



TO COUNCILLOR:

Mrs R H Adams
N Alam
L A Bentley
G A Boulter (Chair)
J W Boyce

Mrs L M Broadley
F S Broadley
D M Carter
M H Charlesworth
F S Ghattoraya

Mrs S Z Haq (Vice-Chair)
Miss A Kaur
K J Loydall JP
Mrs S B Morris
R E R Morris

Dear Sir or Madam

I hereby **SUMMON** you to attend a meeting of the **SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE** to be held at the **COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES, STATION ROAD, WIGSTON** on **TUESDAY, 4 JUNE 2019** at **7.00 PM** for the transaction of the business set out in the Agenda below.

Yours faithfully

Council Offices
Wigston
24 May 2019

Mrs Anne E Court
Chief Executive

<u>ITEM NO.</u>	<u>AGENDA</u>	<u>PAGE NO'S</u>
1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Appointment of Substitutes	
	To appoint substitute Members in accordance with Rule 26 of Part 4 of the Constitution and the Substitution Procedure Rules.	
3.	Declarations of Interest	
	Members are reminded that any declaration of interest should be made having regard to the Members' Code of Conduct. In particular, Members must make clear the nature of the interest and whether it is 'pecuniary' or 'non-pecuniary'.	
4.	Minutes of the Previous Meeting	1 - 6
	To read, confirm and sign the minutes of the previous meeting in accordance with Rule 17 of Part 4 of the Constitution.	
5.	Action List Arising from the Previous Meeting	7
	To read, confirm and note the Action List arising from the previous meeting.	
6.	Petitions and Deputations	



To receive any Petitions and, or, Deputations in accordance with Rules 11 and 12 of Part 4 of the Constitution and the Petitions Procedure Rules respectively.

7. Corporate Performance Update (Q4 2018/19)	8 - 15
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive	
8. Community Services Update (Q4 2018/19)	16 - 32
Report of the Housing Services Manager and Property Manager	
9. Revenues & Benefits Update (Q4 2018/19)	33 - 37
Report of the Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	
10. Health, Wellbeing & Leisure Services Update (Q4 2018/19)	38 - 45
Report of the Head of Community & Wellbeing Services	
11. Greening of the Borough & Operational Services Update (Q4 2018/19)	46 - 51
Report of the Head of Community & Wellbeing Services	
12. Asset and Facilities Service Update (Q4 2018/19)	52 - 56
Report of the Corporate Asset Manager and Economic Regeneration Manager	
13. Customer Service & Transformation Update (Q4 2018/19)	57 - 62
Report of the Head of Customer Service & Transformation	
14. Review of the Pest Control and Dog Warden Services (June 2019)	63 - 69
Report of the Regulatory Services Manager	
15. Oadby & Wigston Tree Strategy (May 2019)	70 - 120
Report of the Planning Control Manager and Arboricultural Officer	

For more information, please contact:

Democratic Services

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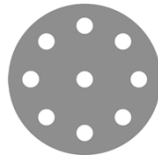
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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE HELD AT THE
COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES, STATION ROAD, WIGSTON ON TUESDAY, 29
JANUARY 2019 COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM**

PRESENT

Councillor G A Boulter (Chair)
Councillor Mrs S Z Haq (Vice Chair)

COUNCILLORS

L A Bentley
Miss A R Bond
J W Boyce
D M Carter
Mrs L Eaton JP
K J Loydall JP

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

S J Ball (Senior Democratic Services Officer / Legal Officer)
D M Gill (Head of Law & Governance / Monitoring Officer)
Mrs J Griffith (Head of Customer Services & Business Transformation)
S Hinds (Director of Finance & Transformation / Section 151 Officer)
Mrs A Lennox MBE (Head of Leisure & Wellbeing Services)
C Raymakers (Head of Finance, Revenues & Benefits)
Miss J Sweeney (Democratic Services Officer)
A Thorpe (Head of Planning, Development & Regeneration)

43. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillors Mrs L M Broadley, F S Broadley, Mrs K M Chalk and Miss M V Chamberlain.

44. APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTES

None.

45. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor L A Bentley declared a non-pecuniary interest with regard to item 13 of the agenda insofar as he had shown a sustained interest over the years in realising the construction of a footbridge over Ervins Lock in Wigston.

46. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting of the previous Committee held on 20 November 2018 be taken as read, confirmed and signed.

47. ACTION LIST ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

The Action List arising from the meeting of the previous Committee held on 20 November 2018 be read, confirmed and noted.

48. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

None.

49. COUNTY COUNCIL PROPOSALS TO DISCONTINUE SUPPORT SERVICES

The Committee received the report (as set out in pages 10 - 13) which asked it to decide upon a considered response in relation to Leicestershire County Council's (LCC) draft model for homelessness and housing support.

It was reported that should LCC's proposal be approved, the existing 'Housing Matters' services would be discontinued and that this Council would not be able to replicate the services currently provided by LCC with the existing resources available, or lack thereof.

With regards to LCC's new draft model, the Committee agreed with Officers' assessment that the proposal would have damaging consequences for a number of residents within the Borough. Members raised concerns regarding the lack of clear information given by LCC for the dates of public consultation, arguing that residents should be made aware of the proposal and have the opportunity to submit their points of view on this matter.

It was moved by Councillor J W Boyce, seconded by K J Loydall and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

- (i) Leicestershire County Council's draft model and the window for consultation be noted;**
- (ii) A formal consultation response be submitted by the Director of Finance & Transformation following consultation with the Chair of the Committee; and**
- (iii) The Chair of the Committee write to Leicestershire County Council asking them to publish the rationale behind their decision to maintain the Falcon Centre Hostel in preference to maintaining the Housing Matters Floating Support contract.**

50. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE UPDATE (Q3 2018/19)

The Committee received the report (as set out on pages 14 – 21) which asked it to note the performance of the Council against its Corporate Objectives during the third quarter of 2018/19.

It was reported that at the end of the third quarter, of the 100 performances measured, 79 were green, 13 were amber and 8 had red statuses.

It was clarified that the annual target set for the total percentage of household waste collected was predicted to not be met due to the high levels of waste following the Christmas period. As such, it was suggested that going forward, anticipated periods of excessive waste should be profiled into the target. It was also clarified that the planning appeal success rate of 70% or higher expressed in such terms was a target set by Central

Government.

It was reported that a review would be undertaken regarding the specification and presentation of the performance indicators to allow for adjustments to be made in future reports.

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

The performance of the Council against its Corporate Objectives be noted.

51. COMMUNITY SERVICES UPDATE (Q3 2018/19)

The Committee received the report (as set out on pages 34 – 40) which asked it to note the progress made in delivering community services during the third quarter of 2018/19.

Members were provided with updates regarding the procurement of new contracts for both central heating and boiler replacements. The Committee were advised that the contracts would commence on 1 April 2019.

It was reported to Members that after successfully procuring a new contract for the kitchen and bathroom replacement programme, a stock condition survey would be carried out to determine any required works. Once identified, new installations were expected to be completed by 30 June 2019.

With regards to the Lightbulb Project (LbP), it was suggested by the Committee that a direct communication channel be made available for Members so they can raise any queries or concerns with the organisation. Officers confirmed that LbP's contact details would be provided. Members were advised to include an Officer in any correspondence sent to allow all queries and comments to be centrally collated.

A Member spoke about an ongoing case regarding a dissatisfied resident who had felt disappointed by the LbP. Although the Member did not want to unduly influence the opinion of the Committee, it was stated that they disagreed with the insinuation of the LbP's ability to deliver improved start-to-end processing times. It was requested that details of case raised be submitted to the Director of Finance and Transformation to allow further investigations to be made.

The Committee was advised that although the LbP was now controlled under a single-tier assessment, and therefore direct comparisons to previous performance figures would be difficult to draw, it was reiterated that the LbP did allow more concentrated focus on dealing with Disability Funding Grant's across Leicestershire Borough and Districts and that overall, performance had improved.

Members were advised that Central Government had provided the LbP with additional funding, to allow identified works to be completed.

It was confirmed that the Council's 'Empty Home Strategy' was set to be reviewed. The Strategy would allow Officers to monitor and address issues regarding the number of empty homes within the Borough. The Committee was advised that the Council Tax premium set for empty homes was set to increase from 150% to 200%, as opposed to the standard 100% Council Tax set for single property homeowners. Officers advised that the collection rate within the Council Tax band would be calculated and reported to Members following the Committee.

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

That the contents of the report and appendix be noted.

52. REVENUES & BENEFITS UPDATE (Q3 2018/19)

The Committee received the report (as set on pages 33 – 37) which asked it to note the activity within the Revenues and Benefits Section during the third quarter of 2018/19 and the progress of Universal Credit implementation.

The Committee was advised that due to a recent successful campaign in recruiting Officers into post, progress has since been made to improve total collection rates and further resources were being sought to ensure targets were continued to be met.

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

That the contents of the report be noted.

53. HEALTH, WELLBEING & LEISURE SERVICES UPDATE (Q3 2018/19)

The Committee received the report (as set out on pages 38 - 48) which asked it to note the range of projects that have taken place within the Borough throughout quarter 3 of 2018/19.

It was reported that with regards to the CCTV, the conversion of the identified lamp-posts had been commissioned and works would be completed by the County Council Highways Authority before the end of March 2019.

It was confirmed that the free 'Everyone Active' 20% discount card was applicable to both Parklands Leisure Centre and the Brocks Hill Visitor's Centre. It was said that the availability of the discount would be more widely promoted on-site and in promotional material directed towards residents (i.e. Letterbox, social media etc).

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

That the contents of the report and appendix be noted.

54. GREENING OF THE BOROUGH AND OPERATIONAL SERVICES UPDATE (Q3 2018/19)

The Committee received the report (as set out on pages 49 – 58) which asked it to note the update on the Borough's green and natural spaces and the work undertaken by Operational Services throughout the third quarter of 2018/19.

In respect of the request received from the South Wigston Local Area Coordinator (LAC) for the approval to use a section of the land at Blaby Road Park as a community garden, concerns were raised by Members as to whether sufficient research had taken place to

establish a community demand for the project. It was also noted that the proposed site was situated beside a storage unit which was said could be problematic in the future due to the potential of restricted access.

The Committee concluded that for the LAC's proposals to be approved, evidence of wider public consultation would be required and that new location should be sought. It was also suggested that a pilot scheme would be effective in order to review and amend certain practical elements of the project.

It was noted that the levels of recycling had increased since the introduction of wheeled bins in June 2018. It was suggested that promotional information be circulated and exercises undertaken around the Borough to raise awareness of what can and cannot be recycled. This would provide an opportunity for Officers to collect feedback in order to promote the recycling scheme more effectively.

It was reported to that the new draft Volunteering Policy has been completed and circulated to the Council's Senior Management Team, all staff and the Trade Unions. The consultation period for the Policy was said to end 8 February 2019.

It was moved by Councillor J W Boyce, seconded by Councillor D M Carter and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

- (i) Consideration of the proposal for a Community Garden at Blaby Road Park (as set out in paragraph 5.1 and Appendix 1 of the report) be deferred to a subsequent meeting of the Committee; and**
- (ii) The contents of the remainder of report be noted.**

55. FACILITIES SERVICE UPDATE (Q3 2018/19)

The Committee received the report (as set out on pages 59 – 64_ which asked it note the details of the work completed by the Facilities Section within the third quarter of 2018/19.

Members were advised of the completed installation of both the dog walk shelter at Blaby Road Park and the picnic shelter at the Crow Mill Picnic Area in South Wigston.

With regards to Ervins Lock Footbridge, the Committee was advised that progress had been delayed due to opposing views between the Canals and Rivers Trust (CRT) and Leicestershire County Council's Conservation Officer (CO) in relation to the design of the proposed footbridge. It was said that the CRT had advised that permission to build would not be granted until the proposed footbridge incorporated its design preference. Members reiterated the need for progress to be made to ensure that the works were commenced by next Autumn. Members were hopeful that a sensible compromise could be reached between the CO and the CRT.

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

That the contents of the report be noted.

56. CUSTOMER SERVICE AND TRANSFORMATION UPDATE (Q3 2018/19)

The Committee received the report (as set out on pages 65 – 70) which asked it to note the activity within the Customer Service and Transformation Section during the third quarter

of 2018/19.

The Committee was advised that a communication campaign to notify residents of the requirement to renew their subscription to the garden waste service has begun. Members were informed that the Council had already received 38 renewal requests in advance. It was said that reminders would be circulated via email to customers that had provided their email address when initially signing up to the service.

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

That the contents of the report be noted.

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8.32 PM



Chair

Tuesday, 04 June 2019

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SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE

ACTION LIST

Arising from the Meeting held on Tuesday, 29 January 2019

No.	Minute Ref. / Item of Business	*Action Details / Action Due Date	Responsible Officer(s)' Initials	Action Status
1.	50. – Corporate Performance Update (Q3 2018/19)	Anticipated periods of excessive waste (i.e. Christmas) be profiled into the household waste collection target going forward. <i>Due by Ongoing</i>	StHi	Ongoing
2.	51. – Community Services Update (Q3 2018/19)	Direct contact details for the Lightbulb Project to be provided to Committee Members. <i>Due by Mar-19</i>	StHi	Complete
		The relevant direct contact details were provided to all Members by e-mail shortly after the meeting on 31 January 2019.		
3.	51. – Community Services Update (Q3 2018/19)	The current collection rates of Council Tax with regards to empty homes within the Borough to be provided to Members. <i>Due by Mar-19</i>	ChRa	Complete (See below)
		Properties which are long-term empty and get a premium charge on their Council Tax have a collection rate of 100% as of 31 March 2019.		

* | All actions listed are those which are informally raised by Members during the course of debate upon a given item of business which do not form part of - but may be additional, incidental or ancillary to - any motion(s) carried. These actions are for the attention of the responsible Officer(s).

Agenda Item 7



Service Delivery Committee	Tuesday, 04 June 2019	Matter for Information
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Report Title: **Corporate Performance Update (Q4 2018/19)**

Report Author(s): **Stephen Hinds (Deputy Chief Executive)**

Purpose of Report:	The purpose of the report is to provide an update on progress at the end of the 2018/19 Financial Year towards achieving the priorities of the Oadby and Wigston Borough Council's Strategic Objectives as agreed in May 2018.
Report Summary:	There are 101 Key Performance Indicators for our Corporate Plan Objectives. These are categorised by each objective and service delivery arm. Each target has been graded using the Red / Amber / Green status ranking system. There is also a "blue" ranking and this is for indicators where work has yet to begin, and therefore cannot be ranked. Out of the 101 indicators, 100 were due for reporting as at the end of Quarter Four. Of the 100, 76 were green status, 8 were amber status, and 16 were red status. This equates to 76% Green, 8% Amber and 16% are red.
Recommendation(s):	That the performance of the Council against its Corporate Objectives be noted.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	Stephen Hinds (Deputy Chief Executive) (0116) 257 2681 stephen.hinds@oadby-wigston.gov.uk
Corporate Objectives:	Building, Protecting and Empowering Communities (CO1) Providing Excellent Services (CO3)
Vision and Values:	"A Strong Borough Together" (Vision) Innovation (V4) Customer Focus (V5)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Financial:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Reputation Damage (CR4) Organisational/Transformational Change (CR8)
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report. EA not applicable.
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.

Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	As the author, the report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	Report entitled 'Key Performance Measures and Reporting 2018/19' to Policy, Finance and Development Committee on 01 May 2018
Appendices:	None.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 As part of the Council's on-going development to performance management and reporting, 2018/19 sees the next stage in how we measure and report Council performance (alongside the standard finance and statutory reporting framework).
- 1.2 The Council has produced 101 new Key Performance Measures for 2018/19, and these measures relate to each of the Council's five Corporate Objectives, and these were agreed at the Policy, Finance and Development Committee in May 2018.
- 1.3 These measures are "outcome" based measures, meaning that they identify key deliverables for the authority that actively work towards meeting the Corporate Objectives, and will allow for greater accountability and transparency. This will mean that the public, Members and Officers can clearly see how the Council is performing against its objectives, and if it isn't, then why it isn't.

2. Corporate Performance

- 2.1 The following report provides analysis and statistics on the performance of the indicators used to monitor our progress against the Council's Corporate Objectives.
- 2.2 There are five main objectives, with these being:
 - An Inclusive and Engaged Borough
 - Balanced Economic Development
 - Effective Service Provision
 - Green and Safe Places
 - Wellbeing For All
- 2.3 There are 101 Key Performance Indicators for our Corporate Plan Objectives. These are categorised by each objective and service delivery arm. Each target has been graded using the Red/Amber/Green status ranking system. There is also a "blue" ranking and this is for indicators where work has yet to begin, and therefore cannot be ranked. The scoring system has been applied using the following definitions:

Green Target fully achieved or is currently on track to achieve target

Amber Indicator is in danger of falling behind target

Red Indicator is off target or has been completed behind the deadline target.

2.4 Out of the 101 indicators, 100 were due for reporting as at the end of the financial year.

Of the 100:

76 were green status

8 were amber status

16 were red status

This equates to 76% Green, 8% Amber and 16% are red. In Quarter Two, these figures were 79%, 13% and 8% respectively.

2.5 The following table identifies the Council's performance, by objective and service delivery section.

Chart 1: Performance Table by Corporate Objective

Quarter Four 2018/19	Green		Amber		Red	
	Number of Indicators	Percentage	Number of Indicators	Percentage	Number of Indicators	Percentage
Overall Performance						
All Targets Due	76	76%	8	8%	16	16%
Corporate Priority						
Inclusive Engaged Borough	13	93%	1	7%	1	7%
Balanced Economic Development	5	83%	0	0%	1	17%
Effective Service Provision	34	72%	4	9%	9	19%
Green and Safe Places	5	71%	1	14%	1	14%
Wellbeing for All	19	76%	2	8%	4	16%

Chart 2: Performance Table by Service Delivery

Quarter Four 2018/19	Green		Amber		Red	
	Number of Indicators	Percentage	Number of Indicators	Percentage	Number of Indicators	Percentage
Overall Performance						
All Targets Due	76	77%	8	8%	16	16%
Department						
Customer Service & Transformation	12	100%	0	0%	0	0%
Finance, Revenues & Benefits	11	73%	3	20%	1	0%
Health & Wellbeing	16	89%	0	0.0%	2	11.1%
Operations & Street Scene	3	60%	2	40%	0	0%
People & Performance	4	57%	1	0%	3	43%
Planning, Delivery, Regen & Housing	30	71%	2	5%	10	24%

(Continued overleaf)

3. Exception Reporting

3.1 In order to highlight potential areas for improvement, this section details the targets that have been given a "Red" or "Amber" Status.

Reference	Corporate Priority	Department	Measure/Activity	Target/Key Output	Target Quarter	Year End Commentary	March Outcome
IEB3	An Inclusive and Engaged Borough	Operations and Street Scene	The amount of household waste collected per household in the month	Target of 40% of all collections.	Quarter 4	The annual average was 42%, just above the target of 40% for the year. This was due to the larger than usual waste over the Christmas Period that pushed the outcome over the target.	Amber
IEB11	An Inclusive and Engaged Borough	Health & Wellbeing	Improving engagement with Children and Young People	15% increase in attendance at Supersonic Boom Event	Quarter 2	Successful Supersonic Boom event held on Blaby Road Park in August 2018. Whilst the number of attendances was lower than the predicted target, this community event was well received by residents and visitors to the Borough. Improved promotional activities will be in place to increase attendance in 2019	Red
BED2	Balanced Economic Development	Planning, Development and Regeneration	Update Suite of Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance	Adoption of the Town Centres Area Action Plan Guidance by March 2019	Quarter 4	The production of the Town Centre Area Action Plan Guidance (TC Guidance) has commenced. However due to other priority deadlines, the publication of the TC Guidance will likely be summer 2019.	Red
ESP5	Effective Service Provision	Planning, Development and Regeneration	Creation of additional Cemetery space	Incorporate the adjacent former scout hut land into Oadby Cemetery by March 2019	Quarter 4	The planning application was approved by Development Control Committee on 11th April 2019, enabling the work to be implemented subject to the discharge of conditions related to the Planning Approval. The discharge of conditions is currently in progress	Amber
ESP9	Effective Service Provision	Planning, Development and Regeneration	Planning Enforcement and Appeals	An appeal success rate of 70% or higher between 1st April 2018 to 31st December 2019	Quarter 4	Between 1st April 2018 to 31st December 2019 the Council's Appeal success rate was 65% based upon 9 appeals being dismissed/withdrawn and 5 being allowed.	Red
ESP11	Effective Service Provision	People and Performance	Review Job Evaluation Scheme	To ensure that staff and managers have confidence in the process (December 2018)	Quarter 3	Review of Job Evaluation Scheme post implementation of a workforce/people strategy that will help underpin how we recognise the roles staff undertake.	Red

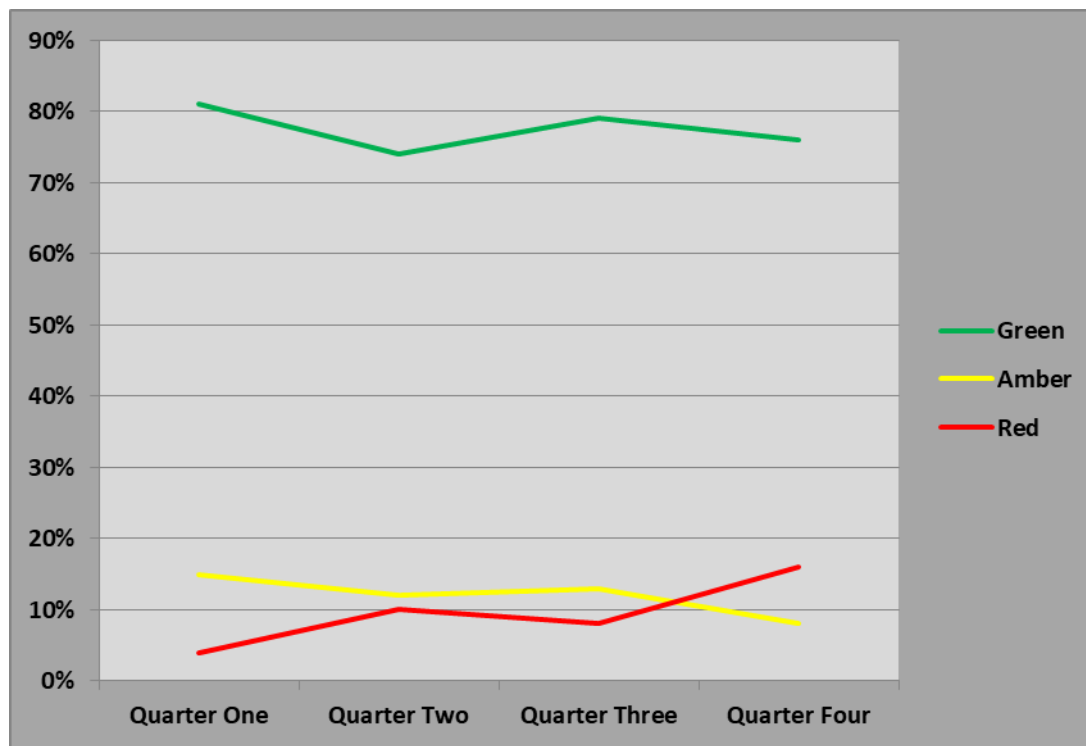
Reference	Corporate Priority	Department	Measure/Activity	Target/Key Output	Target Quarter	Year End Commentary	March Outcome
ESP12	Effective Service Provision	People and Performance	Have a People Strategy that will enable to authority to progress to being a top rated council and an employer of choice	Develop a People Strategy that is approved by June 2018	Quarter 1	People Strategy not delivered. This will now be owned by the Senior Leadership Team and implemented in 2019.	Red
ESP17	Effective Service Provision	People and Performance	Review of Council's Policies and Procedures	All policies to be reviewed and revised in four batches. To be completed by March 2019.	Quarter 4	Target of 30 policies to be reviewed, four outstanding and these are due for completion by the end of July.	Amber
ESP27	Effective Service Provision	Finance, Revenues and Benefits	Improve financial awareness of elected Members	Deliver two briefings during the financial year (March 2019).	Quarter 4	Sessions were not delivered by 31 March. Heads of Service and Budget Holders will be trained once the new structure has been recruited to. Members Training is scheduled for 10 June as part of the Members induction process	Red
ESP29	Effective Service Provision	Finance, Revenues and Benefits	Continue to maximise income through effective collection processes.	Council Tax collection rate of 98.5%	Quarter 4	97.87% (98.23% in March 2017) of debit has been collected to date below target collection of 98.50% for the year. This is 0.63% below the set target for "in-year collections". However monitoring will continue of this debit during April when collection will continue. It is anticipated that our total collection for 2018/19 will be closer to 99%.	Amber
ESP31	Effective Service Provision	Finance, Revenues and Benefits	Continue to maximise income through effective collection processes.	Reduce former years areas on Council Tax to below 3% of the annual debt.	Quarter 4	Previous Years Arrears stand at £1.03m (3.4% of debit). There has been long term absence during the second half of 2018/19 . Going forward the section should be fully staffed once the final back fill for maternity cover is arranged. The section has started to liaising with legal as well as external legal firms to pursue long term serial non payers and this work will continue in 19/20	Amber
ESP38	Effective Service Provision	Planning, Development and Regeneration	Energy Efficiency Strategy	Energy Efficiency Strategy approved by Senior Management Team by September 2018	Quarter 2	This target has not been met (links to target to increase EPC's to 100%, see WBA 19 below). Draft Strategy due to be with SLT by end of Q1 2019/20 to be finalised when EPC's at or very close to 100% by end of Q2. The purpose of the Strategy is to focus on the work that is needed to achieved the required EPC rating.	Red
ESP39	Effective Service Provision	Planning, Development and Regeneration	Energy Efficiency Strategy	Energy Efficiency Strategy delivered - Key Target to be set post April 2018	Quarter 4	Not completed	Red

