

Newark and Sherwood District Council Performance Report

2023-24 Q4

1 January to 31 March 2024



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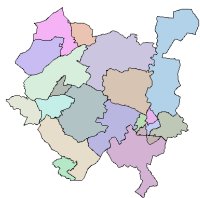
Introduction

We at 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. 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. Our new Community Plan is now in place and a performance framework has been drafted. As this is finalised, it will become the how we will measure the performance of our objectives as of Quarter 1 2024/25. It will continue to contain key performance indicators; a combination of qualitative and quantitative data and it will expand on the current measures around 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 January to 31 March 2024 (Quarter 4).

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 28



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 33

Our District

About Newark and Sherwood (2021 Census)...

A resident population of 122,956 (14.9% of Nottinghamshire's population).

There are 53,332 dwellings in the district, 38.5% are owned outright, 31.3% are owned with a mortgage or loan, 13.9% are socially rented with around 10% of those directly owned by the Council and 16.3% are private rented.

92.7% of the district population were born in the UK.

60.5% of the district's population are working age (16 to 64), 17% are 16 years or younger and 22.4% of the population are over the age of 65. For those over the age of 65, this percentage has increase by 3.5% when compared to the 2011 census demonstrating a growing older population when compared to the 2021 census.

In terms of socio-economic challenges, 16.2% of households do not own a car or van, 0.8% of households do not have a form of central heating and 19.1% of residents do not have any formal qualifications.

Performance of our district

This data tells us something about our district in quarter 4 (1 January to 31 March 2024). 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 decreased by 11, residential applications have decreased by 25, non-major applications have decreased by 215 and major applications have decreased by 23.

- 11 commercial planning applications were validated
- 153 residential planning applications were validated
- 54 major planning applications were received
- 784 minor planning applications were received

Average daily footfall during Q4 was 2,773 visitors per day. Q3 had a value of 3,264, in comparison Q4 experienced a reduction in daily footfall by 15%. Meanwhile, the value generated by all 10 sensors in Newark is 6,497. Q3 had a value of 7,190 visitors per day. This is a reduction of 9.7%.



These reductions could be the result of several factors. These include the travel warnings issued during Storm Henk in January. The cost-of-living crisis also continued to impact household budgets, particularly during the winter when temperatures were lower, and nights were longer. As a result, the decision may have been made to take less trips to Newark town centre. The recent announcement that the UK entered a recession in 2023 may have further impacted these decisions. Despite this, it should be noted that both February and March experienced a rise in footfall from the previous month. This was the first instance since October 2023 in which there has been an increase in monthly footfall. This matches trends seen in regional and national indicators. While it would be premature to suggest that footfall has stopped declining, these statistics indicate that visitor numbers in Newark may begin to recover in the first quarter of 2024/25.

**please note, footfall figures are not currently being compared against last year due to the installation of the 5 new sensors.*

Interactions with the Council — Service Demand

This information gives an indication of demand for council assistance **year to date:**

- **16,720 face to face contacts** were held at Castle House, a 25.7% increase when compared to the same period of last year.
- **113,532 calls** were received by the contact centre, a 4% decrease when compared to the same period of last year.
- **27,292 calls** were received by responsive repairs, a 1.98% increase when compared to the same period of last year.
- **62,200 digital web form transactions** were completed by our customers, which has almost doubled the number of web form transactions when compared to the same period of last year with 31,236 transactions being recorded.

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;

⇒ During Quarter 4 the UK was impacted by Storm Henk, which closely followed Storm Babet, causing significant issues across the county. In the Newark and Sherwood District, residential and commercial properties were internally flooded, sometimes for the second time, causing damage to properties and the loss and damage of possessions. Some premises were affected by the sewage system back surging, and some residents required evacuation and some of which continue to be displaced.



During the storm event, our officers liaised with Flood Wardens to provide immediate response, including the provision of aqua sacs. Additional support was provided by Nottingham Fire and Rescue Service in the form of boat rescue and the provision of food and medical items. In the immediate aftermath, our Officers conducted hi-visibility patrols throughout the district, concentrating on the key flood locations of Gunthorpe, Lowdham, Girton and Collingham, along with Farndon and Kelham Roads. We also undertook Flood Verification Visits across the district. Several

community meetings have been held around the affected parts of the District in partnership with the Environment Agency, Severn Trent Water and Nottinghamshire County Council to provide reassurance, offer practical advice and give information on flood plans.

Our Humanitarian Assistance Support Team (HART) were stood up for Storm Henk to provide a full range of support to residents. Support included: safe and well checks, food and medicine deliveries, arranging waste collections and road cleaning, and signposting to services. We have undertaken 152 home verification visits, enabling people to access government grant funding to support them in the recovery process.

The first Newark & Sherwood Flood Partnership Meeting was held at Castle House on Friday 23rd February 2024. Attendees included the Environment Agency, Nottinghamshire County Council, and the Canals and Rivers Trust. An action plan has been drawn up for all agencies, this action plan is primarily information gathering in nature to establish where responsibilities sit, what actions have/are being taken in the wake of storm Babet and Henk, and what lessons have been learnt. The next meeting is scheduled to take place in April 2024.



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



- ⇒ Four new consumer standards are due for publication on 1st April 2024. The Transparency, Influence, Accountability and Standard (TIAS) highlight the governments and the regulator's requirement for positive relationships between the tenant and the landlord, and as such remains a focus for us. As such we have started a review of our engagement methods, consultation with our tenants will be at the heart of this to ensure we understand what tenants would like from us and what methods of engagement work best for them. The outcomes of this will be shared in due course.
- ⇒ Within Quarter 4 we have undertaken 34 tenant engagement opportunities, including Local Influence Networks, Tenant Panel and 'Pop-in' session, and have had 46 new additional tenants become involved this quarter.
- ⇒ This quarters 'Tenant Times' went to 3,431 tenants, and we had a 95% successful delivery rate. This edition was opened by 1,985 residents, with the highest click rates being the 'Who is my Tenancy Officer' and 'Here to Help' pages. The Here to Help page includes cost of living tips, who to go to for advice for a range of subjects including benefits, repairs, and independent support, along with healthy eating guidance and



recipes, which have received positive feedback from our tenants.

- ⇒ During quarter four we had one new 'good cause' join the Community Lottery Fund. The Community Lottery Live Draw took place on the 13th of March. Six good causes, listed below, won £500 each to support their projects.

- Home Start Newark
- Walesby Forest
- Newark Dementia Carers Group
- Kick Start Youth Football League
- Edwinstowe Village Hall
- Newark Breast Cancer Support Group

The next live draw will take place in July where another six groups will be awarded £500 The scheme is on track to raise £34,569.60 for good causes within a 12-month (rolling) period.



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



⇒ Four Speedwatch sessions were attempted this Quarter. One was successfully undertaken:
Collingham, Swinderby Road – Unsuccessful due to cars parked on both sides of the road.
Collingham, Station Road – Unsuccessful due to adverse weather conditions.
Southwell - Unsuccessful due to adverse weather conditions.
Spalford, Eagle Road – 10 vehicles checked, one over the speed limit.

The details of speeding vehicles are sent to Nottinghamshire Police who send out a warning letter.

⇒ The Community Grant panel met in March to review all 47 applications and awarded funding of 100k to the following groups highlighted below. All successful groups submitted applications that met one of the Community Grant priority areas.

Application Name	Amount Awarded (£)
Blidworth on the Move	4,500.00
Christ Church Newark	8,100.62
Farnsfield Community Spaces	966.00
Friends of Coddington School	8940.60
Friends of Sconce and Devon Park	4440.78
Friends of Southwell Park	10,800.00
Muskham Rural Community Centre	4,980.00
Newark & District Royal Air Force Cadets	2,190.00
Newark Amateur Boxing Club (NABC)	7,900.00
Ollerton Town Football Club	4,932.00
Reach Learning Disability	10,000.00
Sherwood Forest Education Partnerships CIC	5,000.00
The Furniture Project	13,750.00
The Social Action Hub	10,000.00
Winthorpe Community Garden	3,500.00

How are we performing against our objective to...

