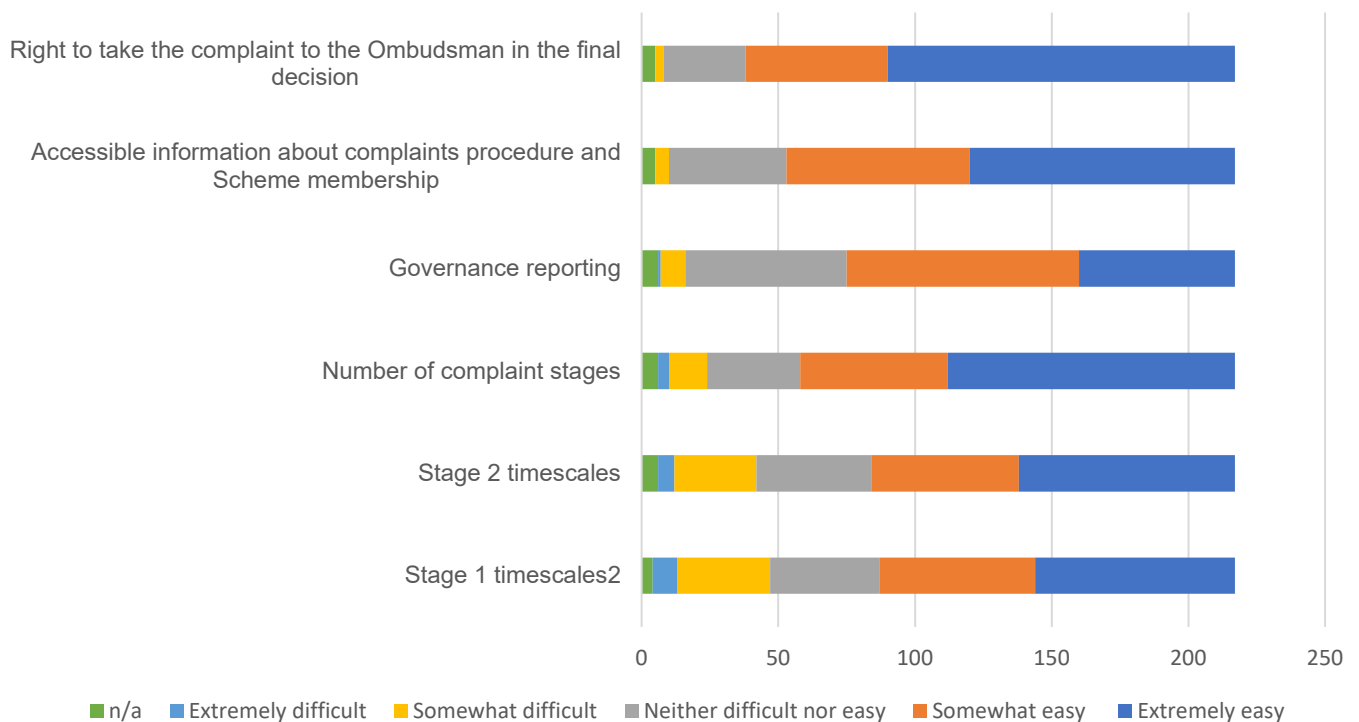
For the first time this year, the Ombudsman surveyed its member landlords about complaints and their engagement with our service. This will become an annual exercise. There were 215 responses to the survey, with a good spread across our membership: 43% of respondents were large landlords with more than 10,000 homes, 41% were medium sized with between 1,000 and 10,000 homes and 16% were small landlords with fewer than 1,000 homes. A number of the questions on the survey focussed on the Complaint Handling Code and the impact that had had on complaint handling.

We asked landlords whether they found the Code easy to understand, whether it focused on the right areas and how easy it was to apply. The response was strongly positive with 94% of landlords said it was easy to understand, 89% said it focused in the right areas, and 88% of landlords said it was easy to apply.



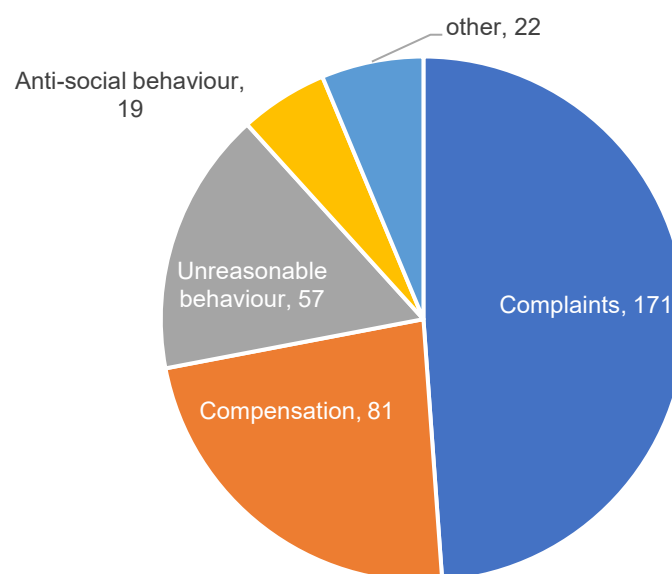
We also explored how easy landlords had found implementing different aspects of the Code. In every area, the clear majority of landlords reported it was either extremely easy or somewhat easy to implement the adjustments required to meet the Code and we have used this feedback in our review of the Code.

### Any elements of the Complaint Handling Code that were difficult to implement?



We also asked landlords which policies had changed as a result of the Code. Landlords were able to select more than one area, with complaints, compensation and unreasonable behaviour scoring the highest and an average of 1.6 policy changes per respondent.

### What policies have you changed or created as a result of the Code?



## **Further information**

**Complaint Handling Code:** For the Complaint Handling Code plus guidance and supporting information see our [website](#).

**Spotlight reports:** Find our Spotlight reports, including the report on damp and mould, on our [website](#).

**Decisions:** See the [Decisions](#) section of our website for reports on individual determinations that are now published every two weeks.

We would welcome your feedback on this report. Please let us know by completing this [short survey](#) or you can email [consultations@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:consultations@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

## **Housing**

Ombudsman Service

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Report to: Policy & Performance Improvement Committee Meeting - 28 November 2022

Director Lead: Sanjiv Kohli, Deputy Chief Executive and Director - Resources

Lead Officer: Nick Wilson, Business Manager - Financial Services, 01636 655317

Report Summary	
<b>Report Title</b>	Projected General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Revenue and Capital Outturn Report to 31 March 2023 as at 30 September 2022
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	<p>To update Members with the forecast outturn position for the 2022/23 financial year for the Council's General Fund and Housing Revenue Account revenue and capital budgets.</p> <p>To show performance against the approved estimates of revenue expenditure and income and report on major variances from planned budget performance, in accordance with the Council's Constitution.</p>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p>That the Policy &amp; Performance Improvement Committee note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the General Fund projected unfavourable outturn variance of £0.655m on services;</li> <li>b) the Housing Revenue Account projected unfavourable outturn variance of £0.194m on services; and</li> <li>c) the capital outturn position of £67.109m.</li> </ul>

## 1.0 Background

### Overview of General Fund Revenue Projected Outturn for 2022/23

#### Current position (as at 30 September 2022): variances

- 1.1 Table 1 shows a projected unfavourable variance against the revised budget of £0.655m on service budgets. This is based on meetings which took place with business managers by late-October, therefore does not account for subsequent changes in expenditure/income. Further details of the variances projected against portfolio holder budgets are in **Appendix A**.

Table 1: General Fund revenue outturn for 2022/23 financial year as at 30 September 2022

	Original Budget £'m	Revised Budget £'m	Projected Outturn £'m	Variance £'m
Cleaner, Safer, Greener	4.537	4.251	4.229	(0.022)
Economic Development & Visitors	1.323	1.363	1.136	(0.227)
Homes & Health	1.396	1.689	1.441	(0.248)
Organisational Development & Governance	4.363	4.415	4.217	(0.198)
Strategy, Performance & Finance	2.769	3.673	5.023	1.350
<b>Net Cost of GF Services</b>	<b>14.389</b>	<b>15.391</b>	<b>16.046</b>	<b>0.655</b>
Other Operating Expenditure	4.253	4.237	4.237	0.000
Finance & Investment Income/Expenditure	(0.280)	(0.281)	(0.785)	(0.504)
Taxation & Non-Specific Grant Income	(19.901)	(20.501)	(20.954)	(0.453)
<b>Net Cost of Council Expenditure</b>	<b>(1.539)</b>	<b>(1.154)</b>	<b>(1.456)</b>	<b>(0.302)</b>
Transfer to/(from) Usable Reserves	0.915	0.530	0.893	0.363
Transfer to/(from) Unusable Reserves	0.624	0.624	0.563	(0.061)
Transfer to/(from) General Reserves	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

- 1.2 An unfavourable variance of £0.655m is currently being projected on service budgets managed by business managers. This represents 4.3% of the total service budgets. This unfavourable variance of £0.655m includes an unfavourable variance of £0.645m on employee spend council-wide. Excluding employee spend, therefore, non-employee spend and income have unfavourable variances totalling £0.020m.
- 1.3 The unfavourable variance of £0.645m on employee spend includes a budgeted saving of £0.656m for vacancies council-wide during the year. This £0.656m represents 4% of the total budget for employee spend. As it is not known which services will have vacant posts during the year, the whole of the £0.656m is currently budgeted for within the Strategy, Performance & Finance portfolio holder's budget and shows as an unfavourable variance. Conversely, all of the savings from vacant posts show as favourable variances against their respective portfolio holders. Details of the services with variances due to vacant posts are in **Appendix A**.
- 1.4 The unfavourable variance of £0.645m on employee spend also includes the total estimated additional cost of the forecast 2022/23 pay award. The 2022/23 budget approved by Full Council on 8 March 2022 budgeted for a 2022/23 pay award of 2%, in line with the 2021/22 pay award of 1.75% for most employees. The employers and unions have now agreed at £1,925 per pay point. This effect of this has been modelled into the figures above. The terms and conditions of most council employees are determined by the NJC. Officers in Financial Services will continue to closely monitor announcements regarding the 2022/23 pay award for employees and will factor these into subsequent budget monitoring forecast reports as appropriate. The impact of the changes will be allocated into services or the next budget monitoring report.
- 1.5 Non-Service expenditure is projected to have a favourable variance of £1.003m against the revised budget of £16.545m. These budgets primarily relate to income from council

tax, national non-domestic rates (NNDR, or 'business rates') and investment interest. The favourable variance of £0.504m on Finance & Investment Income/Expenditure relates to increased investment interest income, based on higher than anticipated interest rates. £0.445m of the £0.453m favourable variance on Taxation & Non-Specific Grant Income relates to additional income from the Nottinghamshire Business Rates Pool.