Reference	Corporate Priority	Department	Measure/Activity	Target/Key Output	Target Quarter	Year End Commentary	March Outcome
ESP41	Effective Service Provision	Planning, Development and Regeneration	Improve Customer Satisfaction with the services delivered by the Housing Service	Customer Satisfaction with the Housing Repairs Service at 95%	Quarter 4	New methodology to be introduced Q1 2019/20. The automated Customer Copy of the works order is being amended to remove the Satisfaction Survey as no replies are being received. The survey will be replaced with details of what contractors are expected to do e.g. wear ID badge, clean up after themselves etc. Details of how to complete an online line satisfaction survey will be included and sample telephone surveys carried out. The new arrangements are scheduled to be in place so that data is available from Q2.	Red
ESP42	Effective Service Provision	Planning, Development and Regeneration	Improve Customer Satisfaction with the services delivered by the Housing Service	Customer Satisfaction with the "Your New Home" service at 95%	Quarter 4	New methodology to be introduced Q1 2019/20. A draft questionnaire has now been circulated for officer comments with a view to being sent to all new tenants with tenancy commencement date on or after 1 April 2019. Q1 will then be treated as a pilot to check how this works.	Red
ESP48	Effective Service Provision	People and Performance	Staff are fully aware and understand their statutory responsibilities	100% of Staff complete mandatory training on Learning Pool	Quarter 4	Annual average of 90% of staff completed mandatory training on Learning Pool. As discussed throughout the year, this measure includes those who cannot attend mandatory training due to sickness and long-term absences. Future recording of this measure will only include those staff who are available to undertake the training.	Red
GSP2	Green & Safe Places	Planning, Development and Regeneration	Improving Tenancy Agreement to allow greater flexibility for the tenant and Council	New Tenancy Agreement approved and implemented by March 2019	Quarter 4	New Tenancy Agreement approved by full council in April 2019	Amber
GSP4	Green & Safe Places	Planning, Development and Regeneration	Improve fire safety on Council Owned Housing Sites.	95% of Communal Housing areas are clear of obstructions at all times.	Quarter 4	This KPI has not proved possible to measure effectively because it relies on tenants keeping the common areas clear of obstructions at all times. The Council does not employ caretaking staff who would be able to enforce this on a regular basis. Communal areas are inspected 4 times per year and in 18/19 the inspection rate was 100% achieved. Any illicit items in communal areas are removed within a target of 7 days.	Red
WBA3	Wellbeing for all	Planning, Development and Regeneration	Erwins Lock Pedestrian Footbridge	Opening of the Footbridge by March 2019	Quarter 4	There has been no response from CRT. In order to break the stalemate Officers are approaching LCC with a view to brokering a solution that will enable the CRTs required design to be used. It is proposed that if acceptable to LCC an amended planning application would be submitted in summer 2019 so that work could take place in Winter 2019/20.	Red

Reference	Corporate Priority	Department	Measure/Activity	Target/Key Output	Target Quarter	Year End Commentary	March Outcome
WBA6	Wellbeing for All	Operations and Street Scene	The amount of recycling as a percentage of total waste collected for the month	50	Quarter 4	Moving from free collections of garden waste Borough-wide to a chargeable service has resulted in a reduction of recycling rates.	Amber
WBA9	Wellbeing for all	Planning, Development and Regeneration	Reduce rough sleeping across the borough by working with voluntary sector partners.	Assess viability of a cross-sector working group to address roughsleeping. Report to Council in December 2018.	Quarter 3	A Rapid Rehousing Pathway bid has been successful led by North West Leicestershire District Council. It is intended that this bid will provide rapid rehousing options for rough sleepers.	Amber
WBA12	Wellbeing for All	Finance, Revenues and Benefits	Continue to improve the way we provide Benefits	Time taken to process new Benefit Claims is 15 days or less.	Quarter 4	March Figure 13.27 days. Recovered some ground after Christmas. YTD figure 15.82 days. Although this is outside our target of 15 days it is still a strong performance and well ahead of the national average of 21 days	Amber
WBA17	Wellbeing for All	Health & Wellbeing	Percentage of Council staff and Elected Members who have undertaken relevant safeguarding training.	100% of relevant Council Staff and Elected Members undertake training	Quarter 4	Significant changes in the national safeguarding landscape, including the restructuring of local services, has necessitated the need for a full revision of safeguarding policies, procedures, and training materials within the Council. In Nov 2018 Members adopted revised Children and Young People, and Adult, safeguarding policies. These policies, and the NSPCC delivered two day safeguarding course undertaken by the Council's Safeguarding Lead, form the foundation upon which all safeguarding training delivered to Council Officers and Members will be based. To ensure a consistent, cross-border approach to safeguarding in line with the recommendations of the Safeguarding Boards for LL&R, this training is being developed as a collaborative effort between the 7 district Councils. Training for O&W elected Members, agreed to take place following the May elections, will be the first training package delivered based upon the above, and will signal the start of the new training rollout at the Council. Funding has also been ring-fenced for the Council's existing and new Designated Safeguarding Officers to receive tailored safeguarding training applicable to their enhanced responsibilities, bringing the total number of trained safeguarding officers from 3 to 7.	Red
WBA19	Wellbeing for All	Planning, Development and Regeneration	Improve EPC ratings of Council Properties	100% Properties EPC Rated	Quarter 4	This target has not been met. However good progress has been made in increasing the number of properties with EPC's. In 2016 when the first Energy Strategy for Council Homes was written the council had 544 of 1236 homes (44%) with an EPC. These had been undertaken in the 8 years since EPC's were first introduced in 2008. There are now 1036 of 1209 homes (86%) with EPC's. The 176 that remain to be undertaken include some properties in the 2018/19 capital programme (works still to be completed before first EPC carried out), no access cases and some still to be scheduled. We now expect to reach 100% in Q2 2019/20.	Red

4. Direction of Travel

- 4.1 In this, the first year of reporting in this method, it is important to see the direction of travel over the year and that a consistent level of forecasting was achieved across the year with regards to RAG status', with only a handful of Amber's turning into red at the end of the year. This indicates Officers are confident of identifying potential issues, and have not been overly or unduly optimistic with their forecasts, taking a prudent approach.



Agenda Item 8



Service Delivery Committee	Tuesday, 04 June 2019	Matter for Information
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Report Title: **Community Services Update (Q4 2018/19)**

Report Author(s): **Steve Nash (Housing Services Manager)**
John Stemp (Property Manager)

Purpose of Report:	This report is to provide an update to the Committee regarding the delivery of housing services for Quarter 4 of 2018-19.
Report Summary:	This report includes standing items on voids, homelessness, gas safety, capital projects and disabled facilities grants.
Recommendation(s):	That the content of the report and appendices be noted.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Stephen Hinds (Deputy Chief Executive) (0116) 257 2681 stephen.hinds@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Adrian Thorpe (Head of the Built Environment) (0116) 257 2645 adrian.thorpe@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Steve Nash (Housing Services Manager) (0116) 257 2662 steve.nash@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>John Stemp (Property Manager) john.stemp@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Corporate Objectives:	Providing Excellent Services (CO3)
Vision and Values:	Accountability (V1) Customer Focus (V5)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Financial:	The implications are as set out at paragraph(es) 6-7 of this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Decreasing Financial Resources / Increasing Financial Pressures (CR1) Effective Utilisation of Assets / Buildings (CR5) Regulatory Governance (CR6)
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report. EA not applicable
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	

Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	None.
Appendices:	1. Housing Choice Based Lettings (2018/19) 2. HRA Capital Programme Update (Q4 2018/19)

1. Voids

- 1.1 This section reports on properties that have become empty (void) and which were brought back into use with a new tenant during 2018/19. The target is to re-let the majority of properties within 20 working days (normal voids). Certain properties requiring major works and those being used as temporary accommodation for the homeless are not included within this target, although they are mentioned in the narrative below. Of the 58 normal voids the average void time was 18.76 working days.
- 1.2 Of the 9 major voids the average void time was 48.8 working days.

2. New Tenancy Agreement

- 2.1 The new tenancy agreement was approved at Full Council on 16 April 2019. The final stage required to implement the new tenancy agreement is the service of a Notice of Variation giving 4 weeks' notice that the new tenancy will come into effect. It is intended that the Notice of Variation will be served on 3 June and will become effective on 8 July 2019.

3. Homelessness

- 3.1 Homeless applications during 2018/19 were 196:

Quarter 1 (2018/19)	46 applications
Quarter 2 (2018/19)	63 applications
Quarter 3 (2018/19)	39 applications
Quarter 4 (2018/19)	48 applications

- 3.2 There are currently 23 households in temporary accommodation comprising:

12	The Council's own stock (note: use of the Council's own housing stock is considered to be a temporary measure pending securing alternative options for providing temporary accommodation. These are currently being considered and it is intended they will be implemented during 2019/20. An Action Plan is in the process of being prepared to set out the various options available).
1	A property on a long-lease from Paragon Asra (PA) Housing.
4	Bed & Breakfast (B&B).
5	Council-owned Belmont House Hostel (134 Station Road, Wigston)
1	Privately leased property.

4. Choice Based Lettings

- 4.1 A full report on Choice Based Lettings in 2018/19 is attached as **Appendix 1**. The report gives details of the number and types of properties let over the period April 2018 until March 2019 which in summary were 52 Council properties and 16 from Housing Association partners. This is a continuing reduction in availability of vacancies.
- 4.2 Officers will consider bringing a proposal to a future meeting to remove those applicants from the Housing register who have no realistic prospect of obtaining accommodation.

5. Gas Safety

- 5.1 In terms of servicing and annual gas safety test, 100% compliance was achieved to 31 March 2019.

6. Repairs Service

- 6.1 The budget outturn for responsive repairs for the full year to 31 March 2019 was £230,000 against a budget of £295,000.

7. Capital Programme Update

- 7.1 As reported to Committee on 29 January 2019 an additional interim staffing resource was appointed in December 2018 to help address the slippage that had occurred in the delivery of the housing capital programme during the first three quarters of the financial year. It was however, anticipated that whilst the vast majority of the budget would be spent or committed by the year end, the actual delivery of a number of schemes was projected to run into 2019-20.
- 7.2 The actual year end spend as at 31 March 2019, including accruals and adjustments was £840,800, and it is proposed that the £1,041,200 that was not spent is carried forward into the new financial year because it is already committed to improvement programmes or has been allocated to known investment requirements. It is anticipated that the majority of the work for which this funding is carried forward will be completed by 31 August 2019.
- 7.3 The money carried forward will be added to the £1.5m budget approved at Full Council on 21 February 2019 for the 2019-20 housing capital programme and a headline breakdown of how this funding will be allocated will be reported to Policy, Finance and Development Committee on 11 June 2019 and is provided for information in the table below:

Programme	Carry Forward from 2018/19	New Budget 2019/20	Budget + Carry Forward 2019/20
Timber Replacement Programme	£152,200	£0	£152,200
EWI Programme	£41,600	£0	£41,600
William Peardon Court Heating	£256,900	£0	£256,900
Heating & Boiler Replacements	£40,200	£209,800	£250,000
Front & Rear Entrance Doors	£0	£50,000	£50,000
Car Hard Standings	£3,500	£16,500	£20,000
Major Voids/Upgrade Works	£0	£150,000	£150,000
Major Adaptations	£18,800	£91,200	£100,000
FRA Safety Works	£34,900	£115,100	£150,000
Kitchen and Bathroom Programme	£493,100	£306,900	£800,000

Housing Block Improvements	0	£470,500	£470,500
Asset Management IT Systems Upgrade	0	£100,000	£100,000
HRA Total	£1,041,200	£1,500,000	£2,541,200

- 7.4 A more detailed breakdown of the 2018-19 year end out-turn on a project by project basis is attached as **Appendix 2** to this report although it should be remembered that these figures are strictly provisional and subject to audit scrutiny during June.

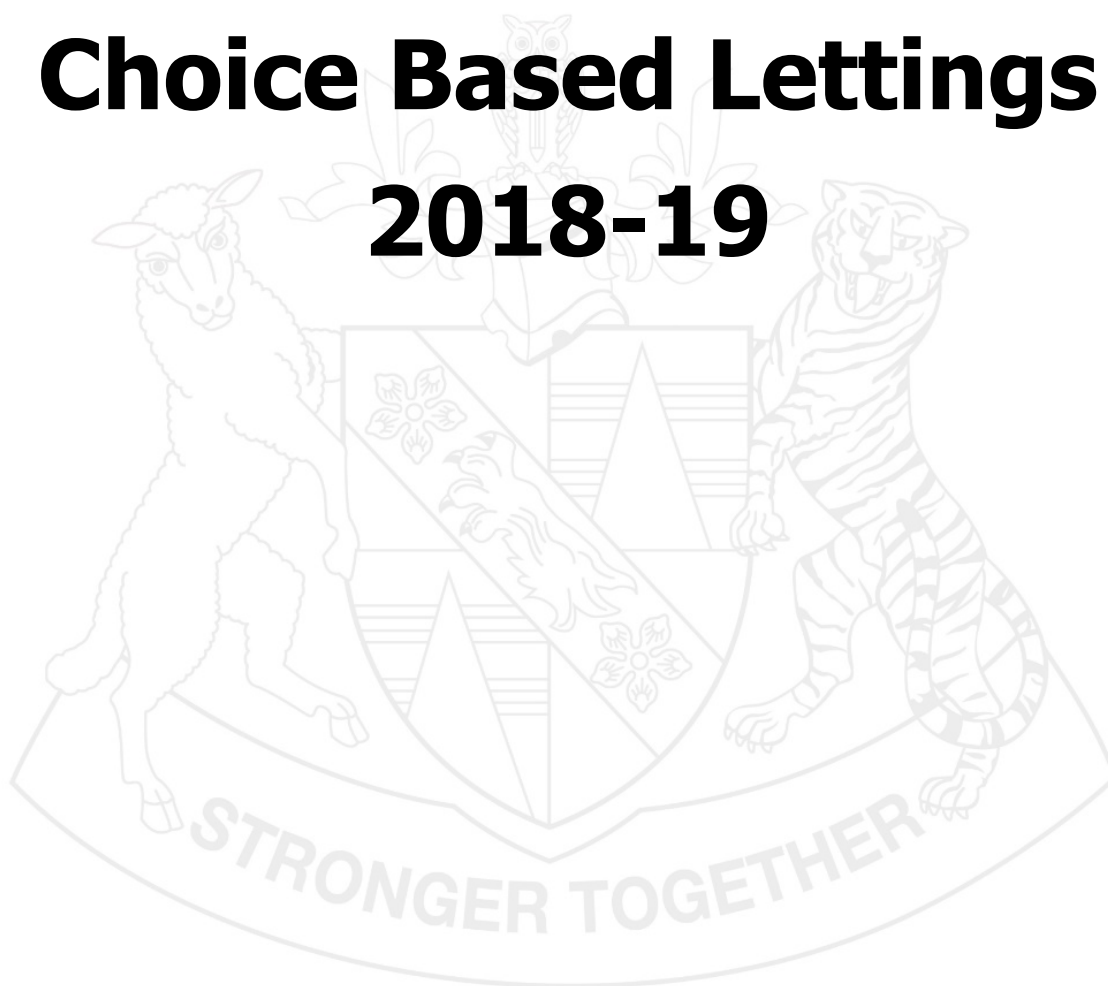
8. Lightbulb Update (Disabled Facilities Grants and Related Services)

- 8.1 As reported to committee on January 2019 the Lightbulb 'performance dashboard', that would contain key performance information, was still to be produced. This information was subsequently circulated in advance of a meeting to be held on 10 April 2019 covering Q1, Q2, Q3 plus January and February 2019.
- 8.2 At the meeting there was acknowledgement that the low level of completions for Disabled Facilities Grants (11 in 11 months) indicated a backlog. The backlog is most likely due to differences in the way performance is measured pre and post Lightbulb and/or subsequent County Council recommendations that had not been made to us be were then made later to Lightbulb after go live. There were however now 48 live cases spread fairly evenly across the various stages of the process and 13 of these were new cases waiting to be assessed. An additional contractor resource had been taken on to progress these new cases to the stage where builders start the work.
- 8.3 The project is very focussed on ensuring any initial backlog is cleared by actively putting additional resources in place in the key delivery stages. This, combined with the regular availability of performance information provides a sound basis for Lightbulb to further improve its performance, efficiency and effectiveness during 2019/20.
- 8.4 The performance dashboard indicated the budget for this Council was 32% spent and 47% committed, with an additional 9% expected to be committed in relation to the new cases, a total of 88%. This left 12% that could be allocated to RRO (Regulatory Reform Order) work i.e. allowable items that support core DFG work such as help with heating or disrepair.

HOUSING

Choice Based Lettings

2018-19



2018-2019 Choice Based Lettings

This report summarises the activities in relation to Choice Based Lettings and the Housing Register in the period 1/04/2018 until 31/3/2019.

1. The Housing Register

The Housing Register comprises 355 active applications. These are placed in bandings depending on their housing need. More than half of applicants are deemed to have no housing need and are placed in the 'low' band. Chart 1 shows the split between bandings.

At least annually every housing applicant is required to renew their application. Those who fail to do so are cancelled.

Chart 1 – Housing Register by band April 2019

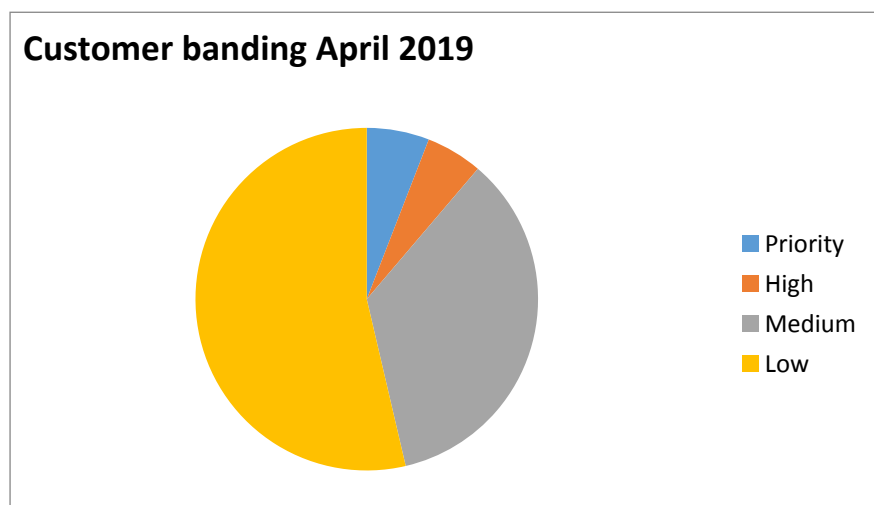
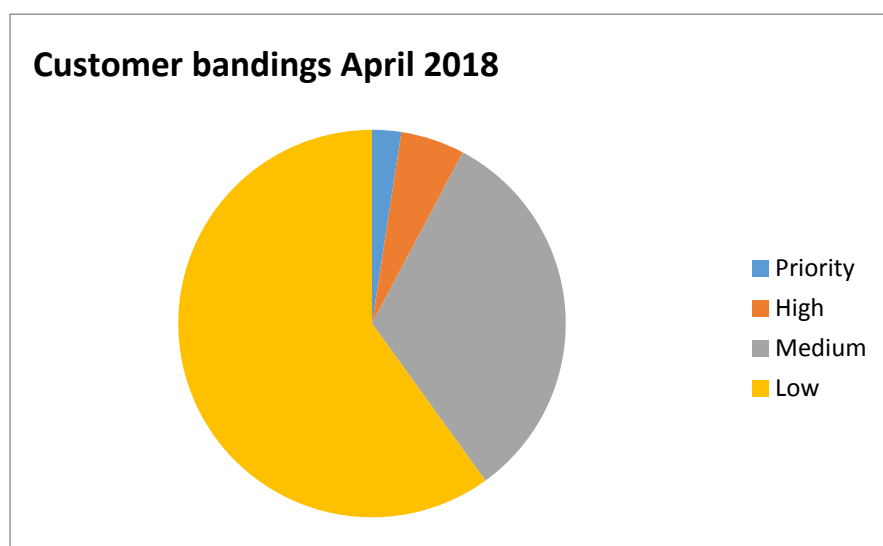


Chart 2 – Housing Register by band April 2018



There has been a 100% increase in customers in the top 'Priority' banding over the past 12 months.

2. New applications

During 2018-19 there were 526 new applications of which only 206 were successfully accepted onto the Housing Register of which only 27 were housed within the year.

Around 17% of new applicants were transfer applications from existing social housing tenants.

3. Lettings

The Choice Based Lettings system was used to allocate 52 OWBC properties and to successfully nominate to 16 vacant Housing Association Properties (see Table 1 below)

Table 1 - 2018/19 summary lettings

Property type	Landlord							Total
	OWBC	EMH Homes	NCHA	Metropolitan	Riverside	Waterloo Housing	PA Housing	
Sheltered	28							28
Studio/ 1 bed flat	5	1					1	7
2 bed flat	6					2		8
2 bed house	2	1	1	3	1	2		10
3 bed maisonette	3							3
3 bed house	5	1		1		1		8
3 bed flat	2							2
4 bed house	1		1					2
Totals	52	3	2	4	1	5	1	68

This is a reduction over vacancies in 2018-2018 (see Table 2), particularly amongst general needs vacancies.

Table 2 – 2017/18 summary lettings

Property type	Landlord							Total
	OWBC	Waterloo	Longhurst	PA Housing	Metropolitan	NCHA	Riverside	
Sheltered	17	1						18
Studio/ 1 bed flat	12	4	2		1			19
2 bed flat	9	1				1	1	12

2 bed house	4		1	1				6
3 bed maisonette	10							10
3 bed house	4				1		1	6
3 bed flat								0
4 bed house								0
Totals	56	6	3	1	2	1	2	71

Nominations from Housing Associations remained steady at 16 in 2018-19 compared to 15 in 2017-18.

The biggest change was the 24%-25% decrease in 'general needs' vacancies – those not specifically for the elderly. These lettings decreased from 53 in 2017-18 to just 40 in 2018-19.