Deliver inclusive and sustainable growth



What we have been doing this quarter;

⇒ The Newark Town Investment Plan 2020 programme of activities continues to flourish.

- The Construction College is delivering four post 16 courses in bricklaying, plumbing and heating. There are 115 students enrolled, scheduled for completion in July 2024.
- Demolition commenced on the Stodman Street Project. Hoarding remains in place. The project is due to complete in Autumn 2025.



⇒ Newark Investment Plan and the Long Term Plan for Towns Fund. This quarter we have carried out comprehensive consultation with stakeholders. We are now in the next stage of the project – working towards developing the Newark Investment Plan for 2024 – 2034 which is a 10-year strategic plan for the town. This plan is in progress, alongside the Newark Town Centre Master Plan and Design Code, all of which are due for completion in August 2024 and will ensure we are developing projects which are supported by local people and will have a real impact on Newark. We are hopeful that the plan will help secure an additional £20million worth of funding, which will help support the delivery of the plan.



⇒ During the 2023/24 financial year, 49 residents have successfully completed courses funded and delivered through the BoostING programme. This is available to all local employers to support them in up-skilling their workforce.



⇒ The scheduled refurbishment of the Buttermarket has now been completed. The mezzanine floor is currently vacant whilst we pursue the available options to make the best use of this space.



Deliver inclusive and sustainable growth

⇒ Ambitious plans to create a new and improved visitor attraction at Newark Castle got another green light after plans were recently approved.

Through a funding application via the National Lottery Heritage Fund along with a £3million allocation from Newark's Towns Fund deal and a capital contribution, this ground-breaking project will see Newark Castle's original Romanesque Gatehouse, named by Historic England as the most complete example of such a structure in England, reinstated as the spectacular entrance just as it was centuries ago.



This quarter we have achieved some key milestones, which are puzzle pieces towards making this project a reality. These include:

- Planning Permission granted.
- Town Fund bid approved.
- Application to National Lottery Heritage Fund submitted November 2023, and we anticipate successful confirmation of the award in Quarter 1 2024/25.

⇒ The Sherwood Levelling Up Fund Bid, submitted in summer 2022, has been approved in principle. In January we submitted an updated programme plan to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) as part of this review process. The outcome of this is expected by the Summer 2024. Feasibility studies The overall aim is to develop the scheme with key partners including the Town Council by summer 2026. The two core components of the bid are:

- The Ollerton Town Centre Scheme
- the Clipstone Regeneration Scheme (employment/commercial/sports/leisure and education linking in with Vicar Water)

Through the provision of capacity funding, both projects continue to deliver and move forward with feasibility and planning related works, whilst we await confirmation of funding from Government. Discussions with Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) are in the final stages of the validation process, and an update will be provided to Cabinet in June. All Levelling Up Fund (LUF) funding awarded must be spent by March 2026.

Aside from Sherwood LUF, Bilsthorpe Parish Council were awarded £55k of UKSPF to continue to drive forward the development of a new community building in the village, with the funding set aside in 24-25 to support ongoing feasibility and professional fees.



Deliver inclusive and sustainable growth



⇒ Through UKSPF, we are delivering initiatives to support residents to progress into employment or develop skills within the workplace or education setting. For young people, this includes the Premier League Primary Stars Programme delivered in eight primary schools across Newark and Sherwood, reaching more than 280 young people across the district, as well as direct engagement with colleges, the Future First Expo, and direct support. We continue to develop a series of proposals with West Notts College to support adult education, community learning in Sherwood, and further develop a public service compact to support a route to employment for people to work in the public service.

⇒ We recently awarded Newark and Sherwood Community and Voluntary Service a UKSPF grant of £34K to support the CVS Golden Thread project. This project is due to commence in Quarter 4 2024/25 and is currently funded until March 2026. It will support local young (post 14 year of age) people to gain work experience and volunteer placements across the district, whilst gaining an accredited volunteering qualification and work experience. The courses will be tailored to the individual needs of the participants.

⇒ Across all of the UKSPF people and skill programmes to date we have supported nearly 470 residents to access educational support, training or complete courses. This support is provided to residents on an ongoing basis throughout the financial year, rather than quarter by quarter.

⇒ As detailed in the quarter three performance report, we have created a suite of initiatives in collaboration with partners to bolster sustainable economic growth through funding made available through UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF). This includes a package of support to businesses that provides:

- Accelerator - specialist research and innovation and decarbonisation support for local businesses to improve the sustainability of their operations. Delivered by East Midlands Chamber.
- Start-up Scale-up programme- specialist 1-2-1 support and workshops for prestart up and early-stage enterprises.
- 1-2-1 established business support through Nottinghamshire County Council Business Advisors
- Rural Business Investment grant fund
- Business Growth and Sustainability fund
- Grant finder searches
- Bespoke workshops on business support, exporting, and procurement.

To date 257 businesses have received support this financial year through the above schemes, with 216 receiving specialist 1-2-1 business advice or access to workshops. 71 businesses were awarded grant funding, with grants ranging from £1,000 to £50,000.

⇒ The Amended Allocations & Development Management DPD was submitted for Examination on the 16 January 2024. It will now be subject to examination. The anticipated timetable for adoption is detailed below, this timeline is however subject to change at the inspectors discretion.

- Q4 23/24 - Pre-Hearing Period January to March 2024
- Q1 24/25 - Examination by Inspector (April 2024)
- Q2 24/25 - Consultation on Main Modifications (June/July 2024)
- Q3 24/25 - Receipt of Inspector's Report (September 2024)
- Q4 24/25 - Adoption and Publication (October 2024)

Deliver inclusive and sustainable growth



⇒ We continue to lead and support on key infrastructure projects around the district including:

- Construction of the Southern Link Road is ongoing. The recent flooding events have impacted the site and caused delays. We continue to liaise with Nottinghamshire County Council (local highways authority) and National Highways (strategic highways network authority) for technical approval for some elements, including the roundabout connecting the A46. Due to open to quarter 1 / 2 2026. We continue to liaise with Urban and Civic to maintain lines of communication on any issues arising.
- A1 over bridge: The 2021 updated feasibility study proved eight options. The feasibility study is currently with National Highways for comment, with anticipated return in Quarter 1 2024/25. The feasibility study and returned comments will inform the design stage of the A1 over bridge. We are currently working with National Highways for their uptake and delivery of the project.
- The full business case for the A614 Improvement Scheme has been submitted to the Department for Transport by Nottinghamshire County Council.

⇒ The Destination Management Plan (DMP) development plan is in progress and due to be completed by summer 2024.

Within Q1 we expect to see a draft of the Destination Management Plan (DMP), the background work being done is to establish whether a single DMP is superior to the previous incarnation, which was split into three, covering the three major towns: Southwell, Sherwood and Newark.

Early work suggests one destination plan with segments focusing on the three major areas ('nested destinations') would be most suitable. Under the banner of Tourism Action Group, focus sessions and interviews are being planned with key stakeholders to ensure we have buy-in and shared direction. This process will also ensure that the governance and structure align with DMP aims and objects, to ensure it supports on the implementation of the DMP

We are working closely with Visiting Nottinghamshire, who are also drafting a county wide DMP, to ensure that we are not doubling up on work and have a shared approach. We remain on schedule to complete by the end of summer 2024.

⇒ The Newark Heart Programme is developing with the Full Business Case aimed for completion in spring/summer 2024. The Capital Programme is focusing on the Market Place with initial concept designs for way-finding, lighting, event infrastructure and seating developed by designers and architects, New Practise.

The draft event strategy has been produced with key events throughout 2024. The events programme will be delivered in partnership with Newark Town Council. The next event scheduled in Spring 2024 is a 'Small Business Showcase' which is currently being developed.

The Project Team continue to develop the studies on place identity, capital works and a sustainable programme legacy model, and have undertaken comprehensive engagement with stakeholders over the last 3 months to enable participation, inclusion and involvement in shaping and designing the future programme.



Spotlight benchmarking

As of December 2023, the unemployment rate in Newark and Sherwood was 3.7% which is a 1% increase since December 2022. Whilst the unemployment rate for England is 3.7% which is an increase of 0.1% when compared to the same period.