- 1.6 As the Council has received, for a number of years, return funding from the Nottinghamshire Business Rates Pool in relation to the local growth retained (split with Nottinghamshire County Council), £0.600m has been budgeted for as the additional funding to be generated in 2022/23. Chief Finance Officers at each of the Nottinghamshire districts and boroughs monitor growth generated by the Business Rates Pool. Based on projected outturn information received as at the end of Q2 from all Nottinghamshire districts and boroughs, the Council is currently projecting to receive £1.045m return funding from the pool for 2022/23.

### Overview of Projected Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Outturn for 2022/23

- 1.7 With reference to the 'Variance' column in *Table 2*, the HRA accounts show a projected unfavourable variance against the revised budget of £0.194m as follows:

*Table 2: HRA revenue outturn for 2022/23 financial year as at 30 September 2022*

	Original Budget £'m	Revised Budget £'m	Projected Outturn £'m	Variance £'m
Expenditure	17.884	17.878	17.911	0.033
Income	(26.531)	(26.466)	(26.305)	0.161
<b>Net Cost of HRA Services</b>	<b>(8.647)</b>	<b>(8.588)</b>	<b>(8.393)</b>	<b>0.194</b>
Other Operating Expenditure	0.027	0.027	0.020	(0.007)
Finance & Investment Income/Expenditure	3.904	3.904	4.100	0.196
Taxation & Non Specific Grant Income	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
<b>(Surplus)/Deficit on HRA Services</b>	<b>(4.715)</b>	<b>(4.657)</b>	<b>(4.273)</b>	<b>0.383</b>
<b>Movements in Reserves</b>				
Transfer to/(from) Usable Reserves	1.442	1.383	1.485	0.103
Transfer to/(from) Unusable Reserves	(6.778)	(6.778)	(7.263)	(0.485)
Transfer to/(from) Major Repairs Reserve	10.051	10.051	10.051	0.000

- 1.8 The main reasons for the projected unfavourable outturn variance of £0.194m are in **Appendix B**.

### Overview of Projected Capital Outturn 2022/23

- 1.9 The table below summarises the position for the Capital Programme as at 30 September 2022 and is split between General Fund and Housing Revenue Account.



	<b>Revised Approved Budget £'m</b>	<b>Revised budget updated for Approval £'m</b>	<b>Actual Spend to 30 September 2022 £'m</b>	<b>Forecast Outturn £'m</b>
General Fund	53.787	42.459	6.368	42.459
Housing Revenue Account	36.207	24.650	5.502	24.650
<b>Total</b>	<b>89.994</b>	<b>67.109</b>	<b>11.870</b>	<b>67.109</b>

1.10 Following the Cabinet meeting of 4 October 2022, the total approved budget was £89.994. As projects are developed and spending commitments are made, budget requirements can change. The additions and amendments that are being recommended for approval at Cabinet on 6 December 2022 are detailed in **Appendix C**, which seeks to reduce the budget to £67.109m.

## **2.0 Proposal/Options Considered and Reasons for Recommendation**

- 2.1 To consider the forecast outturn position for the 2022/23 financial year for the Council's General Fund and Housing Revenue Account revenue and capital budgets.
- 2.2 To show performance against the approved estimates of revenue expenditure and income and report on major variances from planned budget performance, in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

## **3.0 Implications**

- 3.1 In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations officers have considered the following implications; Data Protection, Digital and Cyber Security, Equality and Diversity, Financial, Human Resources, Human Rights, Legal, Safeguarding and Sustainability, and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

## **Background Papers and Published Documents**

General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Revenue Monitoring Reports to 30/09/2022  
General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Capital Monitoring Reports to 30/09/2022

**General Fund (GF) Revenue Outturn Variance Analysis by Portfolio Holder as at 30 September 2022**

Favourable variances are bracketed and in red - £(0.000)m. Unfavourable variances are in black - £0.000m.

<b>Cleaner, Safer, Greener - £(0.022)m</b>	<b>£'m</b>
Waste & Recycling: increased trade refuse and waste disposal income	(0.115)
Environmental Health: vacant posts, partly offset by increased costs on agency staff	(0.094)
Vehicle Pool and Workshop: increased transport-related costs, particularly fuel (petrol and diesel) and oil and lubricants	0.135
Other small variances	0.052
<b>Total</b>	<b>(0.022)</b>

<b>Economic Development &amp; Visitors - £(0.227)m</b>	<b>£'m</b>
Newark Beacon: increased rental income, due to higher than anticipated occupancy levels, and reduced spend on supplies and services, partly offset by increased premises-related costs	(0.065)
Surface Car Parks Newark: reduced spend on London Road car park rental costs and increased car parking income	(0.064)
Newark Lorry Park: increased rental income, due to higher than anticipated occupancy levels	(0.113)
Other small variances	0.015
<b>Total</b>	<b>(0.227)</b>

<b>Homes &amp; Health - £(0.248)m</b>	<b>£'m</b>
Rent Allowances: forecast based on year-to-date actuals	0.055
Health & Community Relations: vacant posts, and allocation for in-year initiatives not currently anticipated to be fully spent	(0.107)
Other small variances	(0.196)
<b>Total</b>	<b>(0.248)</b>

<b>Organisational Development &amp; Governance - £(0.198)m</b>	<b>£'m</b>
Small variances	(0.198)
<b>Total</b>	<b>(0.198)</b>

<b>Strategy, Performance &amp; Finance - £1.350m</b>	<b>£'m</b>
Corporate Asset Development: reduced income from recharge of costs to HRA and capital, partly offset by vacant post	0.070
Other Financial Transactions: vacancy factor budget equal to 4% of 2022/23 employee costs; and estimated cost of a 2022/23 pay award equal to 5% per employee, compared to the 2% pay award originally budgeted for 2022/23	1.359
Other small variances	(0.079)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.350</b>

	<b>0.655</b>
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**Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Revenue Services Outturn Variance Analysis as at 30 September 2022**

Favourable variances are bracketed and in red - £(0.000)m. Unfavourable variances are in black - £0.000m.

<b>HRA - £(0.194)m</b>	<b>£'m</b>
Reduced income from rents and service charges. The main reasons include: - an increased average period of time that dwellings are remaining vacant (void); and - meals no longer being compulsory for tenants to purchase at extra care scheme sites (Broadleaves and Gladstone House).	0.234
Increased costs of supplies and services on responsive repairs. The main reasons include increases in: - the use of contractors to deliver repairs due to employee vacancies; and - the costs of materials required for repairs and the range of repairs being performed; partly offset by - the service not currently expecting to use of all the additional efficiency savings budget it has been allocated.	0.100
Increased income from solar photovoltaic (PV) panels, due to warmer than expected weather and a lower than anticipated number of faulty meters.	(0.074)
Increased spend on supplies and services related to compliance services. The main reason relates to additional spend on the installation of smoke and Carbon Monoxide (CO) detectors, in order to become compliant with changes in regulations which recently come into effect.	0.062
Other small variances	(0.128)
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.194</b>

**GENERAL FUND**

Original Budget	57.603	As per Council on 8 March 2022
Slippages Approved	10.001	As per Cabinet on 12 July 2022
Quarter 1 Movements	-13.817	As per Cabinet on 4 October 2022
Current Revised Budget	53.787	

**Additions**

Project	Capital Description	Additions / Reductions 22-23 £m	Comments
TA1221	SLC Fire Safety Remedial Works	0.015	Additional budget approved in Portfolio Holder Decision
TC3131	London Road Library Gardens	0.025	Additional budget approved in Portfolio Holder Decision
TB6169	S106 Children & Young People Space Contribution	0.065	Additional budget approved in Portfolio Holder Decision
TT1002	Towns Fund - Contribution to IASI	7.100	As per report to P&F
<b>Total Additions/Reductions</b>		<b>7.205</b>	

**Reprofiling**

Project	Capital Description	Additions / Reductions 22-23 £m	Comments
TA3097	Yorke Drive Regeneration and Community Facility	-3.054	Reprofile to 2023/24 due to planning app going to committee in Dec 22
TT1000	Towns Fund Stodman Street	-6.830	Reprofile to 2023/24 tenders back in autumn, reprofile budget on the scheme to meet updated schedule in the capital budget report
TG1003	Housing Regeneration Loan Facility	-8.649	Reprofile based on current forecast cash flow requirements
<b>Total Re profiling</b>		<b>-18.533</b>	

