



**NEWARK &  
SHERWOOD**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL



# Community Plan Performance Report

**2025 – 26 Q3**

**1 October -  
31 December 2025**

# Introduction

At Newark and Sherwood District Council, our mission is to empower residents and businesses to thrive, while also attracting visitors to experience the unique offerings of our area. Our strategy to achieve this is outlined in our Community Plan, which was developed with input from residents and sets forth the Council's ambitions and activities over a four-year period.

Having been in place for two years, our 2023-27 Community Plan has recently undergone a review to ensure it remains relevant and reflective of ongoing and upcoming projects and initiatives. This continuous refreshment is crucial to maintaining the plan's effectiveness.

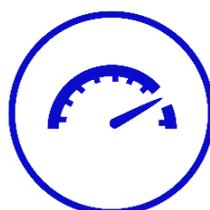
Our performance framework complements the Community Plan by detailing how we will measure the success of our ambitions through key performance indicators, utilising both qualitative and quantitative data.

This report evaluates the Council's performance against the Community Plan, focusing on key services and activities from **1 October to 31 December 2025 (Quarter 3)**. Understanding our performance enables us to promote good practices, ensure quality service delivery, and identify areas for improvement. The Council's performance is measured in four parts, three of which are detailed within this report. The fourth part, Our Customers, is reported twice a year in our Customer Feedback Report.



## 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'.



## Our Performance

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



## 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.

# 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, 16.3% are private rented around 10% directly owned by the Council.

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 3 2025-26**. Most of these indicators are not factors we can directly affect, only influence, but they add context to the work we undertake.

Average footfall figures for Quarter 3 in Newark, Southwell, Edwinstowe, and Ollerton are presented below. In

Newark, average daily visitor numbers rose by 0.8% in December, likely due to events like the Christmas Steampunk weekend, the Christmas Tree Festival at the Buttermarket, and free weekend parking in Council-owned car parks. Thursday, December 11th was the

busiest day of the month in Newark, coinciding with the Mayor’s Charity Quiz Night at the town hall, ongoing Pantomime performances, and Santa’s Grotto throughout December. Data from the five town centre sensors showed a 3.8% increase in visitors, marking the fifth consecutive rise in footfall for this area. Newark Market Place experienced one of its busiest months in December 2025, with average visitor numbers up 12.8% compared to December 2024.

In comparison, Southwell, Edwinstowe, and Ollerton saw footfall decrease by about 5% in December. This drop is likely linked to fewer events than in November when highlights included Christmas Light Switch Ons, Late Night Shopping, and Black Friday sales. Visitor numbers did improve during specific events, such as Festive Raceday at Southwell Racecourse on December 19th and the Minster Carol Service on December 23rd, which brought approximately 20% more visitors than usual to Southwell. However, holidays were quiet: Edwinstowe had its lowest visitor count of the year on Christmas Day, with only 878 recorded visitors (56% below the 2025 average). Colder weather and shorter daylight hours also discouraged visits to outdoor locations like Forest Corner. Although this decline matches patterns seen in 2024, it was less pronounced. Average daily visitor numbers in Southwell and Ollerton were higher than in December 2024, suggesting the district overall enjoyed a busier Christmas season than the previous year. Favourable weather played a significant role; unlike in December 2024 when Storm Darragh cancelled festive activities and kept people home, December 2025 provided better conditions, encouraging more travel to town centres.

	Average Daily Footfall			
	Newark	Southwell	Edwinstowe	Ollerton
October	6,545	2,070	1,751	2,455
November	6,288	2,114	1,830	2,413
December	6,336	2,010	1,738	2,287
<b>Q3 Average</b>	<b>6,390</b>	<b>2,065</b>	<b>1,773</b>	<b>2,385</b>

# Our District



## Exploring our performance.

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.



## Interactions with the Council

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

- **3,789 face-to-face** contacts were held at Castle House, a **3.51% decrease** when compared to the same period last year.
- **22,291 calls** were received by the contact centre, a **4% decrease** when compared to the same period last year.
- **10,744 digital web form transactions** were completed by our customers, a **2.56% increase** when compared to the same period last year.

We welcomed **424,034 unique website users this quarter**, which means so far this year there have been 1,322,768 unique visitors to our website. This is more than 3 times our targeted rate of 356,250. In addition, we measure **our reach and engagement with the posts we share to our social media accounts** to ensure what we are sharing is what our residents want to see and be made aware of – our engagement rate so far this year was above expectations at **1,265,906 engagements**, compared to a target of 750,000. **5,309 residents subscribed to our e-newsletters**, slightly below our target by **6.89%**.

## Local Government Reorganisation

In December 2024, the Government released the English Devolution White Paper which outlined ambitions to begin a period of structural change to Local Government across England. The aim of this structural change is to transition from a two-tier system to a single tier system (also known as a Unitary Authority) of Local Government, which will be responsible for all local services in an area. In February 2025, the Government invited Councils to submit proposals for new Unitary Authority structures, with final submissions due by 28 November. The submissions must aim to create more efficient and effective Local Government, potentially leading to streamlined services and cost savings for residents.



Our Community Plan sets out our ambition to secure the very best option for the residents of Newark and Sherwood arising from the reorganisation of Local Government and as such we will continue to report on how we're progressing at strategic points throughout the year. These progress updates can be found in [Ambition 7 – Be a top performing, modern and accessible Council, that get its everyday services right for the residents and businesses that it serves.](#)

# Celebrating a Year of Progress

As we bring the third quarter of the financial year to a close and bid farewell to 2025, it's a natural moment for us all - residents, partners and colleagues alike, to pause and reflect. This period is not just about reviewing figures; it's a chance to look back on our shared achievements, consider the challenges we've tackled together, and look forward with optimism as we step into a new year filled with fresh opportunities for our district.

We are proud to mark 2025 as a year of significant investment, community spirit, and tangible improvements delivered for residents across the district. From multi-million-pound regeneration projects to environmental milestones, our teams have worked tirelessly to enhance the quality of life for all.

Key highlights from the year include the submission of planning permission for the ambitious Ollerton town centre regeneration scheme and major redevelopment work on the Yorke Drive estate, both which have also received additional funding from the East Midlands Combined County Authority. Additional noteworthy developments include approval for five new 3G pitches, improved accessible amenities at the Dukeries Leisure Centre, and ongoing enhancements at Newark Castle and 32 Stodman Street.

Environmental achievements have been exceptional, with Sherwood Avenue Play Park receiving the district's sixth Green Flag award. Over 110,000 trees were planted in two new woodlands, and the Green Gateway scheme has brought wildflower planting to entrances and exits across towns and villages. Newark was one of many places in the district honoured at the East Midlands in Bloom annual competition winning the 'least litter in the East Midlands' prize, thanks to the hard work of local groups, businesses, and volunteers.

On the housing front, more than £500,000 was invested in de-carbonising Council homes, alongside the launch of MyHome, a new online service that makes it easier for tenants to manage repairs and tenancy information. The opening of the Alexander Lodge facility in the summer is also providing much-needed support for homeless residents.

Community safety has advanced with the development of a centralised CCTV control room for Newark and Sherwood, expected to be operational soon. The Council also celebrated local heroes through the Community and Sports Awards, honouring 13 outstanding individuals for their contributions.



**LOOKING BACK  
ON 2025 WITH  
THE LEADER OF  
THE COUNCIL**



**SERVING PEOPLE, IMPROVING LIVES**

*"2025 has been an extraordinary year for our district. I am immensely proud of the dedication shown by our officers and councillors, who work tirelessly to serve our community. The achievements we have celebrated this year, from environmental successes to housing improvements and public safety advancements, are a testament to the passion and commitment we all share for Newark and Sherwood. Together, we continue to strive for a better future for all our residents.*

*We know it is impossible to please everyone with each decision we make, but we all passionately care about Newark and Sherwood and do the very best we can for all our residents at all times.*

*As we wrap up another wonderful year, I'd like to wish all our residents a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year."*

**Councillor Paul Peacock,  
Leader of Newark and Sherwood District Council**

## Break down barriers to opportunity to enable residents and businesses to prosper and fulfil their potential.



Our 2023-2027 Community Plan set out our ambition to develop and deliver a new **Sustainable Economic Growth Strategy for 2026-2031**. We achieved this aim during the quarter, with the strategy being presented to Cabinet for Approval in November 2025. The strategy is a forward-looking five-year plan developed to unlock the district's potential, tackle long-standing challenges, and create a more resilient local economy. The strategy builds on the successes of the previous five-year plan, which delivered over £31 million in business support during the pandemic and delivered transformative projects such as the Newark Air & Space Institute and expanded Future First Careers Expo. The strategy aims to tackle some ongoing challenges, including comparatively low productivity, gaps in skills, and high levels of economic inactivity due to poor health.



The strategy is accompanied by a detailed action plan, which includes major projects such as the Newark Town Centre Masterplan, the Ollerton Regeneration Scheme, and completion of important road projects such as the A46 Bypass and Newark Southern Link Road. It also incorporates a Destination Management Plan aimed at boosting the visitor economy. Progress against these will be reported quarterly.

**In order to support local communities to develop the necessary skills in order to benefit from the pipeline of major infrastructure developments**, we have developed an Employment & Skills Board. This board includes key partners like the Colleges, Department for Work and Pensions, Nottinghamshire County Council, training providers, as well as employers. The Board aims to steer, influence and support learning and training for improved qualifications, employment and positive destinations. The delivery of training and learning using Adult Skills Fund accessed through training providers, is designed by local need. We have also developed a Land Management Group which specifically works with local Further Education providers and Independent Training Providers to support pathways to qualifications and employment in the land management sector, which is a unique selling point for local provision and need.

**We have been working to maximise local economic opportunities in green and land management sectors, through the development of a Land Management Advisory Group.** The group met for the second time this quarter, bringing together 11 partners from across the sector. Alongside the Chair and a representative from the Economic Growth team, the group welcomed experts from the Department for Work and Pensions, Nottingham Trent University, Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, and other leading Further Education/Higher Education providers and together they discussed some key issues, including:

- **Tackling Skills Gaps for Young People**

The group discussed how to inspire the next generation to consider careers in land management. To kickstart this, the group designed a survey for schools across Newark and Sherwood. The aim is to understand students' awareness, interest, and influences when it comes to land-based courses and careers. The survey will launch at the start of the Spring Term, with responses requested by February half-term.

## Break down barriers to opportunity to enable residents and businesses to prosper and fulfil their potential.



- **Showcasing Opportunities**

The group also identified major events where land management careers can take centre stage, including the County Show in May and the Woodland Festival in July. These will be fantastic opportunities to raise awareness and spark interest in the sector.

- **What's Next?**

During the next meeting taking place in March, the responses to the land-based courses and careers survey responses will have been received and analysed. This will enable the group to review the survey insights and continue shaping future actions to close the skills gap.

**Newark will soon see the benefits from substantial new investment as part of the Government's £5 billion Pride in Place (PiP) Programme.** In March 2025, Newark was awarded £19.5 million through the fund, previously known as the 'Plan for Neighbourhoods' initiative, and was just one of 75 initial areas chosen from across the UK.



The local programme is overseen by the Newark Town Board and funding will be instrumental in driving forward a transformational vision for Newark and its communities. The programme is scheduled to commence in April 2026, providing endowment style investment over the next decade until 2036. The release of funds from Government is subject to the approval of a Local Regeneration Plan, recently developed by Newark Town Board and due for submission in November 2025. This comprehensive plan sets out a high-level vision for Newark over the next decade and an investment profile for the period 2026 to 2030.