Quarterly Indicators	Quarter 4 21/22	Quarter 4 22/23	Quarter 4 23/24	Target 23/24
Year to Date Indicators				
Total number of admissions - National Civil War Centre	8,709	13,234	16,800	12,000
Total number of admissions - Palace Theatre	28,517	59,877	52,619	48,000
% of visitors from schools – National Civil War Centre	New For Q1 23/24	New For Q1 23/24	24.0%	Trend
% of visitors from schools – Palace Theatre	New For Q1 23/24	New For Q1 23/24	12.0%	Trend
Number of people reached through direct participation and outreach	New For Q1 23/24	New For Q1 23/24	12,060	Trend
Total footfall across all heritage and culture services and sites	New For Q1 23/24	New For Q1 23/24	99,651	Trend
Car parking numbers across all council owned Newark car parks	New For Q1 23/24	New For Q1 23/24	377,798	Trend
All Other Indicator Types				
Newark town centre footfall count (average visitors per day)	5,019	4,042	2,773	3,750
Newark Beacon - % of occupied units	89.4%	99.1%	80.0%	95.0%
Sherwood Forest Arts and Crafts - % of occupied units	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	95.0%
Commercial Property - % occupied units	93.0%	98.0%	98.0%	95.0%

Measuring Success



Annual Indicators	21/22	22/23	23/24	23/24 Target
Percentage of town centre retail premises vacant across the NSDC District	6.9%	6.8%	7.2%	8.0%
New jobs created within the district	50,700	52,000	56,441	40,000
Number of new businesses as a percentage of business births to active enterprises	10.2%	9.6%	10.6%	10.0%
% of students within the district achieving LEVEL 1 - GCSEs 1-9 and lower or NVQ level 1	83.2%	83.6%	90.6%	85.0%
Increase in dwell time in Newark Town Centre	New For Q4 23/24	New For Q4 23/24	10.3%	2.0%

Exploring our performance

Newark Town Centre footfall is below target by 977, there are a number of factors which we believe to be contributing to this. This quarter was impacted by the flooding caused by Storm Henk as well as other instances of poor weather conditions, potentially discouraging people from entering town. The period following Christmas is usually one of low footfall, as people cut back on spending and visits to town centres. The decrease in footfall seen here is in line with national trends.

The cost-of-living crisis also continued to impact household budgets, particularly during the winter when temperatures were lower, and nights were longer. As a result, the decision may have been made to take less trips to Newark town centre. The recent announcement that the UK entered a recession in 2023 may have further impacted these decisions.

In order to address the shortfall, more events and campaigns will be taking place in Newark over the coming months. Notably the Small Business Showcase and the Whale Installation in the town centre. Work is also being done with Allies and Morrisons regarding town centre improvements, it is hoped this will provide benefits such as improving vibrancy and enhancing the flow of visitors throughout the town centre.

The Newark Beacon occupancy levels are currently below target by 15%, this can be attributed to the relocation of one business in June 2023 who occupied 11 offices but had outgrown the space and has moved to another building within the district, as well as the loss of 6 other companies in 6 offices during Q2 & Q3. However, occupancy levels have shown significant improvement in the past 8 months. Occupancy has increased from 61.8%, up to 80% in Q4 23/24. This is a great achievement and is attributed to additional marketing of vacant units across various platforms.



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

What we have been doing this quarter;

- ⇒ The practical completion of our new temporary accommodation facility, Alexander Lodge, took place in January 2024. Following the site and process trials, the first residents moved in week commencing 8th March 2024 and initial feedback is all very positive.
- ⇒ As Alexander Lodge has been commissioned and is now in use, as a result we are now decommissioning some of our older stock which will no longer be in use. We have plans to carry out an options appraisal on the temporary accommodation at Wellow Green into 2024/25.
- ⇒ As part of the ongoing continuous improvement to the standard of empty homes, we are continuing to work with tenants from our Local Influence Network groups to carry out 'fit to let' inspections. Results of these property inspections are being fed back to the empty homes team to improve performance.
- ⇒ Works progress on the Amended Allocations & Development Management (DPD) and associated Gypsy and Traveller Strategy. In January 2024, a draft DPD was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate appointed by the Secretary of State to examination the 'soundness' i.e., suitability of the plan. We have submitted a planning application for a Council run Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT) site for 15 pitches on the former Belvoir Iron works, Bowbridge Lane to the south of Newark.
- ⇒ We are experiencing an increasing level of demand for routine repairs and we have plans to review the capacity of the Trades team in quarter 1 of 2024/25 to see which, if any, trades may need additional resourcing and the options available to provide this.
- ⇒ The Surveyor for Damp and Mould post has now been approved and we will be advertising this role and aiming to recruit an individual in quarter 1 2024/25.
- ⇒ In terms of our new online facility for reporting repairs, we have continued to see a flow of repairs coming through via this channel. We have plans to further promote the use of this service over the coming year.
- ⇒ Work is ongoing with resettlement communities in our district. We have completed partnership meetings this quarter to bring together the voluntary, statutory and commissioned services. We plan to continue with this meeting making it more strategic and enabling the commissioned and voluntary services to work through an operational model.
- ⇒ The HRA Development programme has delivered a further 38 properties during 2023/24 taking the total delivery under the original HRA Development Programme to 311 completions. A further 23 properties are currently on-site. The Council are applying to be partner for the Affordable Homes Programme and the team will be working to maximise grant into the councils bespoke 50 unit programme. This programme was approved last quarter to bridge the gap in development whilst the council fully considers and models the impact of decarbonisation, stock condition and new building safety requirements on the HRA business plan in order to explore the possibility of a further 3-5 year development programme.





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

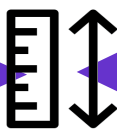
- ⇒ The focus on regeneration at the Hallam Road and Stepnall Heights estates is through community led regeneration rather than physical housing led, with two significant projects progressing well. The area is currently one of four focus areas within an Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Project – identifying the current buildings and open spaces that can be used by residents and people assets (community champions and groups within the community) with a view to investing in and supporting these to remain resilient. The draft reports on ABCD have been received by the council and a period of review and action planning is now under way.
- ⇒ In addition, on the Stepnall Heights estate, we have developed the ‘Boughton Community Hub’ within a property on the estate. The hub is now providing onsite delivery in an area with recognised barriers to services and it is intended that the hub will be used by a wider range of partner agencies from which to collate, coordinate, co-deliver services.
- ⇒ We continue to exceed national performance targets for determining planning applications. National targets are 60% determined in 13 weeks for major applications and 70% determined in 8 weeks for non-majors, and both of our indicators are 90% or above.
- ⇒ We introduced our pre-application advice and the processing of applications satisfaction service survey in Q2 23/24. This survey is key to understand how satisfied our customers are and how we can improve to try and secure the best development possible for the sites and our customers, as well as in lieu of likely changes from Government. However, we have not achieved the response rates we hoped for and are now in the process of revising the survey to maximise responses. Our revised survey is in the final draft stage and we will be targeting Planning Agents only. As the feedback we have received from our survey indicates that changes to Planning Policy going forward will have the greatest impacts on agents who submit on behalf of householders, rather than householders who may only ever have submitted one planning application, and we need understand if agents have recognised the changes, especially with the removal of part of the exemptions, the pre-application process and the increase of fees.
- ⇒ An action to come out of the original survey is the creation of an Agents Forum. Out of over 400 agents, approximately 27 have expressed an interest in being part of a forum. These 27 are regular submitters of planning applications. We intend to set up and hold our first forum during the 2024/25 period.