General Fund Revised Budget	42.459	Recommended for approval
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**HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT**

Original Budget	29.543	As per Council on 8 March 2022
Slippages Approved	6.695	As per Cabinet on 12 July 2022
Quarter 1 Movements	-0.030	As per Cabinet on 4 October 2022
Current Revised Budget	36.207	

**Additions/Reductions**

Project	Capital Description	Additions / Reductions 22-23 £m	Comments
S95208	Roewood Lane Sewerage Treatment Station	0.004	Increase budget from contingency
S99100	Property Investment Contingency	-0.004	Move to S95208
SA1047	New Build Programme Contingency	-0.454	New Build Programme budget realignment
SA1063	Phase 3 Cluster 3	-0.007	New Build Programme budget realignment
SA1064	Phase 3 Cluster 4	-0.143	New Build Programme budget realignment
SA1071	Phase 4 Cluster 1	-0.148	New Build Programme budget realignment
SA1072	Phase 4 Cluster 2	0.030	New Build Programme budget realignment
SA1073	Phase 4 Cluster 3	0.625	New Build Programme budget realignment

SA1074	Phase 4 Cluster 4	0.132	New Build Programme budget realignment
SA1075	Phase 4 Cluster 5	-0.035	New Build Programme budget realignment
SA1080	Phase 5	-4.279	New Build Programme budget realignment
SA1081	Phase 5 Cluster 1	2.065	New Build Programme budget realignment
SA1082	Phase 5 Cluster 2	1.231	New Build Programme budget realignment
SA1083	Phase 5 Cluster 3	0.982	New Build Programme budget realignment
<b>Total Additions/<span style="color: red;">Reductions</span></b>		<b>0.000</b>	

#### Reprofiling

Project	Capital Description	Additions / <span style="color: red;">Reductions</span> 22-23	Comments
S99103	Building Safety Works	-0.299	Reprofile to 2023/24 as per updated spend profile
SA1033	Estate Regeneration	-7.958	Reprofile to 2023/24 due to planning app going to committee in Dec 22
SA1081	Phase 5 Cluster 1	-1.500	Reprofile to 2023/24 as per updated spend profile
SA1082	Phase 5 Cluster 2	-1.000	Reprofile to 2023/24 as per updated spend profile
SA1083	Phase 5 Cluster 3	-0.800	Reprofile to 2023/24 as per updated spend profile
<b>Total Re profiling</b>		<b>-11.557</b>	

HRA Revised budget for approval	24.650	Recommended for approval at Cabinet on 6.12.22
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<b>Total Additions/<span style="color: red;">Reductions</span></b>	<b>7.205</b>	
<b>Total Re profiling</b>	<b>-30.090</b>	
<b>Total Revised Budget</b>	<b>67.109</b>	



Report to: Policy & Performance Improvement Committee – 28 November 2022

Director Lead: Sanjiv Kohli – Deputy Chief Executive and Director - Resources

Lead Officer: Nick Wilson, Business Manager – Financial Services, Ext. 5317

Report Summary	
<b>Report Title</b>	Review of HRA Business Plan Assumptions
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	This report provides Members with an overview of the key assumptions to be made within the production of the 30-year HRA Business Plan.
<b>Recommendations</b>	That Members endorse the assumptions presented to be utilised in the update of the 30-year HRA Business Plan.

## 1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Council maintains a 30-year HRA Business Plan to ensure that the HRA is viable and sustainable over a 30-year period.
- 1.2 The Business Plan therefore covers a large time period where many external factors can affect the sustainability of the overall plan.
- 1.3 This report sets out some of the key assumptions which will affect the Business Plan from an external perspective, in order for various scenarios to then be considered looking at the internal factors (such as the setting of rent, capital improvements or revenue services).
- 1.4 The agreed assumptions will then be fed into the overall HRA Business Plan, which will form the basis of the HRA Budget and Rent setting report to be taken to Cabinet on 17 January 2023 and approved at Council on 7 February 2023.

## 2.0 Proposals

- 2.1 **Appendix A** sets out the various external factors that could affect the Business Plan over the 30-year period. This next section of the report will look at each in turn:
  - Void Allowance – This percentage is set as a proportion of the gross rent receivable and will therefore reduce the total amount of income due to the Council. This figure has been benchmarked against Housemark data to set a stretching target.

- Bad Debts – This percentage will be generated against the net rent receivable. The balance will be forecast to maintain at 4% of the net rent, hence where rent increases, there will be a charge to revenue to increase the bad debt provision. This is just for forecasting purposes, in reality money will be set aside based on actual rent outstanding as at 31<sup>st</sup> March in any given year together with assumptions over its collectability.
- Right to Buy sales – This assumption sets the amount of right to buy sales in any given year, hence reducing the stock and therefore the total amount of income receivable.
- Borrowing and Interest Rates – These assumptions set the forecast interest rates to be incurred for interest payable on loans taken by the HRA in order to fund capital expenditure where further borrowing is required, but also interest receivable on funds that are held (eg the HRA working balance).

2.2 Once the assumptions within Appendix A have been set, these will be fed into the HRA Business Plan, together with the forecasts of expenditure for both Capital and Revenue over the 30-year period and scenarios can then be modelled to review the effect of different rental values depending on Council's decision setting the rental charge for 2023/24.

#### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

None



## Newark & Sherwood District HRA Business Plan Assumptions Summary

Assumption		Notes
Base Year	2023-24	
<b>Voids &amp; Bad debts</b>		
Void Allowance:		
1	1.25%	
2	1.25%	
3	1.25%	
4	1.25%	
5 onwards	1.25%	
Allowance for Bad Debts:		
All years balance of Bad Debt provision as a % of overall rent receivable		4.00%
<b>Right to Buy Sales:</b>		
Year 1	20	
Year 2	20	
Year 3	30	
Year 4	30	
Year 5 onwards	30	
<b>Borrowing &amp; Interest Rates</b>		
Average interest Rate on Borrowing		
1	4.50%	
2	3.50%	
3	2.75%	
4	2.75%	
5 onwards	2.50%	
Average interest Rate on Investments		
1	1.20%	
2	1.20%	
3	1.20%	
4	1.20%	
5 onwards	1.20%	



Report to: Policy & Performance Improvement Committee Meeting, 28th November 2022

Director Leads: Sanjiv Kohli, Director - Resources and Deborah Johnson, Director - Customer Services & Organisational Development

Lead Officers: Transformation Working Group Lead: Carina Williamson, Transformation & Service Improvement Officer, 01636 655 258  
Lead Officer: Dave Richardson, ICT & Digital Services Business Manager, 01636 655 405

Report Summary	
<b>Report Title</b>	Members Digital Tools Working Group
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To provide Members of the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee with a summary of the review undertaken by the Members Digital Tools Working Group and to outline their recommendations relating to digital hardware, software and ways of working.
<b>Recommendations</b>	That the proposed recommendations of the Working Group as set out in Section 3 of the report, in relation to the provision of hardware, software and training for the new cohort of Members elected in May 2023 are endorsed, for a final decision to be taken by the Portfolio Holder for Organisational Development & Governance.

## 1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Policy & Performance Improvement Committee set-up a working group to look at member digital tools on 13 June 2022. The working group, chaired by Councillor Simon Haynes, was set up to look at member's current digital tools and practices with a view to making recommendations about what provision should be made for new members elected in May 2023. As of September 2022, the majority of members utilise digital hardware with most using an iPad or tablet and a small amount with laptops. The purpose of the review was to ensure elected councillors have the right digital tools and training to work most effectively and efficiently in their roles on behalf of residents.
- 1.2 During the scoping of the review, members discussed accessibility in relation to digital hardware. As an authority we are committed to examining our practices and policies to ensure all our residents, service users, staff and members are treated equally. You can read more about this policy on [our website](#). For example, a member of staff who is partially sighted may utilise a screen reader on their work device. The same principal applies to members. The needs of each Councillor or staff member are unique therefore each individual is reviewed in isolation and a bespoke plan made for them with the

support of appropriate colleagues and any appropriate measures are put in place on a case-by-case basis. These measures may include physical adaptations, such as a particular office chair or assigned parking space, or software purchased for an individual, such as Grammarly to support someone with dyslexia. As such any digital hardware required for accessibility reasons is not considered within the scope of this review as this is considered on a case-by-case basis as part of the Council's equalities commitments.

## **2.0 Summary of the Review**

2.1 The group met three times between July and September with input from the following working group members;

- Councillor Simon Haynes (Chair)
- Councillor Max Cope
- Councillor Linda Dales
- Councillor Mathew Skinner
- Councillor Yvonne Woodhead

2.2 The working group was supported by a team of officers who, considering the direction given by members, gathered information and data to inform the sessions supporting members to reach an informed decision. The working group was supported by:

- Colleagues from ICT & Digital Services (ICT&DS) who provided a digital overview of hardware, software and training and outlined member hardware options, including the advantages and disadvantages of each, as well as advising on cyber security and risk to the Council;
- A representative from Democratic Services who provided insight into the role of the member to ensure that tools were fit for purpose; and
- A representative from Information Governance who provided guidance on the Council's and member's responsibilities under UK data protection legislation.