*"The initial investment of £25 million awarded to Newark in 2019 has allowed us to develop several key sites for the benefit of the community including the Air and Space Institute, Newark Construction College, Newark Gatehouse Project and much more. Without this initial funding, these projects would not have happened, and we anticipate that this additional funding provided through the Pride in Place Programme will bring in even more exciting initiatives that will foster continued growth within the town. We're excited to see what these could be and we'll be working with Newark Town Board and community partners to bring these into reality.*

*"Collaborative working with the community has played a crucial role in progressing the programme to its current stage, enabling us to plan for the allocation of these funds. We remain committed to our ongoing partnership with the Newark Town Board and will support them to implement initiatives that deliver value to our residents."*

**Councillor Claire Penny,  
Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Economic Development**

**Break down barriers to opportunity to enable residents and businesses to prosper and fulfil their potential.**



Our Community Plan sets out our ambition to deliver **regeneration within Ollerton Town Centre** and this quarter we have made progress towards delivering on that ambition. The green book business case has been signed off and the full planning application has now been submitted. This planning application is due to be considered with a decision due in Spring 2026. We have continued negotiations this quarter, both to secure a cinema operator and to acquire the remaining land interests not within our ownership and we expect the former should be secured within Quarter 4 of this year. Overall, the project is on track and is due for completion in 2028/29.



*CGI Illustration of Ollerton Town Centre Regeneration*

**Continue to progress the Clipstone regeneration scheme, which is progressing in 3 key phases.** Last quarter we

shared that phase 1 proceeded to tender for contractors regarding the building of new industrial units. This quarter we're pleased to report that an award of contract is due to be made following assessment of tenders for the build contract and more details will be shared in future reports.

Phase 2 completed RIBA 2 – Concept Design, which is the stage which focuses on developing initial design ideas based on the project brief, exploring various design options, and creating visual representations of the project's potential. We are continuing to work with Clipstone Miners Welfare as project lead for phase 2 to proceed into RIBA stages 3 – Spatial Coordination and 4 – Technical Design. Additionally, Clipstone Miners Welfare have this quarter secured a project manager and are developing a cost plan for the budget, whilst also working to develop a route to contract the build.

Since the update we shared last quarter that phase 3 had completed RIBA 1 – Preparation & Brief, work has continued and updates can be expected on how this is progressing in future quarters.

A preferred contractor has now been identified to **redevelop the Clipstone Holdings site**. Contract award notices are being prepared by Welland Procurement and are due to be issued next quarter.



*CGI Illustration of Ollerton Town Centre & Clipstone Regeneration schemes*

## Break down barriers to opportunity to enable residents and businesses to prosper and fulfil their potential.



Quarterly Indicators	23/24 Q3 Value	24/25 Q3 Value	Quarter 2 25/26	25/26 Q3 Value **	Performance Trend*	Target 25/26
Newark Beacon - % of occupied units	67.3%	83.3%	90.0%	97.0%	↑	83.0%
Commercial Property - % occupied units	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	98.0%	↓	95.0%
Sherwood Forest Arts and Crafts - % of occupied units	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	==	95.0%
% of planning applications (major) determined within statutory timelines	93.0%	90.0%	100.0%	100.0%	==	90.0%
% of planning applications (non-major) determined within statutory timelines	93.5%	94.0%	86.0%	91.3%	↑	90.0%

\*Performance trend indicates whether KPIs this quarter have improved, declined, or remained the same compared to the previous quarter. This information allows readers to identify trends, analyse possible underlying causes, and use these insights as a reference for resource allocation, strategic planning, and establishing future performance targets.

\*\*Where the current quarter appears more favourable than the previous quarter, but is indicating a downward trend, this is due to the use of year-to-date indicators. Year-to-date indicators present cumulative performance for the year, whereas the performance trend analyses each quarter independently.

**Exploring our performance:** In the third quarter we decided 6 **major planning applications** achieving 100% within the 13-week target or agreed extension of time. As previously reported, performance can fluctuate according to the complexity of a scheme, negotiation undertaken, Biodiversity Net Gain as well as need for s106 planning obligation.

For **minor planning applications**, 184 applications within the 'non-Major' category, achieving 91.3% within 8-week target or agreed extension of time, representing an increase in performance from the previous quarter.

**Increase the supply of housing, in particular decent homes that residents can afford to buy and rent, as well as improving housing standards.**



Alongside our **Yorke Drive Regeneration** development partner, Lovel Partnerships Ltd, we continue to work through the pre-commencement conditions within the outline and reserved matters planning approvals as previously reported. We're currently in the process of seeking Highways Section 38 approval, which pertains to the construction and adoption of new roads as public highways.



*CGI Illustration of Yorke Drive Regeneration*

Meanwhile, the residents of Yorke Drive are being actively rehoused as part of the projects decant strategy, which will ensure all those within the area earmarked

for demolition are appropriately re-housed. An update on the progress of the project was presented to Cabinet in October. Once all pre-commencement conditions have been discharged, a firm timeline for delivery will be shared in a future report.

Last quarter, we secured an additional £1,000,000 worth of funding from the East Midlands Combined Authority. This funding will go towards enhancing social housing from a carbon reduction and efficiency perspective through the introduction of solar panels and batteries. These measures will significantly reduce resident fuel bills and reduce those experiencing the impacts of fuel poverty. The remaining funding will support the delivery of the pavilion specification due to inflationary increases in the build.



**We are undertaking stock condition surveys for Council Housing and private rented stock and we will use the findings to develop investment and improvement plans.**

Currently 80% of our Council homes have had a stock condition survey carried out. We are pleased to report our target completion date remains the end of Quarter 4.

Within the private rented sector, we reported last quarter that Derby City Council are in the process of reviewing all data sets provided by us and other Councils, carrying out address matching so they can begin to build the Authority specific data base. Data analysis and report development are due to follow with scheduled completion in early 2026 and the final report delivery due in March 2026.

**Increase the supply of housing, in particular decent homes that residents can afford to buy and rent, as well as improving housing standards.**



We remain committed to **meeting social housing regulatory standards and are actively preparing for the upcoming inspection of our Housing Services by the Regulator of Social Housing**. We have now received notification for the upcoming inspection of our Housing Services which will take place in April 2026. Our recent efforts have included reviewing key policies, several of which were amended and approved in Quarter 3 to comply with Awaab's Law and developing a position statement to provide the regulator with a comprehensive overview of our Housing Services. A communications plan has been implemented, and updates regarding the inspection process are being shared with customers, members, and staff. Additionally, we have compiled a portfolio of evidence and completed a self-assessment against the regulatory inspection criteria, which is being continuously reviewed and updated. We have conducted a 'show me' exercise with colleagues to validate assumptions within our self-assessment, with a current focus on compliance. This work has also prompted further developments within our Asset Management System. The Housing Performance and Improvement Board also meets monthly to oversee performance and use this information to identify areas for improvement. We have established that preparation, compliance with the standard will always be an ongoing exercise and we have made good progress in understanding our weaknesses and have plans in place to address them.



**Increase the supply of housing, in particular decent homes that residents can afford to buy and rent, as well as improving housing standards.**



**Develop new homes for open market sale or rent through Arkwood Developments Ltd, balancing housing quality, mix of housing, environmental sustainability and financial return.** The 29-development unit at Stodman Street continues, with Arkwood Developments collaborating closely with us on the build process. It is expected that Arkwood Developments will take possession of the unit's mid-way through 2026 and they will commence on marketing these products in the Spring of 2026.



CGI illustration of the Lowfield Lane Development

At Lowfield Lane the development consists of 132-units and Arkwood Developments have concluded discharging pre-commencement planning conditions and are working with Lovells as the development partner. Initial site tidying works commenced before Christmas and the site clearance is due to be complete in early Quarter 4, with the build process to follow soon after during Spring 2026.

Work continues at Wirksworth to develop the 30-unit site. The build programme is progressing well, particularly given the seasonal impact that can be experienced during the winter period in the Derbyshire Dales. Arkwood Developments have been engaging with the Local Authority and have this quarter resolved the Section 278 works legal agreement after some months, which will allow the site to connect to the main road. Work will commence during February, and this will improve the sales activity. The first reservation has been received, and other sales are in the pipeline, which are at the point of detailed negotiation with prospective customers.

The 50-unit site at Long Bennington remains behind target due to delays confirming a date with the Local Authority for the site to go to full planning. This is mainly because of delays in the Local Authority receiving consultation responses. However, we have now had confirmation that this is due to be considered at the January 2026 planning committee and approval is recommended. Subject to approval, we have a build partner in place and aim to commence the build works in Spring 2026 following discharge of any pre-commencement conditions.

At Manea, Cambridge, the 32-unit site is due for completion during February 2026. Sales continue to show an upturn, particularly on the smaller units. At the time of sharing this update, there are circa 16 sales with more under negotiation which is good performance considering Quarter 3 being notoriously quieter in the housing sales sector due to seasonal impacts such as Christmas.



CGI illustration of the Manea Development

Finally, work continues concluding the purchase of one other 90-unit site with outline planning consent.

It is hoped to legally complete this purchase up in the early part of 2026 with a planning application to follow in the Summer 2026. Subject to a positive outcome, works would be likely to commence late 2026.

**Increase the supply of housing, in particular decent homes that residents can afford to buy and rent, as well as improving housing standards.**



Quarterly Indicators	23/24 Q3 Value	24/25 Q3 Value	Quarter 2 25/26	Quarter 3 25/26**	Performance Trend*	Target 25/26
Satisfaction with lettings service	93.0%	90.0%	96.0%	94.0%	↓	95.0%
Number of Council homes with retrofitted energy efficiency measures	New For Q1 24/25	84	0	0	=	N/A
Number of homes delivered through our housing development company Arkwood	18	8	13	23	↑	N/A
Number of plots commenced through our housing development company Arkwood	0	32	52	52	↓	N/A
Time spent in temporary accommodation for people we owe a duty to	New For Q1 25/26	New For Q1 25/26	9.4	9.6	↓	13.0
Average time to re-let Council properties (days)	29.4	42.8	68.0	72.0	↓	28.0
Amount of current arrears as a % of annual rent debit	1.63%	2.03%	3.20%	3.67%	↓	2.30%

\*Performance trend indicates whether KPIs this quarter have improved, declined, or remained the same compared to the previous quarter. This information allows readers to identify trends, analyse possible underlying causes, and use these insights as a reference for resource allocation, strategic planning, and establishing future performance targets.