Measuring
Success



Quarterly Indicators	Quarter 4 21/22	Quarter 4 22/23	Quarter 4 23/24	Target 23/24
Year to Date Indicators				
Number of all tenants who have been evicted for rent arrears	2	2	1	Trend
Number of evictions (anti-social behaviour)	2	3	1	Trend
All Other Indicator Types				
Arkwood - number of units delivered	20	55	79	Trend
Arkwood - plots commenced	79	87	87	Trend
Arkwood - total legal completions (Annual Indicator)	17	50	71	Trend
Average time spent in temporary accommodation (weeks)	12.3	8.8	11.6	13.0
Average time (days) to re-let Council properties	27.6	28.0	30.9	28.0
% of rent collected from current tenants as a % of rent owed	98.6%	99.0%	98.9%	98.5%
Average "End to End" time for all reactive repairs (CALENDAR days)	12.7	21.2	16.6	16.0
% of repairs completed at first visit	92.9%	88.4%	91.1%	93.0%
% of planning applications (major) determined in time	100.0%	90.0%	92.3%	90.0%
% of planning applications (non major) determined in time	98.0%	93.4%	94.4%	90.0%
Average number of working days to process housing benefit change in circumstances	3.0	2.6	1.5	5.0
Average number of working days to process new housing benefit claims	19.0	18.1	14.5	17.0
Amount of current arrears as a % of annual rent debit	1.68%	1.31%	1.47%	2.20%
Amount of current arrears	£396,533	£324,310	£382,744	£554,400
% of housing complaints responded to within agreed timescales	85.0%	94.0%	89.0%	100.0%
% of homes with a valid gas certificate	99.0%	98.8%	99.7%	100.0%
% of homes with Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) certificates up to five years old	99.2%	99.0%	99.3%	100.0%

Measuring Success



Annual Indicators	21/22	22/23	23/24	23/24 Target
Number new homes developed within HRA	63	7	38	Trend
Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods (TP11)	New For Q4 23/24	New For Q4 23/24	65.1%	90.0%
% of properties with an energy efficiency (SAP) rating of C or above	67.7%	68.0%	52.3%	70.0%
Overall Satisfaction (TP01)	New For Q4 23/24	New For Q4 23/24	77.9%	90.0%
Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them (TP06)	New For Q4 23/24	New For Q4 23/24	68.0%	90.0%

Exploring our performance

The % of housing complaints responded to within agreed timescales has decreased this quarter, however the year has ended on 94% - with 13 out of 226 complaints not meeting this target. 7 complaints were out of target during the quarter, but the service has seen average monthly complaints reaching around 20. The majority of complaints fall within the repairs service and the team has been under pressure due to a number of vacancies. Some cases were extended by agreement with the tenant which is allowed under the terms of the Housing Ombudsman Service complaint handling code. Officers strive to provide a response within timescales and keep the tenant informed where this will go over time by some degree.

The % of homes with a valid gas certificate is below target by 0.3% which equates to a total of 15 properties. All properties that are out of compliance are in an enforcement process to gain access.

Overall satisfaction is below target by 12.1%, the question was asked as part of the first year of tenant satisfaction measures. Whilst this is the same question that was asked in STAR survey, this was a different survey and the survey was carried out by different methodology, so whilst there is a significant slippage, we are not comparing like with like. We have a range of actions in place to drive improvements across all of the tenant satisfaction measures, some of the key drivers will in turn drive improvements in overall satisfaction. This is also linked to the work we are doing to meet the new regulatory requirements and the new complaint handling code.

Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them is below target by 22%, this is similar to the declining indicator above in that the question was asked as part of the first year of tenant satisfaction measures, we had no previous indication of what the outturn might be. We have a range of actions in place to drive improvements across all of the tenant satisfaction measures, a number of which cover engagement and consultation. This work is also linked to the work we are doing to meet the new regulatory requirements and the new complaint handling code.

Rent arrears performance remains excellent despite the challenges posed by the ongoing cost of living challenges faced by many of our tenants.

Benchmarking data from Housemark has placed our performance comfortably within the top quartile throughout 2023/24. At yearend, arrears as a percentage of debit of 2.04% was the benchmark for top quartile performance across the whole social housing sector. We out performed this with an outturn of 1.47%.

Performance has been maintained with limited formal recovery action taking place, with only 1 eviction rent arrears taking place in 2023/24, and a continued focus on preventative, proactive work to try to engage with tenants before arrears accrue. This approach will be maintained into 2024/25.

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;

- ⇒ In Quarter 4 we issued 34 Fixed Penalty Notices for fly tipping and three for littering. These mainly consisted of small fly tips where the full penalty would not be appropriate (based on DEFRA guidance). We issued 15 notices to business's for failure to produce waste transfer and waste carrier documentation. Four notices were issued for abandoned vehicles. One of our biggest fly tipping cases of the year has been heard in court. The defendant pleaded guilty to the main offences and is now awaiting sentencing.
- ⇒ In February, District Enforcement became our new litter enforcement provider. They have made an excellent start with 213 fines being issued for littering in less than two months.
- ⇒ In quarter 2 we opened the Green Champions system up to all NSDC employees due to the limited number of responses from volunteers. Although we had less responses from employees than we had initially hoped, we have had enough responses to test the system which has now been carried out. We are planning to have a phased public launch as part of Big Green Week on the 10th June.
- ⇒ At Vicar Water Country Park we are continuing to work with Notts Wildlife Trust on the improvements to the waterway, with new plans developed for a wetland area and changes to the river channel designed to improve the flow and reduce silt build up.
- ⇒ At Sconce and Devon Park, the Ancient Orchard Area has been refreshed, with much of the scrubby vegetation which has been host to antisocial behaviour removed and replaced with new tree planting. The area has also had a redesigned access to highlight its uniqueness.
- ⇒ In partnership with Newark Town Council, work is now gathering pace on the Sherwood Avenue Park project with the final touches being put to the designs.
- ⇒ Responding to issues raised in respect of access, a letter drop was carried out across all properties on The Meadows in Farndon in February. The letter encouraged considerate parking and cutting back boundary vegetation.
- ⇒ In March, our Officers led a pop-up Responsible Dog Ownership event on Sconce Park, this was supported by the Dogs Trust. Dog waste bags and dog treats were handed out, and discussions to encourage responsible dog ownership were had.
- ⇒ In quarter 4, our Officers undertook Walkabouts in the following locations, as part of our 'Walkabout Project':
- Ollerton
 - Lovers Lane, Newark
 - Fosse estate, Newark.



We engaged with our residents to understand their concerns and assist with any enquiries.

How are we performing against our objective to...

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



⇒ Within this period the following enforcement action has been taken:

- Closure Order at a property on Lime Grove, Newark, due to drug related crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Injunctions were secured on two adults causing nuisance at the home address in a village on the Sherwood side of the district.
- ASB Officers supported the Police in securing a Criminal Behaviour Order on a female committing shop theft in Ollerton.
- One Injunction Warning was served on a male for repeated drunk and disorderly behaviour in Newark town centre.
- One Community Protection Warning issued to a young adult for nuisance at Churchill Drive shops, Hawtonville.
- One young person entered into an ABC in relation to repeated nuisance at Lakeside Shopping Centre, Balderton.
- Six first Stage Warning Letters were issued to young people for anti-social behaviour:
 - Three relating to incidents in Balderton
 - Two for incidents in Hawtonville
 - One for issues in Fernwood

⇒ Performance checks are made on the quality of the grounds maintenance service delivered for the Housing Revenue Account. The average scores for the quarter are provided in the table below. Scoring is 1 to 5. 1 being perfect and 5 needs rectifying within 24 hours. Our year-to-date accumulative scores are as follows:

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

Service Area	Q4 22/23	Q4 2023/24
Grass Cutting	1.27	1.66
Litter and Bins	1.17	1.16
Garage Sites	1.29	1.72
Shrub Bed Maintenance	1.56	1.60
Weed Control	1.41	1.49
Hedge Cutting	1.47	1.62



Quarterly Indicators	Quarter 4 21/22	Quarter 4 22/23	Quarter 4 23/24	Target 23/24
Year to Date Indicators				
Number of fly tipping incidents	1,643	1,576	1,604	1,800
Number of fly tipping enforcement actions	2,601	2,291	1,798	2,050
All Other Indicator Types				
% fly tipping incidents removed within 72 hours	89.5%	95.8%	93.6%	75.0%
% of household waste sent for re-use, recycling and composting	36.0%	35.4%	Waiting for External Data	40.0%
Number of missed bins (per 100,000 households)	New For Q1 22/23	44.4	52.5	45.0
Number of missed assisted collections	New For Q1 23/24	New For Q1 23/24	254	Trend
Total number of garden waste subscriptions	16,694	19,188	20,949	19,500
Number of level 1 graffiti incidents not removed within 36 hours	New For Q1 23/24	New For Q1 23/24	0	0
Number of level 2 graffiti incidents not removed within 10 days	New For Q1 23/24	New For Q1 23/24	0	Trend
% of failing sites - street and environmental cleanliness - litter	0.5%	0.8%	0.6%	2.8%
% of failing sites - street and environmental cleanliness - detritus	0.7%	1.1%	1.0%	1.8%

Exploring our performance

The number of fly tipping enforcement actions is below target by 252; however, the number of fly tipping incidents were significantly reduced by 196 incidents this quarter.

