



**NEWARK &  
SHERWOOD**  
*DISTRICT COUNCIL*

# Environmental Services Strategy

April 2020 – March 2023

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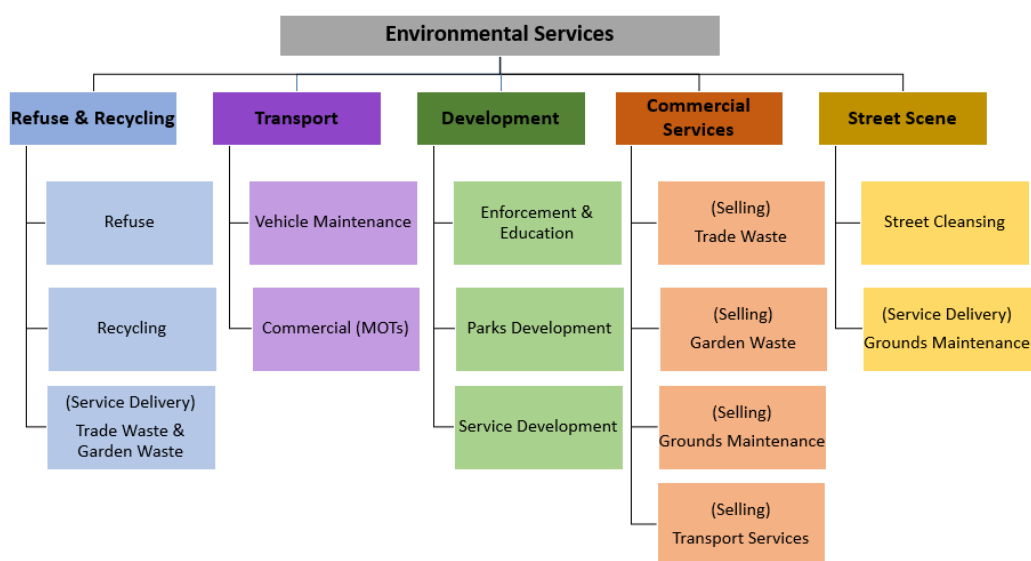
# Introduction

## Purpose of this Strategy

Environmental Services are vital to the Council; they impact the lives of residents every day both in their homes and as they walk through the district’s streets and parks. These front line services, and their performance in the streets and green spaces across the district, are valued by our residents. This is demonstrated in the 2018 Resident Survey when 11,224 residents replied to the question ‘what is the most important service?’ selecting ‘refuse collection and recycling’ as fourth most important closely followed by ‘keeping streets and public areas clean and tidy.’ Similarly, one of the largest themes in the resident comments was that the Council should address ‘cleaner’ issues, most notably fly tipping, littering and dog fouling whilst 90% of respondents said it was important or very important to them be able to live in a sustainable and environmentally aware way. Another theme from resident comments was requests to improve care of green spaces, parks, roundabouts and verges. This ties into the legacy of the “Cleaner, Safer, Greener” campaign, launched in July 2018, which saw Newark and Sherwood District Council pledge to make the District a Cleaner, Safer and Greener Place. The campaign’s Council wide focus on the front line issues that impact residents every day was a great success and it re-energised and refocused the Council on the streets and green spaces across the district.

Environmental Services covers a range of ‘Clean’ and ‘Green’ services using five delivery arms, namely; Recycling and Refuse, Development (including Parks Development and Service Development), Commercial Services and Street Scene, which utilises the synergies between Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleansing. All of which are underpinned by Transport, the delivery arm providing the vehicles that enable these services to happen. All of these services work to make our district Clean and Green the commonality between all is the aim to make the district a pleasant place to live, work and visit.

This strategy lays out how these services will be delivered over the next three years. This is a short term strategy as this service area is in a state of flux due to the draft National Waste Strategy, currently in its public review phase, and Environmental Bill. This service area looks set for change and therefore over the next three years the Council will focus on delivering this strategies objectives as well as preparing for change by developing this service to a solid baseline.