Of particular note is the reduction from 19 single person (or childless couple) vacancies in 2017-18 to just 7 in 2018-19.

The Council has maintained its policy of reserving certain vacant properties for existing OWBC tenants (upto 25% of vacancies). In 2018-19 this totalled 7 properties of which the majority were 3 bedroom houses.

The figures listed in Table 1 include a number of 'final offers' of accommodation made directly to homeless households owed the main homeless duty. These cases were all 'Priority' band households who had been in that band in excess of 8 weeks. The decision to offer was made on the basis of the longest length of time in the Priority band. Refusal for no acceptable reason meant the household's banding was reduced from Priority to Medium band.

4. Housing Need

Table 3 – bedroom need as of 8 April 2019

Bedroom need	Number of households
1	132
2	144
3	61
4	16
5+	2

Table 3 above shows the current need for property by bedrooms.

Given the demand of 132 households requiring a single bedroom and the relative lack of vacancies (just 7 in 2018-20) it is worth noting that applicants not in the 'priority' banding who do not qualify for sheltered housing are unlikely to obtain accommodation.

Steve Nash
Housing Services Manager

April 2019

HRA Capital Programme 2018-19 - Financial Summary Year End

Scheme Description	Budget	2018-19 Actual Year End Spend including Accruals	2018-19 Budget Remaining to be Carried Forward
Schemes Carried Over from 2017-18	£529,000	£455,400	£73,600
Schemes Included Each Year (continued)	£390,000	£350,900	£39,100
2018/19 Schemes	£963,000	£56,000	£907,000
Total	£1,882,000	£862,300	£1,019,700

Note

There was an additional £21,500 in the 2018-19 housing capital programme allocated for potential carry over works from a number of projects that were completed in 2017-18 that was not required. As a consequence the actual carry forward into the 2019-20 housing capital programme budget is £1,041,200.

HRA Capital Programme 2018-19 - Scheme by Scheme Summary Year End

Schemes Carried Over from 2017-18	2018-19 Budget	2018-19 Actual Year End Spend including Accruals	2018-19 Budget Remaining /(Overspend)	Carry Forward for this project/programme to 2019-20
William Peardon Court	£229,000.00	£122,100	£106,900	£256,900
	The first phase of work, to replace the communal boilers to this sheltered housing scheme in Wigston was completed in November 2018. Procurement of the second phase to replace the individual heating systems to each flat resulted in tender submissions that were deemed to be cost prohibitive. As a consequence the specification has subsequently been re-visited and revised significantly. Re-procurement commences on 7 May 2019 and will be completed and a contractor appointed by 31 May 2019. Subject to a successful appointment it is anticipated that this project will be completed by 31 July 2019. An additional £150,000 has been vired into this budget for 2019-20 from the 2018-19 underspend to allow for a carry forward of £256,900 to complete this project.			
Marriot House	£200,000.00	£198,200	£1,800	£0
	A programme of fire safety work to this sheltered housing scheme in Oadby was completed in March 2019 and successfully handed over in April 2019. This included the replacement of flat entrance doors, kitchen glazed panels onto common areas, communal fire doors and side panels and the compartmentalisation of the roof space to the block.			

Schemes Carried Over from 2017-18 (continued)	2018-19 Budget	2018-19 Actual Year End Spend including Accruals	2018-19 Budget Remaining /(Overspend)	Carry Forward for this project/programme to 2019-20
14 Junction Road	£100,000.00	£135,100	(£35,100)	£0
	Work to convert a three bedroom maisonette located on the third and fourth floor of this block in Wigston, into a one bedroom third floor flat and a two bedroom fourth floor flat was completed in March 2019 and successfully handed over in April 2019			

Schemes Included Each Year	2018-19 Budget	2018-19 Actual Year End Spend including Accruals	2018-19 Budget Remaining /(Overspend)	Carry Forward for this project/programme to 2019-20
Decent Homes	£100,000.00	£150,600	(£50,600)	£0
	Major refurbishment work to upgrade six properties that became vacant during the financial year to the Decent Homes Standard was successfully completed.			
Central Heating and Boiler Replacements	£100,000.00	£83,100	£16,900	£40,200
	Replacement boilers and associated heating works were completed to 56 properties during the financial year. A more planned approach to replacing boilers and heating systems is to be adopted from 2019-20 that will involve the replacement of boilers that have reached the end of the industry standard life expectancy of 15 years. It is proposed that a three year planned programme will be implemented to achieve this and the £40,200 to be carried forward will contribute towards the funding of the 2019-20 programme.			
Major Adaptations	£150,000.00	£80,600	£69,400	£18,800
	As at 31 March 2019 all major adaptations recommended by the County Council's Occupational Health Team had been completed. Whilst there was no waiting list a budget is required to respond to ongoing recommendations as they are received and the £34,900 that is proposed to be carried forward will contribute towards the funding of the 2019-20 programme.			

Schemes Included Each Year (continued)	2018-19 Budget	2018-19 Actual Year End Spend including Accruals	2018-19 Budget Remaining /(Overspend)	Carry Forward for this project/programme to 2019-20
Front and Rear Doors	£20,000	£20,100	(£100)	£0
	Replacement doors were fitted to 38 properties during the financial year. This is an annual budget and a programme of further replacements will take place during 2019-20.			
Car Hardstandings	£20,000	£16,500	£3,500	£3,500
	A total of five hardstanding installations to individual properties were completed during the financial year with a further two commissioned with works due to commence and be completed in April 2019. These two schemes will be paid for by the £3,500 that it is proposed to be carried forward from this budget.			

2018/19 Schemes	2018-19 Budget	2018-19 Actual Year End Spend including Accruals	2018-19 Budget Remaining /(Overspend)	Carry Forward for this project/programme to 2019-20
Kitchen and Bathroom Replacements	£495,000	£1,900	£493,100	£493,100
	<p>The contract for this programme was awarded to Mathews & Tannert and covers kitchen and bathroom replacements and associated improvement works as required to the 126 council owned properties contained within the geographical parameters of the area known as the 'Wigston Triangle'. Stock condition surveys were completed to 73 of these properties in February and March 2019 and the first phase of the programme commenced on 1 April 2019 and includes the following work to be completed by 31 August 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 38 kitchen replacements; • 15 bathroom replacements; • 45 boiler replacements; • 12 consumer unit replacements; • 58 periodic electrical tests and associated works; • 3 electrical rewires; • 65 loft insulation installations. <p>The second phase of works to the remaining 53 council owned properties within the 'Wigston Triangle' will follow on and it is anticipated that this will be completed by 30 September 2019 and the total cost of investment will be funded from the £493,100 carried forward.</p>			

2018/19 Schemes	2018-19 Budget	2018-19 Actual Year End Spend including Accruals	2018-19 Budget Remaining /(Overspend)	Carry Forward for this project/programme to 2019-20
External Wall Insulation (EWI)	£45,000	£600	£44,400	£41,600
	<p>Ellipse Energy Limited were appointed in March 2019 to install External Wall Insulation, loft insulation and other associated energy efficiency improvements to four properties in Wigston. The appointment was completed following a mini-competition exercise through the relevant EEM procurement framework. Works commenced to all four properties on 25 April 2019 and is scheduled to be completed on 31 May 2019.</p>			
Fire Safety Works Chartwell House/Churchill Close	£35,000	£0	£35,000	£34,900
	<p>A recent Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) report identified a requirement for the replacement of 34 fire doors to walkways and open stairwells in this block in Oadby, with an estimated expenditure requirement at that time of £31,255.32. Installation of the doors has however, been delayed pending ratification of the necessary testing and certification of composite fire doors as a result of a Government review following the Grenfell Tower fire. It is hoped that this issue will be resolved and installation work completed during the first six months of the 2019-20 financial year which will be funded by the money that it is proposed to carry forward.</p>			
Churchill Close Car Park	£30,000	£32,800	(£2,800)	£0
	<p>Work to refurbish the of lower ground of this two storey car park to reopen the facility for local tenants ahead of the introduction of new town centre parking restriction has now been completed. A CCTV system has also been installed as a deterrent against vandalism. An additional £8,000 of electrical and other maintenance works to the upper ground floor level has been identified and may be considered for a future works programme.</p>			

2018/19 Schemes	2018-19 Budget	2018-19 Actual Year End Spend including Accruals	2018-19 Budget Remaining /(Overspend)	Carry Forward for this project/programme to 2019-20
Timber Window Replacement Programme	£358,000	£20,700	£337,300	£152,200
	<p>This programme is for the replacement of timber windows, doors, cladding and roofline elements to properties on Aylestone Lane, Gibson Close, Gladstone Street, Kings Drive and William Peardon Court in the Wigston area of the Borough. Phase One of this works programme to replace front and rear entrance doors to individual properties and the main entrance door and fire doors at William Peardon Court was completed in 2018-19 at a cost of £20,704. A contract to complete the remaining works as part of the second phase was awarded to Graham Holmes Astraseal in April 2019 and it is anticipated that works will commence in May 2019 and be completed by 31 July 2019 within the costs that is proposed to be carried forward.</p>			



Service Delivery Committee	Tuesday, 04 June 2019	Matter for Information
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Report Title: Revenues & Benefits Update (Q4 2018/19)

Report Author(s): Chris Raymakers (Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits)

Purpose of Report:	To inform Members of activity within the Revenues and Benefits area during the fourth quarter of 2018/19, and to bring them up to date as to the progress of Universal Credit implementation.
Report Summary:	The Service has performed well throughout 2018/19 and has coped well with the challenges relating to collection and the introduction of Universal Credit.
Recommendation(s):	That the content of the report be noted.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Stephen Hinds (Deputy Chief Executive) (0116) 257 2681 stephen.hinds@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Chris Raymakers (Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits) (0116) 257 2891 chris.raymakers@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Mick Bullock (Revenues & Benefits Manager) (0116) 257 2713 mick.bullock@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Corporate Objectives:	<p>Building, Protecting and Empowering Communities (CO1)</p> <p>Providing Excellent Services (CO3)</p> <p>Click to select corporate objective.</p>
Vision and Values:	Customer Focus (V5)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Financial:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	<p>Decreasing Financial Resources / Increasing Financial Pressures (CR1)</p> <p>Reputation Damage (CR4)</p> <p>Increased Fraud (CR10)</p>
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report. EA not applicable
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	

Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	None.
Appendices:	None.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Revenues and Benefit Teams are responsible for the administration and collection of Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) for the Borough of Oadby and Wigston.
- 1.2 The Benefits Team also receives, assesses and administers the Housing Benefit service as well as facilitating the implementation of Universal Credit which will ultimately replace Housing Benefit for working-age claimants.

2. Revenues

- 2.1 The Revenues Team is responsible for administering and collecting £30m of Council Tax and £12m of Non-Domestic Rates which it does on behalf of Leicestershire County Council, the Leicestershire Police Service, the Combined Fire and Rescue Service and Central Government as well Oadby and Wigston Borough Council itself.
- 2.2 The section is set specific collection targets for these income streams which are then included in the annual budget as part of the Council's core funding. Performance is measured through a comprehensive series of indicators which are reported to the area's management. Collection rates and arrears levels also are also reported as part of the Council's Key Performance Indicators.

2.3 Collection Rates

At present, both Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates collection has fallen behind its target for this time of year. The Revenues and Recovery Teams have both suffered from long term sickness and staff changes during the last twelve months and while extra staff were recruited to clear the backlog of work there was still a time delay in the cash coming in. Council Tax Collection was down for 2018/19 on the target set. However collection continues into the new year and the proportion of the 2018/19 debit for Council Tax collected at Mid-May 2019 is 98.32%

Percentage of Debit Collected (Accumulative)	January (%)	February (%)	March (%)
Council Tax			
Actual collection	94.72	96.39	97.87
Target	96.40	97.50	98.50
Actual Collection 2017/18	95.60	97.16	98.23
Non Domestic Rates			
Actual collection	90.41	95.21	98.66
Target	90.23	94.52	98.50

Actual Collection 2017/18	92.39	96.30	99.23
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2.4 Property Statistics

	January	February	March
No of Council Tax Properties	23,345	23,345	23,347
No of Council Tax Direct Debits	17,346	17,287	17,446
No of Single Person Discounts	7,287	7,251	7,262
No of Businesses	1451	1448	1448
No of Business in receipt of Small Business Rate Relief	649	651	658

2.5 Recovery Statistics

In the fourth quarter of 2018/19, the Team has sent a total of 1,001 reminders for Council Tax payments and 37 to Business Rates accounts. Court action statistics are listed below.

	January	February	March
Council Tax			
No of Summons Issues	114	139	257
No of Liability Orders	64	80	0
No referred to Enforcement Agents	7	94	99
Business Rates			
No of Summons	7	5	10
No of Liability Orders	5	4	0

As a direct result of the above court actions action 58 accounts have been paid in full while 44 arrangements to pay have been made.

3. Benefits

- 3.1 The Benefits Team currently administers a total caseload of around 3,029 claimants. New claims are processed against an average time target of 15 days.

	January	February	March	Total Q4	YTD
No of new claims received	100	60	71	231	987
Avg. time taken per claim (days)	22.81	14.58	13.27	17.74	15.82

At the end of quarter four, the average time taken to process a new claim was 15.82 days. Despite the performance in the year being below the target set, 15.82 still represents a level of service well above the national average which sits at about 22 days.

It is noticeable that the number of claims dealt with during 2018/19 has dropped by about one quarter from 1345 in 2017/18 to 987 this year. This is a direct result of Universal Credit

moving to 'full service' in July 2018. However applications for Council Tax Support and Discretionary Council Tax Support have both risen over the same period.

Changes in circumstances are processed against an average time target of 8 days which is approximately the national average

	January	February	March	Total Q4	YTD
No of changes received	643	6657	694	7,994	14,790
Avg. time taken (days)	8.84	1.41	4.27	2.25	4.01

At the end of the fourth quarter the average time taken to process a change of circumstances was 4.01 days. February includes the annual uprate change applied to all claims which substantially increases that months figure.

The Team also administers Discretionary Hardship Payments for both Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support, both of which are showing an increase from previous years.

No of people in receipt (total)	January	February	March
Discretionary Housing Payment	68	76	80
Discretionary CTS Scheme	59	63	64

4. Universal Credit (UC)

- 4.1 After surging upwards before Christmas, the movement from Housing Benefits to Universal Credit and continued to see a steadier rise. Housing Benefit Stop Notices totalled 201 in the final quarter bringing the year end figure received in 2018/19 to 763.

Activity	January	February	March
Housing Benefit Stop notices	56	62	83
Universal Credit Enquiries	180	144	132
Rent Verifications Requests	4	14	16

- 4.2 The Council offers support to those who require help completing UC Application forms but, as reported at previous Committees the take up of this service has been limited, which is a concern: however, one reason may be that claimants are getting assistance from the Job Centre in Leicester.

Activity	January	February	March
Assisted Digital Support	0	0	0
Use of UC Hotline	13	5	12

- 4.3 There is a lot of evidence that suggests that once a tenant migrates from Housing Benefit onto UC, they are more likely to fall into arrears because of the nature of UC, which is paid in arrears directly to the claimant. The Council is pro-active in assisting claimants in arrears and can request payment to be made direct to the Council, as landlord. Of the 116 tenants who currently receive Universal Credit, 104 are having their rent paid by this method.

Tenant Activity	January	February	March
No of Tenants Claiming Universal	75	95	116

Credit			
No of Claimants > than one month in arrears	44	51	45
No of Claimants > than two months in arrears	28	33	18

- 4.4 From 15 May 2019 mixed age couples (where one is working age and one is pension age) will have to claim Universal Credit instead of legacy benefits such as housing benefit, Job Seekers allowance, tax credits etc. Prior to this date they could choose which benefit to claim. Detailed guidance has now, only recently, been received from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). There are some exceptions and mixed age couples already in receipt of legacy benefits will remain on these until there is a change of circumstances that moves them to Universal Credit.
- 4.5 The managed migration of existing working age legacy benefit claimants (including housing benefit) is scheduled to take place between 2020 and 2023 but there are no firm dates when this would affect Oadby and Wigston Borough Council. A pilot is being carried out in Harrogate from July 2019 and the results of pilot will inform the process and timetable for managed migration nationally.

Agenda Item 10



Service Delivery Committee	Tuesday, 04 June 2019	Matter for Information and Decision
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Report Title: **Health, Wellbeing & Leisure Services Update (Q4 2018/19)**

Report Author(s): **Avril Lennox MBE (Head of Community & Wellbeing Services)**

Purpose of Report:	To provide Members with an update on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Sport & Physical Activity Commissioning Plan; - The Borough's leisure contract and the Brocks Hill Centre; - Community Engagement; - Community Safety & Youth Work; and - Resilience planning.
Report Summary:	This report provides details of the range of projects that have taken place during Quarter 4 (January 2019 to March 2019).
Recommendation(s):	A. That Members provide their comments on two matters, namely: (i) yarn-bombing and; (ii) plastic bag usage; and B. That the content of the report be noted.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	Anne Court (Chief Executive / Head of Paid Service) (0116) 257 2602 anne.court1@oadby-wigston.gov.uk Avril Lennox MBE (Head of Community & Wellbeing Services) (0116) 257 2673 avril.lennox@oadby-wigston.gov.uk
Corporate Objectives:	Building, Protecting and Empowering Communities (CO1)
Vision and Values:	"A Stronger Borough Together" (Vision) Accountability (V1) Respect (V2) Teamwork (V3) Innovation (V4) Customer Focus (V5)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Financial:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	No corporate risk(s) identified
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report. EA not applicable
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.

Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	None.
Appendices:	None.

1. Sport and Physical Activity Commissioning Plan

1.1 The final quarter of 2018/19 was used to complete the remaining Sport and Physical Activity Commissioned programmes and to collate the monitoring data in order to report back to the funders. This data relates to programmes that were delivered as part of the £73,280 grant Oadby and Wigston were awarded from Leicestershire County Council Public Health department. This year the Health & Leisure team has continued to sub-commission programmes e.g. falls prevention, the physical activity referral scheme and schools programmes, whilst also focusing on consulting with local residents to identify how best to encourage them to become more active. The team used a variety of consultation methods such as surveys, focus groups and events in order to hear local people's opinions; the insight gained will influence funding bids and shape future programmes.

1.2 Learning South Leicestershire Schools Sport Partnership

Some of the Health & Leisure team's external funding allocation was sub-commissioned to the Oadby and Wigston School Sport Partnership in order to deliver programmes to 5 – 19 year olds. Below is an outline of their quarter 4 progress.

1.3 School Games

A number of competitions have already been held including Basketball, Hockey, Netball, Dodgeball and a Change4Life Festival. The winners and runners up of the 'family of schools' events progress to the Level 2 finals; the winners of Level 2 finals will qualify to represent their area in the County School Games in the summer, which the Oadby and Wigston Mayor will attend.

1.4 Big Moves Fundamental Movement Project

The Big Moves programme has been created to help children in mainstream school improve their physical development; it also has wider impacts on school life including developing listening and concentration skills and appropriate behaviour. The project was successfully delivered in 16 primary schools. One key element of this initiative was the upskilling of teachers, to ensure the programme is sustained.

1.5 Energise

The Energise Clubs are for children ages 5-11 years to encourage higher levels of participation in physical activity and to support the development of healthy lifestyles. The activities, which were delivered in local primary schools, take the children on a fun

interactive journey to improve physical and mental well-being and a healthy diet. It is positive to note there was a high parental engagement during the sessions.

1.6 Girls Active Lifestyles (GALS)

The GALS project targeted girls ages 9-16 years to improve confidence, self-esteem and levels of participation in physical activity. Each secondary school delivered 12 weeks of fitness activities such as Zumba, yoga and cheerleading. This year the project has been re-developed to include sessions on nutrition and mental health. A total of 20 schools in Oadby and Wigston took part and the results show the participants are more active at school and in the community, following the completion of the project.

1.7 Live Active Do-Something (LADs)

The LADs project targeted boys ages 10-11 years to improve confidence, self-esteem and levels of participation in physical activity. Each primary school delivered 6 weeks of non-traditional physical activities for boys who are less active, such as dodgeball, street dance, fencing and archery.

1.8 Sports Ambassadors

The Sporting Ambassadors programme trains young people in primary schools as Ambassadors to inspire their peers to get involved in physical activity. A series of conferences were held, led by older sports leaders from local secondary schools, whilst the younger primary school Ambassadors were trained in various roles to form a School Games Organising Crew, and to create an action plan for their individual schools. Pupils involved obtain the SLUK Play Maker Award qualification for primary sports leaders.

1.9 Inclusive Lesson

A range of physical activity opportunities were organised for young people with special education needs and disabilities. A total of 16 mainstream schools took part in the Inclusive Sports sessions to encourage pupils to get more active, resulting in many of the participants taking part in school games competitions.

1.10 Future funding approved for 2019/2020

In March 2019 the Health & Leisure team was successful in drawing down £73,144 for 2019/20 to deliver the Sport and Physical Activity Commissioning Plan. This funding, from Leicestershire County Council Public Health department, will enable the delivery of a range of projects to targeted groups across the borough.

1.11 Summary

Overall it is pleasing to see that the external funding applied for and approved for 2019/20 is similar to the amount in 2018/19. The change in approach to consultation over the last 12 months will benefit the residents more particularly by co-designing programmes with residents. Working across other Council departments, such as Planning, Regeneration and Communities and being able to influence services has been beneficial and is enabling a more 'whole systems approach'.

2. Everyone Active, Leisure Contract update – February to March 2019

2.1 Participation

This two month period saw over 167,688 visits at Parklands Leisure Centre, Wigston Pool and Fitness Centre and the Brocks Hill Centre. This is compared to 161,909 for the

same period last year - a 3.6% increase overall. Particular highlights were participation in:

- Swimming +5.9%%
- Gym +10%
- Events +200%

Everyone Active is pleased to report healthy attendances for targeted groups such as:

- Falls prevention = 391
- Diabetes course = 80
- GP Referral and Heartsmart = 2,638
- Disability swim = 187

The Leicestershire NHS Breast Screening Van has returned to the Parklands site for the remainder of the year. The team supports this and the Centre provides free access to a considerable amount of electricity that the screening van requires to operate their service.

2.2 Programmes and Events

Parklands Leisure Centre hosted a number of events during February and March with 3 private birthday parties; a "GALS" Activity day for local school girls; a karate Grading; and also Rest Centre training for volunteers which may be required in the case of an emergency.

2.3 Brocks Hill Centre

Brocks Hill has continued to maintain the facility as a busy centre with the following bookings taking place:

Everyone Active hosted 141 different sessions during the period varying from:

- Disability sport;
- NHS COPD Training;
- Baby Sensory;
- Connie Chand Karate;
- Geary Karate;
- Karts for Kids Parties;
- A Funeral Wake;
- Fitness BootCamp's;
- RDC Cheerleaders;
- NHS Diabetes Sessions;
- NHS blood bank;
- SLM – Conference Meetings;
- Council Public Meeting; and
- A number of Pride of Borough Meetings.

2.4 Education at Brocks Hill

Everyone Active had 2 schools make a combined total of 8 visits during February and March, taking part in exciting activities such as mini beast hunt, den building and scavenger hunts. Schools taking part were a Home Schooling Unit, and Green Lane Infant School.

Everyone Active was pleased to support OWBC hosting a public planning meeting during March, at short notice, to which there was a large crowd in attendance. They also supported the Pride of the Borough group by hosting three meetings over the two

month period, to which Everyone Active do not charge a hire fee as part of their continued commitment to helping the community.

3. Community Engagement

3.1 Annual Community Engagement Calendar

An annual calendar of key festival and events has been produced. The Calendar is being used to help monitor the wider Community Engagement Action Plan including the range of events listed below. Key event and festival dates will continue to be uploaded on the 'What's On' section of the Council's website.

3.2 Holocaust Memorial Event, Monday January 28 2019

A reflective tribute event was held on 28 January in the Council Chamber to mark Holocaust Memorial Day. 'Torn from Home' was the theme for 2019, which attracted over 70 attendees from community groups, local residents, Councillors and Council staff. The speeches relayed aimed to encourage what was an intergenerational audience to reflect on how the enforced loss of a safe place to call 'home' is a trauma faced by anyone experiencing persecution and genocide.