The number of missed bins per 100,000 households is below target by 7.5, this can be attributed to numerous day changes due to Bank Holidays, plus additional waste results in a spike of reported missed bins which are likely to have been refilled. In order to achieve this target, we are promoting the use of bin reminders which will help to avoid reports of missed bins which may have been presented for collection late.



Enhance and protect the district's natural environment

What we have been doing this quarter;

- ⇒ The Glass recycling programme is on track to hit its April 2024 launch target. Glass bins continue to be delivered to homes by postcode area, with those areas scheduled for earliest collections having their bins delivered soonest.
- ⇒ We held the first EnviroCrime Working group for our neighbouring authorities in Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire. We shared best practice and intelligence via this group, which will help us tackle environmental crime.
- ⇒ The Active Travel Feasibility Study has been completed. We will now review and consider the recommendations.
- ⇒ We are continuing to develop the Forest Corner Masterplan; this process involves developing a number of project plans for implementation over the next 5 years. We have been busy carrying out comprehensive engagement with key stakeholders, traffic assessments, planning review, options analysis, and project review in readiness for developing these project plans. In Quarter 4, we established why the 2020 draft Master Plan did not meet expectations. Stakeholder engagement and a traffic assessment has been undertaken, and a revised draft Master Plan has been completed. It is due to be submitted to landscape architects in Q1 24/25. Budget for the architectural work is in collaboration with Nottinghamshire County Council, as per actions agreed in the February 2023 cabinet report to draw down £74K to move from RIBA stage Zero to RIBA Stage 3 or 4.



We have included integration with Active Travel, and the links already in place across the site, and will incorporate current footfall data into design and decision making. Footfall sensors will be installed in Quarter 1 2024/25.

New lighting to address Anti-Social Behaviour ahead of the Master Plan approval has been submitted to planning. A review has also been undertaken to ensure appropriate stakeholder collaboration and ensure up-to-date land ownership details have been obtained.

- ⇒ There is continued progress to achieve our target for carbon neutrality by 2035, as outlined in the Greening Newark and Sherwood action plan.

PV installations:

- In addition to the completed works on the Newark Sports and Fitness Centre and Newark Beacon, we now have completed the installation at Vicar Water and are now running the final testing and calibration.
- At The Dukeries and Sconce and Devon, preliminary work has started.





Enhance and protect the district's natural environment

Decarbonisation

- The consultation work by B.E. Designs has been completed and the decarbonisation strategy for our 14 commercial buildings and 19 car parks will be discussed and progressed on in April 2024. The outcomes of which will determine a program of works to help achieve carbon neutrality.
- The Brunel Drive site's future is still under discussion, but the new waste stream for glass collection is complete and collections are due to start in April 2024.

Green Reward App:

- We have had 11 new members sign up, and we continue to have the highest proportion of actual active members i.e., the members that sign up to the App in our district use the App most often. Currently there is work underway to increase the uptake of the App to encourage green behaviours.



⇒ We have planted 800 trees on Westbrook Drive in Rainworth with the help of the local community and 70 trees at Vicar Water Country Park.

⇒ Our Officers have delivered 6 school sessions with local primary schools. We have appointed an Officer with teaching experience to continue to further develop our education offering.

As part of the Christmas Tree Recycling funds, we contacted all the primary schools in the district to offer them free trees. Eight Schools accepted. 161 trees and hedging whips have been supplied:

- 38 fruit trees
- 3 native trees
- 120 hedging whips



Annual Indicators	21/22	22/23	23/24	23/24 Target
Number of trees planted on Council land or partner land	New For Q4 23/24	New For Q4 23/24	867	600
Number of trees given away to residents	New For Q4 23/24	New For Q4 23/24	1,305	1,000

Please note, the number of trees planted in the District has been replaced with the two indicators above.



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

What we have been doing this quarter;

- ⇒ On 26th March, the feasibility study and business case to return the CCTV Control Room to an in-house operation was agreed. The notice period for the current partnership is 24 months and notice has been served. Those approved plans will now be undertaken to move the project forward.
- ⇒ Re-deployable CCTV was deployed in Clipstone, Kneesall, Newark, and Edwinstowe to act as deterrents in ASB hotspot areas and a deployment in Hawtonville is in progress.
- ⇒ In February, our Officers from Public Protection attended a Community Meeting facilitated by Farnsfield Parish Council. The meeting was well attended and generated several actions for both us and the Police. In addition to this, anti-social behaviour reporting was discussed.
- ⇒ Our Public Protection Officers joined the Police for a Safer Businesses Action Day in Newark town centre this quarter. The purpose of the day was to find out what specific crimes and anti-social behaviour affect the businesses in Newark Town Centre, whilst building trust and a positive working relationship with those affected.
- ⇒ Operation Cognition Nights of Action took place on 16th February and 22nd March in Newark town centre. A number of our Officers joined Nottinghamshire Police Officers in Newark Town Centre to raise awareness of Cocaethylene. Cocaethylene is a chemical that our bodies create when alcohol and cocaine are taken together. It can increase violent and impulsive behaviours, increase chances of a heart attack, stroke or seizures, cause damage to the liver and even sudden death.
- ⇒ This quarter, we have seen a reduced number of youth related nuisances being reported across the district when compared to last year. However, under-reporting of all ASB incidents remains a concern. We have been focusing on smaller targeted areas of youth related nuisance in Balderton, Hawtonville, Fernwood and Bilsthorpe, that have been undertaken by our Public Protection team, in partnership with the Police.
- ⇒ In February, a joint Council and Police Community Safety event was held on Yorke Drive, providing an opportunity for residents to engage with the dedicated ASB and Community Protection Officers for their area, along with the Police Neighbourhoods officers.
- ⇒ In March, Bike Marking events took place in Collingham and Balderton delivered by officers from our Public Protection team, alongside the Police Neighbourhoods team.
- ⇒ March also saw us carrying out targeted patrols, following up on concerns over cars idling outside a school in Walesby. We engaged with parents at the beginning of the school day, providing advice to drivers/parents. We will continue to engage with residents in the area to offer ongoing advice and education over vehicle idling.



How are we performing against our objective to...

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



⇒ As part of Safer Streets 5 a Youth Shelter was installed in March 2024 at Coronation Park, Balderton. It is currently well used and received by local young people. Installation of additional CCTV on Coronation Park took place coinciding with the newly erected Youth Shelter.



⇒ As part of the attitudinal change, approximately 80 children from Barnby Road Academy attended a 2-day Graffiti event in March. The sessions were very well received and the children learned about anti-social behaviour whilst getting an opportunity to create their designs. The children chose the themes for two bridge walls on the Sustrans track which included Motion for the Ocean and Woodland. They displayed fantastic artwork skills and an enthusiastic approach with their cans under the guidance of a Graffiti Artist.

⇒ Cooking with Teens on Yorke Drive has taken place in this quarter. This initiative is funded by Locality Funding, and was led and delivered by our Community Engagement Officers, who are supported by officers from Public Protection. The sessions, attended by 45 young people, include a practical healthy cooking experience and allows them to eat together, forming friendships. Our officers have received positive feedback from those who attended and also parents. The sessions have been very popular and well received, as such another cohort is currently running, and more are hoped to take place in the future.