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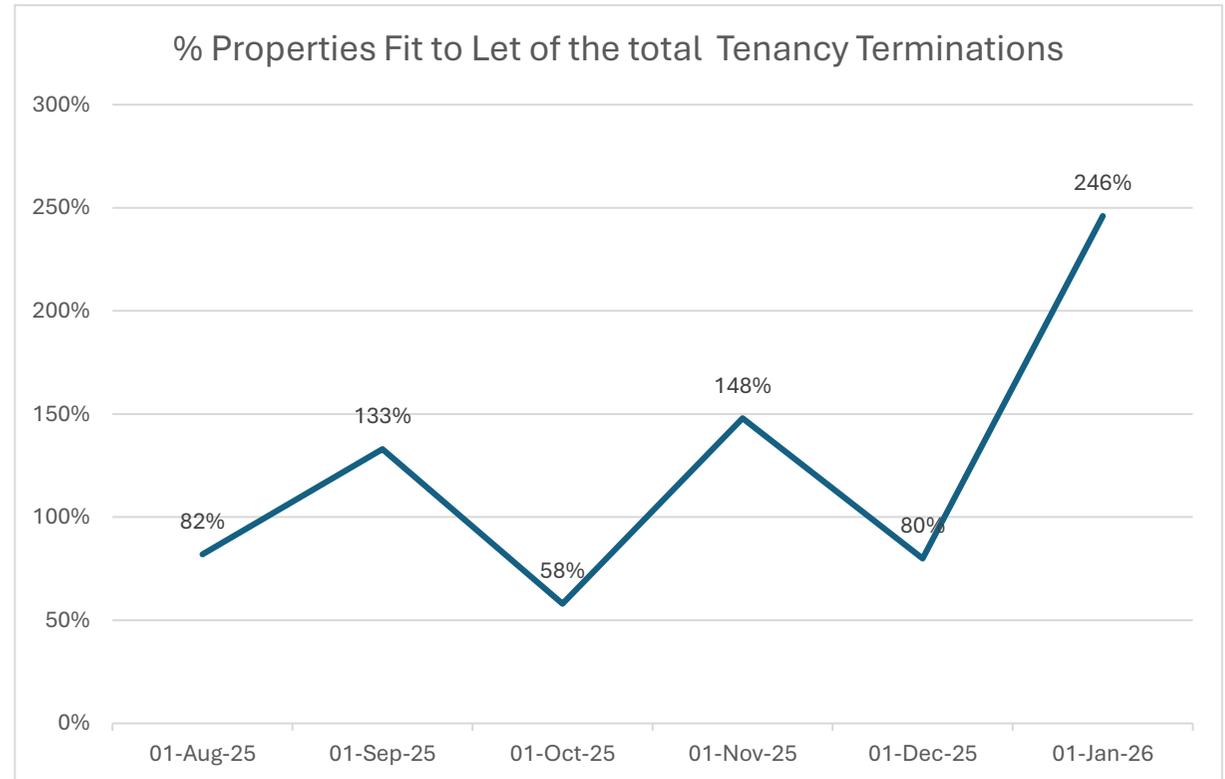
**Exploring our performance.** The amount of **current arrears** has felt the impact of tenants making the transition to Universal Credit, challenges with team resources and the transition to the new housing management system. We have been working closely with NEC to resolve the teething problems with the new system, and we have developed an action plan to stabilise and then improve the arrears position. We are expecting arrears to stabilise in the second half of the year, with the arrears improving into 2026/27.

## Increase the supply of housing, in particular decent homes that residents can afford to buy and rent, as well as improving housing standards



**A deeper dive into our performance:** The average time taken to re-let Council properties is below target by 44 days. This indicator measures the 'key-to-key' performance, which is the total time it takes to relet a property. It spans the performance of more than one team and the performance clock starts from the date we receive the keys back from the outgoing tenant, it tracks the property through the time taken to complete works, through to the property becoming fit to let and the performance clock only stops once we have let that same property to the incoming tenant. We have shared in previous reports that there have been a number of ongoing efforts in this area to improve performance of relet times.

This has included **improvements to the Empty Homes process**; the recently recruited Business Manager has been working on redeveloping the process to ensure it is effective and restructuring the team to ensure that sufficient resources are in place. This has now taken place, and we can see that this part of the process is now performing well. The graph below shows that within a 6-month period, 3 of those months have seen significantly more properties being let than terminations coming in. During the other three months on two occasions, 80% or more of those incoming properties were fit to let and on one occasion 58% of properties were fit to let. This is good performance and shows that the Empty Homes process improvements have consistently taken effect.



## Increase the supply of housing, in particular decent homes that residents can afford to buy and rent, as well as improving housing standards



### Allocations Process

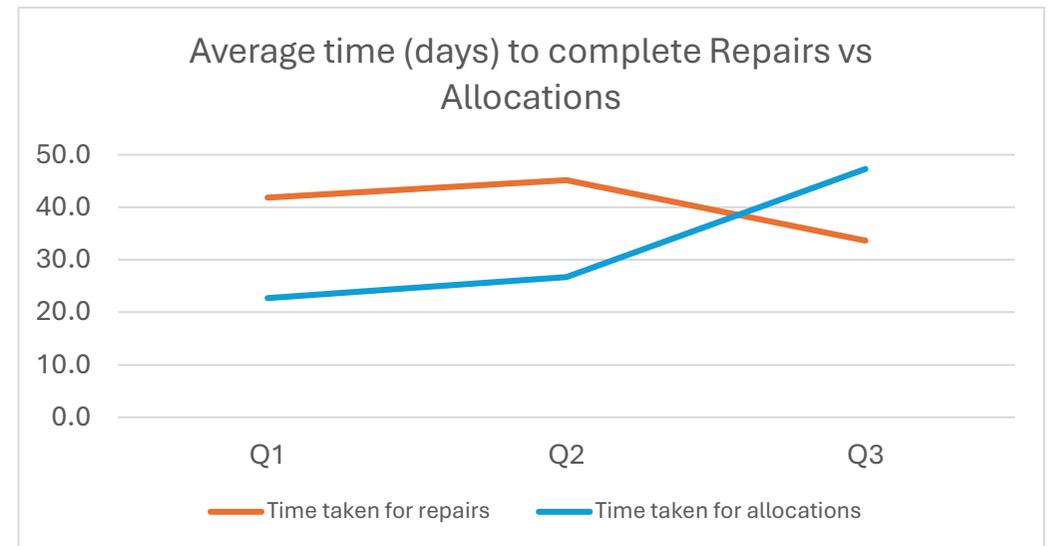
As previously mentioned, this indicator measures a process which spans multiple teams within our Housing Services and whilst we can now have assurance that the Empty Homes part of the process has been effectively improved, the volume of properties have now shifted into our Allocations team. At the time of writing, there are 64 properties awaiting allocation. 8 of those properties relate to works that had been managed by the Contractor as referenced within page 16 and the remaining 56 relate to the works that had been managed by our in-house teams.

The volume of properties awaiting allocation is due to extended allocation times caused by challenges within the new Housing Management System allocations module. The system is currently undergoing further development to handle and process the complex nature of the eligibility criteria contained within our allocation scheme and key officers continue meeting weekly with the software provider to maintain focus on this development.

We're prioritising and giving focus to the allocations process in a number of ways, including allocating additional resource from the wider Housing Services team on a temporary basis. These officers are supporting with administrative tasks to release capacity, which allow the Allocations team to dedicate their focus to allocating properties.

Longer term, we have approved the recruitment of a temporary Housing Choice Advisor, a temporary Housing Choice Officer and an increase in establishment hours for the Housing Services Co-ordinator. These additional temporary resources will provide greater administrative support and focus on the inputting of housing applications remaining from the pausing of the register and data transference from the old Housing Management System to the new one to support allocation of empty homes from one system. Once completed the Housing Choice Advisor will undertake the full range of duties and the Housing Choice Officer will focus on the allocation of fit to let properties. Permanently increasing the establishment hours for the Housing Services Co-ordinator role will also provide a greater level of support adding long term, established resilience to the Housing Choice Team.

By taking this targeted approach, it is expected that by the end of Quarter 1 the volume of properties awaiting allocation will have reduced closer in line with expectations.

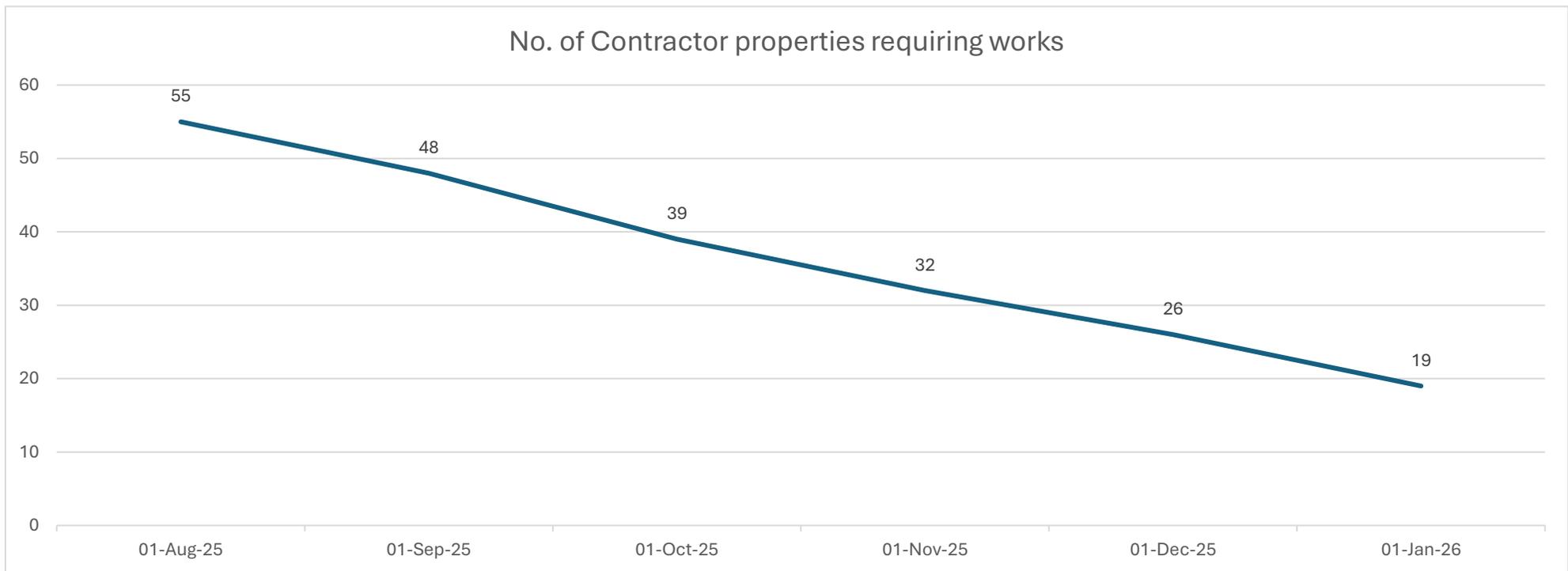


## Increase the supply of housing, in particular decent homes that residents can afford to buy and rent, as well as improving housing standards



### Contractor Performance within Empty Homes

We have also previously reported on delays in completing repair works for empty homes and an associated accumulation of empty homes due to more complex major repairs being required. These are the properties that an external contractor had been appointed to help reduce the number of and we are pleased to report that the contractor has successfully completed work at 39 properties so far. Additionally, we are on track for all properties allocated to the contractor to be fit to let by 13 March 2026.



## Improve health and wellbeing, with an emphasis on communities with lower levels of life expectancy.



As part of our ongoing work to **complement the implementation of our 'Health and Wellbeing Strategy' with activities to reduce health inequalities in targeted areas**, this quarter we have supported a number of initiatives in the Community including:

### Food-related community work

- The delivery of a practical food programme to four of our local Best Years hubs engaging more than 80 residents. The workshop delivery contributed directly to improved food confidence and community participation among older residents.
- We supported the launch of the Southwell Food Hub, which operates fortnightly and supports families access affordable, healthy food and helps to reduce potential food waste by utilising FareShare. FareShare is the UK's national network of charitable food redistributors and helps to ensure nutritious food is redistributed to where it is needed including school breakfast clubs, homeless shelters and community cafes.
- We provided guidance to assist with the preparation of emergency food supplies.
- Maintained active engagement with the Nottinghamshire Sustainable Food Network, supporting ongoing multi-agency collaboration around local food resilience.
- In support of the We Are Newark Halloween event, the team delivered a 'health wrap pizza' workshop, engaging more than 20 local families and promoting healthy eating in a fun, accessible way.