Borough Mayor, Councillor David Carter opened the event and was followed by readings of the Kaddish, the Jewish prayer for the dead and was complimented by contributions of song, music and the spoken word from the band Destination, and sisters Gurleen and Tavleen Gill, representatives of voluntary organisations, community groups' representative of faith and belief. The event concluded with inspiring gospel songs delivered by the De Montfort University Gospel Choir and lit candles being laid at the base of an architectural candleholder representing doves of peace.

The theme for 2020 is Stand Together. The date of this event is: Monday 27 January 2020.

3.3 Flying the LGBT Flag (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender)

The LGBT Flag was raised on 1 February. The Flag, which flew for twenty-eight days, observes the national date across the United Kingdom. This is in recognition of the societal responsibility to support the ending of discrimination and oppression of people celebrating the acceptance in society. A message of support and information was circulated to all staff and Council Members.

3.4 Disability Forum

Forum members were invited to attend the Community Engagement meeting on 12 March. They co-produced a presentation covering the 'lived' experience of local people living with the challenge of a disability.

The formation of the Disability Forum in part achieves one of the goals of reaching those people who are seldom heard and have little in the way of access to resources such as funding, employment and services.

3.5 Residents' Forums

Further promotion has been undertaken to encourage attendance at the Residents' Forums. This included an article in the winter edition of Letterbox, prior to the February and March 2019 round of Forums, as well as promotion at the Christmas light switch-on and the provision of posters particularly advertising the South Wigston Forum. This has resulted in an increase in attendance at the South Wigston Forum, with 20 attendees at their March meeting.

3.6 'Oadby and Wigston Borough Engaged' - Citizens Panel

The background work has been completed for the design and implementation of the Citizen's Panel online registration tool. A launch date to go 'live' is yet to be confirmed.

The aim is to recruit a minimum of 1000 residents across the age span from a range of backgrounds to reflect the diversity of the borough, and provide an online tool to gain the views and opinions of local people on services that affect them. Promotional activities about this new initiative have begun, as well as including an article in the forthcoming Summer edition of Letterbox.

3.7 Community Engagement Support

Community Engagement has taken place with over 25 Third Sector groups, through the provision of information relating to the offer of a National Open College Network, Level 1, accredited Community Development Course. Other meetings have been held with external community groups and organisations e.g. Age UK Wigston, Citizens Bureau and Helping Hands to support them in acquiring further funding.

The Sam Says Stop Campaign and the Sangam Asian Women's Group have also been supported to access the Council's Youth and Community Group funding Grant.

3.8 Overall there has been good development in community working across the Borough. The numbers attending the residents' forums have increased, particularly in South Wigston. The Holocaust Memorial event remains popular and is well attended.

The Community Engagement Forum has consistently received high numbers of participants and input from a range of organisations. The focus on joined up working will continue to be promoted.

The Disability Confident event, held in the Council Chamber in December 2018, was also well attended. A Part 2 of this event is to be delivered in 2019. It will once again be focussed on engaging local employers to raise awareness of funds available from the Department for Work and Pensions, and the needs of people with a disability to access employment.

4. Community Safety

4.1 2018-19 Delivery Plan Progress

Despite the final monitoring return to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) not being due until 31 May 2019, regular updates on the progress made against the 2018-19 Delivery Plan received by the Community Safety Partnership ("the Partnership") are positive, and no barriers to completion were identified. The OPCC has also confirmed that it is satisfied with the progress the Partnership is making against its Delivery Plan.

The majority of the tactical actions outlined in the plan have been confirmed, or will be confirmed, as completed once the final monitoring return for 2018-19 is compiled, and the Partnership's closing budget as of 31 March 2019 shows a minimal underspend of £19.65, with expenditure maximised in the interest of forward planning.

4.2 Community Safety Survey

4.3 The 2018-19 Community Safety Survey was launched on 26 November 2018, and ran until 31 January 2019 seeing 300 responses received, a 70% increase in responses compared to 2017-18's survey which saw 174 responses. A greater public awareness of the work of the Community Safety Partnership, and its component agencies, to reduce

crime, disorder, and anti-social behaviour in the Borough is partially credited with the increased number of responses.

Findings from the 2018-19 survey are consistent with the previous year's, however the top crime and community safety concerns in the Borough, according to public perception, have altered. These are now;

1. Motor Vehicle and Traffic Concerns;
2. Littering or Fly-Tipping;
3. Burglaries and Distraction Thefts;
4. Drugs or Drug Related Issues; and
5. Groups causing Nuisance / Vandalism and Graffiti.

A full, publically available report on the findings of the survey, broken down by settlement area, will be published in May 2019. An overview of the Partnership's 2019-20 Delivery Plan will also be made publically available at this time.

4.4 CCTV Upgrade

The 5 new redeployable CCTV units referenced in the previous Service Delivery Committee update were affixed to the first converted street lighting columns on 9 March 2018.

These locations are all near, or overlooking, 'hot spot' areas for crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour, or community safety concerns, and were identified through a review of data held by Community Safety Partnership partners in the Borough. The existing CCTV units will still be utilised, and deployed, to deter and detect crime and disorder.

Deployment of the 10 redeployable CCTV units in the Borough, and the development of the network of converted host columns, will be coordinated by the Borough's Joint Action Group which meets on a monthly basis.

4.5 Youth Council

During Q4 2018-19 Oadby & Wigston Youth Council gained a further 3 new members, bringing its total membership up to 21 young people. There are a number of additional young people who have expressed an interest in joining the Youth Council but have been unable to attend a meeting to date. Attendance at monthly meetings in Q3 and Q4 remain consistently higher than those held during Q1-Q2 2018-19.

The Youth Council has opted to begin major work on its five campaigns following the May 2019 local elections, but will continue to map out their intended projects and outcomes in the interim. The Youth Council will also be actively seeking the support of key community safety partners, including requesting financial support for relevant projects through the Oadby & Wigston Community Safety Partnership. This will only be sought where the planned project by the Youth Council marries to tactical actions within the Partnership's 2019-20 Delivery Plan.

5. Emergency Planning

5.1 No Deal EU Exit

- 5.2 Whilst not directly impacted, OWBC has been required to participate in planning for a no deal EU Exit. This has involved weekly SCG call (attended by Anne Court), producing and submitting weekly/daily reports through Resilience Direct and arranging for staff to be on duty. Although not ultimately required, the procedures and plans put into place have been saved for future potential No Deal EU Exits.

5.3 Training - Emergency Centre Volunteers

Existing EC Volunteers from OWBC attended a carousel training session on the 21 March at Parklands Leisure Centre. The training consisted of 4 x 30mins sessions; the Alerting System, the role of the Casualty Bureau, Signing Clients In/Out and the role of the Information and Communication Officers.

5.4 Loggists

E-Learning modules have been made available for existing Loggists. A future focus will be to recruit and train additional Loggists, to add capacity.

5.5 Community Resilience Projects

Community leads, volunteers and individuals from the Wigston or South Wigston area are currently being sought, in order to create a Community Response Group for these areas of the Borough. Councillors are encouraged to promote this opportunity to their localities. Those interested in developing a local plan should contact the Head of Community and Wellbeing, or the OWBC Resilience Officer, who also intend to speak with individual Ward Councillors in order to progress this action further.

5.6 Business Continuity

All departments have their own Business Continuity plan, which are available on Resilience Direct. Moving forwards, the plans will be slightly amended to include relevant additional information, as well as changes in lead Officers.

6. Matter for Members' Comment

6.1 Yarn-Bombing Blaby Road Park

A resident wrote to the Chair of the South Wigston Residents' Forum, to propose Yarn-bombing at Blaby Road Park. In the absence of the resident at the Forum on 20 March 2019, the matter was raised by Councillor Boulter. The outcome of the discussion was to put this matter forward to the next Service Delivery Committee for comment. Yarn-bombing is a type of graffiti or street art that employs colourful displays of knitted or crocheted yarn or fibre rather than paint or chalk. The aim is to cover objects or structures in public places, including trees. The resident has proposed to Yarn-bomb the trees at Blaby Road Park. Members are invited to give their comments.

6.2 Plastic Bag Usage

Members have raised concerns about the number of charity bags being distributed across the Borough, many of which are not used. They are seeking information on what happens to the bags that have been used and returned to the charity. Committee Members are invited to provide their comments, which will be fed into the newly established Environment Working Group.

Agenda Item 11



Service Delivery Committee	Tuesday, 04 June 2019	Matter for Information
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Report Title: **Greening of the Borough and Operational Services Update (Q4 2018/19)**

Report Author(s): **Avril Lennox MBE (Head of Community & Wellbeing Services)**

Purpose of Report:	To provide Members with an update on the Borough's green and natural spaces, including Brocks Hill Country Park, in line with the Greening the Borough Strategy.
Report Summary:	This report provides details of the range of work that has taken place across the Borough during quarter four by Operational Services, key Officers and the range of Volunteers.
Recommendation(s):	That the contents of the report be noted.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Anne Court (Chief Executive / Head of Paid Service) (0116) 257 2602 anne.court1@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Avril Lennox MBE (Head of Community and Wellbeing Services) (0116) 257 2673 avril.lennox@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Brian Kew (Depot Manager) (0116) 257 2842 brian.kew@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Corporate Objectives:	Building, Protecting and Empowering Communities (CO1) Providing Excellent Services (CO3)
Vision and Values:	<p>"A Stronger Borough Together" (Vision)</p> <p>Accountability (V1)</p> <p>Respect (V2)</p> <p>Teamwork (V3)</p> <p>Innovation (V4)</p> <p>Customer Focus (V5)</p>
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Financial:	Click to select or insert narrative.
Corporate Risk Management:	No corporate risk(s) identified
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report. EA not applicable
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.

Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	None.
Appendices:	None.

In line with the aims of the Greening the Borough Strategy, the following work has taken place across Oadby and Wigston under three key work streams: Improved Visual Impact, Environmental Sustainability, and Engagement.

1. Improved Visual Impact

1.1 Highway Verges

County Council Highways have finished their works in the borough, including replacement planting of any trees that required felling. A few verges/pavements where tree numbers are dwindling have been proposed for further planting in 2019/20.

1.2 Street Scene Improvements

A number of improvements have taken place across the borough, as follows. Perch seats have been installed in bus shelters in the following Wigston locations: Station Road, Launceston Road (x2), West Avenue, Holmden Avenue, Rolleston Road (x2), Aylestone Lane and Leicester Road.

Street name plates have been replaced at Ashdown Road, Milverton Drive and Milverton Close, Wigston. A litter bin has been installed next to the bus shelter at The Firs, Oadby Road, Wigston.

The car park at St Peter's Church Hall has been re-lined. Kirkdale Road car park has been cleaned, railings and lamp columns re-painted and the parking bays re-lined. The car park at Brocks Hill Country Park has also been re-lined.

1.3 Parks and Open Spaces

A number of winter maintenance jobs were carried out by the Ground Maintenance Team during quarter four e.g. cutting back shrubbery, carrying out tree works and general maintenance on parks, open spaces and housing communal areas. Some of the locations covered were William Peardon Court, Blaby Road Park, Boulter Crescent and Uplands Park.

The team also marked out the football pitches, and are continuing to maintain them to a good standard. Regular play inspections have also been taking place, as programmed.

Mowing started from 22 March which included the parks, open spaces, housing communal areas and bowling greens. A programme of mowing works is now in place until the beginning of October; however this is dependent on the weather.

The badge-bed design for Peace Memorial Park has been ordered and will arrive mid-June. Summer bedding has also been ordered for the in-fill of beds across the Borough.

In preparation for Holocaust Memorial Day, the Clean and Green team tidied up the areas around the Council Offices, then cleaned and secured the sculpture ready for the memorial event on 28 January.

Other works across the parks and open spaces include the re-painting of four benches and a notice board at Peace Memorial Park in Wigston. In addition two litter bins have been replaced at Willow Park; one along the footpath from Central Avenue into the park and one inside the park itself.

1.4 Trees and Shrubs

Tree risk assessments and associated works continue to be carried out, any replacement trees required are to be reserved ready for delivery and planting this coming autumn/winter. The Council is also looking to trial the use of proprietary watering systems to help assist with establishment and cut down on work hours.

Summary: Over 2018/19 there has been arboricultural input on 155 applications, including 88 applications for TPO or Conservation Area tree works and 67 consultations towards other planning applications. Replacement planting requirements have generally been adhered to; enforcement action has so far been effective at securing replacements where required. Four tree related enforcement cases have been opened, three of which are now resolved with one on-going. Nine new TPOs have been made and confirmed, with a total of 136 trees.

1.5 Country Parks and Access to the Countryside

The tree thinning for the winter of 2018/19 has been completed at Brocks Hill Country Park, with approximately 1.5Ha of woodland thinned. The majority of woodland compartments have now received an initial tree thinning after a few years of neglect. Tree thinning must carry on each winter as the trees continue to grow and develop to ensure good growth and healthy crown development. Some oak trees with squirrel damage have been pollarded to remove damaged branches and allow regrowth. Areas of hazel coppice have been cut and will provide useful and sustainable materials for the country park.

Plans are being made with the Friends of Brocks Hill to develop some new interpretation for the country park. A new map is on display in the centre and this will be used on the interpretation boards alongside photos and illustrations of the site and its wildlife.

Overall the past year at Brocks Hill and the other natural green spaces has been challenging with a reduction of officer hours compared with previous years. The increasing visitor numbers in fine weather have placed additional strains on greenspaces with higher amounts of litter and vandalism to deal with.

The habitat management at Brocks Hill over the past year has been very beneficial to the site, with tree thinning and crown raising creating open, sunny areas and paths maintained after becoming eroded. Garden areas have been improved with additional planting and the raised beds have continued to be looked after by students from South Leicestershire College (SLC). The meadow management has continued to be successful after the original management plans were made in 2017: these are some of the most important areas of Brocks Hill and should be viewed as equal to woodland in terms of biodiversity and value to wildlife. 97% of wildflower meadows have been lost across the UK, and Brocks Hill's are so important that they contributed to the achievement of a Bee's Needs Award.

1.6 Walks and Lanes

The old wall that runs alongside the footpath from Chestnut Avenue to Sandhurst Street has been repaired along the length that borders Sandhurst Street Car Park.

At Fludes Lane, volunteers have cut back scrub overhanging the paths, as well as continuing to litterpick, with a large amount gathered on some visits, particularly in January.

1.7 Town Centres

Patch repairs have been carried out to pot holes in the following town centre car parks: Paddock Street and Aylestone Lane in Wigston and Sandhurst Street and East Street, Oadby.

On the Cleansing side, the de-littering team and the sweepers have been keeping the borough streets, roads and parks clean.

2. Environmental Sustainability

2.1 Environment Agency

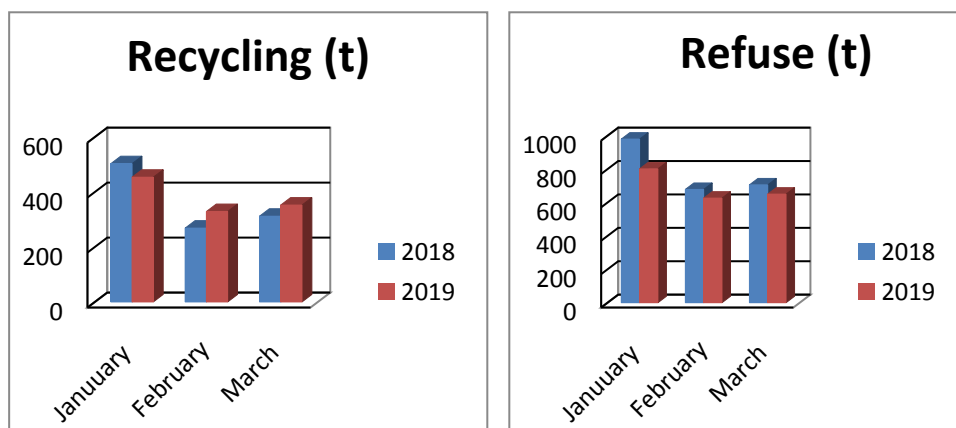
In February the Council's Depot in Oadby received a visit from the Environment Agency to ensure the Depot was compliant with the site permit. This inspection, which takes place annually, includes general housekeeping, health and safety measures and checking that any waste coming into and out of the site is being recorded correctly. The visiting Officer was satisfied that everything was in order and commented on how the clean the site is being kept.

2.2 Education

The Environment and Waste Technician, from Leicestershire County Council, (who carries out recycling workshops for all districts) attended the three Oadby and Wigston Residents Forums during quarter four, to raise public awareness and importance of recycling and to answer any questions the public had about recycling.

2.3 Refuse and Recycling

The charts below shows the tonnage comparison of refuse and recycling collected in 2018 and 2019 during quarter four. With the exception of January 2019, there has been a positive improvement on recycling rates. It is also pleasing to note that Refuse rates have consistently reduced during quarter four of 2019, in comparison to 2018.



2.4 **Black Wheeled Bins**

A total of 26,000 wheeled bins for household waste were ordered and received in March, these were distributed to all households throughout May onwards.

2.5 **Route Optimisation**

Following consultation with the crews the proposed route optimisation has been approved. The new rounds will commence in June 2019, all households will have been notified of their new collections days prior to the commencement of the new round.

2.6 **Incab Technology**

All drivers received training on how to use the Incab units, which went live in January 2019. On the whole this has proved to be successful; in that where an issue has arisen (i.e. damaged bins, incorrect items etc) this has been logged into the unit and this information is then relayed to Customers Services in real-time, thereby allowing Customers Services to update residents immediately as opposed to waiting until the crews finish their rounds. There have been some minor technical teething issues which have in the main been resolved. The crews have adapted well to utilising the new system.

3. **Engagement**

3.1 **Working with External Organisations**

The Tree Council, working with FERA Science Ltd and DEFRA released the Ash Dieback Action Plan Toolkit in March of this year. While OWBC will generally follow the Leicestershire County Council Action Plan (which the Tree Council helped create) a more concise assessment of the potential impact to Oadby and Wigston will be undertaken. This will include potential costs, identifying corporate risk, health and safety issues, economic impacts, environmental impacts, engaging with colleagues, private tree owners and volunteers, as well as a recovery strategy.

3.2 **Working with Volunteers and Non-Profit Making Organisations**

Volunteers from the Pride of the Borough group worked together to clear brash from Hill Way roundabout, as well as de-littering the area.

3.3 **Brocks Hill**

At Brocks Hill, Volunteers and Lead Volunteers have helped with a range of tasks including:

- Woodland clearing following on from tree felling: branches have been chipped and a number of dead hedges have been constructed from logs and branches in areas less accessible for woodchipping. Dead hedges create valuable dead wood habitat, providing food for invertebrates and animals further up the food chain;
- Apple trees in the orchard have been pruned this winter: this is an annual task that helps trees produce more fruit. Volunteers used the skills learnt the previous year from Leicestershire Heritage Apples;
- Charnwood Foods came for a corporate volunteering day in March: they assisted with footpath maintenance, helping to spread woodchip on areas of the path that become muddy in winter;

- SLC students and one of the Lead Volunteers have prepared the raised beds for the coming growing season, adding compost and planning a planting programme;
- Scrub cutting and litterpicking have been carried out on Fludes Lane; and
- Small tree felling and litterpicking have been carried out at Pochin's Bridge.

3.4 Volunteering Hours

The volunteer hours provided by the Brocks Hill volunteers has once again improved many aspects of Country Park and other natural green spaces. It is pleasing to note that the predicted number of volunteering hours, in comparison to the actual achieved for 2018/19 (shown below) were once again exceeded.

	2018									2019			
	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	Total
Target	80	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	100	140	140	140	1580.00
Achieved	77.25	180.75	182.75	70	145.5	148.9	164	183	117	110	130	146.5	1655.65

Agenda Item 12



Service Delivery Committee	Tuesday, 04 June 2019	Matter for Information
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Report Title: **Asset and Facilities Service Update (Q4 2018/19)**

Report Author(s): **Margaret Kind (Corporate Asset Manager)**
Alex Ward (Economic Regeneration Manager)

Purpose of Report:	To update Members on work undertaken by the Corporate Assets and Economic Regeneration Section.
Report Summary:	This report details work completed by the Corporate Asset Section in quarter 4 between January 2019 and March 2019.
Recommendation(s):	That the content of the report be noted.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Stephen Hinds (Deputy Chief Executive) (0116) 257 2681 stephen.hinds@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Adrian Thorpe (Head of the Built Environment) (0116) 257 2645 adrian.thorpe@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Margaret Kind (Corporate Asset Manager) (0116) 257 2832 margaret.kind@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Alex Ward (Economic Regeneration Manager) (0116) 257 2821 alex.ward@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Corporate Objectives:	Building, Protecting and Empowering Communities (CO1) Growing the Borough Economically (CO2) Providing Excellent Services (CO3)
Vision and Values:	"A Stronger Borough Together" (Vision) Teamwork (V3) Innovation (V4) Customer Focus (V5)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Financial:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Effective Utilisation of Assets / Buildings (CR5)
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report. EA not applicable
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.

Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	None.
Appendices:	None.

1. Progress on Capital Projects during Quarter 4 (2018-19)

1.1 Thythorn Hill Community and Sports Centre – Formerly Horsewell Lane Pavilion (Economic Regeneration)

The development of the new building is progressing well. The programme has slipped by approximately 10 working days due to high winds preventing installation of the steel frame which caused an overall delay to the development timeframe. This means that the building is projected to be handed over to the Council in July. Both of the key occupiers, Little Fishes Day Nursery and Wigston Club for Young People are being kept fully apprised and are making preparations to move. Once both organisations have moved to the new centre then demolition work will commence to the existing community buildings and finally making good of the site, layout of the car parking and landscaping will be resolved. Completion of the project is anticipated in August with the official opening proposed for September. The project is still projected to be delivered within the agreed budget.

1.2 Coombe Park Pavilion Extension (Economic Regeneration)

The key user of the Coombe Park Pavilion is the highly successful Oadby Owls Football Club, who operate over forty football teams and run a non-affiliated academy at weekends. Their growth has meant the existing pavilion is too small for their needs and requires an extension. The club has worked with architects to design a suitable extension and has submitted the proposed designs for planning consent.

Planning permission for the proposed extension has now been granted. Additional funding for the project is being sought from S106 contributions with respect to large developments in Oadby and the project is awaiting the outcome of these negotiations before proceeding. Football Foundation funding is also available to support the delivery of the project.

1.3 Ervins Lock Footbridge

Officers have been working with Canal and River Trust (CRT) on a pedestrian bridge at Ervins Lock across the Grand Union Canal. The purpose of this is to improve safety for residents wishing to cross the canal in this location. In October 2018 Development Control Committee approved a brick bridge design on the recommendation of the County Councils' Heritage Officer as the location lies in the Canal Conservation Area.

Following the granting of planning permission, the Corporate Asset Manager started to pursue the drawing up of a 'Heads of Terms' agreement with CRT to allow the bridge to

be installed. The 'Heads of Terms' agreement relates to an agreement between Oadby and Wigston Borough Council and CRT in respect of proposed lease rights for airspace and footings allowing for the construction and maintenance of the bridge.

However, at this point CRT stated they were not prepared to proceed with an agreement for a bridge with brick piers and advised they would not pursue the matter any further unless the bridge is constructed with metal piers.

Officers requested a meeting with CRT to discuss the matter but CRT made it clear they will not entertain a meeting with Officers stating in an email of 24 January 2019 *'If all that you are wanting to discuss is the Trusts objection to the use of brick piers then I believe that we have made our position very clear on this matter and are not prepared to alter our stance.'*

In order to break the deadlock Officers are approaching LCC with a view to brokering a solution that will enable the CRTs required design to be used.

Assuming a way forward is found the next steps will be to agree Heads of Terms with CRT and then to draw up a project timetable for procurement of supply, manufacture and installation of the new bridge to include timescales for a stoppage or restriction (as determined by CRT) of canal traffic during installation in Winter 2019/20.