## Background

Newark and Sherwood is one of the seven Districts of Nottinghamshire. It has an area of 65,132 hectares which is the largest district of Nottinghamshire county. The resident population of Newark and Sherwood in 2018 was 121,566 living across 48,773 households. The predominant age band is 50 to 54 and the mean age of the Newark and Sherwood district population was 42 years compared to a mean age of 41 years for residents in the whole of Nottinghamshire. The central part of the District is predominantly rural with three main population centres namely; Southwell, Newark-on-Trent and Ollerton.

The District contains one of the world's most famous historical natural assets in the form of Sherwood Forest as well as the River Trent, one of England's largest river systems. The District is rich in history and the waterways passing through the district are now an important heritage feature with a wealth of cultural and natural history as well as several historic market towns. It is also a well-connected district with road networks woven across the district as well as national rail connectivity.

## Council Priorities

Newark and Sherwood District Council's strategic objectives were set as part of the Community Plan in May 2019 and they are as follows;



This strategy supports all of these objectives in a tertiary manner but it primarily links to these three objectives;

- Objective 1: Improve the cleanliness and appearance of the local environment
- Objective 6: Protect, promote and enhance the district's natural environment
- Objective 11: Generate more income, improve value for money and increase residents' satisfaction with the Council

## The Challenges we face

The authority strives to be a leader in environmental matters against a background of national and international uncertainty. Our nations exit from the European Union and evolving strategies and priorities from central government combined with uncertainty around demand from national and international materials markets makes long term planning extremely complex. That is why this strategy is designed to reposition our existing services so that we are ready to respond to anticipated demands.

We expect the governments Resources and Waste Strategy 2018 to have significant impacts on the services the council must provide and have aligned this local strategy with the time scales identified within that document. It is anticipated that from 2023 there will be a legal duty on all councils to offer additional services including kerbside glass and waste food collections. It is not yet clear if additional funding will be provided for these services. In any event the targets established in this strategy are deliberately challenging and will require a real shift in focus to prepare us for the implementation of the national strategy whilst positioning us to launch services independently should the national plans not come to fruition.

With all of the above in mind this document details the council's position on a range of environmental issues identifying the areas where we can operate directly to control outcomes and where we can work with or lobby other business units or external bodies to influence positive change. For ease of reference these areas are listed below.

### Control

- Garden Waste
- Glass (banks)
- Trees (NSDC land)
- Action day team
- Marketing and communications
- Customer experience
- NSH
- New service development
- Licensing HMOs
- Enforcement
- Climate Change (NSDC)
- NSDC Community

### Influence

- Food
- Glass (kerbside)
- Trees (non-NSDC land)
- Planning – Population, growth etc.
- Government (national)
- Community – Green Champions
- Climate change (non-NSDC)

## Progress since the last Strategy

### **Recycling and Waste Diversion**

The council released its Waste Strategy in 2006 and this was last given a light touch review in 2017. Since the development of that strategy the household waste recycling rates for Newark and Sherwood have improved significantly from 25% in 2004/5 to 32.9% in 2018/19. This is primarily due to the launch and expansion of the garden recycling scheme which continues to grow.

In addition to increasing the amount of material recycled from households the business unit has worked with its partners at Nottinghamshire County Council to develop further opportunities for diverting the waste we collect by launching battery recycling, a recycling scheme for our trade waste customers and recycling street cleansing waste. The remaining (residual) waste is now sent for energy recovery with the result that very little waste is sent to landfill.

### **Waste Minimisation**

The 2006 strategy set a target to maintain the total waste production at 440kg per head of population. This was based on the previous years figures (2004/5). In 2018/19 this figure had fallen significantly to below 372 kg per head. Overall this means that the authority is collecting under 45,200 tonnes of material from household which is less than 2004/5 despite the growth in the population of the district. In 2006 it was predicted that over 64,000 tonnes of material could be collected by 2020 it now appears that that figure will be much lower. This decrease will be due to many factors such as the light weighting by design of items such as glass bottles but such a shift is more likely to reflect a change in the purchasing behaviour of residents and an increased environmental awareness within our communities.

## Our Purpose

Newark and Sherwood is a diverse and wide reaching district full of history with a balance of natural beauty and industry spread across a rural landscape interspersed with market towns and national transport connections. Environmental Services are key to Newark and Sherwood's identity by ensuring that all areas of, and gateways to, the district are clean and that the district continues to be green and thus embody Sherwood Forest that gives Newark and Sherwood its international identity. This service also plays a role in working with communities to connect with and empower residents to deliver cleaning and greening objectives. Nature and the environment are at the centre of the District's identity and as such keeping the district clean and green is vital. This is the value of this service area.