### Broader public health priority areas

- Active participation in the Suicide Prevention Network, alongside continued involvement in wider strategic groups, including a county wide discussion on neighbourhood working. This work supports the emerging NHS Long Term Plan vision of shifting care from hospital to home and developing Neighbourhood Health Hubs.
- We continue to provide ongoing leadership and input to the Holiday Activities and Food Steering Group, ensuring that local community needs are fully represented in the continued rollout of the programme following the Government's confirmation of ongoing funding to support families with children eligible for free school meals.

### Youth Engagement

- Practical youth-based food education continued with the delivery of Teens Cooking sessions in Ollerton engaging with 15 local young people. These sessions focused on building confidence, independence and cooking skills among young people.
- We delivered a workshop to students on alcohol awareness at You Can Do Sport, supporting informed decision making among young people.

### Community Wellbeing

- We organised and delivered a men's health event at Newark Rugby Club, creating opportunities to share key wellbeing messages, engage directly with the local community, and provide a platform for services to promote and communicate essential public health information to our male demographic.

## Improve health and wellbeing, with an emphasis on communities with lower levels of life expectancy.



- Winter Wellness formed a significant part of the work during this period. Support was provided for planning, coordinating and delivering Winter Wellness events in both Clipstone and Farndon, helping residents access information, resources and health related support during the colder months.
- We updated the Living Well booklet to ensure all guidance and resources reflected the most current information, supporting clear, accessible advice on local food provision and social activity opportunities.
- Food was provided in support of the DWP 'Love Not Hate' event, held as part of Black History Month at Castle House, contributing to a welcoming and inclusive community celebration.
- Our teams supported Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust in bringing their Research Bus to two community events, promoting current research projects and engaging residents in opportunities to take part
- We supported and coordinated the relocation and official launch of a Community Café at Cleveland Square, working alongside the community engagement team to provide a much needed resource for residents and tenants

### Explore options to further develop parks in the district enabling free play and exercise, making sure the offer is as inclusive and as varied as possible.

During the quarter, we have continued to develop a clear and ambitious programme to improve parks and open spaces across Newark and Sherwood, building on recent investment and resident feedback. A new 'Parks and Open Spaces Development Programme' has been prepared to support healthier, more active communities by improving access to high-quality, inclusive green spaces that are free to use. The programme proposes targeted investment in council-owned parks, biodiversity and tree planting improvements, and the creation of a new legacy fund to support town and parish Councils in upgrading local play areas and open spaces. It also identifies opportunities for future development at a small number of strategic sites, including enhanced play, youth and outdoor activity facilities, subject to consultation with local communities. Together, these proposals aim to future-proof parks and open spaces, strengthen community involvement, improve health and wellbeing outcomes, and leave a positive legacy ahead.

- **Sconce and Devon Park** has continued to be a well-used and valued green space during Quarter 3, with strong visitor numbers and sustained community engagement throughout the period. Our monthly monitoring shows consistent use across a range of activities, including Park Run events, organised group sessions, educational visits and volunteer involvement. The park has hosted regular Park Run events, attracting significant participation and supporting physical activity and wellbeing for residents and visitors. In addition, adult community groups and educational sessions have continued to take place, reinforcing the park's role as a multi-functional space that supports both health and social connection. Grounds maintenance and cleansing standards have been maintained to a high level, ensuring the park remains clean, safe and welcoming. Routine maintenance, litter removal and seasonal works have been completed in line with our schedules, supporting a positive visitor experience and protecting the quality of the site. Volunteer involvement has continued to play an important role in supporting activities and maintaining the park's presentation.

## Improve health and wellbeing, with an emphasis on communities with lower levels of life expectancy.



- **Vicar Water Country Park** has remained a popular destination during Quarter 3, with steady visitor numbers and ongoing use for recreational activities such as Park Run, volunteering and educational visits. The site continues to support both structured events and informal recreation, contributing positively to health, wellbeing and access to nature within the district.

During the quarter, winter preparatory works were undertaken in response to the seasonal changes. These included hedge cutting, strimming and ditch maintenance along key routes, carried out by our Grounds Maintenance team with support from volunteers. This work has improved accessibility, enhanced site appearance, and helped ensure continued safe access for both visitors and service vehicles. Volunteer involvement has remained a key strength at Vicar Water, supporting maintenance activity and fostering a sense of shared ownership of the site. Ongoing collaboration between our teams and volunteers has helped maintain the quality and resilience of the site as it transitions into the winter period.



During Quarter 3, **our street cleansing rounds were restructured to streamline service delivery and improve operational efficiency**. The revised rounds have reduced unnecessary travel time, provided greater consistency of coverage, and created more logical workloads for operatives. This has resulted in improved productivity, increased familiarity with assigned areas, and more effective use of staff time. The restructure has also delivered sustainability benefits, including reduced fuel consumption and lower wear and tear on vehicles. By minimising duplication and improving route planning, the service is operating in a more environmentally responsible way while supporting the long-term reliability of the fleet. This has been a timely and collaborative effort, made possible through the commitment and flexibility of staff involved. The new cleansing rounds are now almost fully embedded.

**The playground inspection programme has also been restructured during Quarter 3 to better reflect the scale and complexity of the district's play provision.** Given the large number of play areas across Newark and Sherwood, the revised inspection rounds now allow defects to be identified, tracked and resolved more efficiently. The revised approach has improved clarity, accountability and record keeping, making it easier to monitor defects and prioritise repairs. Importantly, the changes have also freed up capacity, enabling teams to focus on preventative programme works rather than purely reactive tasks. Over time, this proactive approach is expected to reduce repair costs, extend asset life, and deliver long-term savings for the District.

**Improve health and wellbeing, with an emphasis on communities with lower levels of life expectancy.**



**Implement the 'Playing Pitch Strategy' and the 'Sports and Recreational Facilities Strategy', including the provision of 5 new 3G sports pitches:** During Quarter 3, the Football Foundation has continued to work on the technical feasibility for three of the 3G pitches following the Expression of Interest and assessment process. Expressions of Interest were submitted for Brinkley, Southwell as well as the Newark Academy and Magnus and Suthers Schools in Newark. Once technical deliverability has been assessed those successful sites will be confirmed.

Work is still ongoing to bring forward sites in Clipstone and Ollerton as part of larger transformational projects including Levelling Up in Clipstone and the re-build of the Dukeries Academy, Ollerton. Ollerton Football Club's site at Walesby Lane is also now under consideration as an alternative to the Dukeries Academy site, driven by challenges in the school site linked to the overall re-build of the school. The complexity of both these schemes has impacted on the pace of delivery at these sites, future updates will be shared as these plans develop.



**Investigate external investment opportunities with the aim of improving health and wellbeing facilities across the district.** We will continue to seek out opportunities for external investment to improve facilities that support the health and wellbeing of residents. This currently includes working with the football foundation on the delivery of 3G pitches but will also include work with other sports representative bodies, Sports England, the use of S106 funding, Community Infrastructure Levy funding and applications to external grant schemes.

## Improve health and wellbeing, with an emphasis on communities with lower levels of life expectancy.



Quarterly Indicators	23/24 Q3 Value	24/25 Q3 Value	Quarter 2 25/26	Quarter 3 25/26**	Performance Trend*	Target 25/26
Number of new Active4Today leisure members	New For Q1 25/26	New For Q1 25/26	2,399	5,192	↑	2,813
Number of User Visits - Active 4 Today (all)	818,751	768,660	573,374	858,276	↓	825,000
Average number of calendar days to process new council tax support applications	14.9	15.2	17.4	18.8	↓	14.0
Average no of calendar days to process council tax support change in circumstances	9.6	20.6	14.3	13.4	↑	7.0
Average no of calendar days to process new housing benefit claims	14.5	16.9	20.6	21.0	↓	14.0
Average no of calendar days to process housing benefit change in circumstances	4.4	4.5	3.8	4.0	↑	4.0
Live Leisure Centre membership base (all)	11,102	11,484	11,718	12,312	↑	11,500
Leisure Services - based on your experience; how likely are you to recommend us to a friend, family member, or colleague?	New For Q1 24/25	60.0%	44%	61.0%	↑	60.0%

\*Performance trend indicates whether KPIs this quarter have improved, declined, or remained the same compared to the previous quarter. This information allows readers to identify trends, analyse possible underlying causes, and use these insights as a reference for resource allocation, strategic planning, and establishing future performance targets.

\*\*Where the current quarter appears more favourable than the previous quarter, but is indicating a downward trend, this is due to the use of year-to-date indicators. Year-to-date indicators present cumulative performance for the year, whereas the performance trend analyses each quarter independently.

**Exploring our performance:** In terms of the average number of calendar days to process new **Council Tax support applications**, the average time taken to process **change in Council Tax support circumstances** and the average number of days taken to process new **Housing Benefit claims**, all of these metrics have been impacted due to the necessity to focus staff resource on the migration of working age Housing Benefit cases to Universal Credit. This has resulted in increased activity associated with this work, but it is expected the processing times will improve in Quarter 4 as migration is complete and this will free up resource.

## Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, improving community feelings of safety.



This quarter the Home Office **anti-social behaviour initiative 'Winter of Action' began**. The Winter of Action builds on the Safer Streets summer initiative which we shared updates on in previous reports. It is designed to provide a nationwide crackdown on crime and anti-social behaviour by uniting the efforts of Police, Councils and Businesses to protect shoppers, retail workers and Christmas revellers.

A joint submission between ourselves and Nottinghamshire Police was provided to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) for inclusion in the response to the Home Office. Updates on actions are provided back to the OPCC for inclusion with the Nottinghamshire response.

The knife wands requested by the Police as part of our Situational Crime Funding proposals were ordered and received and these were provided to the Neighbourhood Policing Team ready for the Winter of Action but also 'Op December' which is a dedicated programme of Police patrols in the nighttime economy during the run up to Christmas and post-Christmas to New Year



Enforcement work is ongoing to tackle the issue of street drinkers in Newark and four fixed penalty notices related to street drinking in Newark Town Centre have been issued during the quarter.

**We continue to work with partners in order to support businesses, provide education and intervene where necessary in order to prevent anti-social behaviour. Some of the initiatives this quarter have included:**

- In November our teams joined a meeting of Ollerton Junior Town Council to discuss anti-social behaviour in the local area. The Junior Town Council comprises of 11 pupils from 3 local primary schools and following this session, 2 schools with members of the Town Council have requested anti-social behaviour delivery sessions within their respective schools.
- Our teams secured 2 closure orders at properties in Newark, where alleged drug related activities were taking place with associated anti-social behaviour.
- 3 Community Protection Warnings and 2 Community Protection Notices were issued. Our Community Protection team also issued 5 Fixed Penalty Notices, 4 of which related to street drinking in Newark town centre.
- The anti-social behaviour panel continues to be held monthly and there have been 11 new referrals to the panel during this quarter.
- In response to a rise in reported youth related incidents in Newark and Ollerton town centres, 21 young people were issued with first or second stage warning letters during the quarter. The predominate

## Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, improving community feelings of safety.



issues have consisted of nuisance behaviour in the Buttermarket, Sherwood Avenue Park, and near St Paulinus Church, Ollerton.