1.4 Extending Oadby Cemetery into former Scout Hut Land

The current Oadby Cemetery has very limited capacity for new grave spaces and work is underway to create an extension to it by using the former scout hut land off St Peter's Path which is owned by the Council but has stood derelict for some time. Groundwater investigations have been completed and a tree survey was carried out prior to obtaining planning permission which was granted on 12 April 2019.

Two conditions are attached to the planning permission which are required to be discharged before the cemetery can be brought into use. The first requires a detailed method statement to be submitted relating to root protection areas for retained trees and the second requires a Section 278 agreement to be drawn up with Leicestershire County Council relating to work on the highway and the line of the Public Right of Way. Work is underway to meet these conditions.

Once the conditions have been discharged (anticipated by the end of June) the next steps will be to carry out landscaping and laying out of the burial areas, installation of a water point and removal of trees identified in the planning application to bring more light into the area. It is anticipated that the area will be ready to take burials by the beginning of September 2019.

1.5 Uplands Park Outdoor Gym Equipment

The equipment was installed during the last week of March. Unfortunately, one item (rowing machine) was found to be faulty at installation and had to be replaced. Replacement has taken longer than expected but the new rowing machine was installed on 1 May 2019. This project is now complete.

1.6 Brocks Hill Play Area

The capital bid for 2019-20 has been approved. Work is proceeding on the project plan which includes the removal of the large play tower (to be done in-house), upgrading equipment that still has a useful life and installing new equipment to retain Brocks Hill's reputation as a destination play area. The original installer of the equipment (Eibe) is looking into whether the metal components of the large play tower (in particular the

stainless steel slide) could be retained and fitted to a new play tower to give a cost saving.

1.7 Extension to Wigston Cemetery Garden of Remembrance

Work started on site on 17 December 2018 and was completed on 28 January 2019. This has created 150 new casket plots which are intended to provide three further years of space for the interment of ashes.

1.8 Sandhurst Street Car Park Wall

The wall that runs alongside the footpath from Chestnut Avenue to Sandhurst Street has been repaired along the length that borders Sandhurst Street Car Park. Work to the wall was finished on 23 January 2019 and this project is now complete.

2. Residents' Forum Projects

2.1 Oadby Forum – The Corporate Asset Manager now has all the information to progress the interpretation project on the historic stones saved when Sandhurst Street School was demolished. A design is being worked up and the next stage will be to produce artwork for the interpretation board.

2.2 Wigston Forum – no outstanding projects.

2.3 Oadby Forum – no outstanding projects.

3. Pavilions and Community Centres

3.1 Portable appliance testing has been carried out on electrical equipment at all community centres and pavilions during the quarter.

3.2 Sheila Mitchell Pavilion – repairs are underway to the roof due to a leak that has caused problems in the ladies changing room. Roof repairs will be followed by redecoration of the affected areas internally.

4. Cemeteries

4.1 Cemetery staff have dealt with the following interments during the quarter:

	Full burials	Interment of cremated remains	Scattering of ashes
Wigston Cemetery	23	30	4
Oadby Cemetery	3	2	0

4.2 Grave shoring equipment (the hydraulic equipment used to retain grave walls whilst excavating a grave) has been tested for safety and a certificate of compliance received during the quarter.

5. Car Parks

5.1 In January patch repairs were carried out to pot holes at Paddock Street and Aylestone Lane Car Parks in Wigston and to Sandhurst Street and East Street Car Parks in Oadby.

- 5.2 In February the car parks at Brocks Hill Country Park and St Peter's Church Hall were re-lined.
- 5.3 Kirkdale Road Car Park was cleaned, railings and lamp columns re-painted and the parking bays re-lined over two weeks in February /early March. Half the car park was completed in each week to allow the other section to be used by residents during the works.

6. Allotments

- 6.1 At 31 March 2019 there were 11 vacant plots across the four allotment sites (9 at Aylestone Lane and 2 at Wigston Road) and these are at various stages of being offered to new tenants. Thirteen plots have been re-let during the quarter. There are 40 people on the waiting list out of which 18 specifically want Brabazon Road or Manchester Gardens (where plots rarely change hands) and 5 are waiting for specific plots on Aylestone Lane or Wigston Road.

7. Street Furniture

- 7.1 In March perch seats were installed in bus shelters in the following Wigston locations using Section 106 funds; Station Road, Launceston Road (x2), West Avenue, Holmden Avenue, Rolleston Road (x2), Aylestone Lane and Leicester Road.
- 7.2 Street name plates have been replaced at Ashdown Road, Milverton Drive and Milverton Close in Wigston.
- 7.3 Four benches and a noticeboard have been re-painted at Peace Memorial Park, Wigston.
- 7.4 Two litter bins have been replaced at Willow Park; one along the footpath from Central Avenue into the park and one inside the park itself.

8. Other Work

- 8.1 Quarterly liaison meetings were held with South Wigston Bowlers and Oadby Bowlers in March. Both clubs are doing fairly well with membership and have expressed their pleasure with the way their greens are consistently maintained to a high standard by the Council.



Service Delivery Committee	Tuesday, 04 June 2019	Matter for Information
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Report Title: **Customer Service and Transformation
Update (Q4 2018/19)**

Report Author(s): **Jacky Griffith (Head of Customer Service & Transformation)**

Purpose of Report:	This report provides an update to the Service Delivery Committee on Customer Service and Business Transformation.
Report Summary:	This report summarises activity for the final quarter of 2018/19.
Recommendation(s):	That the contents of the report be noted.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	Stephen Hinds (Deputy Chief Executive) (0116) 257 2681 stephen.hinds@oadby-wigston.gov.uk Jacky Griffith (Head of Customer Service & Transformation) (0116) 257 2612 jacky.griffith@oadby-wigston.gov.uk
Corporate Objectives:	An Inclusive and Engaged Borough (CP1) Effective Service Provision (CP2)
Vision and Values:	"A Strong Borough Together" (Vision) Teamwork (V3) Innovation (V4) Customer Focus (V5)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Financial:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Decreasing Financial Resources (CR1) Organisational/Transformational Change (CR8)
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report. EA not applicable.
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.

Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	None.
Appendices:	None.

1. Business Transformation Update

1.1 Improving Payment Options for Residents

The Transformation Team are working to make it more convenient for residents to pay for Council services at Post Offices and Pay Point outlets of which there are 57 throughout the Borough. Currently, residents who make payment for services by cash must attend the Customer Service Centre (CSC) to use the payment kiosk. Residents are restricted by CSC's opening hours whereas Pay Point outlets offer the convenience of extended opening hours.

The position at the end of March 2019 is:

- All possible services now have the bar code functionality tested and in full use. This includes Business Rates, Housing Benefit overpayments, Housing Rents, Invoices and Council Tax.
- Residents can now make the full use of this service by taking their barcoded documentation to their local outlet to make a payment.
- The promotion and publicity of this payment option is currently taking place. This includes spring letterbox, leaflet with the Council Tax Notice, website, posters and the Customer Service Centre.

Moving forward the transformation team are looking at the usage of the payment kiosk and cheques to find any additional savings or streamlined processing whilst also ensuring we offer a relevant amount of alternative payment options to not affect income.

1.2 Channel Shift

Online forms are available to provide customers with an alternative way to transact with the Council; this includes making payments for services. Face-to-face and telephone enquiries into the CSC are seeing a reduction as a result.

A recent internal audit of our online forms shows we have over 40 forms available across all services. These 40+ forms were selected through being the most common service requests from our customers for maximum impact. The transformation team have compiled a list of the next set of forms to be added for online use and this should see an increase of at least 40-50% over the coming year.

The most recent new online forms are the taxi applications for the licensing service.

On average, throughout Q4 there was a decrease in telephone and face to face contact. Whilst also seeing a rise in the usage of online forms. The amount of contact we received on the telephony, face to face and online throughout Q4 is generally high due to Garden Waste renewals, Waste bin changes, alongside the yearly council tax notices being sent and impending election/s.

1.3 Electronic Documents and Records Management System

Work is underway to migrate the Licensing Service away from a reliance on paper documents to the storage of documents electronically. The main work completed is the setup of the categories and the document name tabs. Moving this along will now coincide

with the full service review. Managing the two implementation processes alongside each other will be more efficient for staff who need to have training in both.

1.4 **Review of the Licensing Service**

The capital bid for the new IT system was approved in February and details of the change have been agreed with the software provider to help support the overall review. A project plan has been confirmed with part 1 of the project going 'live' at the end of August 2019 and part 2 being the end of October 2019.

The new system (Uniform Enterprise) will support the introduction of workflows, increase the reporting tools available to staff, improve work allocation depending on the skill levels and will maximise opportunities for online transactions.

1.5 **Garden Waste (Renewals)**

The communication campaign for this project commenced in January. This included leaflets, website, social media, bulk emails, text messaging and finally, if an existing subscriber had not renewed within 4 weeks of their expiry date we sent a letter to encourage renewing.

Residents were able to apply early for a new subscription; time left on the old permit will be added to the new one. By the end of Q4 of 18/19, 5786 subscribers had renewed. Leaving 5091 left to renew. This was expected as the vast majority of households left to renew their subscriptions expire in April, May and June 2019 (therefore will not need to renew until nearer this time).

Charges for 2019/20 remain the same as in 2018/19; £35 for the original subscription and £20 for additional bins. Subscriptions between April 2018 and the end of March 2019 realised a gross income of £405,800.

1.6 **Council Wide Projects**

The table below lists all of the projects which were reviewed during quarter 4 and gives an indication of progress.

Green = Project progressing at expected rate and will meet deadline.

Amber = Project is progressing but may not meet deadline.

Red = Project is yet to be started or project will not meet deadline.

Project	Current Situation	Deadline	Current RAG
Refurbishment of Crow Mills Picnic Area	Structure in place and fire retardant applied	End of financial year.	Project Complete
Dog Walk Shelter, Blaby Road Park	Installed on 11 January 2019.	End of financial year.	Project Complete
Ervins Lock Pedestrian Footbridge	There is a conflict between Canal & River Trust (CRT) who want the bridge to be of steel design and the County Council's Heritage Officer who has recommended the bridge be of brick construction.	Rolling over to 19/20.	

	CRT have rescheduled several meetings throughout Q4 and the expectation is to meet in Q1 of 19/20 to negotiate a possible conclusion between OWBC, County Council's Heritage Officer and the CRT.		
Incorporating ex Scout Hut Land into Oadby Cemetery	Planning application submitted and original decision date was due for 28 March 19 – this will now roll in to April due to Highways asking for alterations to the application.	Rolling over to 19/20	
Extension of Garden of Remembrance at Oadby & Wigston Cemeteries	Work at Oadby and Wigston cemetery is complete.	End of financial year.	Project Complete
Refurbishment of Bus Shelters	All 18 bus shelters have been refurbished. Project complete.	December 2018	Project Complete
New ICT Server for Orchard	Test environments have been implemented data migrated throughout Q4 – Expected live environment to be during May 2019.	Long term project.	
Citrix and supported infrastructure	Majority of devices have been upgraded. The depot upgrade to take place in April 2019. Preliminary work on Citrix (Windows 10) upgrade has commenced and targeted for completion in Q2 2019/20.	Long term project.	
Server/Network hardware replacement	WIFI work is completed at Bushloe House which has resulted in improved connectivity. Works to alarm system to commence in Q1 of 19/20.	Long term project.	
ICT Replacement Programme/Mobile Working	Roll out of programme completed with benefits of mobile working implemented into Flexible Working Policy.	End of Financial year.	
Capital Repairs Scheme HRA	Interim HRA Programme Manager (Neil Barks) is continuing the work on the HRA Programme. A full report has been compiled for this committee.	Monitoring of the 10 year plan.	

	Project now amber as we are currently behind original project timeline but there are plans in place for getting this project back on track.		
Horsewell Lane Pavilion	Work underway – with an expected building handover of End of June 2019. Then demolition works to other buildings and minor alterations to complete by End of August 2019.	Works on Site by end of November 2018.	Project carry over to 19/20
41 Canal Street	Property sold. Project complete.	End of December 2018.	Project complete
Document Management System	Implementation across Licensing is in progress. – To be completed alongside full service review.	Continuous project.	
IIP Action Plan	Survey completed and results will be published in January 2019. Within 2019/20, the Council is working towards achieving the Customer Service Excellence award.	Project complete	
People/workforce Strategy	The creation of the Workforce Strategy is now the responsibility of SLT. This will be produced in the Summer of 2019 alongside a Learning and Development Strategy.	Long term project.	

2. Customer Service Update

2.1 Service at Oadby Library

From the 4 February 2019 onwards, the Customer Service provision at Oadby Library has been changed permanently to a phone only service. This allows residents wishing to access Council services from the library to be dealt with as a priority, due to the direct line to our Customer Service Team at Bell Street.

Oadby residents can use the free telephone line every day between 8.45am to 4.45pm Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, Wednesday from 9.30am until 4.45pm and Friday from 8.45am until 4.145pm. This offers 40 hours direct access to Customer Services compared to 12 hours when an officer attended the library.

Use of the free phone remains low, many customer now preferring to use their own phone at home. In February, 13 calls and in March, 16 calls were received in total.

So far all enquiries have been dealt with over the telephone. Customers have been educated on alternative payment methods with many cheque payers switching to direct debits or started to pay at their local Pay Point outlet.

In the event that any resident at any location across the Borough requires a face-to-face service and cannot attend Bell Street CSC, a home visit can be arranged.



Service Delivery Committee	Tuesday, 04 June 2019	Matter for Information
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Report Title: **Review of the Pest Control and Dog Warden Services**

Report Author: **Tony Cawthorne - Regulatory Services Manager**

Purpose of Report:	Advise committee on the review of the Pest Control and Dog Kennelling and Dog Warden Service.
Report Summary:	Following a requirement by the committee to provide advice on the full costings of the commercialisation of the Pest Control Service. As the Post Holder additionally undertakes the Councils Dog Warden service, an appraisal of the provision of the Dog Kennelling and Dog Warden Service has also been undertaken.
Recommendation:	A. That Members note the award of the Dog Kennelling and Dog Warden service to College Garth Limited; and B. That Members note the Pest Control Service is an important commercial service and the progress that has been made in developing the service which should be maintained in-house.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	David Gill (Head of Law & Democracy / Monitoring Officer) (0116) 257 2626 david.gill@oadby-wigston.gov.uk Tony Cawthorne (Regulatory Services Manager) (0116) 257 2670 tony.cawthorne@oadby-wigston.gov.uk
Corporate Objectives:	Building, Protecting and Empowering Communities (CO1) Growing the Borough Economically (CO2) Providing Excellent Services (CO3)
Vision and Values:	"A Stronger Borough Together" (Vision) Accountability (V1) Teamwork (V3) Innovation (V4) Customer Focus (V5)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	The implications are as set out at paragraphs 1.1 and 1.2 of this report.
Financial:	The implications are as set out at paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2 of this report.
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report. EA not applicable
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.

Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pest Control Service Review Update - 27 June 2017 • Pest Control Service 2017/18 - Income & Expenditures Account – 10 October 2017 • Community Services Update - Meeting of Service Delivery Committee, Tuesday, 23rd January, 2018 7.00 pm (Item 45.) • Corporate Enforcement Report - 05 April 2018 • Environmental Health Update (Q2 2018/19) - 11 October 2018 • Licensing And Regulatory Committee 11 October 2018 - Environmental Health Update (Q1 2018/19) • Environmental Protection Act 1990, s149 • Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949, s2
Appendices:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quotation for the Service Provision of Dog Ward and Dog Kennelling Service (Tender Ref. OWBC2018DW)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council has a legal duty under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 s149 to appoint an officer for the purpose of discharging the functions imposed or conferred by the legislation for dealing with stray dogs found in the area of the authority.
- 1.2 The Pest Control service is a discretionary service offered by the Council in fulfilling its duties under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 s 2 "It shall be the duty of every local authority to take such steps as may be necessary to secure so far as practicable that their district is kept free from rats and mice."

2. Background

- 2.1 The Environmental Health Department contains the Pest Control and Dog Warden Service. The Service Delivery Committee on the 27 June 2017 discussed the review of the Pest Control Service. It was agreed to set key performance targets to improve the income from the service. The targets set included; raising the costs of the treatments, promotion of the Service and raising awareness of pest issues, increased visits and commercialising the service.
- 2.2 The Council in addition required a full financial appraisal of the service to ensure the service was fit for purpose and cost effective – This can be found at point 5.

3. Pest Control

- 3.1 The Pest Control Service has undergone a transformation since the targets set by the Service Delivery Committee and has undertaken the commercialisation of the service, incorporating a brand image "Stronger Together" and undertaking contract work at several businesses across the Borough.

- 3.2 Requests for service have increased over the previous year and residents and customers express their gratitude at the professional and informative services provided by our officers who have often been brought in following poor and expensive treatments from other pest control contractors to resolve ongoing issues.
- 3.3 Pest control treatments undertaken 1/4/18 - 31/3/19 compared to 1/4/17 - 31/3/18:

Treatment	Number of Treatments 1/4/17 – 31/3/18	Number of Treatments 1/4/18 – 31/3/19
Ants	0	1
Bedbugs	5	12 Domestic + 1 Commercial
Fleas	12	7
Cluster Flies	0	2
Mice	30	53
Rats	99	128
Squirrels	13	13
Wasps	83	206
Other	5 – Insect, Wild cat, Bird, 2 Assessments	4 – Mosquitos, Fox, Maggots, Horse complaint

- 3.4 The Service has entered into 6 Commercial Contracts across the Borough including catering premises, residential homes and undertakes Sewer Treatments for Severn Trent within the Borough
- 3.5 The Service has contracts with Blaby District Council to undertake the sewer baiting treatment for STWA and offers its pest control service across Blaby District Council Pest issues in Blaby have been addressed directly by officers of OWBC to resolve long standing issues, raising OWBC Profile and becoming a trusted service, which is now being actively sought by customers.

4. Dog Kennelling and Dog Warden Services

- 4.1 The dog warden service during 2018/19 was undertaken by the Councils Technical Officer who undertook these duties alongside the pest control service and was supported by Central Animal Control providing an out of hours service and cover when the Councils Technical officer was not available. This service was through a purchase order arrangement following the contract expiring and entered into on a rolling ad-hoc basis, pending a review of the dog warden service.
- 4.2 The Councils dog warden service also worked with Leicestershire Animal Aid to kennel and rehome stray dogs.
- 4.3 The Council approved a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) following consultation with occupants in the Borough and the sealed document became effective on the 22/2/18. The PSPO is enforced through the service of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) and prosecution. The Councils Technical Officer undertook site surveys when the requirements of the pest control service allowed. During these surveys no contraventions were observed.
- 4.4 Following a review of the Dog Kennelling Service and the Dog Warden Service during 2018/19 The costs of the service were identified as a significant issue and a tender

document was sent out to 5 Companies who could undertake the collective works including kennelling and dog warden service. As part of the tender document the companies were provided with an indication of the number of dogs collected and actions taken over the proceeding four years. These are reproduced in the tables below.

4.5 Dogs collected and actions taken 2015 -2018

Service elements	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	1/4/18 – 26/11/18
Total Number of Dogs Collected	17	23	11	9
Number of dogs collected / kennelled 'office hours'	Not Known	Not Known	8	8
Number of dogs collected / kennelled 'out of office hours'	Not Known	Not Known	3	1

4.6 Detail of the actions taken with strays 2017 -2018

Service elements	2017/18	1/4/18 – 26/11/18
Number of dogs collected	11	9
Number of dogs returned to or reclaimed by owner	7	6
Number of dogs re-homed	4	2
Number of dogs destroyed	0	0
Dog under investigation pending action	0	1

4.7 Until 5th April 2008 the responsibility for stray dogs during 'office hours' (Monday to Friday 09:00 hrs to 17:00 hrs) was shared with the Police Authority but for 'out of office' hours it was the sole responsibility of the Police Authority.

4.8 On the 6th April 2008 the duty to deal with stray dogs became vested in the Council. The 'out of office hours' stray dog provision has been outsourced on a contract basis since April 2008.

4.9 The tender required an extension to the service to provide a longer and flexible service to satisfy the needs of the residents and Borough:

The Service was to provide:-

- All essential receiving, seizing and transport of stray dogs.
- Provision of kennelling service for the temporary kennelling of stray dogs seized in the area of Oadby and Wigston Borough Council for the statutory period of 7 days.

Dog Reception (acceptance point) and Dog Kennelling service

a. Week-day 'office' and 'out of office' hours: 09:00 hrs to 22:00 hrs

b. Week-ends: 9:00 hrs to 22:00 hrs

- Provision for a week day stray dog collection between the hours of 9:00am and 22:00 Monday to Friday
- Provision for an Out of Hours stray dog collection service, Saturday and Sunday and Bank Holidays - 9:00 hrs to 22:00 hrs
- Provide a comprehensive dog warden service across the District

Three hours x two times per week, 50 weeks a year excluding the Christmas and New Year weeks undertaking the duties listed as follows:

Dog Warden Duties during contract times:-

- Attend to service requests for the door-step collection of stray dogs and in addition transport them to a designated kennel facility.
- Weekday/weekend - undertake Dog Warden duties within the authority; to include, microchipping, dealing with dangerous dogs, park patrols, sign erection and enforcement of dog fouling controls as agreed in conjunction with the Council.

4.10 The dog kennelling and dog warden service was awarded to College Garth Ltd who undertake this service for Leicestershire Police, Leicestershire Social Services and Leicester City Council and all other Leicestershire Authorities except Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council.

4.11 The contract commenced on the 1st April 2019 and will operate until the 31st March 2022

4.12 Dogs will be rehomed following an independent social assessment of the dogs to ensure the safety of any perspective owners.

5. Financial Appraisal of the Services

5.1 Direct expenditure and Income associated to Dog Warden Service 2018/19:

Dog Warden Service	
DIRECT CONTROL EXPENDITURE	Final Accounts 2018/19
New Equipment	£99.98
Dog Control Service	£7,363.19
Vets Charges	£484.85
Emergency Call Out	£361.14
Vehicle Y194 XNR recharges to Dept.	£4,149.26
Direct Expenditure Total	£12458.42
DIRECT CONTROL INCOME	
Fees & Charges	£1,602.81
Direct Income Total	£1,602.81
NET COST OF OPERATING SERVICE	£10855.61

- 5.1.1 The new Dog Warden and kennelling service, with the additional hours of operation explained at 4.9. the undertaking of 6 hrs per week of patrols, it is expected the revised service to cost £3,625 based on 11 dogs.
- 5.1.2 Income is expected from 7 dogs being returned to owners - £532.50 and additional monies from kennelling fees and Fixed Penalty Notices enforcement of the Councils Public Space Protection Order will also increase the revenues.

5.2 Direct expenditure and income associated to Pest Control Service (a full comparison with the financial year 2017/18 will be provided to Committee at its meeting).

Pest Control Service	
DIRECT CONTROL EXPENDITURE	Final Accounts 2018/19
Salaries	£27,676.57
ER's Pension Contribution Prepayment	£1,628.28
Employees Total	£29,304.85
New Equipment	£14.00
Equipment, Baits, Poisons & Insecticides	£1,357.96
Protective Clothing	£60.25
Depot Recharge to Department	£2187.11
Pest Control Refunds	£90.00
Other Expenditure Total	£3709.32
Direct Expenditure Total	£33014.17
DIRECT CONTROL INCOME	
Wasps Commercial and Domestic	£11605.67
Pests Domestic	£80.00
Rodent Control	£12,690.00
Other Pests Commercial (Sewer Baiting)	£6,634.68
Internal Journal Transfers and Contracts	£1,847.00
Direct Income Total	£32,857.35
NET COST OF OPERATING SERVICE	£156.82

6. Observations of the Financial Breakdowns

- 6.1 The pest control service has undertaken £1847.00 of internal and external contracts which continue to rise as the Councils Pest Control Officer pursue additional contracts to make the service go into profit.
- 6.2 The 2001 IVECO van Y194 XNR continues to be used and following the awarding of the Dog Warden Contract is required to be decommissioned and sold, which would bring in a nominal amount of £200.00.
- 6.3 The costs of the Dog Warden Service reflect the cost of dealing with 11 dogs in the 2018/19 year at £986.88 per dog in delivering the Councils legal duties. The financial information provided by the finance department does not apportion costs in covering

the dog warden service and therefore the expenditure costs of the Dog warden service excludes staffing costs.