### **2.3 Session 1: Member Feedback**

In session one, the group reflected on the experiences of members, including current issues and digital requirements for the future. This feedback created the structure of the following sessions. The key points of this feedback were:

- Members wanted the preferred device to be as lightweight and portable as possible;
- Members wanted key usability features such as split screen;
- Members want to have increased confidence with self-service, such as setting up fingerprint log-in and use of applications such as MS teams;
- Members wanted hardware that is compatible with the systems they use, such as mod.gov;
- Members wanted to better understand the MS Teams tools available to them and the scope and benefits of rolling out additional Microsoft 365 tools and features; and
- Members wanted a greater understanding of the security requirements for members hardware e.g. two-factor authentication, screen lock times.

## 2.4 **Session 2: Digital Hardware**

In this session members reviewed the digital hardware options available to them to help inform the future hardware provision for members. Three options were considered against member criteria. All options have security controls, as the Council and its members are data controllers, however there were positives and negatives to consider in terms of usability and cost. The group considered the objectives of the review and use the MoSCoW method (Must, Should, Could, Won't) to compare the options and reach an outcome on digital hardware.

### **Apple iPad (current provision) – Circa £450 per user**

Member feedback highlighted that many find the iPad difficult to use. Due to its screen size, lack of multi-tasking functionality, lack of Microsoft applications and poor compatibility with the Council's file storage area. As such the group ruled this out as a future option.

### **Windows Laptop – Circa £600 per user**

The laptop is not as lightweight as the iPad or tablet, but the group valued the larger display, enabling full desktop application displays, ability to use Microsoft applications, ability to access the Council's file storage area and capability for split-screen. This was noted to be advantageous for committee chairs who need to view the agenda overview and papers simultaneously.

### **Windows Tablet – Circa £700 per user** (includes required editions such as a keyboard and case)

The tablet is a hybrid of the iPad and laptop. It offers the combined preferences of advanced multi-tasking and is also lightweight and portable. However, it is the most expensive option.

The 'bring your own device' (BYOD) options were also considered. BYOD allows members to use their personal device for Council work. This must be a personal device and cannot be a device owned by another company. BYOD can be easily set-up on a member's personal device with direction provided by ICT&DS. This could be a laptop or phone (iOS or Android device). One of the solutions works by members accessing the Council network through a remote desktop via a webpage. The advantages of this are that members can use a single device if they prefer, empowering them to work and collaborate in the way they prefer, with the freedom to use a device that is familiar to them. This was tested by a group member with positive feedback. The council already holds a licence to enable staff to work this way, as such there would be no additional cost for setting members up with BYOD. After initial set up, the personal device will be 'unsupported' by ICT. This means it is the member's responsibility to maintain the device, including its safety and condition, for example making sure the device has the latest software downloaded. In preparation for members being able to BYOD, from May 2023, ICT will develop a BYOD Policy outlining these roles and responsibilities.

## 2.5 **Session 3: Digital Software and Ways of Working including training**

The Information Governance and Data Protection Officer presented to the group on the data security and GDPR responsibilities of the Council and outlined the digital tools, controls and good practice, including training and risk management, in place to keep our and our residents' data safe. The group also reviewed the digital software tools

available to members and were satisfied with the current offer. Considering this information and reflecting on member appetite to increase their digital confidence, they reviewed the current training programme for members and proposed additional elements (see 3.c).

### **3.0 Working Group Recommendations**

- 3.1 In relation to hardware, the working group recommend the laptop. It is the best value for money option that meets the needs of members. The group propose the laptop is offered to all members as standard with the windows tablet available as an alternative option on request. For example, where a member sits on planning committee and would prefer a lightweight device as they regularly attend site visits. This change in hardware would be implemented from May 2023 for the new cohort of elected members. Due to the lead time for ordering devices, ICT will order an equal number of laptops and tablets in preparation for May 2023 to ensure that both hardware options are available for all members on their induction. Once members have selected their device all remaining devices, not used by members, will go into the pool of devices used by ICT for new staff or in the replacement of devices for employees.
- 3.2 BYOD to be offered to all members as an optional extra (subject to Corporate Information Governance Group approval). There may be some members who wish to utilise this as their primary device but for most this would be a supplementary offer.
- 3.3 In terms of supporting members to utilise the digital hardware and software available to them, the group propose the following training programme delivered in-house by ICT and Information Governance. The recommended frequency and topics for members to be trained in;

#### **One off training for new members (part of Member Induction)**

- Set up of hardware e.g. finger print login
- Microsoft 365 software
- Council Intranet and website
- Mod.Gov system (Delivered by Democratic Services)
- Cyber Security and UK GDPR

To be followed by 6-month drop-in sessions to ensure understanding and offer further support and guidance on an individual or group basis.

#### **Annual training for all members on Cyber security and UK GDPR, to include;**

- The controls set by policy,
- How the controls protect members, the council, and residents, and
- Councillors' responsibilities as elected members.

#### **Ad-hoc Refresher training available to all members on Microsoft 365**

- Features and utilisation of; MS Teams, Outlook, OneDrive and SharePoint.

#### **4.0 Implications**

- 4.1 In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection, Digital and Cyber Security, Equality and Diversity, Financial, Human Resources, Human Rights, Legal, Safeguarding and Sustainability, and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

##### **Financial Implications (FIN22-23/8757)**

- 4.2 The Capital Programme has a budget to replace the Apple iPads in 2022/23 in preparation for members elected in May 2023 of £17,000.
- 4.3 Based on the above information, the costs of replacing the three different devices are as follows:

<b>Number of Members</b>	<b>Apple iPads</b>	<b>Laptops</b>	<b>Windows Tablet</b>
39	£17,550	£23,400	£27,300

- 4.4 Therefore, if the Council were to require 39 Laptops and 39 Windows tablets instead of the Apple iPads and additional budget of £33,700, following relevant approval would need to be added to the Capital Programme in 2022/23.

#### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Members Digital Tools Topic Request Form



Report to: Policy & Performance Improvement Committee Meeting, 28 November 2022

Director Lead: Matthew Finch, Director - Communities & Environment

Lead Officers: Alan Batty, Public Protection Business Manager  
William Marshall, Transformation & Service Improvement Officer

Report Summary	
<b>Report Title</b>	Recommendations from the Review of Anti-Social Behaviour
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To present the findings of the Anti-Social Behaviour Working Group to the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee.
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p>That the Policy &amp; Performance Improvement Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) endorse the proposed recommendations, as summarised in paragraph 4.0, that aim to reduce ASB and ultimately help make residents feel safer in the district; and</li><li>b) forward the recommendations to Cabinet for consideration.</li></ul>

## 1.0 Background

- 1.1 On 13 June 2022 the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee (PPIC) approved a Working Group to undertake a review of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) within Newark & Sherwood. The working group, chaired by Councillor Ronnie White, was set up with the aim of reducing ASB and ultimately helping make residents feel safer in the district.
- 1.2 There is no single definition of what is meant by ASB. The Council have adopted the definition applied by the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014:
- conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person,
  - conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of residential premises,
  - conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person, or
  - conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of business premises
- 1.3 ASB can have a large detrimental effect on communities and individuals that experience it. Reducing crime and tackling ASB is an issue of high importance to the residents of Newark and Sherwood. The results of the 2022 Resident's Survey showed that it was rated the third most important service to residents. Furthermore, it was also rated as the service that was second most in need of improvement.

## **2.0 Summary of the Review**

- 2.1 The group met five times between July and October with input from the following working group members;
- Cllr Ronnie White (Chair)
  - Cllr Penny Rainbow
  - Cllr Lee Brazier
  - Cllr Betty Brooks
  - Cllr Scott Carlton
  - Cllr Jack Kellas
- 2.2 The working group was supported by colleagues from Public Protection who, considering the direction given by members, gathered information and data to inform the sessions supporting members to reach informed recommendations. The working group also met with the Police, Newark and Sherwood's Acting Inspector and Early Intervention Officer, as well as ASB officers from the Council's tenancy team to discuss ASB within the Council's social housing estate.
- 2.3 The Working Group understood that ASB is a complex issue that requires a proactive and collaborative approach in order to successfully reduce the number of incidents. The review into ASB was comprehensive and took the following approach:
- Meeting 1: A scene setting presentation on the role of the Council and Community Safety team in tackling ASB, the key issues and how ASB is currently tackled.
  - Meeting 2: A review of CCTV and its utilisation.
  - Meeting 3: Partnership working with the Police and how to maximise this relationship.
  - Meeting 4: How early intervention tackles ASB and the possible impact of the 'Community Safety Charter'.
  - Meeting 5: A review of ASB in the Council's social housing.

## **3.0 Proposals**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The recommendations in this report are designed to improve how the Council handles ASB in the district and therefore directly contributes to the community plan objective to 'reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and increase feelings of safety in our communities'. Members involved in the working group acknowledged and supported the approach of the anti-social behaviour team. Consultation with residents between 2018 and 2022 show that feelings of safety have increased in the district. With that said, the Council strive to continually improve performance and the recommendations within this report are made with that in mind. There were 5 themes identified with recommendations for each.



## Tackling ASB



### 3.2 Improve Communications

3.2.1 Reporting anti-social behaviour is key to the success of the Council, and its partners, in reducing/tackling incidents. The data received allows us to target key areas and provides the evidence to assign Council and Police resource. It is only with accurate identification and reporting that issues can be handled and addressed at a local level. The group identified some current barriers to reporting;

- Residents are not always able to identify instances of ASB,
- Residents do not always know who to report it to,
- Residents are not always sure how to report ASB, and
- Residents do not always feel their report is acted upon, we need to 'close the loop' and inform the public about what is done when a report of ASB is received.