Measuring Success



Quarterly Indicators	Quarter 4 21/22	Quarter 4 22/23	Quarter 4 23/24	Target 23/24
Year to Date Indicators				
Community protection notices/warnings (number issued)	16	8	20	Trend
All other notices/warnings (number issued)	49	23	22	Trend
Number of notices issued relating to private rented properties	New For Q1 23/24	New For Q1 23/24	4	Trend
All Other Indicator Types				
% reduction in anti-social behaviour - Newark & Sherwood District compared against County area	-15.0%	2.0%	17.0%	6.0%
% reduction in all crime - Newark & Sherwood District compared against County area	14.5%	-9.0%	-1.1%	2.4%
% of businesses in the District with a food hygiene rating of 3 or above	93.12%	92.67%	98.00%	94.00%
% of businesses in the District with a 0 star food rating (major improvement necessary)	0.18%	0.18%	0.09%	0.16%
% of food inspections undertaken in quarter	No Data Rec'd	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
% of all programmed Environmental Permitting Regulations inspections completed	New For Q1 22/23	100.0%	100.0%	Trend

*target is the County average and minus denotes an increase

Annual Indicators	21/22	22/23	23/24	23/24 Target
Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods (TP11)	New For Q4 23/24	New For Q4 23/24	65.1%	90.0%

Exploring our performance...

Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods is below target by 24.9%. The question was asked as part of the first year of tenant satisfaction measures, we had no previous indication of what the outturn might be. We have a range of actions in place to drive improvements across all of the tenant satisfaction measures, a number of which cover estates and neighbourhoods. This work is also linked to the work we are doing to meet the new regulatory requirements.

The % reduction in all crime within Newark & Sherwood District has increased this quarter when compared against County area. The target is a moving target as it is based on the performance of the county and how we compare to it. The county saw a small reduction of 2.4% whereas we saw a slight increase Of 1.1% the data shows there has been an increase in thefts at year end compared to previous full year. Whilst there were some other increases these were small in numbers. We have an active Shopwatch scheme and more targeted patrols with shop staff encouraged to report any offences.

Improve the health and wellbeing of local residents



What we have been doing this quarter;

⇒ During the last quarter we have been busy working to deliver activities to help achieve the objectives set out within our Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Some of the key achievements this quarter include:

- Two successful funding bids enabling the creation of two new projects to further support residents via the food club. These include the rollout of monthly Saturday night takeaway bags which provides families with the ingredients and a recipe card to enable them to cook a healthy low cost “Fakeaway” meal. The second project has seen the food club work locally with a fruit and veg supplier to unlock wholesale price local produce which is sold at a fraction of the cost to families weekly in addition to their food club boxes.
- 4,650 households received food support from food clubs across the district this quarter.
- The newly created Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP) covering Newark and Hawtonville has commenced promotion in the community via engaging with supermarkets sharing the branding and messaging around CAP. In addition to this, educational resources have been given to schools and colleges and diversionary events are planned to further support the work of CAP.
- The Recognising Mental Health group identified a lack of local peer support groups and a number of local residents/volunteers have worked tirelessly to create a number of new local groups including “In Sam’s Name” in Ollerton, “Newark Town Team Talk” Men’s MH group in Newark, a suicide bereavement group in Newark and two additional groups in Rainworth and Southwell.
- The roll out of family hubs was agreed by Nottinghamshire County Council, our pilot centre is scheduled to be rolled out on 1st June at Hawtonville Children Centre.
- We have been working to renew and increase the number of accredited breastfeeding friendly venues, with 52 currently across the district, locations include cafes, leisure centres and health centres.



⇒ During Quarter 4, as part of the Tenant Welfare Fund, we delivered a project which targeted support to tenants who were not in receipt of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit Housing Element. Due to not receiving these benefits, tenants would have had limited access to the additional support provided to mitigate the impact of the increased cost of living. We made a payment equivalent to a weeks rent to qualifying tenants who responded to a survey to update their contact details along with some other tenancy-related information. We were able to support 262 tenanted households by making payments which totalled £26,032.

⇒ While tenant arrears performance remains strong, as anticipated at the end of Quarter 3, arrears at Quarter 4 are higher than at Quarter 4 last year. Arrears were around £58,000 higher than at Quarter 4 last year and while this is disappointing, performance remains in the top quartile across the sector and reflects the hard work of the income team supporting tenants with continued challenges of the increased cost of living.

⇒ We invested £75,000 of government funding, from the Better Care Fund, to continue delivery of the Warm Homes on Prescription scheme throughout 2023/24. This funding has enabled us to support another 27 low-income households suffering with cold-sensitive long-term health conditions to achieve affordable warmth.

⇒ During the last quarter, we wrote to all residents of Yorke Drive about the planned regeneration scheme, as well as holding a resident panel meeting. The purpose of engaging residents was to explain the delays presenting the scheme to the Planning Committee for approval and what actions need to be taken to ensure that a scheme that meets the requirement all statutory stakeholders, planning and the project objectives is delivered. It is anticipated that the final revisions to the scheme design will be submitted to Planning in June, with a further public consultation on the amendments to be held.

How are we performing against our objective to...

Improve the health and wellbeing of local residents



Measuring
Success



Quarterly Indicators	Quarter 4 21/22	Quarter 4 22/23	Quarter 4 23/24	Target 23/24
Year to Date Indicators				
Number of user visits - Active 4 Today (All)	909,388	1,008,319	1,101,987	1,000,000
Number of events held in NSDC parks	126	270	326	Trend
Number of children on environmental education visits to NSDC parks	969	982	818	800
All Other Indicator Types				
Live Leisure Centre membership base (All)	10,990	11,585	11,170	11,500

Exploring our performance...

Most indicators across the health and wellbeing objective are in a strong position and above target and is testament to the continued efforts across the Council and key partners in what is an objective of vital importance to our residents.

The number of visits to our leisure centres has exceeded the target by 101,987. However, Active4Today have seen a reduction in live Leisure Centre memberships compared to the same period last year, the number of live memberships are also underperforming against target by 330. This is due to the closure of Southwell main pool.

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.

Quarterly Indicators	Quarter 4 21/22	Quarter 4 22/23	Quarter 4 23/24	Target 23/24
Year to Date Indicators				
Website – NSDC – sessions (total number of views)	341,882	784,580	1,503,926	400,000
Engagement rate with posts issued on NSDC Facebook and X combined	1,055,405	920,610	1,085,448	1,000,000
Number of digital web form transactions	38,786	31,236	62,200	34,000
% business rate collection	98.0%	97.2%	97.8%	98.2%
% council tax collection	97.4%	97.1%	97.2%	97.4%
Telephony - average length of time to answer call (seconds)	78.0	84.0	156.0	90.0
Responsive Repairs - telephony - average length of time to answer call (seconds)	New For Q1 22/23	90.3	161.0	60.0
All Other Indicator Types				
% invoices paid within 30 days - whole Council	98.1%	98.0%	98.0%	98.5%
% effective response to careline calls within 180 seconds (industry standard)	99.1%	99.3%	99.8%	99.9%
Average number of days to process new council tax support applications	18.0	18.8	12.8	18.0
Average number of days to process council tax support change in circumstances	9.0	7.5	4.1	6.0
Average number of working days to process new housing benefit claims	19.0	18.1	14.5	17.0
Average number of working days to process housing benefit change in circumstances	3.0	2.6	1.5	5.0
% of complaints responded to within agreed timescales	New For Q1 23/24	New For Q1 23/24	91.3%	100.0%

Exploring our performance...

There has been unprecedented demand for telephone enquires in March.-The number of customer enquiries we deal with is very much based on the activity of other business units. During Q4 approximately 18,000 garden recycling renewals were issued. These coincided with the delivery of kerbside glass recycling bins and the issuing of the annual council tax bills and rent statements, all of which caused spikes in demand. We have seen peaks of just short of 1,000 calls in a day.

Considering the demand for our services across all contact channels and the unprecedented demand for telephone enquires in March, this performance is better than it was expected to be.

We do work with business units to try and “smooth out” the activities but there are so many conflicting factors that it is often not possible to do so. Demand cannot always be predicted but the team flex to meet demand peaks and are always focused on the quality of the provision ‘right first time’ which sometimes means that calls can take longer to resolve and there a longer waiting time for those in the queue, but overall a much better outcome for the customer.