- 6.4 The Pest Control Service includes the full staffing costs, although the officers' duties included the Dog Warden service.

Agenda Item 15



Service Delivery Committee	Tuesday, 04 June 2019	Matter for Information and Decision
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Report Title: **Oadby & Wigston Tree Strategy (May 2019)**

Report Author(s): **Richard Redford (Planning Control Manager)**
Michael Bennetto (Arboricultural Officer)

Purpose of Report:	To establish the provisions of the Oadby & Wigston Borough Council Tree Strategy for use in contributing to a good quality of life for residents alongside a clean, greener and safer environment and successful economy.
Report Summary:	Following preparation of the Tree Strategy and subsequent consultation on its contents and provisions, the Tree Strategy represents a productive, useful document setting out how the Council will look at its tree stock alongside involvement of the public. It is recommended that the document is now approved and brought into effective use.
Recommendation(s):	That the Oadby and Wigston Borough Council Tree Strategy (as set out at Appendix 1) be approved and brought into immediate effective use.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Stephen Hinds (Deputy Chief Executive) (0116) 257 2681 stephen.hinds@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Adrian Thorpe (Head of the Built Environment) (0116) 257 2594 adrian.thorpe@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Richard Redford (Planning Control Manager) (0116) 257 2654 richard.redford@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Michael Bennetto (Arboricultural Officer) (0116) 257 2697 michael.bennetto@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Corporate Objectives:	Building, Protecting and Empowering Communities (CO1) Growing the Borough Economically (CO2) Providing Excellent Services (CO3)
Vision and Values:	"A Stronger Borough Together" (Vision) Accountability (V1) Respect (V2) Innovation (V4) Customer Focus (V5)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications arising from this report.

Financial:	Click to select or insert narrative.
Corporate Risk Management:	No corporate risk(s) identified
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications directly arising from this report. EA not applicable
Human Rights:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	The consultation process is as set out at paragraph 2.1 of this report.
Background Papers:	None.
Appendices:	1. Oadby & Wigston Tree Strategy (May 2019)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to confirm the final version of the Tree Strategy and bring it into effective use.

2. Tree Strategy

- 2.1 The 'Draft Tree Strategy' went out for consultation on 24 April 2018 and has also been available on the Council's website to view since 24 April 2018. Arboricultural Officers from adjacent Authorities and volunteer tree wardens within Oadby and Wigston were consulted. Notices were placed in Council buildings including Bell Street, Library's and on notice boards around the Borough. Members were invited to provide feedback and comments prior to the making of any final amendments.

- 2.2 A total of 6 comments were received. This comprises 2 from Arboricultural officers at adjacent Authorities and 4 from volunteer tree wardens within the Borough. The comments received can be summarised as follows;

- The document was more of a summary and position statement than a strategy without a specific aim or aims. That aside it is useful to put things together in a single document such as the one in question.
- It looks excellent. The Council may not want to be restricted or to set targets that may not be achievable.
- Impressed with the tree strategy. All points thought of were included. I hope householders take notice and value their trees for all the benefits outlined.
- Really pleased Oadby and Wigston have developed this. It will prove extremely useful for everyone living here who has any questions regarding their trees. The links encourage people to become involved, and help them when researching for other information.
- The pictures made it very accessible, more would have been nice. The format was just about right and the FAQ's section at the end was useful and clear.
- 'Policies', as against 'Objectives', other borough's use policy without any concern.

- There was no reference to TEMPO [Tree Evaluation Method for Preservation Orders] in the 2016 document. The Borough has always used it, but it should not be given the status of an objective. It can still be used where necessary and where applicable
- The FAQs and Tree Advice and Guidance sections are excellent. Both are clear, authoritative, friendly and helpful. Householders who read this will be fully informed of both rights and duties. They will also be made aware of why we need trees, and encouraged to think about them positively. At last residents will be made aware, amongst other things, of why tree roots are found in drains, and reassured that trees are not a dangerous and immediate threat to their foundations! The recommendation not to buy a house if you don't like trees is honest, direct and eminently sensible. As Tree Wardens and residents, we've been waiting for a document like this for years.
- A really good, helpful and clear document.

- 2.3 Based upon these comments, the Strategy has been amended to incorporate the feedback where possible and appropriate. The amendments made are generally relatively minor.
- 2.4 The strategy has received relatively minor amendments; the date on the title page was removed to alleviate pressure for revisions when unnecessary, any grammatical errors should have been ironed out with some wording having been strengthened where appropriate.
- 2.5 The Tree Evaluation Method for Preservation Orders, better known as TEMPO is a quantitative assessment of trees as to their suitability for protection by tree preservation order. Objective 9 stated: *'Suitability for making Preservation orders will be quantitatively assessed based on the TEMPO evaluation method'*.
- 2.6 TEMPO is supposed to function as a guide, not as a substitute for the surveyor's judgement. A decision will be made after considering a number of elements, one of which may be the use of TEMPO or other tree evaluation systems. In order that tree preservation is not too prescriptive objective 9 has been removed and cross references amended within the document.
- 2.7 Changes to web links within the tree strategy have been amended to ensure they are up to date and therefore provide continued functionality.

3. Future Reviews

- 3.1 Future reviews of the strategy are advised, this may take place when necessary but a 5 year cycle is typical for documents of this type, the need for a full revision can be assessed when approaching the 5 year mark.

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council

Tree Strategy

Trees for Life



Oadby & Wigston
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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1. Describing a proposal to undertake work on protected trees.	
2. Tree Strategies.	
3. Frequently asked questions.	

Version [1.0], May 2019

Forward:

If you look around you anywhere in Oadby and Wigston, most of what you can see will be roads, car parks and buildings. What you may not notice will be the extraordinary number of trees, hedges and planted landscapes. If so then look again. Trees are a vital part of the environment throughout the Borough. They bring a wide number of benefits to the people of the Borough - see pages 13 to 18. When properly valued in monetary terms many of them are of huge value as public amenities – see pages 11 and 12.

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council are the Local Planning Authority for the area. Amongst other things this means that we are responsible for administering a number of planning matters including the protection of local trees. The Council's Corporate Objectives are:

- **Building, Protecting and Empowering Communities**
 - “Delivering High Quality and Healthy Lifestyles in Communities”
 - “Making our Communities feel safe, be safe and supported”
 - “Informing, Including and Understanding our Communities”
- **Growing the Borough Economically**
 - “Delivering Development of the Town Centres”
 - “Delivering on our Housing Need”
 - “Attracting people and business to the Borough”
- **Providing Excellent Services**
 - “Excellence for our Customers”
 - “Improving how we work”

If you think about it the contents of this document – “Trees for Life” will assist The Council and our residents to achieve all of these priorities. Read on!

A particular thanks are extended to Sharon Hosegood, Chartered Arboriculturist FICFor FARborA BSc (Hons) Tech Cert (Arbor A), who prepared the initial draft of this document.

Councillor John Boyce

Leader of Oadby and Wigston Borough Council



1. Introduction

- 1.1. This document is about the best and most versatile product in the world; trees! They beautify, cleanse, nourish, and heal. They are useful, practical and renewable. They create landscapes, habitats and communities. They are an asset that gets more valuable with time. Everyone has seen and touched them. Oadby and Wigston Borough Council recognise the importance of trees and this document is for everyone, as trees touch all of our lives.
- 1.2. Oadby and Wigston Borough Council has three corporate objectives:
 - Building, Protecting and Empowering Communities
 - Growing the Borough Economically
 - Providing Excellent Services
- 1.3. Trees are an integral part of delivering these priorities; connecting commerce, recreation and public health. Information on the role of trees in your Borough, how to look after the treescape, and get involved with your local trees, is an important part of this document. This document sets out how the council will look after our own trees, how we will deal with protected trees, and how we will consider trees and development. This document does not prescribe planning policy and is not intended to provide an exhaustive exposition, but to inform everyone.
- 1.4. Towards the back of this document we aim to answer common questions about TPOs and Conservation Areas. (See FAQ's) If you plan to fell trees that are not in a residential garden, look at the Forestry Commission website for information on felling licences.

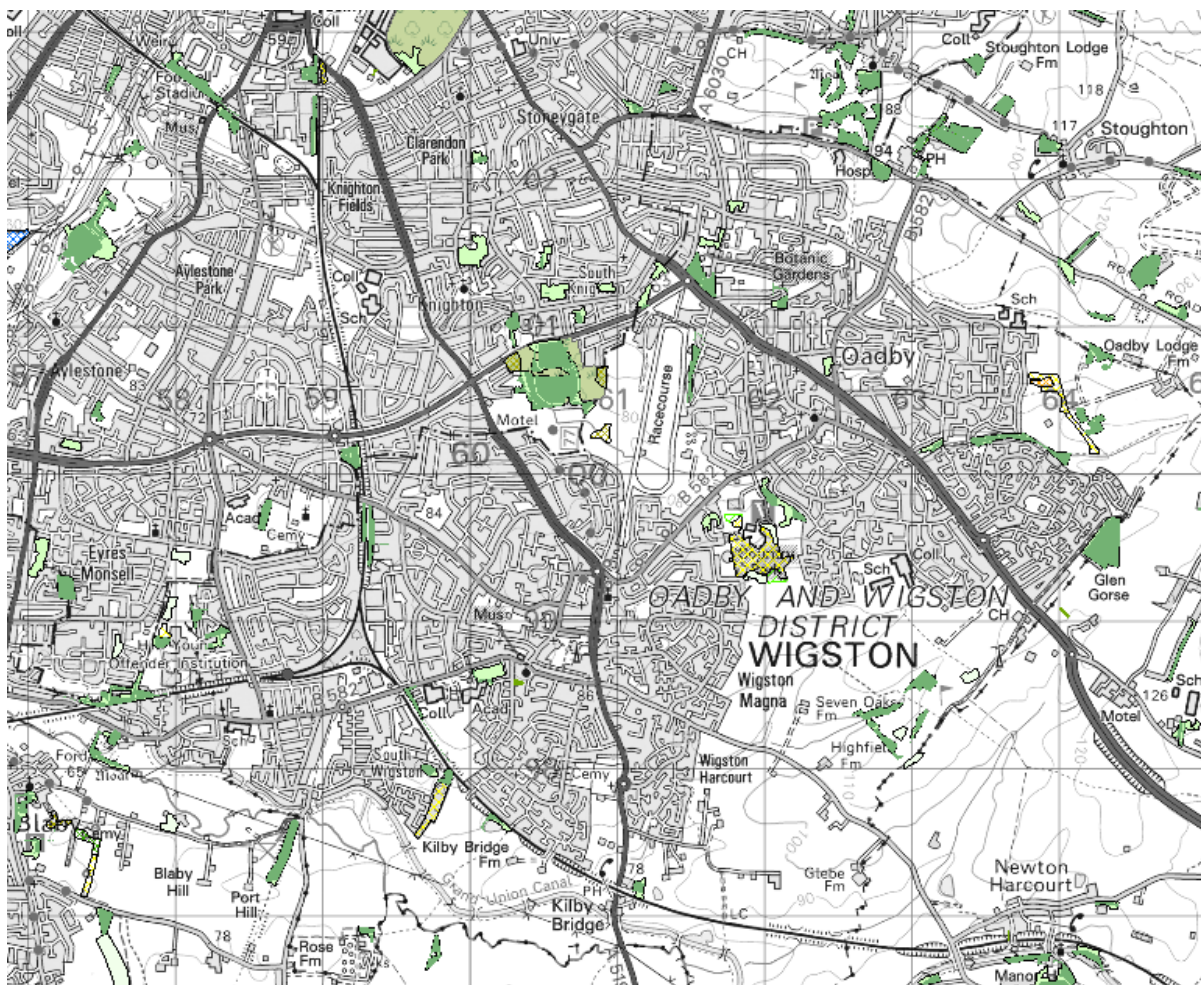
2 Oadby and Wigstons Trees

2.1 The Borough's Tree Stock

- 2.1.1 Woodland is a scarce resource in the Borough, well below the national average of 8%. None of the woodland is classified as ancient, but there is isolated semi-natural secondary woodland in the urban and rural areas. Substantial new woodland planting has taken place, in particular on Brocks Hill Country Park.
- 2.1.2 The ash tree is dominant in Leicestershire and is extensive throughout the Borough as hedgerow trees or mature woodland trees, and oak is predominant. There are opportunities for further tree planting within the towns, as identified by the Greening the Borough Strategy. There are a high proportion of veteran trees in the rural area and a network of hedgerows. The Council will be surveying trees on their own land over the next few years.
- 2.1.3 Hedgerows are a characteristic of the Borough, linking the town and countryside and creating wildlife corridors. The urban edge is well integrated into the landscape by hedgerows, trees and subtle changes in the landform which filter and limit views of the townscape from the open countryside.

Figure 1 Woodland around Oadby and Wigston

Magic Maps - (c) Crown Copyright and database rights 2019. Ordnance Survey 100022861



- 2.1.4 Trees on Highway land are the responsibility of Leicestershire City Council and beyond the scope of this document.

2.2 Biodiversity

The Biodiversity Audit (2005) and Extended Phase 2 Habitat Survey (2017) found the following:

2.2.1 Hedgerows

There is no 'typical hedgerow', however a frequently occurring hedgerow is predominantly hawthorn with occasional blackthorn, elder and dog rose. Ash and English elm occurs as shrubby trees and standards, whilst oak is always a standard. The total length of the hedgerows recorded was 85km. Mature crack willow are a common feature with the hedgerows between the River Sence and Grand Union Canal. Several hedgerows, totalling 700m within the Borough, have been identified as being 'species-rich' (i.e. averaging at least 5 woody species per 30m)

Getting involved

The Tree Council have a 'Hedge Tree' Campaign which encourages tree tagging of saplings in the hedges to avoid them from being flailed. Contact The Tree Council for more information. Tree tagging must only be carried out with the owner's permission. The Tree Council has launched a Hedgerow Harvest initiative which seeks to reconnect people to this heritage of free local healthy food.

(<http://www.hedgerowharvest.org.uk/>).

2.2.2 Woodlands

Broad leaved plantation makes up the largest proportion of woodland character of the Borough. It is either young (less than 20 years old) or approaching maturity. Broadleaved woodland survives as scattered stands of a once large area, mostly confined around the Oadby area. The woodlands mainly comprise of oak, ash and beech with an under storey of hawthorn, holly, elder and blackthorn. Stoughton Farm Grange contains the only area of mixed plantation in the Borough and contains veteran, and potentially veteran oaks.



Photo 1 - The woodlands at Brocks Hill County Park

Getting involved

Oadby and Wigston Council have a number of events at Brocks Hill which you can take part in http://www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk/pages/what_is_happening_at_brocks_hill_visitor_centre_and_countr_y_park or 'like' their facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/BrocksHillCountryPark/?fref=ts>

The Tree Council encourage a Walk in the Woods and Seed Gathering Season to promote well-being, enjoyment of our local resources, and to gather seeds of local provenance.



Photo 2 - A woodland walk at Brocks Hill County Park



Photo 3 Group of trees on Saffron Road

2.3 Trees of special interest

- 2.3.1 185 trees were identified in the survey as being of special interest, and 112 were of veteran status. Ancient and other veteran trees are a vital and treasured part of our history, and our natural and cultural landscape, and Britain has the greatest number of ancient trees in northern Europe (source <http://www.ancienttreeforum.co.uk/>). Ancient and veteran trees are a unique host to some protected species (such as the violet click beetle). An **ancient tree** is generally low, fat, squat (because the crown has reduced in size through age), and has a wide trunk which is often hollow. A **veteran tree** shows ancient characteristics. A **heritage tree** is linked to a local event, history or local person, or is botanically scarce. **Notable trees** are memorable, usually due to their size and/or setting. They need not be veteran. Finally **Champion trees** are the largest of the species in a particular area.

Getting involved

Veteran Trees can be recorded on the ancient tree hunt website <http://www.ancient-tree-hunt.org.uk/> . Seek the owner's permission before entering land and uploading tree data.

Getting involved

The Tree Council have a National Tree Week (NTW) in late November/early December every year since inception in 1975. In the 40th year of NTW the council aim to plant one million trees. Their website <http://www.treecouncil.org.uk/Take-Part> provides a wealth of detail on how to take part.



Photo 4 – Holly Blue butterfly at Brocks Hill County Park

2.4 Putting a value on trees

2.4.1 Undoubtedly, important trees have been removed, and there is anecdotal evidence to suggest that, across all the different ownership categories, trees have been and are being removed unnecessarily due to the fear of litigation (National Tree Safety Group - <http://ntsgroup.org.uk/>)

2.4.2 With the growing recognition of how valuable trees are within our society, a number of methods to value trees have been developed. These aim to quantify their diverse roles and assess how important they are to our economy, ecology and wellbeing.

i-tree eco

2.4.3 i-tree eco measures the urban forest structure, environmental effects and value to communities. This is calculated by using specialized software which processes information from tree surveys (usually a number of plots within a town), together with meteorological data and air pollution. A number of studies have been carried out through the world. The largest study in the world was in London and was completed in early 2015. Preliminary findings are located at:-

<https://www.charteredforesters.org/2016/01/london-itree-results/>

Treezilla

2.4.4 Treezilla is a citizen science platform that aims to map every tree in Britain. Anyone can get involved, and the information will help populate the software on what 'ecosystem services' trees provide.

Getting involved

Take a photo, and provide details of a tree (with the owner's permission), and upload it to the map at:- <https://www.treezilla.org/treezilla/map/>

CAVAT

2.4.5 Aside from the cost of buying, planting and looking after a tree, there are a number of methods for working out the financial value of a tree. The most recently developed system is CAVAT. This provides a method for managing trees as public assets, and provides a financial value for the tree; not to replace it, but as its value to the local area. The final figure is calculated from a number of variables, but to summarize, the bigger, healthier and more accessible the tree is, the higher its value.



Photo 5 - Tree Warden training session, in November 2015, on CAVAT and Treezilla.

The value of this mature Austrian pine in Peace Memorial Park is calculated under CAVAT as £116,142.

3 Why Trees are Important

- 3.1.1 All trees are a valuable resource that provide us with oxygen, absorb pollution and carbon dioxide, inhibit the sound of traffic, make our urban environment more pleasant and add value to our properties as well as sustaining wild fauna and flora, providing a living link to the past and many other benefits.
- 3.1.2 The ways trees help us are extensive with benefits that we all probably take for granted but rarely perceive.
- 3.1.3 Trees are integral to most natural land-based ecosystems, providing a wide range of ecosystem services to people, including mitigating the harmful effects of climate change as well as assisting with climate adaptation. Trees are an important part of the economy, providing timber and non-timber forest products. Their importance is recognised at all stages, from international to local government policies, many non-governmental organisations have policies dedicated to conserving trees and their biodiversity.

3.2 How Trees Grow

- 3.2.1 Trees grow taller by growth from new cells from branch tips. As they mature the trunk and branches get wider and the crown forms a network of sub-divided branches. They obtain their energy from sunlight which creates photosynthesis. The trees give out oxygen, and take in carbon dioxide as part of this process. The roots are woody and taper out to the edge of the crown. These roots subdivide and fine feeder roots take up water and nutrients, and carry out gaseous exchange. Roots often have a helpful relationship (symbiotic) with beneficial fungi (mycorrhizae) which help them gather more water and nutrients from a wider area. Most tree roots are within the top 1.5m of the soil, typically the majority of roots and virtually all the large structural supporting roots are in the upper 60cm of the soil. Soil disturbance within the rooting area should be avoided, whenever and wherever possible as this can significantly adversely affect tree health and tree stability. Tree roots are damaged by trenching, soil compaction, and raising or lowering the ground. The effects of damage do not usually show for a few years, unless the damage is so severe that the tree blows over.

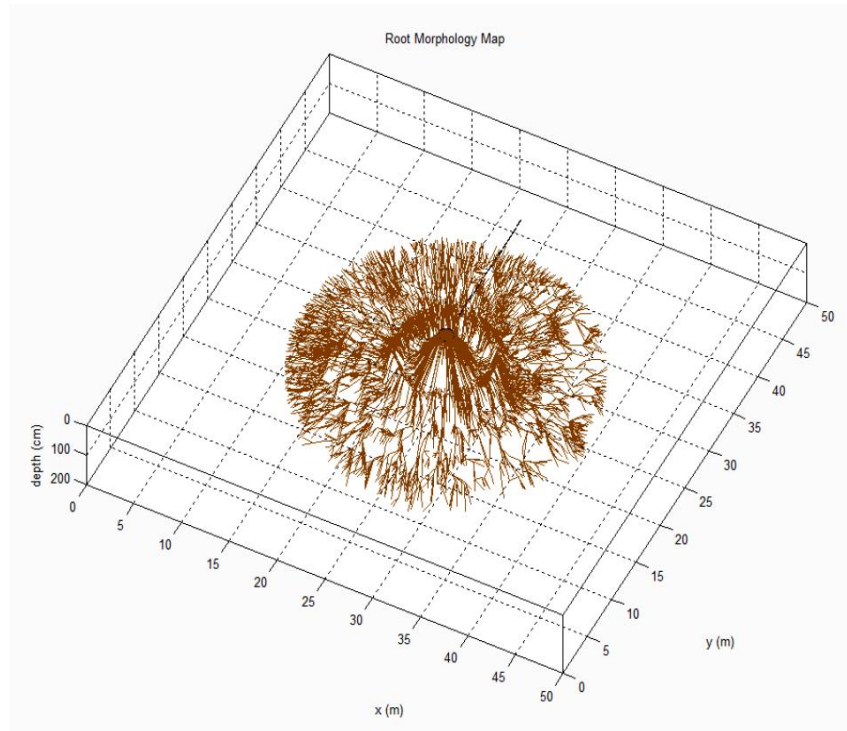


Figure 2 – Root morphology map of a large mature oak tree using ground penetrating radar (TreeRadar). Sharon Hosegood. For further details see

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0619k6l>

Getting involved

Can you help us find the largest tree in the Borough?

3.3 Landscape

- 3.3.1 Trees are the largest living landscape feature and define the character, views and sense of place. They soften the visual impact of the edge of the towns when looking from the open countryside, which is particularly important on the southern edge of Wigston and South Wigston. Trees enhance the setting on the built environment (see photo 1), screen unattractive buildings and create 'vistas' to enhance an attractive view. Trees provide a sense of maturity for new developments and help blend new buildings into the landscape. They are an important component in creating a sense of place and many landscapes we admire and visit have a high tree population, marking as they do the passing of the seasons. However, not all trees are appropriate for their setting, and an understanding of the right tree, in the right place is important to make sure that tree has room to grow and does not cause a conflict.



Photo 6 - St Peter's Church, Oadby



Photo 7 - The passing of the seasons

3.4 Ecological benefits

- 3.4.1 Trees provide a host of significant ecological benefits, including habitats and roosting for bats, birds, insects and other creatures. Fungi, mosses, liverworts and lichens are a rich and complex part of our ecology. Many protected and rare insects and fungi are entirely dependent on old trees to survive with hollow trees provide some of the most valuable habitat.
- 3.4.2 Dead wood (fallen, standing, large or small) and general wood decay are essential for nutrient recycling which is important for soil health. Collectively, trees have added value as wildlife corridors for mammals, bats and birds. All trees provide ecological benefits, however some species have a higher ecological value than others. An oak tree, for example, can support over 270 different species. Generally, the older the tree, the more complex and diverse an ecological community it supports.

3.5 Ecosystem services

- 3.5.1 Trees intercept heavy rainfall and reduce flash flooding. They filter the air converting carbon dioxide into oxygen and remove various pollutants from the atmosphere. They cool buildings in summer and diffuse moisture loss and reduce wind speeds, therefore reducing heat loss in winter.