3.2.2 Recognising these issues, the Community Safety team have been piloting a Community Safety Newsletter. The aim of the newsletter is to provide members and selected partners with information about the team, what services they provide, upcoming news and events as well as some select performance figures. Members are often the first point of contact for residents when raising issues in the community. Therefore, keeping members apprised of updates within the team would be a valuable exercise. The group reviewed the newsletter and felt that members and partners would benefit from circulating this newsletter on a quarterly basis. In a similar vein, the working group also believes it would be valuable for information on ASB to be included as part of the member induction process.

3.2.3 Given the importance that ASB incidents are reported, we need to ensure that the process of reporting is as easy as possible. Whilst it is currently possible to report incidents online through the Council's website, it can be challenging to navigate and it could be made more user friendly by moving the reporting button to the front page of the website.

3.2.4 Considering the other barriers identified, the group also recommended the Council run a wide-ranging communications campaign to increase understanding of what ASB is and how to report it. As well as creating an annual communications plan, developed in collaboration with colleagues from Communications, to help improve how the council engages with the public when discussing ASB, to ensure consistent messaging and inform the public about some of the successes the council have had in tackling ASB in the district.

#### 3.2.5 **Actions (No costs as can be delivered within existing resource)**

1. Launch an ASB communications campaign that aims to help residents define and identify cases of ASB and how they can be reported to the council and its partners.

2. An ASB communications plan to be developed annually as a business-as-usual task to keep residents informed with ongoing initiatives and updates from across the district.
3. Endorse a quarterly ASB newsletter created by the Community Safety team that provides updates to all members and selected partners.
4. Information on ASB and current initiatives to be included as part of the member induction process.
5. Review the ASB online reporting process and make it more user friendly.

### **3.3 Community Protection Officers**

There are four Community Protection Officers (CPOs) who work across the district, within communities to tackle ASB, amongst other things. They sit within the Public Protection team and are a valuable resource in tackling ASB. However, the group did identify three areas for improvement in the work of the CPOs.

#### **3.3.1 First Area of Improvement: Refocus the Role**

The CPO role was impacted by the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. In the period of 'deep lockdown' during 2020 they fulfilled a wide range of roles outside of their normal duties including delivering food parcels and prescriptions. These were incredibly valuable services delivered under challenging circumstances. However, with the return to a more typical way of life and work, it is important that the CPO role reflects this. The working group recommends that there are certain changes made to how the CPOs operate. By splitting the district up into smaller areas and changing the working pattern of officers to be more in line with when incidents of ASB occur, officers will be better placed to effectively tackle ASB. Additionally, the role should be re-focussed based on the principle of increasing visibility and having more of a presence in the community in order to ensure the role is fit for purpose when tackling ASB.

#### **3.3.2 Second Area of Improvement: Efficiencies**

In line with the Council's Climate Emergency Strategy the CPOs are currently piloting two electric vehicles to carry out their duties. However, due to the reactive nature of the CPO role and the geographic size of the district, the limited range of these vehicles can cause operational issues. This can mean that different areas receive varying levels of service due to capacity. The working group suggested to explore whether there is scope in the future or not to exchange the two electric vehicles currently used by the CPOs with two other vehicles currently used elsewhere in the council's fleet. Additionally, four CPOs currently share two vehicles. Therefore, whilst being mindful of the costs involved the working group recommend that the purchase of one additional hybrid vehicle be considered. This vehicle would create greater resilience in the service and increase the capacity of the CPOs meaning that an increased presence in the district would be operationally possible. Additionally it is likely that three vehicles in total will be enough to service the four officers with CPOs being predominately based in town centres which are easily accessible on foot. In current market conditions a hybrid vehicle would cost approximately £30,000 in total. On any existing or new vehicles, it should also be considered whether an updated livery, which places an emphasis on reporting ASB would remind residents of the importance of informing the council about ASB incidents.

A further option is to upgrade to 'fast' charging infrastructure (50 miles of charge in 15 minutes) to allow the CPOs to continue to use the electric vehicles throughout the duration of their shift and give officers more capacity. This would mean that CPOs will not experience the same limitations from lengthy electric charging.

### 3.3.3 **Third Area of Improvement: Stray Dog Service**

The Council has a legal responsibility to collect stray dogs found in the district. Currently the Council uses a kennelling service in Worksop to house any stray dogs that are collected. Whilst this does not directly impact the Council's ASB service, as discussed above, there are issues with the range of the current vehicles used by officers. The long distances involved in travelling to and from the kennels impacts the capacity that the CPOs have and takes away from their other duties. With this in mind, the working group recommends that the service is reviewed at the conclusion of the current contract, in May 2024, to determine if more local kennels are suitable in an attempt to reduce the travel time for officers.

### 3.3.4 **Actions (Costs associated with 2 and 3)**

1. Implement changes to the way the CPOs operate to improve visibility in the community.
2. Consider the purchase of an additional hybrid vehicle, which would cost approximately £30,000 so that the Council can increase the capacity and presence of CPOs in the district. explore whether there is scope in the future or not to exchange the two electric vehicles currently used by the CPOs with two other vehicles currently used elsewhere in the council's fleet.
3. Consider upgrading the charging infrastructure at Castle House to increase the capacity of the electric vehicles.
4. Review the location of the stray dog kennel once the current contract expires.

## 3.4 **Partnership Working**

3.4.1 Throughout the working group process, it was clear that ASB is a highly complex issue with many causes and influencing factors. There is no singular way of working that will eradicate the problem entirely. Success in tackling ASB requires a collaborative approach that shares good working practices and intelligence. The working group recommends that the Community Safety team continue to work closely with partners, in particular colleagues in the Police's Beat and Early Intervention teams. The working group also ask that the Police look into the possibility of extending their early intervention initiatives into primary schools if possible and whether a focus on youth forums would be useful.

3.4.2 Understanding ASB, where and when it takes place, identifying and understanding any trends in behaviour and who potential perpetrators are, are all vital elements in helping to address and tackle the problem. Having up-to-date intelligence and data is therefore very important in order to successfully reduce ASB in the district. Currently ASB data is collated by the Newark and Sherwood and Bassetlaw Community Safety Partnership analyst. Data is taken from the police computer and is reported back on a monthly basis to the partnership. Funding for the analyst after 22/23 has not been secured. With the majority of ASB incidents being reported directly to the Police, the analyst and the data that they provide are important tools to inform the actions of the ASB team. The working group therefore recommends that Cabinet consider the ongoing funding of the partnership analyst.

3.4.3 The Partnership Analyst has been instrumental in supporting the bids for Safer Streets funding. Over the past three years the data provided to support the Safer Streets bids has allow the council to receive over £1,000,000 in additional funding.

3.4.4 The links between mental health and anti-social behaviour are complex and require careful investigation. Up to a third of ASB perpetrators experience challenges with their mental wellbeing. The working group were very keen to explore the possibility of having a designated mental health professional to work across the council's Community Safety and Housing teams. However after further exploration there are of variety of issues that might make this problematic. Employing an individual in this type of role would cost up to £50,000 per year. Furthermore they would have to have a clinical supervisor which would further add to the costs associated with this position and raises the question whether this role is best suited to sit within the National Health Service. NSDC currently has a number of mental health champions who have knowledge of how to refer individuals to the support that they need and the council have found this to be a very effective way of working. With this in mind, a more pragmatic approach to addressing the link between ASB and mental health at a local government level might be to ensure the ASB, housing and other related teams receive mental health first aid training and awareness training. This will give them the skills and understanding to effectively support individuals, as well as connect them to partners and charities that can provide further assistance.

3.4.5 **Actions (Costs associated with 2)**

1. Continue to work closely with partners and ensure the council retains a strong focus on a collaborative approach to tackling ASB, particularly with the Police. The working group also ask that they consider extending their early intervention initiatives into primary schools if possible and whether a focus on youth forums would be useful.
2. Consider the continued funding of the Police Partnership Analyst for 2023/24.
3. Explore the possibility of providing those that work within the ASB and other related teams with mental health first aid training.

3.5 **The Community Safety Charter**

3.5.1 The Community Safety Charter (CSC) is an initiative set up by the Neighbourhood Watch Network with the aim to involve a wide range of local organisations in crime prevention and work towards the goal of eliminating harassment, ASB and intimidation. The CSC is a free scheme that will allow the Council to deliver clear and consistent messaging through their promotional material, have access to interactive training modules and share ideas and good practices with other groups and organisations. Signing up to the CSC will also demonstrate the council's commitment to help create a more positive, safer environment for those that live in the district.

3.5.2 Neighbourhood Watch groups are valuable crime prevention initiatives and members also noted the ongoing partnership building work between the Council local neighbourhood watch schemes.

3.5.3 **Actions (No costs as delivered within current resource)**

1. The council sign the Community Safety Charter and advocate for partners to do the same.

### 3.6 CCTV

3.6.1 CCTV is a valuable tool that the council takes advantage of to both help prevent ASB as well as identify perpetrators. Logically the success of CCTV cameras is dependent on having a clear field of view. The working group did identify some instances in which cameras have been blocked through the construction of new buildings and overgrown trees for example. Currently the locations of cameras are not changed unless a problem has been identified with the field of vision. Therefore, the working group recommends that the location of CCTV cameras is reviewed on an annual basis and action is taken to remove obstructions where necessary.

3.6.2 It is possible for some of the CCTV cameras used by the council to utilise a facial recognition facility, however this is currently switched off. There was consideration given to whether this facility could be utilised more however there are a number of issues that mean implementation would be challenging. Firstly, the software used in the CCTV control room would need to be upgraded to allow for facial recognition to be used. Secondly it could be considered a violation of privacy. Facial recognition cameras scan the identities of all those that come within range of the cameras and stores this data for future use. A recent court case brought against the South Wales police has raised a question over the legality of facial recognition. It is because of these issues that the use a facial recognition facility should not to be implemented by the council at this time. Instead the working group recommends that further research is carried out into the use of facial recognition and explore whether its use might be viable in the future or not.