## Service Vision

Over the next three years the vision for this service is to deliver 'greener' change such as improving recycling, reducing Co2, increasing biodiversity and planting trees, as well as working to deliver behaviour changes such as waste minimisation, whilst still maintaining focus on providing an excellent day-to-day service keeping our customers satisfied, and keeping the district's streets and community led green spaces clean and tidy.

Our intention is to be constantly improving and innovating pushing this service forward and working with residents to achieve community led change. This vision will be delivered through Newark and Sherwood being a 'Leader of Place' leading by example and empowering residents and communities through positive engagement both directly and through empowered individuals known as 'Champions' who will work in their communities helping empower individuals to take responsibility to change their behaviours and lives to increase community pride. We will also work in collaboration with our strategic partners and partners across the Council to develop our District's 'Places'. Our ultimate aim is to make our residents lives better by improving where they live, work and visit thus improving their health and wellbeing.

## Environmental Services Strategic Objectives



To improve the district's recycling rate with the aim of increasing our recycling percentage. With the aim to maximise in a challenging context as we await national and local clarity.



Work with communities and partners to 'Green' Newark and Sherwood delivering district wide programmes focusing on tree planting and protecting and enhancing the district's natural environment.



Making Newark and Sherwood 'Clean' with a focus on areas in need by conducting targeted activity in identified communities and tackling key issues.



Work with our communities to create social capital in the 'Green' and 'Clean' agendas and encourage engagement with Environmental Services.



Engage with communities to deliver behaviour change through education and enforcement including campaigns.



Work with key colleagues within the Council to reduce Newark and Sherwood District Council's carbon footprint to offset the impact of Climate Change.



Maximise resources within the unit through efficiencies and commercialisation with the aim any additional resource being reinvested into greening initiatives and service improvements.



## Objective One

To improve the district's recycling rate with the aim of increasing our recycling percentage. The aim will be to maximise the rate in a challenging context as we await national and local clarity.

### Actions to Deliver;

- 1.1 Increase glass recycling rates by ;
  - Increasing the number of glass recycling sites in the district,
  - Refreshing signage and 'look and feel' at all sites,
  - Directing residents to 'Recycle Now' for information on recycling centres in the interim with the intension that the Council will develop their own page and information resources directing residents (see 5.1), and
  - Improving the use ability of bottle banks in Newark and Sherwood by rolling out mixed glass (aka combined colours) banks."
- 1.2 Explore options, and develop a business case, for delivering kerbside separated glass collection with the aim of having a delivery plan in place for March 2023 preparing for the National Waste Strategy.
- 1.3 Explore options, and develop a business case, for delivering a food waste collection service with the aim of having a delivery plan in place for March 2023.
- 1.4 Lobby central government for clarity on the National Waste Strategy, the Environment Bill, environmentally friendly design and development and reduction in food packaging.
- 1.5 Increase the number of households utilising the Council's garden waste service by extending the offer to include garden waste bags, an adaptable low-cost option for households with less garden waste, and using clear branding and targeted marketing of the service. Work with members to consider using powers of enforcement against residents who contaminate residual bins with garden waste to encourage residents to recycle their green waste using the garden waste service.
- 1.6 Work with communications to run targeted campaigns for areas with poor recycling rates and/or high contamination rates (see 1.5). Coordinating the Action Team and Environmental Protection Officers to target these areas with the support of colleagues across the Council. Work with members to consider using powers of enforcement against residents who contaminate residual bins with viable recycling.
- 1.7 Increase the number of residents 'reusing and recycling' by;
  - Increasing recycling from non-kerbside sources by developing and promoting the services available hosting a single site where all information is held to direct residents to recycling information,
  - Reviewing, refreshing and relaunching battery kerbside collection scheme,
  - Reviewing, refreshing and relaunching textile collections at glass banks including rebranding, promotion and consideration of additional sites.
  - Reviewing, refreshing and relaunching specialist bulky waste collection including electrical collection (see 5.2)
  - Reviewing, refreshing and relaunching the Council's composting scheme to encourage residents to compost.
- 1.8 Work with members and neighbouring authorities to consider options for, and develop a strategy for, lobbying Nottinghamshire County Council on recycling legislation. Working at a local level to adapt the Veolia contract to allow more recycling within mixed dry recycling household bins including glass and mixed plastics.