Photo 8 - Woodland management and standing dead wood at Brocks Hill Country Park



Photo 9 - Yellow hammer at Brocks Hill Country Park

3.6 Promoting our wellbeing

- 3.6.1 Many of us feel intuitively that it is important for our quality of life to have access to nature. Walking outside amongst trees has been proven to make us feel better. This has been proved medically with research proving that blood pressure can be lowered, mild depression lifted and overall fitness improved. Trees can reduce the incidence of asthma as air is filtered. Stress-related illnesses are reduced not only by the calming effect of the looking at trees, but by the fact that attractive, well maintained public spaces with trees encourage walking, and, by association, incidental social interaction. Trees cast shade and may have a role to play in reducing skin cancer. Studies have shown that patients in hospital rooms with views of green space (in particular, trees); recover from surgery quicker than patients looking out onto buildings. A recent report from Faculty of Health states that:

‘Access to nature can significantly contribute to our mental capital and wellbeing’ and that ‘Safe, green spaces may be as effective as prescription drugs in treating some forms of mental illnesses’



Photo 10 - Brocks Hill Country Park

3.7 Cultural value

- 3.7.1 Trees may be significant to us personally, marking historical occasions, commemorating a birth, family event or celebration of a life. Trees – and in particular, veteran trees are often linked to local events and customs.

3.8 Future Proofing

Climate Change and Adaption

- 3.8.1 Weather is the short term changes in the atmosphere, the week to week, day to day and hour to hour experience. Our climate, however, is the average of weather over time and space.
- 3.8.2 Climate change is a serious threat to all forests, woods and trees. Not just extreme weather events that affect tree stability and health but also through pests and diseases which can lie latent in the tree and infect the tree when it is stressed. Climate change will affect woodland habitats and the species they support by affecting life cycles, altering the relationships between species.
- 3.8.3 The rapid changes we are now witness to across the globe are unprecedented and tree stocks are both at threat and part of the solution. Increased woodland planting may help mitigate some of the negative impacts of climate change by protecting soils from erosion, reducing the likelihood and impact of flash flooding, and supporting biodiversity. It can also contribute benefits to other land uses, providing shade and shelter, improving water quality and flows, and making urban environments more habitable.
- 3.8.4 To help future proof tree stocks a Europe wide network of organizations are in collaboration to collect data on plant growth, deaths and growth patterns. Trial plots of carefully selected species are established in various locations, the tree stock is being selected from populations with desirable attributes such as those from warmer climates or display lower water demand.

Pests, diseases and ill-health

- 3.8.5 The number of pests and diseases affecting trees in the UK has increased rapidly in the UK. This is due to a number of factors, some of which are the subject of current research. Climate change, increased transportation and mobilization of pests during cargo transport are some factors. Extremes of weather, especially hot, dry summers, can make trees more susceptible to disease. The effect of a pest or disease that only affects one tree species can have a big impact on the landscape, especially in areas where only one species is dominant. For example, Great Britain's woodlands are made up of around 4.7% Ash; the social, environmental and commercial value of these trees is estimated between £94 and £146 million per year. In future planting, we should aim to provide a mix of species to build resilience in the landscape.



Photo 11 Peace Memorial Park

3.8.6 There are three main causal agents; fungi, bacteria and insects. Tree health is a complex matter and trees have evolved to have a good and helpful relationship with many fungi and insects (for example, pollution). If you're in doubt about your trees health, seek advice from a tree expert.

3.8.7 Priority pests and diseases to look out for:

- Emerald Ash Borer
- Longhorn Beetle – Asian and Citrus
- Sweet Chestnut Blight
- Xylella fastidiosa
- Chestnut Gall Wasp
- Oak Processionary Moth

The Forestry Commission has a helpful website on pests and diseases which is found at:

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pestsanddiseases>

Getting involved

3.8.8 The Forestry Commission provide Tree Alert, a tree pest and disease sighting reporter. This has been set up for use by everyone to help gather information about the health of the nation's trees, woodlands and forests.

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

Observatree provide a comprehensive list of high priority tree pests and disease, as well as their signs and symptoms throughout the seasons.

<http://www.observatree.org.uk/tree-health/pests-and-diseases/>

3.9 Biosecurity

- 3.9.1 The threats to our tree stock have never been greater, it's not always possible to see pests and diseases and they can be transmitted accidentally by people moving between different areas. Pests are most often transported in soil or organic material, such as plant debris, that can be carried on footwear or by the wheels of vehicles. Diseases may also be spread via the equipment used for tree work. Some pathogens are dispersed in water and so the risk of these being spread increases when conditions are wet.
- 3.9.2 Every little helps, we recommend biosecurity guidance provided from the Forestry Commission as best practice for use by all those who engage in the forestry and arboricultural sectors.
- 3.9.3 Certain plants may be subject to movement and sale restrictions as well as requirements to quarantine. Quarantine measures help to keep foreign pests out of areas where they could damage crops, trees, wild plants and ecosystems. Under plant health legislation a number of plant pests and diseases are classified as quarantine organisms and are therefore subject to statutory control.

Unregulated plant trade and sales can be a serious threat, please buy responsibly from reputable suppliers.

Getting involved

The Forestry Commission provides a free training module for use by both the public and professionals:

<https://www.forestryengland.uk/article/biosecurity-advice-forest-visitors>

<https://www.trees.org.uk/Help-Advice/Biosecurity-Guidance>

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

Can you help us provide information on important local trees which are connected to a local story? We would love to publish stories and pictures here.

3.10 Tree Wardens

- 3.10.1 The Tree Council is the UK's lead charity for trees, promoting their importance in a changing environment. Their vision is one; of more trees in streets, parks, hedgerows and woodland across the UK, bringing benefits to people and wildlife, enhancing landscapes and engaging people in biodiversity and environmental issues. They work in partnership with our volunteer Tree Wardens, schools, communities, organizations and government to make trees matter to everyone.
- 3.10.2 Tree Wardens are volunteers, usually appointed by parish councils or other community organisations, who gather information about their local trees, get involved in local tree matters and encourage local practical projects related to the trees and woods. The Oadby and Wigston Borough Council's Tree Warden Scheme is part of the wider Leicestershire Tree Warden Scheme and seeks to involve local volunteers in championing and managing their local trees and to meet locally with like-minded people for training, field trips and practical activities. To support this, the Council runs training events locally, supporting the volunteers wherever possible, and in whatever way appropriate. This will include providing information on changes to legislation and current research on new pests and disease alerts.

Getting involved

For more information about joining the tree warden scheme see http://www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk/pages/volunteering_with_the_tree_warden_scheme

Getting involved

Record your local trees on the Treezilla website. The more records we have, the easier it is to quantify the benefits of the trees. The following description is from their website:

What is Treezilla?

Treezilla is an exciting new platform for citizen science that everyone from school children to university students and the general public can get involved with. The idea is to map every tree in Britain. This will create a data-rich platform on which a wide range of citizen science investigations can be built.

Getting involved

The Pride of the Borough Group is an umbrella group, working with the council to organize our entry into East Midlands in Bloom. The group was formed in 2004 and aims to improve the environment, working with the council and others and encourage and support relevant community activities. Further operations details are found in Appendix one. Contact details are found on the website http://www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk/pages/pride_of_the_borough1.

4 Tree Ownership

4.1 Who owns the tree?

- 4.1.1 The owner of a tree is typically defined as the person who owns the soil surrounding the base of its stem. If this soil is owned by more than one person, these persons are considered tenants in common of the tree.

4.2 What are the implications?

- 4.2.1 As the owner or any party with control over the trees management, you have a duty of care to “take reasonable care to avoid acts or omissions that cause a reasonably foreseeable risk of injury to persons or property”.
- 4.2.2 The surveying of trees within falling distance of property and boundaries is considered a ‘reasonable’ precaution provided; recommendations to reduce or remove risk are carried out by a professional tree firm, or a management plan is put in place which lays out timescales for phased works to be carried out between surveys.
- 4.2.3 A suitably qualified and insured arborist can provide you with a tree risk survey which should also recommend appropriate management and works where required to fulfil your duty of care.

4.3 Managing Risk

- 4.3.1 Managing the risk from trees is the responsibility of the owners and managers of the land on which they grow. There are many different types of landowner and trees grow in many different environments. The overall approach when assessing risk is that a balance should be struck between risks and benefits.
- 4.3.2 The risk of being struck and killed by a tree or branch falling is extremely low (in the order of one in 10 million for those trees in or adjacent to areas of high public use). However the low level of overall risk may not be perceived in this way by the public, particularly following an incident.
- 4.3.3 One reason why trees fall into the “low” level of risk category is because over past decades, in the majority of cases, appropriate and timely management decisions have taken place. Hazardous trees have been identified and remedial works undertaken.
- 4.3.4 So far as non-fatal injuries in the UK are concerned, the number of accident and emergency cases (A&E) attributable to being struck by trees (about 55 a year) is exceedingly small compared with the roughly 2.9 million leisure-related A&E cases per year, even wheelie bins are involved in many more incidents than trees (about 2,200 a year).

- 4.3.5 It can be reliably predicted that if a falling tree kills a member of the public, there will be a passing story in the local, and occasionally national, media. This is because unusual events, such as tree-related deaths, are more likely to be newsworthy than commonplace accidents, even though the latter pose a far greater risk and cause much more harm overall.
- 4.3.6 The pressures on tree owners to follow a risk-averse approach have never been greater. Responsible management should seldom result in large-scale tree removal for safety reasons, no tree can be guaranteed to be safe as long as we retain trees, we cannot achieve zero risk. A disproportionate response to the actual risks posed by trees leads to unnecessary intervention, particularly alongside roads and public places. Disproportionately responding to risk itself runs the threat of diminishing the landscape and depriving the whole community of the enjoyment of trees and their wider benefits.



Photo 12 - A defect or two shouldn't immediately condemn a tree.

4.4 Protected trees

- 4.4.1 There are a number of reasons a tree might be protected; Tree Preservation Orders, Conservation Areas, Planning Conditions and Covenants.
- 4.4.2 It is a criminal offence to lop, top, cut down, uproot, wilfully damage or destroy a protected tree unless the Council has permitted the work. Therefore, before commencing work on any tree, it is strongly recommended you check the status by e-mailing details, including the location and a description of the work you wish to carry out to our Planning Control Team.
- 4.4.3 In some circumstances it may also be necessary to obtain a felling licence from the Forestry Commission before felling trees, though this is unlikely to apply to a normal domestic garden.

The Council offers pre-application advice to tree owners, for further information contact our Arboricultural Officer on 0116-2572697 or e-mail Michael.Bennetto@oadby-wigston.gov.uk. *(E-mail is preferred as, like any good arborist, Michael is away from his desk for much of the working day).*

4.5 Tree Preservation Orders

- 4.5.1 Local Authorities have powers to make tree preservation orders (TPOs) to control work undertaken to trees that make an important contribution to the local area. Trees within conservation areas have a level of protection similar to trees which are covered by a TPO. If works to protected trees are needed, an application must be made to us on a standard tree works application form – which can be downloaded from the national Planning Portal website. You can download an application form [here](#) and guidance notes [here](#) and we strongly recommended that you use these. In line with best practice advice in the "British Standard 3998: tree work – recommendations" and TPO applications guidance notes, a full and clear specification (detailed description) of tree works will be required. We cannot validate applications that present crown reduction works specified in percentage terms. To avoid ambiguity, the specified end result should be stated either as the tree-height and branch-spread which are to remain or the average equivalent in branch length reduction (in metres) and maximum diameter of live pruning wounds. You should specify end results or individual branches if the growth pattern of the tree creates a need for this or where clearance from a specified object is required (see Para 7.7.2 of BS 3998:2010). Annotated photographs can be very beneficial to avoid misinterpretation.

- 4.5.2 You can see a copy of the "British Standard 3998:2010 tree work – recommendations" online at the British Standards Institute. Once a valid application has been received and registered, adjoining land owners will be consulted. We may place public notices locally and will take any views or representations into account. Some works may be decided by officers. If the application involves the felling of a protected tree or is controversial, it may be referred to the Council's Development Control committee.

4.6 Trees in Conservation Areas

- 4.6.1 A conservation area is a specified area designated by the Local Planning Authority, such as Oadby and Wigston Borough Council, because of its special character. This is usually done because of the special architectural or historical importance of an area.
- 4.6.2 Within a designated Conservation Area all trees have a level of protection similar to trees covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). Follow the TPO guidance within this document

4.7 Carrying out work on a tree in a Conservation Area

- 4.7.1 Before working on a tree in a conservation area you must give us six weeks' notice in writing of your intention to carry out the work. You should include details of the exact location of the tree, indicated on a plan, along with details of the species and exactly what work you wish to do. Send your notification to us at Oadby and Wigston Borough Council, Council Offices, Station Road, Wigston, LE18 2DR. You can download an application form [here](#) and guidance notes [here](#) from the national Planning Portal and we recommended that you use these.
- 4.7.2 The Council will then consider the impact of the proposed works on the character of the conservation area and local public amenity. If you have heard nothing within six weeks, or if you have received a letter letting you know that the work is acceptable, you may go ahead with it. If the work is deemed to have an unacceptable impact the Council may make a TPO to protect the tree further.

To find out if a tree is within a Conservation Area contact our Planning Control Team or Arboricultural Officer by e-mail with details of the address, location, and species of the tree. (planning@oadby-wigston.gov.uk).



Photo 13 - Tree works at Brocks Hill County Park

5 Hedges

- 5.1.1 A hedge can be cheap to create and last for a long time. It can help bring wildlife into your garden; and its flowers, berries and leaves can add colour and beauty. You don't normally need permission to plant a hedge in your garden and there are no laws that say how high you can grow your hedge.
- 5.1.2 But you are responsible for looking after any hedge on your property and for making sure it's not a nuisance to anyone else. You can help prevent a hedge on your property from becoming a nuisance by trimming the hedge regularly, both its top and all sides.

5.2 High Hedges

- 5.2.1 If a hedge is allowed to grow unchecked it can sometimes cause problems.
- 5.2.2 If you are troubled by someone else's hedge, the best way to deal with the issue is to talk to them about it. Calling in the council or going to court, especially without first approaching your neighbour yourself, might make matters worse.
- 5.2.3 It's in both your interests to try and sort things out. After all, you have to continue to live near each other and so it's better if you are on good terms.

5.3 Protected Hedgerows

- 5.3.1 Agricultural hedges are afforded protection under the hedgerow regulations, to remove a hedgerow protected under the regulations you will need to submit a hedgerow removal notice to the council. If the hedge is deemed important you will receive a Hedgerow Retention Notice.

- 5.3.2 Hedges within or that form the boundary of a dwelling are exempt from requiring notification, where the hedge demarks the boundary between two properties and in the absence of mention of the hedge or boundary measurements in the titles of either property a Court is likely to assume that a line drawn through the centre of the base of the hedge represents the boundary; thus the hedge is joint property. Any jointly owned hedge cannot unilaterally be removed.
- 5.3.3 You may cut back that part of the hedge that overhangs your property but must not endanger the continued life of your neighbours half of the hedge. Any alternative boundary demarcation will have to stand within your land alone, similarly any foundations must not endanger the continued life of your neighbours half of the hedge.
- 5.3.4 Hedgerow removal notices should be submitted to the Local Authority.

6 Trees, Design, Planning and Development

- 6.1.1 When it comes to building and development, whether it's permitted development or full planning approval, trees are a material consideration.
- 6.1.2 Trees (including shrubs and hedges) play an essential role in the built environment and visual amenity of rural and urban landscapes. They may take decades to grow, but can be damaged irreparably in a few minutes by actions that may be unwitting or wilful. Wherever they are growing - in public areas, private gardens, rural verges or elsewhere – they need space for adequate development of their root systems and to allow the branches to develop an attractive and natural shape.



How trees are damaged

- 6.1.3 Trees are complex living organisms, which are susceptible to damage from a wide range of physical agents or activities. Trees do not heal; damage caused to a tree will remain for the rest of its life. Even minor damage may set up circumstances leading to the tree being seriously impaired in the long term. Contrary to popular belief, the root system of a tree is not a mirror image of the branches, nor is there usually a 'tap root'. The majority of the root system of any tree is in the surface 600mm of soil, extending radially in any direction for distances frequently in excess of the tree's height. Excavation or other works within this area are likely to damage the roots.

The root system

- 6.1.4 The base of a trunk typically flares out in buttresses extending into the main lateral structural roots. These rapidly subdivide into the mass of smaller roots which serve to anchor the tree into the soil and transport water and nutrients. Even at a short distance (3m) from a large mature tree, most roots will be less than 10mm in diameter, but these may extend to well beyond the branch spread of the tree. A mass of fine roots, less than 1 mm in diameter, develop off all parts of this root system. These fine roots also absorb the water and nutrients, which are essential for the growth of the tree. The main structural roots (close to the trunk) develop as the tree grows in response to the need for physical stability. Beyond these major roots growth is influenced by the availability of water, air and nutrients in the soil.

6.2 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - recommendations

- 6.2.1 The British Standards Institution (BSI) provide recommendations and guidance for arboriculturalists, architects, builders, engineers, land managers, landscape architects, contractors, planners, statutory undertakers, surveyors, and all others interested in harmony between trees and development.
- 6.2.2 British Standard 5837:2012 gives recommendations and guidance on principles to be applied to achieve a satisfactory relationship between trees and development. It follows a logical sequence of stages that have tree care at their heart, which is essential to allow new development to be integrated successfully with trees.
- 6.2.3 British Standard 5837 recognises that there can be problems with development close to existing trees which are to be retained, and of planting trees close to existing structures. The standard sets out to help people concerned with design, construction or demolition of trees to form balanced judgements. It does not seek to put arguments for or against development, or for removal or retention of trees. Where development, including demolition, is to take place, the Standard provides guidance on how to decide which trees are appropriate for retention, on the means of protecting these trees during development, including demolition and construction work, and on the means of incorporating trees into the developed landscape. It was originally published in 1980 but the current version takes account of the practice for managing, protecting and planting trees in the vicinity of structures and for the protection of structures near trees. It updates guidance for building regulations and recognises the contribution that trees make to adapting our built environment to the impacts of climate change.

6.3 Permitted development

- 6.3.1 Permitted development allows improvement and extension of homes without the need for a planning application. Even if your work does not require planning permission, you must still consider the impact your work may have on trees.
- 6.3.2 If your work will affect trees that sit in a Conservation Area or are covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), you must not carry out any work on them without our authorisation. Trees in these situations are legally protected, and carrying out unauthorised work, or causing them any damage, is a criminal offence.
- 6.3.3 A frequent cause of harm to trees on building sites is ground compaction; this can be caused by storing building materials or driving machinery over the roots. Failure to plan for trees during building projects is commonly overlooked and could result in a tree falling through your new extension, and/or prosecution and a criminal record. We want to protect trees and help residents. We are always happy to give advice, so please speak to us before you start any work. If in doubt, speak to a suitably qualified and experienced Arboriculturist.

6.4 Tree Protection

- 6.4.1 For the majority of planning requirements the provision of a Construction Exclusion Zone demarked by protective fencing will be adequate. This is to restrict the area that can be used, ensuring that machinery and material storage cannot damage the tree. If access is tight then temporary ground protection can be installed.
- 6.4.2 Tree protection measures may seem trivial to some, but ground compaction is a hidden stressor, suffocating roots and disrupting respiration processes which power every function of the tree. If the tree dies or fails, liabilities are thrown wide open, some temporary fencing is much cheaper than the possible repair bill or law suit.

More information:

You can buy copies of British Standard 5837 and other standards from the British Standards Institute at Head Office, 389 Chiswick High Road, London W4 4AL.

BSI Website: <http://www.bsonline.bsi-global.com/server/index.jsp> 

National Joint Utilities Group (NJUG) guidelines for the planning, installation and maintenance of utility apparatus in proximity to trees. Volume 4, Issue 2. NJUG 2007.

National House Building Council – NHBC Standards 2011, Chapter 4.2 - Building near trees

References:

- The Tree Council - <http://www.treecouncil.org.uk/>
- Hedgerow Regulation 1997
- Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 (Part 8) and the High Hedges (appeals England) 2005
- BS 3998: 2010 Tree Work - Recommendations
- BS 4428: 1989 Code of practice for general landscape operations (excluding hard surfaces)
- BS 5837: 2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations
- BS 7370: 1991 Grounds maintenance. Recommendations for establishing and managing grounds maintenance organizations and for design considerations related to maintenance
- BS 8545: 2014 'Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape – Recommendations'.
- Part VIII of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Town and Country Planning (Trees) Regulations 1999
- Town and Country Planning (Trees) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2008
- Town and Country Planning (Trees) (Amendment No 2) (England) Regulations 2008
- Town and Country (Tree Preservation)(England) Regulations 2012
- The Forestry Act 1967
- Occupiers Liability Act 1957 and 1984
- Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions Act) 1976
- Highways Act 1980
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Tree Health Management Plan April 2014 – Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs
- Plant Health News – Forestry Commission
- Oak Processionary Moth Guidance Note – London Tree Officers Association (LTOA)
- Massaria Disease of London Plane – a practical management guide – LTOA
- Trees in the Townscape: A guide for Decision Makers (TDAG)
- Trees in Hard Landscapes A guide for Delivery – Trees and Design Action Group (TDAG)
- Ancient Tree Guide No 4 – What are ancient, veteran other trees of special interest – Woodland Trust, Ancient Tree Forum
- Faculty of Public Health, in association with Natural England – Great Outdoors: How our natural health service uses green space to improve wellbeing.
- Journal of Arboriculture 29(2): 84–97 a practical approach to assessing structure, function and value of street tree populations in small communities
- Law of Trees, Forests and Hedges 14/12/2011 – Dr Charles Mynors
- National Tree Safety Group 'Common sense risk management of trees'
- 'The Axe' magazine, March 2015 'The relationship between tree officers and arboricultural consultants – sharing a vision. Sharon Hosegood.
- The Health and Safety Executive - Management of the risk from falling trees or branches - http://www.hse.gov.uk/foi/internalops/sims/ag_food/010705.htm)
- <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/>
- <http://www.treezilla.org/>
- <http://www.treecouncil.org.uk/>
- [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/space4trees_stage3_doc.pdf/\\$FILE/space4trees_stage3_doc.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/space4trees_stage3_doc.pdf/$FILE/space4trees_stage3_doc.pdf)
- <http://www.itreetools.org/eco/>
- <http://ltoa.org.uk/resources/cavat>
- <http://www.observatree.org.uk/>
- <https://forestry.gov.uk/biosecurity>

Photos from Brocks Hill Facebook page, or by the main author Sharon Hosegood,
Chartered Arboriculturist FICFor FArborA BSc (Hons) Tech Cert (Arbor A)

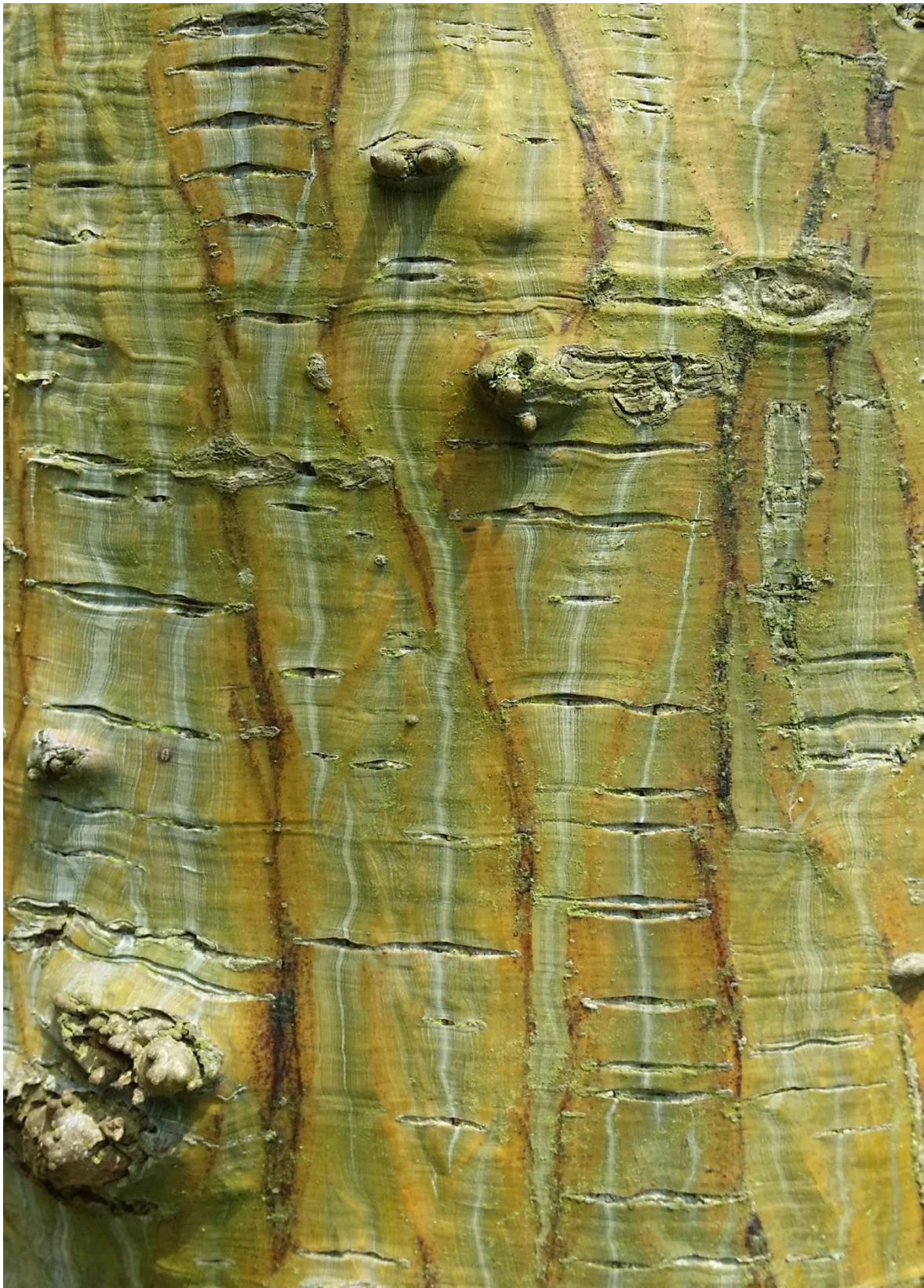


Photo 14 - Snake bark maple

Appendices

- 1. Describing a proposal to undertake pruning work on protected trees**
- 2. Tree Strategy**
- 3. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

Appendix 1: Describing a proposal to undertake pruning work on protected trees.