3.6.3 When a call is made to the CCTV control room, an operator must be on site to answer the call and view the relevant cameras regardless of the time of day. There are approximately 70 screens and hundreds of cameras that must be monitored so it is unrealistic to expect all of them to be viewed at once. There is currently a CCTV partnership agreement in place between Newark and Sherwood District Council, Ashfield District Council and Broxtowe Borough Council. The costs of maintaining and running the CCTV control room are shared amongst the partners. The services provided by the control room are varied. The main function is to provide CCTV monitoring but the control room is also used by all three authorities for out of hours calls (out-of-hours housing repair calls for example). The working group therefore recommends that the ASB team discuss with those in the CCTV partnership about how to make the control room more effective including making efforts to reduce the number of third party events that take place, to ensure a tight focus on crime and ASB prevention. The working group would also like consideration being given to the possibility of bringing the CCTV operation back in house.

#### 3.6.4 **Actions**

1. The location of CCTV cameras is reviewed on an annual basis and action is taken to remove obstructions where necessary.
2. Further research is carried out into the use of facial recognition.
3. ASB team discuss with those in the CCTV partnership about how to make the control room more effective including making efforts to reduce the number of third party events that take place, to ensure a tight focus on crime and ASB prevention.
4. The working group would also like consideration being given to the possibility of bringing the CCTV operation back in house.

## **4.0 Summary of Recommendations**

### **Improve Communications**

- a. Launch an ASB communications campaign that aims to help residents define and identify cases of ASB and how they can be reported to the council and its partners.
- b. An ASB communications plan to be developed annually as a business-as-usual task to keep residents informed with ongoing initiatives and updates from across the district.
- c. Endorse a quarterly ASB newsletter created by the Community Safety team that provides updates to all members and selected partners.
- d. Information on ASB and current initiatives to be included as part of the member induction process.
- e. Review the ASB online reporting process and make it more user friendly.

### **CPOs**

- f. Implement changes to the way the CPOs operate to improve visibility in the community.
- g. Consider the purchase of an additional hybrid vehicle so that the Council can increase the capacity and presence of CPOs in the district at an approximate cost of £30,000. and explore whether there is scope in the future or not to exchange the two electric vehicles currently used by the CPOs with two other vehicles currently used elsewhere in the council's fleet.
- h. Consider upgrading the charging infrastructure at Castle House to increase the capacity of the electric vehicles.
- i. Review the location of the stray dog kennel once the current contract expires.

### **Partnership Working**

- j. Continue to work closely with partners and ensure the council retains a strong focus on a collaborative approach to tackling ASB, particularly with the Police. The working group also ask that they consider extending their early intervention initiatives into primary schools if possible and whether a focus on youth forums would be useful.
- k. Consider the continued funding of the Police Partnership Analyst for 2023/24.
- l. Explore the possibility of providing those that work within the ASB and other related teams with mental health first aid training.

### **The Community Safety Charter**

- m. The council sign the Community Safety Charter and advocate for partners to do the same.

### **CCTV**

- n. The location of CCTV cameras is reviewed on an annual basis and action is taken to remove obstructions where necessary.
- o. Further research is carried out into the use of facial recognition.
- p. ASB team discuss with those in the CCTV partnership about how to make the control room more effective including making efforts to reduce the number of third party events that take place, to ensure a tight focus on crime and ASB prevention.
- q. Consideration being given to the possibility of bringing the CCTV operation back in house.

## 5.0 **Implications**

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection, Digital and Cyber Security, Equality and Diversity, Financial, Human Resources, Human Rights, Legal, Safeguarding and Sustainability and, where appropriate, they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

### 5.1 **Financial Implications (FIN22-23/9715)**

5.2 Not all of the proposed actions have financial implications, those that do, are summarised below.

Recommendation	Description	Capital £	Revenue £	Notes
g.	x2 New Diesel Vans	£30,000	£3,000	Running costs
h.	Upgrade Charging infrastructure	£50,000	Unknown	£25,000 DNO + up to £25k for ultra fast charging
k.	Continue funding Partnership Analyst	£0	£17,500	2023/24 onwards

5.3 Should the above recommendations be endorsed:

- g. the Capital Programme budget should be increased by £30,000 to purchase one additional hybrid van. This should be financed from the change management reserve, to minimise the impact on the revenue budget.

An additional £3,000 will need added to the Environmental Services budget as a growth item, which would be recharged to Public Protection.

- h. Quotes have been requested from Metric and BP regarding the charge points, but at the moment, an indicative cost would be £25k with a further cost of £18,000 - £25,000 for the ultra fast charge point. Other charge points have attracted government funding, so some investigation into whether this would be applicable here will be required. There will be additional revenue costs if the ultra fast charge points are installed as this will result in additional electricity costs.
- k. the additional budget required to pay for the Council's share of the Partnership Analyst post in 2023/24 and future years would need to be included as a growth item as part of the 2023/24 budget setting process.

5.4 Regarding recommendation k., the Bassetlaw, Newark and Sherwood Community Safety Partnership (CSP) consists of the two district councils, Nottinghamshire County Council and the Nottinghamshire Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). For 2023/24, it is currently proposed that the Partnership Analyst spends their time working equally for the two district councils. It is currently proposed that the estimated cost of the analyst, currently £35,000, be split equally between the two district councils. The Council would therefore need to add £17,500 to its budget in 2023/24 and future years to pay for its share of the post.

- 5.5 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 placed new duties on English local authorities. As a result of this legislation, the Council has received £31,000 annually in 2021/22 and 2022/23 to fund the costs of its new duties. The Council currently expects to receive similar amounts in future years. If the Council does receive this grant funding, it may use some of the monies received towards the costs of the Partnership Analyst, subject to agreement between the relevant officers.

**Background Papers and Published Documents**

None



## Forward Plan

For the Period November 2022 - February 2023



### What is the Plan?

This Forward Plan sets out all of the Key Decisions that are expected to be taken during the period referred to above. The Council has a statutory duty to prepare this document, in accordance, with the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended). The Plan is published monthly and will be available on the [Council's Website](#).

### What is a Key Decision?

The decisions listed in this plan are 'Key Decisions'. A Key Decision is one that is likely to:

- (a) Result in the Council spending or making savings of over £150,000 revenue or £300,000 in capital, or;
- (b) Where the impact of the decision would be significant in terms of its impact on communities living or working in two or more Wards.

Under the Council's Constitution, Key Decisions are made by the Cabinet, Portfolio Holders, or officers acting under delegated powers.

### Exempt Information

The plan also lists those 'Exempt' Key Decisions which are going to be taken over the next four months. Exempt Key Decisions are those decisions which have to be taken in private. This is because they involve confidential or exempt information which cannot be shared with the public.

Agenda papers for Cabinet meetings are published on the Council's website 5 working days before the meeting [here](#). Any items marked confidential or exempt will not be available for public inspection.

Any background paper listed can be obtained by contacting the Responsible Officer. Responsible officers can be contacted on 01636 650000 or [customerservices@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk)

Decision to be taken / Report title and Summary	Decision maker	Date Decision to be taken	Responsible Portfolio Holder	Responsible Officer	Exempt y/n and Grounds for exemption	Date decision can be implemented
Sherwood Levelling Up Fund Updates - Ollerton Town Centre and Mansfield Road, Clipstone	Cabinet	1 Nov 2022	Leader - Portfolio Holder Strategy, Performance and Finance	Mark Eyre, Business Manager- Corporate Property Mark.Eyre@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Part exempt <i>Commercially sensitive material</i>	7 Nov 2022
Proposal for a Kerbside Glass Recycling Service in Newark & Sherwood	Cabinet	1 Nov 2022	Leader - Portfolio Holder Strategy, Performance and Finance, Portfolio Holder - Cleaner, Safer, Greener	Andrew Kirk, Business Manager - Transport and Waste Services Andrew.Kirk@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	7 Nov 2022
Local Development Framework Update - Publication of Allocations and Development Management APD and Gypsy and Traveller Site Provision	Cabinet	1 Nov 2022	Portfolio Holder- Economic Development and Visitors	Matthew Norton, Business Manager - Planning Policy matthew.norton@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk, Mark Eyre, Business Manager- Corporate Property Mark.Eyre@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Part exempt	7 Nov 2022

Decision to be taken / Report title and Summary	Decision Maker	Date Decision to be taken	Responsible Portfolio Holder	Responsible Officer	Exempt y/n and Grounds for exemption	Date decision can be implemented
Economic Growth Action Plan - Annual Review	Cabinet	1 Nov 2022	Portfolio Holder- Economic Development and Visitors	Neil Cuttall Neil.Cuttall@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Part exempt <i>Commercially sensitive information</i>	7 Nov 2022
Newark and Southwell Conservation Area Boundary Changes / Adoption of Appraisal Documents	Cabinet	1 Nov 2022	Portfolio Holder- Economic Development and Visitors	Oliver Scott, Senior Conservation Officer Oliver.Scott@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	7 Nov 2022
Acquisition of land at Lowdham – for provision of car parking	Cabinet	6 Dec 2022	Leader - Portfolio Holder Strategy, Performance and Finance	Mark Eyre, Business Manager- Corporate Property Mark.Eyre@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Part exempt <i>Commercially Sensitive information</i>	12 Dec 2022
Old Hall Farm, Edingley	Cabinet	6 Dec 2022	Leader - Portfolio Holder Strategy, Performance and Finance	Lisa Hughes, Business Manager - Planning Development lisa.hughes@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Part exempt <i>Commercially sensitive information</i>	12 Dec 2022
Local Area Energy Planning	Cabinet	6 Dec 2022	Leader - Portfolio Holder Strategy, Performance and Finance	Matt Finch, Director- Communities & Environment Matthew.Finch@newar	Open	12 Dec 2022