## **Objective Two**

Work with communities and partners to 'Green' Newark and Sherwood delivering district wide programmes focusing on tree planting and protecting and enhancing the district's natural environment.

### **Actions to Deliver;**

- 1.2 Plant trees on NSDC land including parks, green open spaces and other sites such as leisure centres, car parks etc.
- 1.3 Work with key partners to encourage tree planting across the District including Newark and Sherwood residents through free planting schemes and organisations and charities across the district considering corporate social responsibility/ carbon neutrality schemes.
- 1.4 Deliver community 'green' engagement and activities in parks such as community tree planting, community led 'green' awards such as East Midlands in Bloom and a 'green' focused education offer for schools and children.
- 1.5 Continue to develop the Council's parks as recognised community led green spaces that are safe and clean by increasing the number of green flag parks in the district and implementing improvements in Council parks.
- 1.6 Work with the planning system to facilitate the development of 'greening' objectives including;
  - Bio-diversity in new developments,
  - 'Greening' in planning decisions and housing developments,
  - Working to create 'green corridors'
  - Using planting to mitigate flood risk, and
  - Working with planning to build cleansing and recycling infrastructure into housing developments.
- 1.7 Work with key stakeholders to protect and preserve the district's environmental assets, including reserves, SSPIs and ecosystems, and expand these assets by increasing the number of local nature reserves and sites under environmental stewardship schemes in the district, and engage with national programmes such as nature recovery networks and positive management.
- 2.7 Develop an Open Spaces Strategy following a full review of all Council, and HRA, green spaces.

### **Objective Three**

Making Newark and Sherwood 'Clean' with a focus on areas in need by conducting targeted activity in identified communities and tackling key issues.

#### **Actions to Deliver;**

- 3.1 Dispatch the Street Scene operatives, led by the Action Team (a multi-skilled street scene team) to areas in need, such as target wards, town centres in the evenings and at weekends and the 'gateways' to the district including transport hubs and A-roads.
- 3.2 For the work of all Environmental Services officers to help tackle behavioural practices such as littering, fly tipping, graffiti and flyposting through education and enforcement (see objective 5) in collaboration with work across the council such as the Neighbourhood Contract.
- 3.3 Gain a better understanding of the needs across the district through analysis of data collected using a uniform methodology across the Council to identify areas of need and make informed decisions to target services, for example analysing transects data to identify most littered areas and identifying areas with high recycling contamination to receive targeted communications.
- 3.4 Gather data over 2021-22 to inform a full strategic review of bins across the district considering location and provision to improve satisfaction and cleanliness, including the consideration of modern technology, to present a business case late in 2022 to rollout the outcomes of the review in 2023.

## **Objective Four**

Work with our communities to create social capital in the 'Green' and 'Clean' agendas and encourage engagement with Environmental Services.

### **Actions to Deliver;**

- 4.1 Continue to deliver three targeted multi-agency days of action annually, providing free bulky waste collection on the days to discourage fly tipping and delivering mini days of action throughout the year led by the Action Team. Develop a network of volunteers 'Green Champions' through these days (see 4.4).
- 4.2 Work with colleagues across the Council to deliver a programme of recycling actions delivered under the 'Greening' brand (see 5.1) working with communities, businesses and organisations to encourage;
  - Reporting of environmental crimes,
  - Reduction in plastics,
  - Waste minimisation,
  - Use of compostable disposables, and
  - Engagement with other programmes such as Refill Newark and Sherwood.
- 4.3 Developing a cohort of champions to facilitate the delivery of all cleaner and greener objectives. These champions support the delivery of behaviour change in the community with resources and support from Environmental Services officers. Champions across the district working with the council to deliver change connecting with national programmes where appropriate, such as love my park week.
- 4.4 Listen to residents' needs and wants and coordinate with colleagues across the Council to deliver responsive services. Working with colleagues and partners to share knowledge and adapt services for vulnerable residents, identifying their needs and providing appropriate support.
- 4.5 Work with the communications team to communicate the work of the Environmental Services Business Unit to residents using multiple platforms to increase awareness of what the service can do, the challenges it faces and the good work done in the unit.