- In addition to the standard Community Protection patrols, **the anti-social behaviour hotspot initiative has continued**, with the following number of patrol hours logged this quarter:

<b>ASB Hotspot Initiative Patrol Hours</b> <i>(in addition to standard CPO patrols):</i>	
<b>Month</b>	<b>Hours</b>
October	24
November	32
December	28

## Reduce opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour, by reviewing infrastructure and encouraging behavioural change across the district with the aim of improving feelings of safety.

- The second chance learning sessions have continued with the two young people and these sessions are due to come to an end in early 2026.
- On the 11 November our teams joined forces for a day of action on the Boughton Estate. The day of action consisted of litter picking whilst engaging with members of the local community to raise awareness and provide a supportive presence. The day was very successful with several skips filled with unwanted items and waste and our streets left cleaner and tidier as a result.

**Our work to deliver the enhanced in-house CCTV control room continues this quarter.** Progress on the development of our enhanced in-house CCTV control room has been strong this quarter. The project will deliver a state-of-the-art facility dedicated exclusively to our District, offering significant advancements in the identification, monitoring, and response to incidents. Operators will have oversight of approximately 90 cameras covering Newark, Southwell, Ollerton, and neighbouring communities, ensuring a comprehensive approach to public safety.



While quarter 3 presented some challenges that affected the overall programme, the project remains on track for completion by the end of March. The installation of all necessary equipment in the CCTV control room is now finished. Although testing of the control room and its operating systems has been postponed, our teams are actively working to resolve outstanding issues, including those related to cabling at the lorry park.

We have also engaged contractors to provide quotes for additional work, including cameras under separate projects, to support continuity and reliability of new connections. Furthermore, our team is addressing partnership-related matters concerning contracts with third-party suppliers, ensuring that all aspects of the operation are managed efficiently and transparently.

**Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, improving community feelings of safety.**



**Our Community Plan sets out our ambition to work with statutory authorities to improve flood mitigation and resilience across the district.** This quarter in preparation for the winter storms our teams have reviewed the emergency response processes and stock held, including PPE for staff who may be called upon to assist in any emergency response. During the quarter, a few storms occurred but due to the drought during the Summer months, the system itself handled the rainfall better than expected by many. Town and Parish Councils continue to apply and deliver on the Flood Resilience Grants offered.



In Quarter 3 a significant amount of work was undertaken by our teams to fix issues at the Oxtton Flood Relief Channel that we're responsible for. This required significant removals of silt and build up of vegetation to ensure the flow and fall of the channel is working well. The sides of the channel that had collapsed following previous floods was also resolved. This was work done jointly with support and expertise from Nottinghamshire County Council, Internal Drainage Board and Oxtton Estates. The feedback we've received following the work having been carried out has been positive.

**We hosted a Flood Resilience Event**, which was a free community event to help residents feel more confident and prepared in the face of flooding. We were joined by nationally recognised expert Flood Mary, along with Severn Trent, Nottinghamshire Police, Fire and Rescue and the Environment Agency. Practical advice on how to prepare your home was shared during the event and for those who were unable to attend can [visit Flood Mary's website](#) and explore her new Property Flood Resilience Directory, packed with trusted tips to help protect your home and recover more quickly.



## Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, improving community feelings of safety.



Quarterly Indicators	23/24 Q3 Value	24/25 Q3 Value	Quarter 2 24/25	Quarter 3 25/26**	Performance Trend*	Target 25/26
Number of positive outcomes resulting from CCTV intervention	83	87	83	122	↑	N/A
% fly tipping incidents removed within 72 hours	93.9%	98.8%	97.4%	95.6%	↓	95.0%
% of incidents resulting in an FPN or prosecution	New For Q1 25/26	New For Q1 25/26	17.0%	14.0%	↓	17.0%
% of businesses in the district with a food hygiene rating of 3 or higher (generally satisfactory or above)	98.00%	98.00%	98.00%	98.00%	=	98.00%

\*Performance trend indicates whether KPIs this quarter have improved, declined, or remained the same compared to the previous quarter. This information allows readers to identify trends, analyse possible underlying causes, and use these insights as a reference for resource allocation, strategic planning, and establishing future performance targets.

\*\*Where the current quarter appears more favourable than the previous quarter, but is indicating a downward trend, this is due to the use of year-to-date indicators. Year-to-date indicators present cumulative performance for the year, whereas the performance trend analyses each quarter independently.

Quarterly Indicators	23/24 Q3 Value	24/25 Q3 Value	Quarter 2 25/26	Quarter 3 25/26	County Comparison
% reduction in anti-social behaviour - Newark & Sherwood District compared against County area	9.0%	10.0%	9.1%	-2.3%	17.2%
% reduction in all crime - Newark & Sherwood District compared against County area	1.0%	2.0%	0.0%	0.6%	8.0%

Please note, in the context of the above two indicators a minus figure denote an increase.

**Exploring our performance:** The % of **incidents resulting in a FPN** or prosecution is below target by 3% this quarter, this can be attributed to a slight fall in the total number of fly tips over the last few months and historic figures were boosted by FPN's issued in areas such as Deerdale Lane which due to proactive work in the area has now improved. The team is also currently operating with reduced staffing, but recruitment is underway and proactive visits to businesses will be reinstated once the team is fully staffed once more. In 2024/25 we investigated and took action in 1,645 fly tipping incidents, the most by nearly 1,000 across Nottinghamshire excluding the City Council. We also handed out the most warning letters and Fixed Penalty Notices for fly tipping excluding City Council too. In terms of the % **reduction in anti-social behaviour**, within Newark and Sherwood we have seen a consistent reduction in levels of anti-social behaviour each year when compared to the previous year. For Q3 there was a slight increase in ASB reports, which was higher than the county. During Q3 there are a number of key events such as Halloween, Bonfire Night and Christmas as such we increased our social media campaigns regarding reporting ASB and we took part in the Home Office's Winter of Action Plan. Where multiple reports we made regarding the same incidents, these were investigated to identify responsible individuals and where necessary enforcement action was taken.

**Promote, maximise and celebrate the diversity of Newark and Sherwood's heritage, culture and community spirit.**



**Delivery of the Newark Castle Gatehouse scheme is progressing well**, with construction of the new steps to the gatehouse entrance, the multifunction building beneath and the main structure now complete. Masonry work in the towers comprised of essential conservation works and repairs, as well as creating new door and window openings. All major procurement is complete, with the exhibition fitout contractor, AV designer and landscape contractor confirmed during this period. Delivery of the activity plan continued, with hard hat tours, the development of a historical talk for local groups, and the start of the volunteer recruitment programme. Our teams also worked in partnership with Newark College on the 2025 'Fiddle Race', an annual competition in which students from the School of Musical Instrument Crafts work in teams to create an instrument in one week. This year, the race was inspired by medieval music, and the completed instruments will be on display in Newark Castle permanently.

**Our work to develop 14 Market Place Newark, as part of the wider transformation of the Town** has continued this quarter and the refurbishment of 14 Market Place has now begun. The ground floor will be converted into a commercial space, and the upper floor will be transformed into residential units and is scheduled to complete in December 2025. Our teams continue to market the space to secure tenants once the refurbishment has concluded.

**Work alongside Bilsthorpe Parish Council and other partners, to continue to support the development of the Bilsthorpe Community Hub.** We were approached by the Parish Council in 2022 for support to improve the condition of their existing community assets and to address the lack of leisure facilities in the village. This led to the development of the Bilsthorpe Community Hub project, which is being led by Bilsthorpe Parish Council and is an ambitious project to develop a new multi-use hub in the village.



In January, a paper was presented to Cabinet which secured a capital allocation of funding to support the delivery of the new Bilsthorpe Village Complex. This allocation of capital funding, sourced from a mixture of reserves and section 106 contributions, will support the Parish Council to leverage additional external funding, acting as match funding. To access the funding the Parish Council will be required to complete a comprehensive business case which will be assessed to ensure that all risks and issues have been considered and addressed and that the scheme is fully deliverable. The Parish Council has submitted a planning submission, and it is anticipated these will be seen by Planning Committee in Quarter 4 of this year, further updates can be expected in future reports.



**Construction at 32 Stodman Street** continues to progress, however there have been some challenges with the site due to its historic nature. Currently the anticipated completion of the project is late Summer 2026.

**Promote, maximise and celebrate the diversity of Newark and Sherwood's heritage, culture and community spirit.**



We continue to work closely with Newark Town Council to deliver the physical **transformation of Newark Market Place**. The Newark Town Centre Masterplan, which encapsulates the regeneration options for Newark Town Centre, was displayed to the public in September and October within the Buttermarket, Newark. We also had a pop-up market stall in Newark on three key dates where we were able to discuss the regeneration plans with the public.

The final version of the Masterplan will be presented to PPIC and Cabinet in February 2026. The Masterplan outlines key themes for the town centre, including:

1. Market town,
2. Skilled and creative town,
3. Riverside town,
4. Thriving town,
5. Active and accessible town,
6. Town of discovery

The masterplan framework is structured against the nine character areas of the town centre, which mirror the key character areas for the Design Code. Alongside the masterplan, a town centre action plan is being developed, which outlines key deliverable actions.



**We continue to work with our partners to look for opportunities within music and the arts** and this has seen our work with Newark Creates continue to deliver a programme of events and activities across the town. Newark Creates has commissioned an arts trail around the town centre to be delivered during Quarter 4 and a new bid is in progress to submit to the Arts Council. Focussing on some key activities which took place this quarter:

- **Alive with Music in collaboration with Newark Creates**, saw our music co-ordinator supporting the delivery of the World Singing Day project. This project united voices from across Newark and Sherwood with people around the globe to celebrate the power of song. From Elston to Edwinstowe, Rainworth to Southwell, choirs and singing groups across our district came together to share one message: **Sing together. Unite the world**. A Music Forum meeting held in November highlighted the success of the music co-ordinator role in bringing together music groups from across the district, and alternative models for future delivery of the forum are now being explored as the co-ordinator role is not permanent.
- **The Robert Kiddey Exhibition** was officially launched in November and will be on display across the National Civil War Centre and Newark Town Hall Museum until February 2026, this is a major exhibition honouring the life and work of Robert Kiddey. The exhibition is the result of a dynamic partnership between ourselves and Newark Town Hall Museum, with generous support from Newark College. This collaboration reflects a shared commitment to celebrating Newark's rich cultural heritage and making art more accessible to the community. Born in Nottingham in 1900, Kiddey trained at the Nottingham School of Art and went on to exhibit at prestigious venues including the Royal Academy in London and the Salon in Paris, sharing space with icons such as Picasso and Epstein. After serving in the First World

**Promote, maximise and celebrate the diversity of Newark and Sherwood's heritage, culture and community spirit.**



War, he settled in Newark, where he taught at the Technical College and became a beloved figure in the local arts scene. This is the largest collection of Kiddey's work ever displayed in Newark, featuring an extraordinary range of pieces from across his career. Many of these works have never been publicly exhibited, offering visitors a rare opportunity to explore the full depth of Kiddey's artistic legacy. Among the highlights is the newly conserved "Death of The First Born", a powerful and emotive centrepiece that will be on public display for the very first time.

**The Open Doors programme, funded by Arts Council England, continued to deliver high quality, ambitious, inclusive and environmentally responsibly arts activities this quarter.** Free arts activities continue to be delivered across the district, in particular the north and west of the district, as well as attracting new audiences to the National Civil War Centre and Newark Museum, and Newark Palace Theatre. We recorded 6,294 engagements with people across our district, and we're pleased to share some updates from the Open Doors activity programme that inspired personal, family and community development through enjoyment and learning:

**The Creative Influencers** are an enthusiastic and creative group of teenagers from the local area, and they meet monthly to help improve access and opportunities for young people to engage in arts and culture. In the last few months, they have supported Newark Beach with terrarium-making and planting activities in the marketplace, volunteered as ushers for Blood Brothers, a theatre production at the Palace Theatre (with over 100 hours at other community events!), and even had a sleep over in the National Civil War Centre.