Decision to be taken / Report title and Summary	Decision Maker	Date Decision to be taken	Responsible Portfolio Holder	Responsible Officer	Exempt y/n and Grounds for exemption	Date decision can be implemented
				k-sherwooddc.gov.uk		
Adoption of Infrastructure Funding Statement	Cabinet	6 Dec 2022	Portfolio Holder- Economic Development and Visitors	Matt Lamb, Director - Planning and Growth Matt.Lamb@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	12 Dec 2022
A46 Northern Town Bypass and Newark Towns Fund	Cabinet	6 Dec 2022	Portfolio Holder- Economic Development and Visitors	Matt Lamb, Director - Planning and Growth Matt.Lamb@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Part exempt <i>Commercially sensitive information</i>	12 Dec 2022
Options for Brunel Drive and Farrar Close	Cabinet	6 Dec 2022	Portfolio Holder- Economic Development and Visitors	Mark Eyre, Business Manager- Corporate Property Mark.Eyre@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Part exempt <i>Commercially sensitive information</i>	12 Dec 2022
Heritage and Culture - Strategic Review	Cabinet	6 Dec 2022	Portfolio Holder- Economic Development and Visitors	Carys Coulton-Jones, Business Manager- Heritage, Culture and Visitors Carys.Coulton-Jones@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	12 Dec 2022

Decision to be taken / Report title and Summary	Decision Maker	Date Decision to be taken	Responsible Portfolio Holder	Responsible Officer	Exempt y/n and Grounds for exemption	Date decision can be implemented
Active4Today Draft Business Plan	Executive Shareholder Committee	December 2022	Portfolio Holder - Homes and Health	Suzanne Shead suzanne.shead@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	
Health and Wellbeing Strategy	Cabinet	6 Dec 2022	Portfolio Holder - Homes and Health	Suzanne Shead suzanne.shead@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	12 Dec 2022
Tree Strategy	Cabinet	6 Dec 2022	Portfolio Holder - Cleaner, Safer, Greener	Matt Adey, Development Manager- Environmental Services matt.adey@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Part exempt <i>Commercially sensitive information</i>	12 Dec 2022
Environmental Enforcement	Cabinet	6 Dec 2022	Portfolio Holder - Cleaner, Safer, Greener	Alan Batty, Business Manager - Public Protection alan.batty@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Part exempt	12 Dec 2022
Safer Streets Funding Programme	Cabinet	6 Dec 2022	Portfolio Holder - Cleaner, Safer, Greener	Matt Finch, Director- Communities & Environment Matthew.Finch@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	12 Dec 2022

Decision to be taken / Report title and Summary	Decision Maker	Date Decision to be taken	Responsible Portfolio Holder	Responsible Officer	Exempt y/n and Grounds for exemption	Date decision can be implemented
Arkwood Developments Business Plan	Executive Shareholder Committee	January 2023	Leader - Portfolio Holder Strategy, Performance and Finance	Will Marshall, Policy and Projects Officer william.marshall@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Fully exempt <i>Commercially Sensitive information</i>	
Supporting Future Business Growth	Cabinet	17 Jan 2023	Leader - Portfolio Holder Strategy, Performance and Finance	Nick Wilson, Business Manager- Financial Services Nick.Wilson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk, Neil Cuttall Neil.Cuttall@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	23 Jan 2023
Customer Strategy	Cabinet	17 Jan 2023	Deputy Leader - Portfolio Holder Organisational Development and Governance	Jill Baker, Business Manager - Customer Services Jill.baker@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	23 Jan 2023
Communications Strategy	Cabinet	17 Jan 2023	Leader - Portfolio Holder Strategy, Performance and Finance	Sarah Lacey, Communication and Marketing Manager Sarah.Forgione@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	23 Jan 2023

Decision to be taken / Report title and Summary	Decision Maker	Date Decision to be taken	Responsible Portfolio Holder	Responsible Officer	Exempt y/n and Grounds for exemption	Date decision can be implemented
Promotion of Tourism	Cabinet	17 Jan 2023	Portfolio Holder- Economic Development and Visitors	Neil Cuttall Neil.Cuttall@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	23 Jan 2023
Housing Strategy 2022-2027	Cabinet	17 Jan 2023	Portfolio Holder - Homes and Health	Cara Clarkson, Strategic Housing cara.clarkson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	23 Jan 2023
Tenancy Agreement Review	Cabinet	17 Jan 2023	Portfolio Holder - Homes and Health	Julie Davidson, Business Manager- Housing and Estates Julie.Davidson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	23 Jan 2023
Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document	Cabinet	17 Jan 2023	Portfolio Holder - Homes and Health	Cara Clarkson, Strategic Housing cara.clarkson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	23 Jan 2023
Play Park Investment	Cabinet	17 Jan 2023	Portfolio Holder - Cleaner, Safer, Greener	Matt Finch, Director- Communities & Environment Matthew.Finch@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	23 Jan 2023

Decision to be taken / Report title and Summary	Decision Maker	Date Decision to be taken	Responsible Portfolio Holder	Responsible Officer	Exempt y/n and Grounds for exemption	Date decision can be implemented
Proposal for a Kerbside Glass Recycling Service in Newark & Sherwood	Cabinet	21 Feb 2023	Leader - Portfolio Holder Strategy, Performance and Finance	Andrew Kirk, Business Manager - Transport and Waste Services Andrew.Kirk@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	27 Feb 2023
Edwinstowe Forest Corner Project	Cabinet	21 Feb 2023	Portfolio Holder- Economic Development and Visitors	Neil Cuttall Neil.Cuttall@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk	Open	27 Feb 2023



## NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Cabinet** held in the Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, NG24 1BY on Tuesday, 4 October 2022 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor D Lloyd (Chairman)

Councillor K Girling, Councillor Mrs R Holloway, Councillor P Peacock and Councillor T Wendels

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor L Goff, Councillor Mrs P Rainbow and Councillor Miss R White.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor R Jackson (Committee Member)

### 22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no declarations of interest.

### 23 NOTIFICATION TO THOSE PRESENT THAT THE MEETING WILL BE RECORDED AND STREAMED ONLINE

The Leader and Chairman advised that the proceedings were being audio recorded and live streamed by the Council.

### 24 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 12 JULY 2022

The minutes from the meeting held on 12 July 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 25 CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

The Leader and Chairman informed the Cabinet that proposals would be coming forward regarding helping residents during the current cost of living issue. He advised of the work the Council had already started and the increasing engagement with the relevant and necessary partners in order to bring about the appropriate help and support to residents.

### 26 EAST MIDLANDS DEVOLUTION DEAL

The Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Performance & Finance presented a report which advised the Cabinet of the devolution agreement that had been reached in principle between government and the four upper tier authorities across Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. The report recommended that Cabinet seek endorsement for the agreement from the Full Council.

The East Midlands Devolution Deal would include the first of a new type of combined authority, designed for two-tier areas, which would be established through new legislation by central government. The legislation would enable the formation of an East Midlands Mayoral Combined County Authority with a 'level 3' deal which offered

the most local powers and funding in return for a new elected mayor. The report set out the headline details of the deal and the Chief Executive confirmed the ongoing and strong influential roles the district and boroughs would have on the combined authority.

AGREED (unanimously) to seek Full Council's endorsement of the East Midlands Devolution deal.

#### Reason for Decision

To express support for the East Midlands Devolution Deal

#### Options Considered

There is no requirement for Borough and District Councils to endorse the devolution deal – the agreement is between Government and the four upper tier authorities. Nevertheless, we have contributed to the content of the deal and will have a relationship with the new Mayor and Combined Authority. The deal document respects and recognises the distinct responsibilities of Boroughs and Districts and our endorsement is considered to be an appropriate expression of support for the principle of devolution and the specific content of the East Midlands deal.

#### 27 PROJECTED GENERAL FUND AND HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN REPORT TO 31 MARCH 2023 AS AT 30 JUNE 2022

The Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Performance & Finance presented a report which provided an updated forecast outturn position for the 2022/23 financial year for the Council's General Fund and Housing Revenue Account revenue and capital budgets. The report showed performance against the approved estimates of revenue expenditure and income. The accounts showed a projected unfavourable variance against the revised budget of £0.947m on service budgets, with an overall unfavourable variance of £0.457m that was forecast to be transferred from usable reserves. Appendix A to the report detailed the variances in service areas and other budgets.

It was noted that the unfavourable variance of £0.947m included an unfavourable variance of £0.873m on employee spend which was due to the significant recruitment issues across the Council. The unfavourable variance of £0.873m on employee spend also included the total estimated additional cost of the forecast 2022/23 pay award.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) note the General Fund projected unfavourable outturn variance of £0.457m to usable reserves;
- b) note the Housing Revenue Account projected unfavourable outturn variance of £0.524m to the Major Repairs Reserve;
- c) approve the variations to the Capital Programme at Appendix C; and

- d) approve the Capital Programme revised budget and financing of £89.944m (£53.787 GF, £36.207 HRA).

Reasons for Decision

To consider the forecast outturn position for the 2022/23 financial year for the Council's General Fund and Housing Revenue Account revenue and capital budgets.