## **Objective Five**

Engage with communities to deliver behaviour change through education and enforcement including campaigns.

### **Actions to Deliver;**

- 5.1 Communications campaign 'Greening Newark and Sherwood: Your Home, Your Future' badging all 'greener' actions including green waste, composting, green spaces, minimising waste, changing purchasing habits and making recycling regulations easier to understand into a district wide campaign. Alongside this run targeted campaigns directed towards specific areas to tackle key issues such as recycling, littering and dog fouling. This targeted programme would consist of a variety of activities such as school talks, community visits and neighbourhood action days.
- 5.2 Continue to tackle fly tipping through the 'Not in Newark and Sherwood' Campaign encouraging responsible disposal with the lowest price bulky waste service in the district and enforcing against offenders with covert CCTV.
- 5.3 Reduce the number of Environmental crimes committed through increased enforcement activity, and increased profile of said enforcement activities, utilising all officers qualified to for enforcement. Working collaboratively with Community Protection Officers and wardens to ensure that Environmental Protection Officers and Rangers target key areas.

## **Objective Six**

Work with key colleagues within the Council to reduce Newark and Sherwood District Council's carbon footprint to offset the impact of Climate Change.

### **Actions to Deliver;**

- 6.1 To consider 'green' alternative options for NSDC's fleet by;
  - Developing a business plan for electric vehicles for long-term procurement planning for how the Council's fleet can be converted to electric ahead of central government targets,
  - Explore options for alternative fuels working with the Nottinghamshire Consortium,
  - Utilise an adaptable procurement schedule to ensure best use of vehicles, and
  - Procure 'greener' equipment aiming, where feasible, to shift all handheld equipment to be 100% electric by 2023."
- 6.2 Work with the Asset Management and Car Parks Business Unit to explore solar and vehicle charging options for the Council depot.
- 6.3 Work with colleagues across the Council, in partnership with communications, to improve recycling at Council sites and reduce the Council's use of single-use plastic and paper through targeted communications campaigns. The Council to lead the programme outlined in 4.2 underneath the programme banner of 'Greener' as highlighted in 5.1.
- 6.4 Work towards carbon neutrality by balancing carbon recreated by NSDC actions against oxygen created by NSDC green spaces and trees planted by NSDC schemes. This objective is linked to the Climate Emergency Action Plan in development by the Climate Emergency Working Group.

## **Objective Seven**

Maximise resources within the unit through efficiencies and commercialisation with the aim any additional resource being reinvested into greening initiatives and service improvements.

### **Actions to Deliver;**

- 7.1 Deliver innovative efficiencies within the unit such as better utilisation of staff, efficient work scheduling, synergies across the unit, greater information sharing and consideration of technology and new ways of working.
- 7.2 Develop all commercial services including, but not limited to Grounds Maintenance, Trade waste, Garden waste, Bulky waste, MOTs and Vehicle care. Delivery a new commercial marketing strategy focusing all branding on the Council's 'Unique Selling Point' of being ethical, reliable and environmentally friendly.
- 7.3 Consider potential new income streams within Environmental Services and, as appropriate, plan for the development and implementation of any new income streams post-2023.

## Our Approach

Developing Digital

## Customer Principles

Digital by Default

Aspiration – standard cross-service customer communication standard – responses

Range

Residents via customer services, online, via councillors, Social media, in person, direct e-mail

Customers via admin, directly to team by phone/email, contract meetings

## Delivering this Strategy

An Operational Action Plan has been written to underpin the delivery of the strategy presented here. Contained within the action plan are details of how these objectives will be delivered.

## Timeline

17 March 2020	Reviewed by Leisure & Environment Committee
25 March 2020	Reviewed by Economic Development Committee
2 April 2020	Approved by Policy and Finance Committee
March - April 2021	Action Plan annual review
March – April 2022	Action Plan annual review
November – February 2023	Develop new Strategy
March 2023	Strategy to Committee March 2023
April 2023 Onwards	New Strategy in Place