This quarter the Creative Influencers undertook the following visits and activities:



- Visits to the Royal Armouries, Leeds Playhouse and Slung Low Community Theatre. They discovered more about accessible arts practice and local theatre projects, and their comments and ideas were shared with Heritage & Culture Team.
- Visits to Derby Theatre and the Museum of Making, Derby – raising the challenge of 'Secret Shopper' to bring back great ideas and observations.
- Two members of the group took to our stage also and confidently hosted our annual panto press-night Q&A session with our fabulous panto cast. During these few months, the group also designed a programme of LGBTQ+ events at the National Civil War Centre and Newark Museum to celebrate Pride in February 2026.

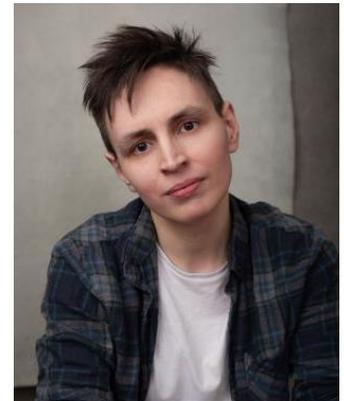
**Our Theatre Learning programme for schools** generated over 1,602 engagements in schools – with teachers making the most of our free sessions for schools which are all designed to enrich the curriculum, inspire interest and motivate children, and to boost teacher confidence and skills in using creativity in the classroom.

During October half term, families in **Bilthorpe, Clipstone, Farnsfield and Edwinstowe enjoyed free shadow puppet theatre shows and family arts workshops.** We worked with well-established community arts organisation City Arts to run this programme for us. This was a brilliantly successful partnership, ensuring local people had priority tickets, offering a magical high-quality show, generating over 245 engagements and delivering a clear environmental message.

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**Our regular Artist in Residence programme**, offers new and emerging artists the opportunity to work within our museum and theatre, and to meet our visitors, share how they work and make new artworks with our visitors and offsite with community groups. In November, we welcomed Robbie Bellekom as our sixth Artist in Residence from 4 November 2025 until 28 March 2026. Robbie is a puppeteer and actor, and has offered fun, interactive puppetry activities based on the pantomime, Beauty and the Beast, and relating to civil war history.



Artist in Residence:  
Robbie Bellekom

In November we launched **Heron Music Café for Wellbeing** at Lifespring Centre, Ollerton. The first four sessions attracted over 100 people, including adults with Special Educational Needs, disabled adults, adults with dementia and adults who come to the centre for warmth and company. The Heron Café offers inclusive, high quality, live music performance provided by the Musicworks team, with participation, percussion and dancing. Musicworks are also working with four Care Homes in Blidworth, Ollerton and Edwinstowe on a project called Soundtrack of My Life programme to learn how to use music to engage meaningfully with people who have dementia. This will result in the creation of a series of original songs, based on the life stories of each client and a celebration event is planned for March 2026.

We were thrilled to have a stand at **Future First Careers Expo** again this year, counting over 349 individual conversations with young people from local secondary schools and colleges. We provided information to take away on the range of careers in museum and theatres and offered fun activities with historical costumes.

To follow on from our '**A Polish Heart Beats Here**' exhibition ending, we continue to consult with our local Polish community. Through a series of events at the National Civil War Centre, Millgate Community Centre and our Collections and Resource Centre, we are collecting views and ideas to co-design a new exhibition for 2026 that will celebrate contemporary Polish culture in our area.

We launched our platform on **Blomberg Connects - an app offering virtual guides to arts, culture and heritage sites**. App users can now view over 200 images, 30 videos and 25 audio clips with captions and/or transcripts, which can all be translated into 50+ languages. We thrilled to be able to make more of the National Civil War Centre available nationally, globally and in other languages.

**Our touring exhibition Mining for Stories was installed in November at The Dukeries Library, Ollerton.** We also continued our support for the Bilsthorpe Heritage Museum, jointly presenting to delegates at the Museum Development Midlands Conference in Birmingham, sharing how the partnership with Open Doors has helped to raise their profile and visitor numbers and secure its future. During this time, we also made brilliant progress recording interviews with community members reflecting on their experiences of coal mining and music – which will be edited into a podcast for 2026. Across this period, we counted 856 engagements with local people.

**We continued our work supporting young people to achieve Arts Awards.** We partnered with Bilsthorpe Youth Services Successful and delivered a short series of weekly contemporary dance workshops, led by Dancer Sophie Thorpe for young people attending the Youth Club. We also supported home-educated young people to explore theatre arts, creating a Virtual Reality theatre experience that will be shared in 2026. In total this generated 201 engagements with young people and their families.

**Promote, maximise and celebrate the diversity of Newark and Sherwood’s heritage, culture and community spirit.**



**Develop opportunities to maximise the visitor offer linked to Sherwood Forest.** Within Quarter 3 our Rebel Rangers campaign came to an end but due to its success we are working together with neighbouring Councils to provide a second campaign across a wider geography in Spring 2026. Rebel Rangers is a free, interactive trail designed for families with children aged 5–14, encouraging them to explore some of the region’s most iconic days out, heritage sites and green spaces while uncovering fascinating stories from the past. Each participating site is linked to a different ‘rebel’ from history, bringing their stories to life in a fun and interactive way. From legendary outlaws to daring revolutionaries, families will discover how these rebels shaped the region’s heritage while completing exciting challenges and exploring local landmarks like Sherwood Forest, The National Civil War Centre and King John’s Palace.

**Newark’s Cultural Heart events plan continues to bring a vibrant programme of free events right to the heart of the town centre** thanks to the collaborative efforts of Lincoln College Group, Newark Town Council, and Newark Cultural Consortium (Newark Creates). Quarter 3 saw the continuation of an exciting programme of events, including the Festival of Creativity, World Singing Day, Mindful Monsters Trail, the Halloween Spooktacular Festival in partnership with Lincoln College Group, Steampunk Christmas, the Christmas Lights Switch on and Christmas Markets. Anecdotal feedback indicates that local businesses continue to experience increased visibility and/or customer traffic, noticing an increase in the number of visitors to the town. Looking forward to next quarter, the final event in the programme will be taking place which is the Garden of Light; this is an immersive light show and silent disco. An analysis and evaluation of the social and cultural impact of the events programme will follow as the programme ends in March 2026 and we will share an update in future reports.

**This quarter we are proud to announce the installation of a new relief on the statue of General Władysław Sikorski at Newark Cemetery, further commemorating the enduring bond between Newark and the Polish community.** General Sikorski, Polish Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Armed Forces in exile during World War II, tragically lost his life on 4 July 1943 in a plane crash in Gibraltar. His body was brought to Newark and laid to rest at the foot of the Polish Memorial, where it remained until its repatriation to Poland in 1993. The Commonwealth War Graves in Newark Cemetery continues to be a place of remembrance, the final resting place of 397 Polish service personnel war graves and serving as a symbol of shared history. In July 2023



*“This addition to the statue is not just a piece of art - it is a profound symbol of courage, leadership, and international solidarity. The relief adds an important historical detail to the statute and highlights General Sikorski’s role in the wider Allied effort during the Second World War. It reflects the strong links between Newark and the Polish community and ensures that future generations can learn about and appreciate this shared history.”*

**Councillor Neil Ross, Armed Forces Champion**

**Promote, maximise and celebrate the diversity of Newark and Sherwood's heritage, culture and community spirit.**



in partnership with the Polish Cultural Institute and Newark Town Council, we unveiled a life-size bronze statue of General Sikorski. Created by renowned sculptor Andrew Lilley, the statue depicts the General saluting the Polish Memorial Cross he unveiled more than 80 years ago. The newly installed relief, by Andrew Lilley, enriches this tribute by featuring a historic image of Winston Churchill, General Sikorski, and General Charles de Gaulle standing together beside a Cruiser Mk IIA CS (A10) tank—a powerful reminder of Allied unity during the Second World War.

**Piano enthusiasts enjoyed a rare chance to set a local and UK record this quarter.**

This one-time event allowed pianists to join forces in a piano orchestra. This unique event, titled 101 Pianos, allowed participants to enjoy the happiness of music making at the piano and was open to players of all ages and abilities. The event took place on a Saturday in November at Sherwood Phoenix Pianos, Mansfield and pianists enjoyed performing two pieces together, 'Prelude in C/Ave Maria' by Bach / Gounod and 'In the Hall of the Mountain King' by Grieg. There were lots of interesting stories amongst the people who played including husband-and-wife teams, siblings, grandparents and grandchildren, a three-generation combination, James Naish MP for Rushcliffe, the owner of a taxi company who hadn't played for many years and some players who travelled long distances to take part. Steve Yemm MP for Mansfield welcomed all the participants. Pianists spend a lot of time on their own, rarely meeting one another in the way other instrumentalists do. Many people play the piano and enjoy the happiness that music making brings, especially because it is an accessible activity with benefits for all ages and abilities. This event was about more than breaking records with the organisers fundraising to acquire a world-class, high-quality piano for the community of Newark which would benefit learners, performers, and audiences alike. Following the restoration work phase of the Reawakening of St Mary Magdalene, the piano would be housed in the heart of the community at St Mary Magdalene's when the church reopens 101 Pianos is for anyone, and many school children and grandparents have already signed up. You can sign up and find out more on the event website at [www.101pianos.co.uk](http://www.101pianos.co.uk)



*"After our Alive With Music launch earlier this year, and the feedback we received, it is very apparent that music and music-making is important to people across our district. People use it to get together, to feel better and to share joy! This fantastic community event brought together like-minded individuals, giving them time to focus on the beauty of music and the many wellbeing benefits that it brings. It also provided an opportunity to shine a light on the creative sector and the incredible impact that music has on lives as well as fundraising to acquire a world class, high quality piano for the community of Newark.*

*This event is a great example of the wider community and ecosystem of our district working and supporting one another. Stephen Pringle founder of Sherwood Phoenix studied piano restoration at Newark College and has gone on to have a very successful business that sends pianos all over the UK and beyond and I am delighted to have worked alongside him on this incredible event. The event provided a rare opportunity for pianists to meet, and I am thrilled that we worked alongside the Reawakening of St Mary's project to support the purchase of such a wonderful piano to be located in one of the most beautiful and inspiring buildings in Newark, St. Mary Magdalene's Church."*

**Councillor Rowan Cozens,  
Deputy Leader of the Council & Portfolio Holder for Heritage, Culture & the Arts**

Promote, maximise and celebrate the diversity of Newark and Sherwood's heritage, culture and community spirit.



Quarterly Indicators	23/24 Q3 Value	24/25 Q3 Value	Quarter 2 25/26	Quarter 3 25/26**	Performance Trend*	Target 25/26
Total number of admissions - National Civil War Centre	9,199	9,273	8,710	11,990	↓	12,750
Total number of admissions - Palace Theatre	12,792	19,833	16,791	47,214	↑	44,500
Number of people reached through direct participation and outreach	6,674	7,312	11,471	20,756	↑	9,375
Total footfall across all heritage and culture services and sites	39,899	51,533	46,341	93,333	↑	78,750

\*Performance trend indicates whether KPIs this quarter have improved, declined, or remained the same compared to the previous quarter. This information allows readers to identify trends, analyse possible underlying causes, and use these insights as a reference for resource allocation, strategic planning, and establishing future performance targets.