Our face to face service at Castle House continues to be very busy. During 2023/24, compared to 2022/23, we saw an additional 3,421 customers requiring support, which is an increase of 25%. These customers can have complex enquires and often enlist the help of our partners located in Castle House. Q4 was the busiest quarter of the year with 4,773 customers requiring our help. The increase can be attributed to the impact of the cost of living. The additional enquires are mainly housing and benefit related. March 2024 was the busiest month of the year to date for face-to-face contacts. This shows that there remains a demand for face to face services.

When reviewing the average length of time to answer responsive repairs phone calls, we have had a significant increase in calls coming in from tenants, in part due to severe weather conditions and a reduction in colleagues to handle the calls. We are hopeful from next quarter we will see an improvement to the average length of time to answer responsive repair calls.

% of complaints responded to within agreed timescales is below target by 8.7%. We proactively chase outstanding complaints responses. During the second half of 2023 -24, 20 complaints missed the 10 working days deadline. These are predominately from the business units who receive the highest number of complaints. We do aim to respond to

every complaint within 10 working days but unfortunately a small percentage due miss the deadline.

We have exceeded our targets for both the engagement rate with posts issued on NSDC Facebook and X, this is attributed to the fact we have been focusing on the quality of posts issued, doing more videos than ever which have a much higher engagement rate and this is reflected here. The total number of NSDC website views is also performing above target with the increase in social posts, we push residents to the website more than we ever have done. So much of our information is so complex that driving to the website is the best way we can share



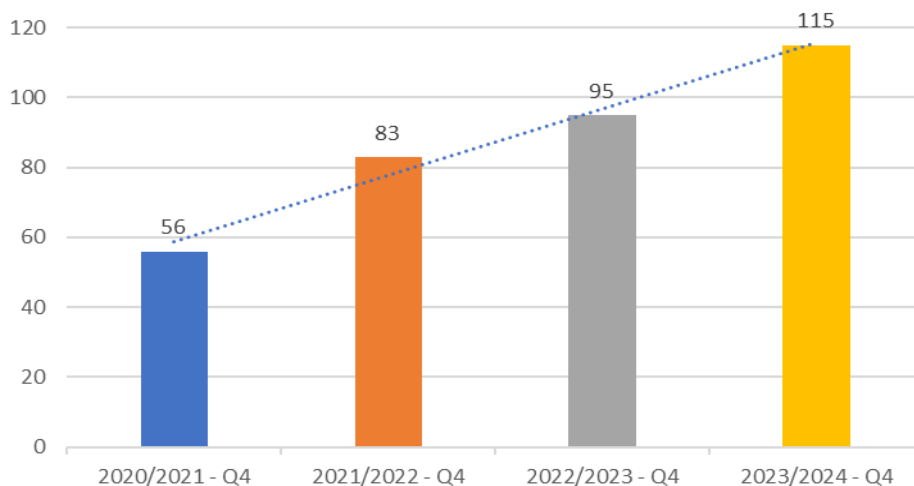
Customer Feedback

Both positive and negative feedback is important to us as it provides us with customer opinion, it allows us to recognise what areas need improvement and provides opportunity for us to learn. It can act as an early warning of problems that may otherwise stay unseen until they become a larger problem, which can then take up significant resource and time to remedy.

Complaints Received

During quarter 4 we received 115 Stage 1 complaints. The 4-year period outturn demonstrates an increasing trend overall as shown by the trendline in the chart below.

This period has seen a 21% increase in the number of complaints received when compared to Q4 of 2022/23.



Figures shown include complaints which were subsequently withdrawn

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

Area of improvement...

There is currently a lack of communication regarding tree protection order requests.

What we are doing to improve....

We have introduced an ongoing review of such requests and this is now part of the case officers weekly 1:1 reviews. Additionally, a letter template has been created to assist the officer with such requests.

Complaints by Business Unit

Due to the nature of their role the front facing services tend to attract the larger number of complaints. In quarter 4 the majority of complaints received were for the following services:

Housing Maintenance & Asset Management received 47, which is 41% of all complaints submitted. Of the complaints received by the team, 25 were due to a delay or lack of responsiveness and 6 related to Officers, specifically the standard/quality of work. Contractors standard of work received 5 complaints, delays in or lack of communication accounted for 5 complaints. A 6 further complaints in singular or smaller numbers related to service, decision or advice provided by officers, conduct or attitude of officers, and delays or lack of internal communication.

Environmental Services received 23 complaints, which equates to 20% of all complaints. Of those 23, 19 were for The Waste & Transport Team. The complaints were mainly related to service delivery and the conduct or attitude of officers. As well as a delay or lack of customer communication, the service, decision or advice provided by officers, and delays or lack of internal communication. The Waste Development team received 1 complaint and Street Scene/Grounds Maintenance received 3.

Housing & Estates Management received 12, which is 10% of all complaints submitted of which, 5 related to service, decision or advice provided by officers, the conduct or attitude of officers accounted for 4 complaints and a further 3 were received under the categories; Customer Communication (delays/lack of) and Officer (standard/quality of work). The table below summarises the numbers received across all Business Units.

Business Unit	Complaints Received
Housing Maintenance & Asset Management	47
Environmental Services	23
Housing & Estates Management	12
Planning & Development	8
Revenues & Benefits	8
Public Protection	4
Customer Services	4
Elections & Democratic Services	4
Housing Development, Regeneration & Strategy	2
Corporate Property	2
Housing Income & Leasehold Management	1
Grand Total	115

Includes complaints which were subsequently withdrawn

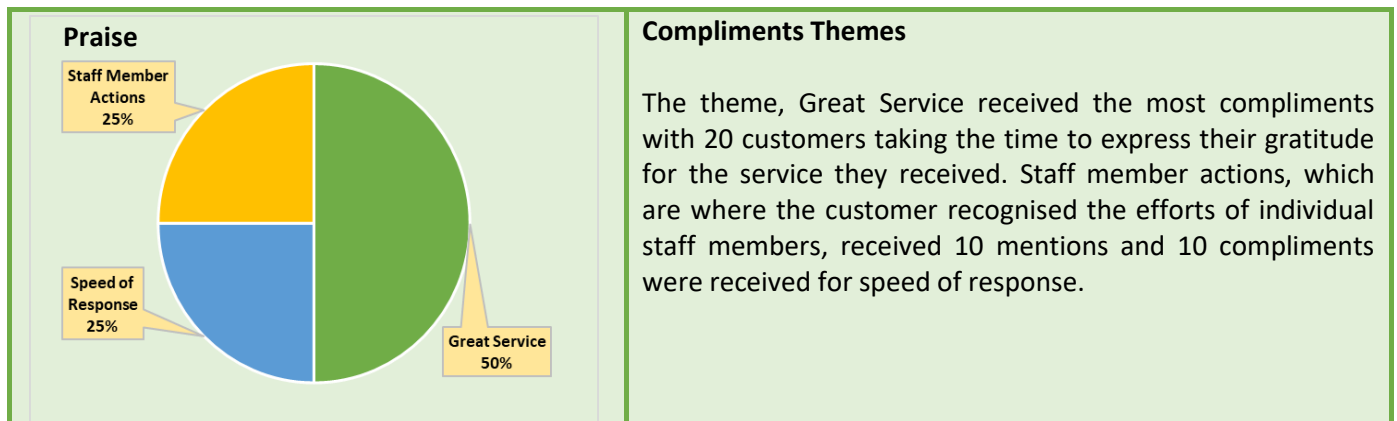
Response Times

Of the 115 complaints submitted in Quarter 4, 15 complaints were not responded to within the 10-working day timescale. These were agreed extension to time between ourselves and the complainant for more complex issues or in scenarios where the complainant was away or not available for any reason. These agreed extensions allowed us to provide a full and comprehensive response.

Suggestions

In Quarter 4, eleven suggestions were received, of which 7 were deemed to be service requests. The 4 remaining suggestions are shown in the table below.