To show performance against the approved estimates of revenue expenditure and income; report on major variances from planned budget performance; and report on variations to the Capital Programme for approval; all in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

28 COMMUNITY PLAN PERFORMANCE FOR QUARTER 1 - 2022/23

The Transformation & Service Improvement Manager presented the Community Plan Performance report for Quarter 1. The performance information was assessed against the Council's Community Plan objectives. The Transformation & Service Improvement Manager reported that the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee had sought assurance in relation to the performance indicator concerning the percentage of homes with valid gas compliance certificates which they would review again at their next meeting; they also reflected on the over performance in respect of fly tipping and considered that these targets could be stretched further in the second quarter; and they also considered the performance in relation to the time to process claims which linked into the work to be undertaken in relation to the cost of living issues.

The Cabinet welcomed the comments of the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee and confirmed these would be reviewed accordingly. The Cabinet also highlighted positive performance in relation to the new local influence networks for tenants; the new empty homes standard and starting well scheme; the number of web chats; the day of action in Bilsthorpe; and the evolving engagement with customers.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Community Plan Performance Quarter 1 report be noted, with the Cabinet considering the Council's performance against its objectives.

Reason for Decision

To enable the Cabinet to review the Quarter 1 Community Plan Performance report.

29 CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY (KEY DECISION)

The Portfolio Holder for Organisational Development & Governance presented a report which sought to approve the Consultation & Engagement Strategy and associated action plan. The current Consultation & Engagement Strategy required updating in line with the Council's values and engagement aspirations. The proposed Consultation and Engagement outlined the Council's high-level approach to engagement to ensure communities and stakeholders were involved in decision making and could influence the future of where they live by directing change and

informing service developments. The Portfolio Holder reported that the Strategy had been endorsed by the Tenant Engagement Board.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) approve the Consultation & Engagement Strategy and associated Action Plan;
- b) endorse the creation and use of operational guidance for officers to sit below this strategy; and
- c) request that Policy & Performance Improvement Committee review the impact of this strategy after one year.

Reason for Decision

To put an appropriate framework in place to ensure decision making is informed by resident views and services are shaped by an understanding of resident priorities and needs.

30 NEWARK TOWN FUND UPDATE AND LORRY PARK OPTIONS FOR RELOCATION (KEY DECISION)

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development & Visitors presented a report which provided an update on the Newark Town Fund Programme including recommendations to continue to progress the relocation of Newark Lorry Park and the redevelopment of the Newark Gateway site.

Since the update report to the Cabinet on 7 June 2022, a number of Towns Fund projects had progressed at pace including assessment and in many cases assurance of Outline and Full Business Cases via the Council's external independent assurers and the Council's S151 Officer. The report provided an update on all Towns Fund projects but substantively dealt with the SisCLog proposals and linked activity surrounding the Newark Lorry Park and its need for relocation given the proposals emerging through the A46 Newark Northern Bypass scheme.

With regard to the Lorry Park, it was reported that the preferred route for the Newark A46 Northern Bypass would significantly impact on the existing lorry park site. Given that and the associated income loss to the Council, it was still recommended to relocate the lorry park, with the preferred location still being the Newark Showground.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) note the progress on the Newark Town Fund Programme and associated projects being delivered;
- b) authorise the Director – Planning & Growth in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Strategy, Performance & Finance and Economic Development & Visitor Economy to respond to National Highways Statutory Consultation on the A46 Newark Northern Bypass to outline the strong support for the proposals alongside the need to deliver the Council's aspirations to relocate the Lorry Park,

redevelop the Gateway site, and to secure adequate compensation for the impacts of the Bypass proposals;

- c) authorise the Business Manager, Corporate Property, in consultation with the Director – Planning & Growth and Portfolio Holders for Strategy, Performance & Finance and Economic Development & Visitor Economy, to progress negotiations with landowner(s) for a proposed new Newark Lorry Park site in order to allow terms to be considered as part of development of a Business Case for the Lorry Park relocation; and
- d) authorise the Business Manager, Corporate Property, in consultation with the Director – Planning & Growth and the Portfolio Holders for Strategy, Performance & Finance and Economic Development & Visitor Economy, to develop a business case (including where appropriate identifying a development partner), and planning applications for a relocated Newark Lorry Park and redevelopment of the Gateway site, supported by additional revenue budget of £200,000 funded from the Change Management Reserve to cover necessary fees.

#### Reasons for Decision

A retained but relocated and expanded Newark Lorry Park will continue to offer an important facility to the logistics and transport sector, as reflected by its increase in use and importance in recent years. The relocation will also allow for the delivery of the Gateway site, specifically the SiSCLog proposals as supported by the Government, this Council, and the Newark Towns Board. The proposals support all of the Community Plan objectives given their scale and scope of outputs in continuing to provide opportunities and aspiration for residents and businesses.

#### Options Considered:

The development of the Newark Town Investment Plan and selection of priority Towns Fund projects was part of a significant assessment process undertaken by the Newark Towns Board, in consultation with a range of partners and industry, including the Council. With respect to the Gateway site and the existing Newark Lorry Park the report explored various options available to the Council as a result of the impact of the A46 Newark Northern Bypass.

### 31 NEWARK & SHERWOOD PLAN REVIEW - AMENDED ALLOCATIONS & DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT UPDATE

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth & Visitors presented a report which updated the Cabinet on recent national planning guidance and its impact on the publication of the Amended Allocations & Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD) for a period of public representation.

It had been intended that a finalised version of the Allocations & Development Management DPD be presented to this meeting of the Cabinet, however updated guidance on flood risk was issued by the government in late August which significantly increased the time for the purposes of plan making. An additional programme of work had been agreed with the Council's flood risk consultants which commenced in September, to ensure findings are available in such time to provide recommendations to the 1 November 2022 Cabinet meeting.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the report be noted; and
- b) the Chief Executive be requested to call an Extraordinary Full Council meeting to be held on Wednesday, 9 November 2022 to agree publication of the amended Allocations & Development Management DPD.

#### Reasons for Decision

To update Cabinet on recent national planning guidance and its impact on the publication of the Amended Allocations & Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD) for a period of public representation. To allow the Council to agree to the publication of the Amended Allocations & Development Management DPD in November 2022.

#### Options Considered

Without this work being undertaken it is considered that the Council would not be able to demonstrate that a sound DPD had been produced in line with National Policy and Guidance and therefore there is no alternative to the course of action proposed. In order to carry out the consultation in 2022, full Council needs to have approved the consultation by the second week of November therefore it would not be possible to wait until the meeting of the full Council in December.

### 32 NEWARK SOUTHERN LINK ROAD PROJECT (KEY DECISION)

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development & Visitors presented a report which provided an update on the funding and delivery of the Newark Southern Link Road (SLR), including updates to the Council's Capital Program.

It was reported that government funds were now being released to the Council in agreed tranches as per the Memorandum of Understanding with the Department for Transport. Work had progressed at pace to ensure the SLR delivery was accelerated. This included securing amended detailed highway design and assembling a contractor package to present to market. The Director – Planning & Growth confirmed to the Cabinet that five tender documents had been returned which were now to be analysed.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) note the progress on the Newark Southern Link Road (SLR), including the pending receipt of tender returns from contractors to build the remainder of the SLR; and
- b) subject to the outcome of the tender returns, delegate authority to the Director - Planning & Growth, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Strategy, Performance & Finance and Economic Development & Visitors to request Nottinghamshire County Council to provide an appropriate financial contribution to the Newark Southern Link Road (SLR).

### Reasons for Decision

To deliver the Newark SLR, addressing local congestion and unlocking significant growth in delivering the Middlebeck Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) including associated housing, employment, education, and open space in accordance with the Council's Amended Core Strategy (2019) and Community Plan (2020-2023).

### Options Considered

A range of options, over many years, have previously been explored to deliver the SLR (in full or in part) and its associated growth and congestion-reduction benefits. The funding package now in place represents the most viable option to accelerate delivery of the full SLR and associated growth.

## 33 SHARED PROSPERITY FUND

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development & Visitors presented a report which sought approval for the next steps in the delivery of the Shared Prosperity Fund.

Following the Cabinet report on 7 June 2022, and agreement by the Newark & Sherwood Place Board on 26 July 2022, Officers submitted the Newark & Sherwood Investment Plan to government by the required date of 1 August 2022. The expected date for confirmation that the Investment Plan would release the grant funding allocation for 2022/23 was October 2022. This would provide a sum of £399,360 for defrayment by 31 March 2023, and a further £798,720 in 2023/24, and £2,092,646 in 2024/25.

The government had recognised that local authorities would require support in terms of capacity to deliver the Shared Prosperity Fund programme and had allocated an up to 4% top slice to enable delivery. It was proposed that this funding be utilised to appoint a Programme Manager to provide dedicated support.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) Cabinet support the establishment of a Shared Prosperity Fund Programme Manager;
- b) the Council's base budget be increased to include the new SPF Programme Manager by £72,745 (based on 4% of the grant allocation) or £65,121 (based on 6% of the grant allocation) depending on outcome of the request to increase the top slice percentage; and
- c) delegated authority be given to the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development & Visitors to approve projects and interventions in line with SPF Guidance and the identified priorities.

### Reasons for Decision

The selected option will allow the Council to implement a structured programme management approach, providing the necessary capacity and capability in contract management, procurement, commissioning and engagement.

### Options Considered

Use of the allocation of Shared Prosperity Fund for additional capacity through acquiring a consultant on a fixed term contract or recruitment of a part time programme manager.

Meeting closed at 7.00 pm.

Chairman