\*\*Where the current quarter appears more favourable than the previous quarter, but is indicating a downward trend, this is due to the use of year-to-date indicators. Year-to-date indicators present cumulative performance for the year, whereas the performance trend analyses each quarter independently.

### Exploring our performance:

Total number of admissions - National Civil War Centre is below target by 760 admissions this quarter. Whilst the data shows a slight drop in numbers against the target, it is in line with the average numbers in Q3 for the last 3 years. Additionally, however, a new marketing strategy and redesigned family and schools programming will support growth, and we will review the figures again once this strategy has been embedded.

## Reduce the impact of climate change and protect and enhance green spaces.



**In preparation for the implementation of weekly food waste collections with WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme) and Nottinghamshire County Council,** a report will be presented to Cabinet next quarter which outlines the plans for a food waste trial, with two domestic rounds due to receive the service. We know through our attendance at the Food Waste Working Group some of our neighbouring Councils are also undertaking trials and securing disposal points for food waste. The purpose of the trial is gathering data on participation rates, yield, contamination levels, bin replacement numbers, customer feedback, and any vehicle issues that may be highlighted.

To ensure we have enough space at the Brunel Drive Waste Depot, the disused office block has now been demolished, with remediation work being conducted to complete this part of the project. Throughout the construction, over 90% of the building materials from the demolition will be recycled.

**The Brunel Drive redevelopment** tender has been awarded and the main contractor started on site on at the end of September. Work at the site is progressing well, with the old offices having been demolished and the hardstanding in place. The main works are expected to be complete by February 2026.

Last quarter we reported that our **commercial glass collection** service was continuing to grow since its launch in June 2025, this quarter we have maintained our customer base, and we have collected 17.9 tonnes of glass from these customers. The volume of glass collected is a great sign of our growing commercial glass collection, as this is an increase of 73% compared to the same period in Quarter 3 2024/25.

**Deliver the Council's Tree Strategy, enabling the exploration of options to develop new community woodland and wildlife spaces and support the improvement of air quality.** In 2024 national data was released on urban trees which showed that tree cover in Hawtonville, Newark, is below average, both for the district and nationally. We're now working closely with the Woodland Trust, local charity Reach Learning Disability, Greenwood Community Forest and residents on the 'Hawtonville Tree Project' to increase the number of trees on the estate. Plans for year 1 of the project have now been finalised and will be implemented early in 2026 with planting of 18 trees at key locations. Urban trees are crucial for providing wildlife habitats, mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change and improving public health.

Returning for its seventh successful year, we launched our annual free tree giveaway this quarter. Since its inception, the initiative has distributed over 10,000 trees to residents throughout the district and continues to be a cornerstone of our environmental efforts, encouraging biodiversity, improving air quality, and fostering a sense of community stewardship.

*"It's fantastic to see our Free Tree Scheme return for its seventh year, continuing to grow – quite literally – as one of our most cherished community initiatives. By planting a tree, residents are not only adding beauty to their gardens and communities - but they're also actively contributing to a healthier, more sustainable environment. It's been wonderful to see so many people take part over the years, and I'm excited to see even more trees planted this season."*

*This year, we're encouraging even more people to get involved. I urge everyone to take advantage of this opportunity - not just to enhance their surroundings, but to be part of a district-wide movement for a greener, healthier future."*

**Councillor Simon Forde**  
Portfolio Holder for Climate and the Environment

This year residents were able to choose 2 field maple or blackthorn trees to plant and grow at home. This scheme is always popular and over 2,000 trees have been requested this year.



## Reduce the impact of climate change and protect and enhance green spaces.



### Work in conjunction with the statutory authorities to promote good river and waterway health

- **Farndon Underpass Mural Transformation Project**

In October, we transformed the Farndon Underpass into a bright, welcoming and inspiring community space. Working in collaboration with our Environmental Services teams, pupils from St Peter's Crosskeys CofE Academy and young people from the home educated community, set out to replace what was once a dull, graffiti covered underpass with a vibrant mural carrying a positive environmental message. **The mural was funded using money recovered from successful fly tipping prosecutions, allowing those funds to be reinvested back into the community.**



Before picking up their brushes, participating young people were given interactive educational resources to help them understand different types of litter and the impact waste has on both their local area and the wider environment. They were then invited to design three characters for the mural: a river animal, a sea animal and a character inspired by litter. A range of these designs was selected and incorporated into the final artwork.

One side of the underpass now beautifully depicts the River Trent, Newark Castle and Farndon Bridge, while the opposite side illustrates where litter can ultimately end up: in our oceans. The result is a colourful, engaging walkway that encourages residents to reflect on how everyday actions affect the natural world. The young people and adults involved had a fantastic experience bringing the project to life, supported by the talented artists at Imageskool, who added further artwork at each end of the tunnel to make the mural visible from the nearby roundabout. Public feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, and the project has already inspired interest from others, including Green Meadows in Nottingham, who contacted us to learn how to deliver a similar initiative. We were pleased to share our resources to support their plans.



## Reduce the impact of climate change and protect and enhance green spaces.



### Hawtonville Litter Reduction Trial – Keep Britain Tidy Partnership

Work is now underway on a targeted litter reduction trial in Hawtonville, delivered in partnership with Keep Britain Tidy through their It's Still Littering campaign. Analysis of local litter prone streets has identified several opportunities to improve on the go disposal, including replacing older bins that lack lids—an issue that has contributed to wind blown rubbish across nearby streets. These unsuitable bins will be replaced with lidded versions early in the new year, and additional bins will be installed at hotspot locations where littering is most prevalent. The required sites have already been selected and mapped, and new post mounted bins are on order and scheduled for delivery. Campaign materials for 'It's Still Littering' have also been ordered and prepared for installation, including signage, stickers and other behaviour change resources supplied through Keep Britain Tidy.



### Improve recycling levels by promoting positive behavioural changes, through community events, targeted communication and enforcement

- **Environmental Services Support for Family Saturday – Festival of Creativity**

As part of the Festival of Creativity, our Environmental Services colleagues supported the National Civil War Centre's Family Saturday by contributing to their winter themed 'World of Narnia' activities. Our team worked with families to create Christmas decorations using recycled materials, inspiring creative reuse and encouraging more sustainable festive habits. The day was very busy, with lots of young people enthusiastically crafting decorations to take home for their Christmas trees.

Alongside the craft activities, we provided clear guidance on what can currently be recycled within the district, helping to bust common recycling myths and offering tailored advice on how to recycle effectively over the Christmas period. This engagement formed part of our ongoing commitment to improving local recycling knowledge and supporting community events with an environmental focus.

- **Improving Waste and Recycling Webpages for the New Website**

We have been working to improve the waste and recycling pages for the launch of our new website. This collaboration has focused on making it easier for residents to check which items are recyclable, understand how to reduce and reuse materials at home, and access clearer behavioural change guidance. As part of the improvements, new webpages have been developed to highlight the two eco refill stores operating within the district and the two recently established repair cafés. Although these facilities are not run or funded by us, we will continue to promote them through our official channels and support community groups looking to secure grants to set up similar initiatives and broaden recycling and reuse opportunities across the district. These updates will ensure residents have simpler, more accessible information, encouraging positive waste reducing behaviours and supporting the district's wider environmental goals.

## Reduce the impact of climate change and protect and enhance green spaces.



### • **Christmas Recycling Social Media**

Over the festive period, we delivered a refreshed and engaging Christmas recycling communications campaign across social media. A suite of on trend ASMR style recycling videos were created to give residents simple, visual guidance on how to recycle common Christmas gift items, including deodorant cans, chocolate boxes, perfume bottles, cosmetic packaging, wrapping paper, Christmas crackers and greetings cards. These videos received positive feedback for being a clear way to demonstrate correct recycling behaviours, with viewing figures ranging from 1,000 to 15,000 per video.

- Additional seasonal recycling posts were developed featuring our bin crews to highlight important messages such as: recycling batteries by placing them in bags on top of bins, how and where to recycle fairy lights, promoting the Council's Christmas tree recycling scheme, and reminding residents not to pour fats down household drains.



### • **Our 'Festive Delight, Bin Batteries Right!' post successfully reminded residents that domestic**



batteries can be recycled simply by placing them on top of their bin on any collection day. The post reached over 42,000 views, demonstrating strong engagement and highlighting residents' interest in understanding what additional items can be recycled through our service. Building on this success, we are now exploring the feasibility of collecting vapes and small electrical items in the same way, further expanding the range of materials we can help divert from landfill. To support wider waste reduction behaviour, the campaign also incorporated messaging from the Love Food Hate Waste initiative, encouraging residents to minimise festive food waste and make the most of leftovers at home.

- Contamination levels have shown a positive downward trend this quarter. Rates fell from 16.8% in October to 13.7% in November, followed by a further reduction to 9.9% in December. While it is difficult to attribute this improvement to any single factor, continuing to strengthen the information we provide to residents, through social media updates, newsletters, and targeted leaflet drops, will play an important role in supporting and sustaining this progress.

## Reduce the impact of climate change and protect and enhance green spaces.



### Provide opportunities for residents' involvement in parks and green spaces:

- The Clay Lane Friends group has met for the second time and plans are evolving for the improvement of the site.
- At Vicar Water, Sconce and Devon parks and Queen Elizabeth Memorial Gardens volunteering groups are active and making a difference within the communities these spaces serve.
- Our partners at Sherwood Forest Trust have also been busy with volunteers on Sherwood Heath, clearing scrubland and braken to help promote the growth of heathland species.
- We have a growing number of volunteer litter pickers with 74 people signed up to our green champions scheme who collected 123 bags of waste between them this quarter.
- Our meet the ranger walks continue to be popular with our residents and visitors. These provide an ideal forum for our teams to educate the public on the work we do and allows us to get feedback from the public.



**In response to the 2025 Carbon Trust report, we are working to develop and deliver a Council-wide decarbonisation plan for built assets and deliver a programme of prioritised decarbonisation actions.** We reported last quarter we had started installing internal air source heat pumps, this installation has completed this quarter and 5 air source heat pumps have been commissioned. These are installed at 5 Council owned properties at 94 Northgate and will be monitored over a 12-month period to measure performance and running costs. We have also submitted capital bids for approval to install solar and battery storage to Castle House roof and for LED lighting on Newark sports and fitness centre.



## Reduce the impact of climate change and protect and enhance green spaces.



Quarterly Indicators	23/24 Q3 Value	24/25 Q3 Value	Quarter 2 25/26	Quarter 3 25/26**	Performance Trend*	Target 25/26
Number of fixed penalty notices issued for all environmental offences (excluding fly tipping)	New For Q1 24/25	645	56	67	↓	N/A
Number of events held in NSDC parks	136	216	348	493	↓	300
Number of targeted focus weeks	3	2	2	7	↑	6
Number of children reached via environmental education visits including river health and 'Motion for the Ocean'	New For Q1 24/25	2,219	2,570	2,927	↓	1,500
Number of missed bins (per 100,000 households)	72.0	N/A	61.4	38.5	↑	45.0
% of failing sites - street and environmental cleanliness - litter	0.0%	1.4%	0.8%	1.2%	↓	1.5%
% of failing sites - street and environmental cleanliness - detritus	0.8%	1.2%	0.9%	1.1%	↓	1.2%

### Exploring our performance:

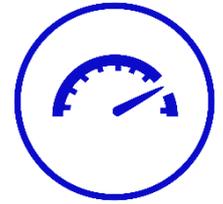
The number of children reached via environmental education has performed consistently above target throughout the year so far, with almost double the amount of children reached through these initiatives than expected. Activities throughout the year have included the Drain Art campaign, in which we partnered with iMAGESKOOL who worked with primary and secondary school aged children, to design, develop and deliver drain art which carried with it an environmental message. We partnered with iMAGESKOOL once again this quarter, this time to deliver the Farndon Underpass Mural Transformation Project. This was delivered in collaboration with pupils from St Peter's Crosskeys CofE Academy and young people from the home educated community, set out to replace what was once a dull, graffiti covered underpass with a vibrant mural carrying a positive environmental message. Crucially, the mural was funded using money recovered from successful fly tipping prosecutions, allowing those funds to be reinvested back into the community.