Suggestion	Response
Preservation of town centre ethos and ensuring all storefront designs blend with the historical charm of the towns heritage	The Planning Enforcement and Conservation team will review the concerns raised in relation to the shops in Newark. If there is a breach of planning control and it is expedient to take action, this will be progressed.
Difficulty using online forms - Suggestions to improve online forms to enable accessibility	Portal is externally managed, the comments and suggestions have been forwarded, in order to review how to make the user experience better. I really do appreciate your time in contacting me as I wouldn't have been alert to this without it.
Promoting the use of water butts to collect rainwater is an excellent initiative! It not only conserves water but also benefits the environment. .	The Environmental team will explore options to establish the feasibility of this idea.
Suggestion for signage stating to "Switch engines off" to discourage parents from leaving their engines running whilst waiting for children at school. Many residents in the area suffer from health problems.	We are currently developing an anti-idling campaign that will include such signs and wider school and parent engagement to try to reduce this issue. However, in the interim I will ask our Community Protection Officer to attend the location and undertake interim discussions with the school and parents at pick up time.



Customer Quote:



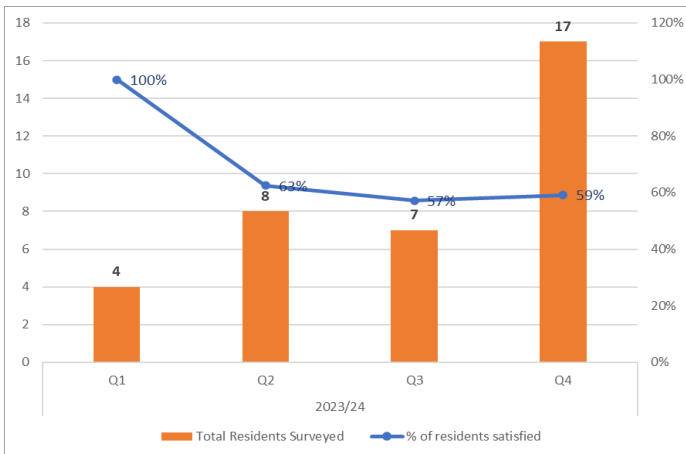
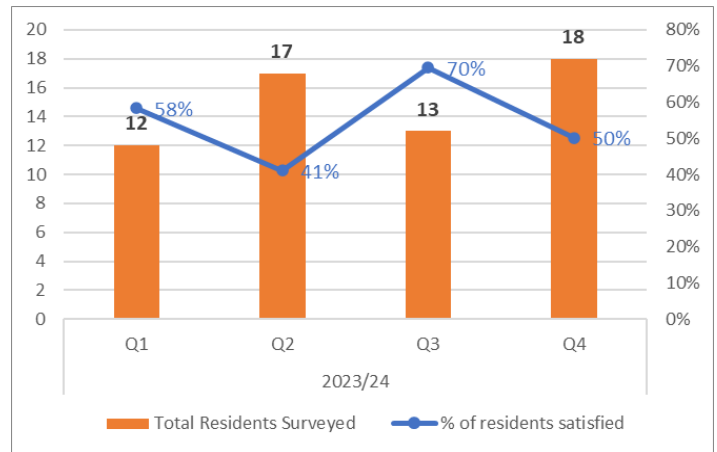
I just wanted to thank the Waste team for their speed and quality of response. This is the second issue related to bins in about a week and both were handed professionally and promptly with no fuss or need for me to chase up. It's really good to know that good customer service does still exist!

Tenant Satisfaction

Following tenants receiving a service, satisfaction surveys are undertaken by Viewpoint to understand if our service delivery met their expectations. In quarter four, 1,868 surveys were conducted over 12 service areas, and the average service satisfaction across the areas was 91% being satisfied or very satisfied. Two service areas scored 100% satisfaction - Careline and Housing Support. The areas scoring the lowest satisfaction rates across quarter 4 were; Complaints (50%), ASB (59%), and Right to Buy (75%).

Complaint Handling

During Q4, 18 responses were received, with 50% of the respondents expressing dissatisfaction regarding the handling of their complaints. This represents a 29% decrease in satisfaction compared to Q2. Customers primarily expressed discontent with their complaints not being adequately addressed and lengthy resolution times.



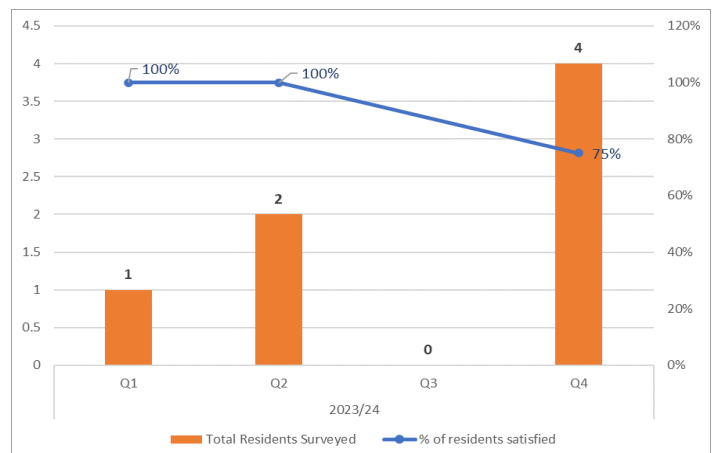
ASB

During Q4, 17 tenants responded to the survey, with 59% expressing dissatisfaction with the service.

The primary concerns were the prolonged resolution times, inadequate responses, and insufficient updates on the status of their issues. Notably, one tenant reported having to temporarily relocate due to the extended wait for a resolution.

Right to Buy

In the survey for the Right to Buy service, 4 responses were received. Among these, 1 person expressed dissatisfaction with the time it took to complete their purchase. They reported that the process spanned 18 months, primarily due to delays in completing repairs to the property.



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

Empowering women in industry

Lauren Anthony from our Corporate Property team is taking part in Newark College's Empowering Women mentorship and coaching programme. She will be mentoring a female student studying an industry-based course, offering support and guidance. It's crucial to encourage more women to pursue and advance careers in male-dominated industries like construction. We're proud to support Newark College in their initiative to empower women in industry by pairing experienced female leaders with students for mentorship.



Finalists in the East Midlands Building Communities Awards

On the 15th March, colleagues attended the East Midlands Building Communities Awards in Leicester. These awards recognise and celebrate professionalism, excellence and innovation within the housing and construction industry.

We were shortlisted for:

- Carbon Reduction Project of the Year - Alexander Lodge.
- Employee Development – for organisations dedicated to bridging the skills gaps and fostering employee growth.
- Refurbishment Project of the Year – Eton Avenue Shops.

We were very proud to have been awarded runner up position for the Alexander Lodge project.

On Friday 8 March our colleagues Clare Barlow and Cheska Asman were joined by several housing staff members and Councillor Lee Brazier, Portfolio Holder for Housing, to take part in the Big Newark Sleepout 2024. This event raises awareness and funds to support young homeless people in our district. The Big Newark Sleep Out raised over £18,000 for Newark Emmaus Trust and the YMCA N&S.



This quarter our wellbeing champions continue to focus on various initiatives for both our community and our employees. For employees, our team have:



- Continued to develop the "Wellbeing Hub", which is due for launch via our intranet in Quarter 1
- Continued to run our well attended, informative and supportive Menopause cafes'
- 220 'Hug in Mug' nominations were received
- Continued to support our staff who are also carers through Peer Support Drop-in sessions, which will continue to run through 2024 and 2025.
- The launch of our Wellbeing MOT initiative to complement our successful Body MOT programme.

Our Workforce

Quarterly Indicators	Quarter 4 21/22	Quarter 4 22/23	Quarter 4 23/24	Target 23/24
Year to Date Indicators				
Average number of sick days per employee (FTE) per year lost through sickness absence	7.6	7.4	6.8	7.0
% staff turnover	New For Q1 23/24	New For Q1 23/24	14.0%	13.0%

The outturn of average number of sick days per employee is an improvement on last year and is the result of an increased focus on sickness absence management. The HR team have provided additional support to managers to ensure that those employees hitting triggers are being appropriately supported and managed back to work.

In terms of the % of staff turnover, it is known that the Council has an ageing workforce and over 20% of this year's leavers have retired.