We have issued a total of 67 fixed penalty notices for all environmental offences, excluding fly tipping. We are pleased to report we have an enforcement contractor in place who will be commencing work in February 2026, and we will therefore likely see an increase in the number of incidents resulting in an FPN or prosecution.

\*Performance trend compares the current quarter to the previous quarter and indicates whether performance has increased, decreased or has remained flat.

\*\*Where the current quarter appears more favourable than the previous quarter, but is indicating a downward trend, this is due to the use of year-to-date indicators. Year-to-date indicators present cumulative performance for the year, whereas the performance trend analyses each quarter independently.

## Be a Top Performing, Modern and Accessible Council.



**As part of our progress towards developing a package of measures to recruit and retain staff, including a review of the pay grading structure and the Council's job evaluation scheme,** we can report that the Reward and Retention project is in its final stages. 88% of all jobs have now been updated and re-evaluated, consultation is ongoing with the JCC to finalise the implementation plans which we expect to commence in Quarter 4.

### **Expand and embed a broader range of customer satisfaction measures to drive performance improvement.**

As part of our work to improve customer satisfaction, we are in the process of carrying out a review of stage 2 complaints. This review process has been designed to provide further insight to determine if anything could have been done differently at stage 1 to prevent the customer needing to submit a stage 2 complaint. The outcome of this review will be shared with our Senior Leadership Team and embedded into our daily operations as needed, the volume of stage 1 complaints escalating to stage 2 will be monitored on an ongoing basis to understand how effective any changes have been through the Customer Feedback report.

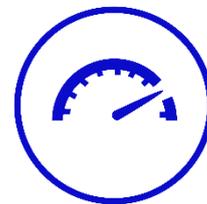


**Through the Commercialisation Strategy and action plan, continue to seek out and generate new sources of income, whilst retaining our public service ethos.** 3 Commercialisation meetings were held during the quarter and were attended by the Section 151 Officer and the Financial Services Business Manager and project owners to discuss progress against individual projects. Further updates against these projects will be shared via updates to the Medium-Term Financial Plan to be presented to Cabinet in February and Council in March.

**Develop and implement an action plan arising from the 'Corporate Peer Challenge'** In October 2024, the Local Government Association undertook a Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) within our organisation, recognising us as a high-performing authority with a strong organisational culture and a solid track record in delivering core services. Following the CPC, a cross-party working group developed a 12-point action plan to address both the strengths and improvement areas identified. Implementation began promptly, with early milestones including a full review of the Community Plan, reported to Full Council in May 2025. In December 2025, the Peer Team returned to assess progress, focusing on the original recommendations and considering Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) as a new priority. The latest review confirmed continued strengths in our culture in particular and highlighted our collaborative approach through LGR, while encouraging ongoing improvement efforts. A report detailing the team's feedback in full will be available on the Council's website here: [Community Plan | Newark & Sherwood District Council](#) following its presentation to Cabinet on 20 January 2026.



**Seek to secure the very best option for Newark and Sherwood arising from the reorganisation of local government.** Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Nottinghamshire reached a major milestone in late November 2025 with the submission of the final proposal to Government. All elected members were briefed on



the proposal and after which Cabinet confirmed the final decision to submit our proposal to Government on 26 November, with formal submission completed on 28 November.



Together with Bassetlaw, Gedling, and Mansfield Councils who are also supporting option 1e, we finalised the proposal for a north-south model. This would replace the existing nine Councils with two new unitary authorities. Sherwood Forest Unitary Council which would consist of Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Gedling, Mansfield, and Newark & Sherwood and Nottingham & South Nottinghamshire Unitary Council which would consist of Broxtowe, Nottingham City, and Rushcliffe.

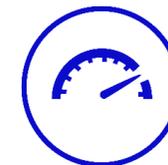
Our Council feel this approach best aligns with the government's criteria; it unites communities with shared identities, heritage, travel-to-work patterns, and housing markets, while avoiding disruptive boundary changes. It also reflects strong alignment with similar north-south proposals being advanced by neighbouring authorities in Derbyshire. Importantly, this was also the option that received the strongest public support during the extensive engagement process. Around one-third of respondents viewed option 1e positively or as the better choice compared to 1b, citing its clearer geographic logic and alignment with local identities. Focus groups reinforced this preference, describing it as a “more natural split” between the north and south of the county.

In early 2026, Councils will be invited to ‘listening meetings’ with Directors from Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG). These meetings are to set out our proposal to them, emphasise any key points, and ask any questions of MHCLG.

Government will launch consultations on proposals that meet the invitation criteria in early February, running for seven weeks. Before the consultation launches Councils will be provided with a list of statutory consultees to sense check and confirm all relevant contacts. The consultation will run on Citizen Space, with paper and email responses also accepted; paper copies will be placed in council buildings and libraries, and the process will be actively publicised to ensure engagement. While not a public referendum, input from residents and businesses is welcomed, alongside evidence from named consultees. Councils are reminded that all communications must remain even-handed and comply with the Publicity Code, as the consultation seeks views on how proposals meet set criteria rather than popularity. A decision on the preferred option is expected by the Summer 2026 parliamentary recess.

In the meantime, alongside the eight other authorities in Nottinghamshire, we will continue to progress a range of option-neutral and ‘no-regret’ activities, working collaboratively to maintain momentum and prepare for future implementation. By the time a decision is reached, we will be in a strong position to move forward and prepare for vesting day.

## Be a Top Performing, Modern and Accessible Council.



Quarterly Indicators	23/24 Q3 Value	24/25 Q3 Value	Quarter 2 25/26	Quarter 3 25/26**	Performance Trend*	Target 25/26
Contact Centre - telephony - average length of time to answer call (seconds)	113.0	74.0	75.0	81.0	↓	110.0
No of face-to-face contacts (Castle House)	11,947	12,696	8,160	11,949	↓	N/A
No of phone calls presented to Contact Centre	81,755	81,145	50,816	73,107	↓	N/A
Number of work experience placements offered at differing levels of education	New For Q1 24/25	23	7	15	↑	19
% business rate collection	80.6%	81.9%	53.0%	79.0%	↑	82.0%
% council tax collection	79.9%	79.5%	51.9%	79.4%	↑	80.0%
% invoices paid within 30 days - whole Council	98.2%	95.0%	99.5%	99.1%	↓	98.5%

### Exploring our performance:

The number of work experience placements offered at differing levels of education is below target by 4 placements this quarter. This is difficult to target as work experience is request led and we have had a sharp reduction in requests this year. For the next financial year we will be offering scheduled work experience placements to schools and colleges in the area to assist the Council in planning and delivery of quality placements and increase the number of placements offered.

\*Performance trend compares the current quarter to the previous quarter and indicates whether performance has increased, decreased or has remained flat.

\*\*Where the current quarter appears more favourable than the previous quarter, but is indicating a downward trend, this is due to the use of year-to-date indicators. Year-to-date indicators present cumulative performance for the year, whereas the performance trend analyses each quarter independently.

# Our Workforce.



Our Chief Executive has been busy hosting a series of **informal LGR drop-in sessions** to help colleagues better understand what's happening, how Newark and Sherwood District Council is involved in Nottinghamshire's proposal to Government, and what the next steps look like. These sessions are part of our commitment to keeping everyone informed and involved. They have been a chance for colleagues to hear directly from John, ask questions, and share any thoughts or concerns they may have.

**The annual Boots and Berets awards were held this quarter**, this is an event hosted by Nottinghamshire County Council which recognises the Armed Forces Community Across Nottinghamshire. Nominations for an award are open to Local Authorities and businesses who are signatories of the Armed Forces Covenant or who are in receipt of either the Bronze, Silver, or Gold Defence Employer Recognition Scheme, Parish and Town Councils, Community groups and Registered charities within Nottinghamshire.

We were represented at the fourth annual Boots and Berets Awards in Nottingham, honouring the service of our armed forces, veterans, reservists, and cadets. Special congratulations to Andy and Alison from our Community Development team, who were nominated for awards in recognition of their outstanding contributions. Representing us the day were Cllr Neil Ross, Suzanne, Cara, and our nominees Andy and Alison. It was a powerful evening celebrating commitment, community, and service.



**Our annual Serving People and Improving Lives (SPIL) Awards** took place in December. It was fantastic to see so many colleagues come together to honour our achievements over the past year. We celebrated everything from Long Service Awards to Team of the Year, making it a night filled with recognition.



# Our Workforce.



Quarterly Indicators	23/24 Q3 Value	24/25 Q3 Value	Quarter 2 25/26	Quarter 3 25/26**	Performance Trend*	Target 25/26
Average number of sick days per employee (FTE) per year lost through sickness absence	3.4	2.9	4.6	7.2	↓	4.9
% of staff turnover	8.0%	6.0%	5.2%	9.0%	Not Applicable	9.8%

\*Performance trend indicates whether KPIs this quarter have improved, declined, or remained the same compared to the previous quarter. This information allows readers to identify trends, analyse possible underlying causes, and use these insights as a reference for resource allocation, strategic planning, and establishing future performance targets.

\*\*Where the current quarter appears more favourable than the previous quarter, but is indicating a downward trend, this is due to the use of year-to-date indicators. Year-to-date indicators present cumulative performance for the year, whereas the performance trend analyses each quarter independently.

## Exploring our performance:

In terms of the average number of sick days per employee (FTE) per year lost through sickness absence, we can see this is performing below our targeted expectations and performance has decreased quarter on quarter. We are experiencing a sustained increase in both long- and short-term sickness absences this year. This has been caused by several factors; a few staff are extremely unwell and remain off for the long term. Short term sickness has also had a sustained increase partly due to this year's seasonal flu which started early in September and continued up till the end of the year. It is important to acknowledge that although we have performed below our target, our performance is strong compared to other Councils in the East Midlands. Line managers locally manage sickness absences and HR review the analysis and reporting of exceptions currently in place and have communicated new arrangements to all line managers. Further training sessions will take place in Quarter 4 and continue into the new financial year, helping managers be better prepared to address any issues related to absence. We prioritise employee wellbeing and provide support for genuine illness, while also taking proactive measures when ongoing absenteeism occurs.

The indicator tracking the percentage of staff turnover does not include a performance trend indicator. Staff turnover is essential in any organisation to create opportunities for progression within the workforce. Therefore, turnover rates are regularly monitored; if the percentage exceeds 14% or falls below 8%, further investigation and escalation will occur.

**Use of Microsoft Co-Pilot:** Microsoft Co-Pilot was utilised in the preparation of this report to enhance its accessibility for a wide range of audiences. Additionally, Co-Pilot assisted in generating some of the images featured within this report.