The British Standard relating to Arboricultural work is BS 3998: 2010 '*Tree Work – Recommendations*'. Trees are generally pruned for safety reasons (to remove dead or dangerous branches), or to provide room for people or buildings. Occasionally trees are pruned to reduce the risk of structural defects causing a collapse. Fruit trees are pruned to encourage new fruit. Wounds should not be painted and any cuts should be made to suitable growing points to the branch collar. Tree work is a skilled and dangerous operation and the use of a competent, insured and qualified tree surgeon is recommended. A list of tree surgeons approved by the Arboricultural Association is found at www.trees.org.uk. Other tree surgeons with a current membership to a suitable SSIP scheme will have been required to prove; adequate insurances, risk assessments, method statements, suitable qualifications for works undertaken, an appropriate waste carriers licence, training, complicity with health and safety legislation and working in line with current best practices.

As a tree owner you are not expected to have a professional working knowledge of trees or how different tree species will react to different tree work operations, a professional will usually be willing to provide advice as to what is most suitable for your particular tree(s) to attain the results you desire.

Generally, trees develop in balance with their environment both above and below ground. Conflicts with people and property can, however, result from natural processes of growth and dieback or from the effects of damage caused by severe weather, pests or diseases. Resolution of conflicts can be achieved by tree work, but there is often a need to consider other measures such as modifying the use or management of the surrounding land.

As a client, your initial desire for tree work is often based on particular circumstances which might not necessarily be appropriate in other respects. In particular, when specifying tree work, there is always a need to take account of the effects of the work on the long-term growth and the future management needs of the tree.

Common tree work operations



General information - The common operations described and simply illustrated here show some of your options.

An arborist should be able to help in defining the work that will be appropriate for the tree(s) and in line with British Standard 3998 – *Recommendations for Tree Work*.

- Please note that the entire branch system is known as the 'crown'.
- LPA approval is not required to remove **dead branches**.



Crown Thinning - This reduces the density of the tree's crown without changing the overall shape and size of the tree. Thinning reduces the amount of foliage and allows more light through the canopy or crown.

The amount of thinning proposed should be specified as a percentage (%) of the leaf area (usually no more than 30%).

- Useful for letting more light into gardens and windows



Crown Lifting - This means removing lower branches to increase the clearance between the ground and the crown.

Identify the branches you wish to remove, or specify a height above ground level to which you wish to "lift" the crown.

- Useful for allowing more light into gardens
- Prevents low branches obstructing paths, drives etc.



Crown Reduction - The tree crown is reduced by shortening branches, and so changes the overall size and shape of the tree. Reductions are usually carried out all round the outer parts of the crown to maintain a balanced shape, but seldom should it include cutting through the main stem.

The amount of reduction proposed should be stated in terms of the intended height and spread of the tree after pruning (rather than what percentage (%) of the overall crown is to be removed).

- Partial reduction may be useful for preventing branches contacting buildings, roofs and guttering

“Coppicing”

This traditional woodland management technique is carried out by cutting down to about 30 – 60cm high to produce multiple shoots which are re-coppiced every 7 – 15 years depending on species and the management objective. Not all broad leaved trees respond well to the treatment. Species that have been traditionally coppiced are hazel, willow, small leaved lime, hornbeam and ash.

“Pollarding”

This is the traditional practice of cutting the crown back to a height of 2 – 3m to allow the ‘poles’ to re-grow, and was a useful technique when managing farms. It usually promotes longevity, and some of our oldest trees have been managed as pollards. Many urban limes and planes are managed as pollards in streets. Pollards need to be first cut when the tree is young, and the cycle repeated every 5 – 10 years depending on rate of growth, management objective, and species. Not all species pollard successfully and pollards that have not been cut for a long time might need to be managed by a crown reduction rather than pollarding, to avoid too much of a shock for the tree. This needs to be assessed by an arboriculturist.

“Crown-clean”

A crown clean is the removal of dead, dying or diseased branch wood, broken branches, or stubs left from previous tree surgery operations, together with all unwanted objects.

“Dead-wooding”

Dead-wooding is defined as the removal from the tree of dead, dying or diseased branch wood, broken branches or stubs left from previous tree surgery operations and from within any cavities within the tree.

“Lopping and Topping”

Generally regarded as crude, heavy-handed or inappropriate pruning. This outdated terminology is still included as part of planning legislation, but only as a legacy from the original 1947 Act, our industry has come a long way in 70 years.

Appendix 2 Tree Strategies

Overall Objectives

- Objective 1** We will develop the tree population. The tree stock will be expanded with new tree planting where appropriate and practicable.
- Objective 2** We will provide and maintain a high quality and sustainable tree stock. Native species will be planted to maximize indigenous flora and fauna, particularly, but not exclusively, in rural areas. A diversity of species will be established to mitigate against pests and disease that can threaten entire species.
- Objective 3** We will provide and promote the highest standards of tree care to the Industry benchmark - British standard BS 3998: 2010 *'Tree Work – Recommendations'* as well as adopting relevant arboricultural legislation and research development.
- Objective 4** We will resist the unnecessary removal of trees unless there are justifiable arboricultural, planning or legal reasons. (If you own or you buy a property, then the nearby and valued trees and your responsibilities towards those trees are all part of that same property).
- Objective 5** If you cut down, significantly damage or destroy any protected tree you will have to plant a new tree of a suitable size, preferred species, location and planting time unless the Local Authority has agreed to dispense of this requirement. Existing legal protection immediately covers any replacement in perpetuity. Failure to replant can and will be enforced up to and including entering your land to plant the replacement(s) and recovering all associated costs through the courts.
- Objective 6** We will continue to run the tree warden scheme, but incorporate this within the councils Volunteer Policy and Procedure (when adopted).
- Objective 7** The council will not normally undertake or grant permission for any tree pruning works or removal of trees in direct response to any natural or seasonal phenomena, for example:
- Falling leaves;
 - Sap exudation, (honeydew);
 - Falling fruits, nuts or seeds;
 - Bird droppings;
 - Blossom or pollen;
 - Reduction or increased moisture to gardens;
 - Germinating seeds from council owned trees;
 - Blocked or obstructed drains, gutters, flat roofs from tree deposits and leaves; or
 - Presence of algae and moss build up.

Objective 8 The council will not normally undertake any tree pruning work due to:

- Loss or interference with TV or satellite signal reception;
- Loss of sunlight or man-made lighting during any part of the day;
- Damage or “heave” to adjacent surfacing due to a nearby tree;
- Blocking or obstruction of a view from a residence.
- Shading of solar panels.

Council owned trees

The council own trees in parks, cemeteries, allotments and country parks.

We will:

Objective 9 Carry out replacement planting when a tree is removed. The replacement planting location and species of tree will be assessed for suitability.

Objective 10 Take all reasonable steps to fulfil duties and obligations to ensure tree safety for public and property.

Objective 11 Every 3 years the council will provide a scheme of tree planting for council owned land within the borough.

Objective 12 Where birds are found to be nesting in trees, tree works will normally be delayed until the end of the nesting season, or the birds have fledged (whichever is sooner).

Objective 13 Any trees identified and confirmed to be supporting roosting bats will not be worked on until Natural England is consulted. We will then act upon the advice given to us.

Objective 14 When investigating claims of subsidence/heave and damage to properties from underground tree roots evidence will be required from claimants by way of a report from an appropriately qualified person. The report should discuss the following.

- a. A description of the property, including a description of the damage and the crack pattern, the date that the damage first occurred/was noted, details of any previous underpinning or building work, the geological strata for the site identified from the geological map.
- b. Details of vegetation in the vicinity and its management since discovery of the damage. Include a plan showing the vegetation and affected building or surfacing material.
- c. Measurement of the extent and distribution of vertical movement using level monitoring.
- d. A profile of a trial/bore hole dug to identify foundation type and depth of soil characteristics
- e. The sub-soil characteristics including soil type (particularly that on which the foundations rest), liquid limit, plastic limit and plasticity index.
- f. The location and identification of roots found. Where identification is inconclusive, DNA testing should be carried out.
- g. Proposals and estimated costs of options to repair the damage.

h. A report from an Arboriculturist to support the tree work proposals, including arboricultural options for avoidance or remediation of indirect tree-related damage.

In the case of other structural damage to garden walls, drains, paving, drive surfaces, technical evidence should be provided by a relevant engineer, Architect, building/drainage surveyor or other appropriate expert. Removal of the tree may not be the only appropriate option.

Objective 15 We will continue to develop opportunities to use the woodchip, logs, timber from our own tree works.

Woodland management objectives

Objective 16 We will take reasonable steps to preserve and enhance woodland trees, particularly those that are indigenous to the area served by Oadby and Wigston Council. We will work with other towards the establishment of a South Leicestershire Community Forest.

Objective 17 Where possible we will encourage natural regeneration in our woodlands.

Objective 18 Where possible, subject to public safety assessments, we will retain dead trees in woodlands preferring to prune rather than fell. In situ dead timber and felled trees are left to benefit habitat creation, or where appropriate with funds permitting, public art.

Objective 19 We will manage woodlands as a long term sustainable resource. This includes the woodland management technique of woodland thinning of young to enable the best trees to flourish.

Objective 20 We will actively support and encourage community involvement in the planning and operation of woodland management.

Objective 21 We will produce and implement woodland management plans for all our woods which will take into account the wider landscape, historic and ecological issues.

Objective 22 We will apply for the appropriate licences for felling, from the Forestry Authority, within Oadby and Wigston Council Country Parks

Privately owned trees

Objective 23 We will strive for provision of space for planting new trees on development and privately owned site by means of the planning application process. Foundation details should follow the recommendations of the National House Building Councils practice note 4.2 *Building near trees* and distance from buildings complies with BS 5837:2012 '*Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. Recommendations*'.

- Objective 24** We will expect to see tree reports in accordance with *BS 5837:2012 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. Recommendations'* with submitted planning applications where nearby trees might be affected.
- Objective 25** We will expect to see works on construction sites that might affect trees to be carried out in accordance with *BS 5837:2012 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. Recommendations'* and that foundation details follow the recommendations of the National House Building Councils practice note 4.2 *Building near trees* in light of trees retained and proposed to be planted.
- Objective 26** We will impose robust, tree specific planning conditions to ensure that trees are cared for during construction work. This will include arboricultural site supervision when it is appropriate and proportionate. We will enforce any breach of such safeguarding conditions.
- Objective 27** We will make Tree Preservation Orders when expedient in the interests of amenity.
- Objective 28** When considering applications to carry out works to trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order or in Conservation Areas we will expect to see all required information and process the application within 8 weeks. Applications to carry out work will not normally be permitted when the considerations highlighted in objectives 7, 8 and 9 apply.
- Objective 29** When considering applications to carry out work to protected trees where subsidence/heave is alleged, the level of detail set out in objective 15 is required.
- Objective 30** We will enforce and where appropriate, prosecute tree related contraventions.

FAQs

Protected trees

1. What is a Tree Preservation Order?

A Tree Preservation Order (TPO) is an order made by a local planning authority, such as Oadby and Wigston Borough Council, which makes it an offence to cut down, lop, top, uproot, wilfully damage or wilfully destroy a tree without first getting permission from us. They are usually made to protect trees that make a significant contribution to a public amenity or area. They may particularly be made when it is felt that a tree may be under threat.

2. What about trees in Conservation Areas?

This is essentially the same as a TPO except in this case you need only provide us with 6 weeks' notice of your intention to carry out works, if the council do not agree with the proposed works we can refuse permission and apply a TPO.

3. What types of tree can be covered by a TPO?

All types of trees, native and ornamental, including hedgerow trees, may be the subject of a TPO. A TPO cannot protect hedges, bushes, or shrubs.

4. How can you find out if a tree has a TPO?

Contact our Planning Control Team or Arboricultural Officer with details of the address, location, and species of the tree. When you are buying a property the presence of a TPO should be revealed via a search of the local land charges register.

5. Who is responsible for maintaining a tree with a TPO?

A tree with any form of protection should not prevent its appropriate management. The owner of a protected tree is responsible for its maintenance, condition and any damage it causes. However, if you are the owner, you will still need to get Consent from us before carrying out most types of work. Tree work is a dangerous and highly skilled operation and trees are complex living structures which are easily damaged by poor quality or unsympathetic tree work. We strongly advise you to talk to a professional tree surgeon or arborist to advise you and undertake any work necessary.

6. Can you recommend a good tree surgeon?

No, as a public body we cannot make any recommendations. However, see the well qualified Arborists and Tree Surgeons recommended by the Arboricultural Association at via their website at: <http://www.trees.org.uk/Find-a-professional>.

7. How do you get Consent to work on a tree covered by a TPO?

If you wish to carry out work to a tree protected by a TPO you must make an application on the standard application form – with any necessary supporting information. You can do this in writing to Oadby and Wigston Borough Council at the Council Offices, Station Road, Wigston, LE18 2DR. For an electronic version of the standard tree works application form and guidance notes, see the

hyperlinks on pages 11 and 12 of this document. Applications not made on the standard application form cannot be accepted and will be returned to you. You must include a plan showing exactly which trees you wish to prune, although this need not be to scale. You must also indicate exactly what sort of work you wish to carry out and the reasons why, annotated photographs can be useful. Certain types of work will also need appropriate supporting documentation. For example, if you give the reason for work as being safety or damage to property you will need to provide written and qualified evidence of this. You can find information about supporting documentation in the guidance notes for the standard application form. We will write to confirm receipt and registration of your application. We will consider it and let you know our decision within eight weeks.

8. If you are refused Consent can you appeal?

Yes. If your application is refused or if you do not receive a decision within eight weeks, you can appeal to the Planning Inspectorate who will consider your appeal on behalf of the Secretary of State. We will send you details of how to appeal along with the decision notice refusing Consent. You may also appeal if we grant permission subject to certain conditions. During the appeal process the information you submitted along with your application and our comments will be carefully considered by an independent Planning Inspector.

9. Can you get compensation if your application is refused or conditions are attached?

There are limited circumstances where you can make a claim for compensation if you are refused permission to carry out work to a protected tree or conditions are attached. If you wish to make a claim for compensation you should write to us within 12 months of our decision or within 12 months of the Secretary of State's decision if you appealed.

10. Will I be told if a TPO is made on a tree on my property?

Yes. When we make a TPO, we will send copies to the owner of the property and any adjoining properties which are affected.

11. How can you object to, or express support for, a new TPO?

To object to a new TPO or to express your support for it, write to us within the time allowed, usually 28 days after the order has been made. We will consider your comments when deciding whether or not to confirm the TPO.

12. When can you prune a protected tree without requiring Consent?

There are certain circumstances when you can carry out work to a protected tree without first seeking our Consent. These include:

- If the tree is dead or dangerous. The danger must be present and the onus will be on you to prove this if the facts are questioned. It is a requirement to let us know if you plan to carry out work on this basis at least five working days in advance so that we can agree with you which trees are dead or dangerous. Removal of dead wood from an otherwise healthy tree is considered to be covered by this exemption. If works are considered of sufficient emergency that notification is not possible you must notify us as soon as practicable.

- Where work is absolutely necessary to implement a detailed planning permission. This does not apply to an outline permission or to development carried out as “Permitted Development” – that do not require planning permission from the Council.
- If the tree is a fruit tree and you prune it in accordance with good horticultural practice, or if it is a fruit tree in a commercial orchard
- If the work is to be carried out in accordance with a Forestry Commission grant scheme or if a felling licence has been granted by the Forestry Commission, provided you declare the TPO on your application.

13. Will I have to plant a replacement tree?

If you cut down or destroy a protected tree you will have to plant a new one if:

- You did so in breach of a TPO or without notifying your intention in a conservation area
- You did so because the tree was dead or dangerous (except if in a woodland)
- You obtained permission but a condition requiring a new tree to be planted was attached to the permission
- In most cases where the Forestry Commission grants a felling licence.

14. What happens if I carry out work on a protected tree without permission?

If you deliberately destroy a protected tree or damage it in a manner likely to destroy it, you could be fined up to £20,000 if convicted in a magistrate's court. In serious cases a person may be committed for trial in the Crown Court where fines are unlimited. For other offences you can be fined up to £2,500. Furthermore, you will normally have to plant a new tree.

15. How else might a tree be protected?

In addition to TPO and conservation areas there are various other factors which may constrain work to trees. These include:

- Felling which involves more than 5m³ of timber, or more than 2m³ if sold, may require a felling licence from the Forestry Commission
- Many wildlife habitats are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act. This includes bat roosts and the nests of wild birds. If a tree contains a protected habitat work may have to be delayed or may require a licence from Natural England
- Trees may sometimes be protected by conditions attached to planning permission
- Occasionally, restrictive covenants attached to the deeds for a property may restrict what work can be undertaken to trees.

16. If I see work being carried out to a protected tree, how can I find out if the owner has permission:

Site notices will have been posted prior to any permission being decided, if you're a close neighbour the council will have informed you of the request to carry out works. You can ask the owner or tree surgeon to see a copy of the permission. Failing this you can contact the Local Authority to check.

Permission for works to a TPO tree expires after 2 years, permission for works to trees in Conservation Areas expires after 1 year.

Tree Advice and Guidance

Before undertaking work to any tree it is important to check they are not covered by a TPO or in a Conservation Area. For more information, contact the Council's Arboricultural Officer on 0116-2572697 or e-mail Michael.Bennetto@oadby-wigston.gov.uk. *(E-mail is preferred as, like any good arborist, Michael is away from his desk for much of the working day).*

Trees may pre-date us by many years and survive with our care for many years after we have moved elsewhere. They are part of our legacy to future generations and deserve our care and respect. If you feel you are not able to offer them the basic care, please do not take on the responsibility.

17. My neighbour's trees encroach across my boundary – can I cut them back?

Your common law rights allow you to remove branches that cross over your boundary without the need to seek your neighbour's permission. However, it is always advisable to let your neighbour know of your intentions before cutting any branches. When you prune back trees from neighbouring land you must not cross the boundary or enter the land to do so. For example, leaning a ladder over the boundary to rest against the trunk of the tree could be classed as trespass. You should not dispose of the branches or any other waste material from the tree over your boundary into your neighbour's garden but first ask your neighbour if they wish the material returned to them. If they don't want it, it is your responsibility to dispose of it.

18. My neighbour's trees are blocking my light - what can I do?

Technically your neighbour only has a duty to ensure that their trees are maintained in a sound and healthy condition to minimise risks to people and property affected by them. There is no restriction governing the height to which trees are allowed to grow. If you have concerns about a tree ask your neighbour how they intend to maintain it: you may be able to cut the overhanging branches back to the boundary.

19. My neighbours have a high hedge - what can I do about it?

The high hedges legislation was introduced on 1 June 2005 under part 8 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 and applies to evergreen and semi-evergreen hedges of over 2m in height. The legislation provides for people who feel a neighbour's hedge is hindering reasonable enjoyment of their property to the extent that they submit a formal complaint to us. We will investigate the matter and may, if appropriate, serve a notice on the hedge owner requiring them to reduce the hedge in height. The fee for dealing with a high hedges complaint at Oadby and Wigston Borough Council is currently a non-refundable £450 (would it be better spent addressing the problem?). In most cases, it should be possible for neighbours to agree on a course of action between them without a formal complaint. This is certainly a preferred approach for everyone.

Further guidance can be found in this document produced by the Office of the former Deputy Prime Minister – *"High hedges: complaining to the Council"*. Click [here](#) to obtain a copy.

20. I have a big tree near my property and I'm worried about the damage the roots may be doing to my house - what should I do?

Too many trees in are being cut down due to exaggerated fears of damage to house foundations and the risk-averse approach of property owners instilled by insurers. Building regulations are in place to ensure that adequate foundations are used to accommodate movement. Once the suspected tree is removed it doesn't necessarily solve the problem. Removing trees that were present at the time of construction may inadvertently exacerbate the situation and cause damage due to heave.

If you believe that your property is suffering subsidence damage due to the action of trees in your ownership (or a neighbour's tree) then you should contact your property insurer at the earliest opportunity. Failure to notify your insurer may invalidate your cover.

The council will consider an application if supported by the evidential assessment of a qualified Arboriculturalist and a structural engineer together with appropriate geotechnical information

An application for tree works based on the above complaint would normally be made subsequent to a claim to insurers which was considered valid, investigated and assessed. The council will need the evidential assessment of the investigators before considering the application (see policy 15). Alternatively, consider installing a root barrier or if insufficient drainage is the issue, a French drain.

21. Tree roots are blocking my drains - what can I do?

It is very unusual for roots to physically break drains and pipe work. However, tree roots are opportunistic and if an old pipe with poor joints is leaking into the surrounding soil this will attract the roots that may then exploit the existing weakness. When repairs are required, a proliferation of tree roots often leads to blame being placed with a nearby tree. However replacement of faulty drains/pipes with modern materials will usually eliminate the leak and stop problems from reoccurring.

22. A tree is lifting paving slabs / affecting my drive – can I cut the roots of a protected tree?

When laid on sand, over time this gets washed away. Relaying the slabs on a stable base layer can typically fix uneven surfacing without having to cut any roots

Cutting the roots of any tree is generally ill-advised as it may affect the tree's health and stability. If a tree is covered by a TPO or if it is in a Conservation Area you will need to make an application to us before root pruning can take place.

23. Are there any controls on the type of tree I can plant in my garden?

There are no controls on the type of tree that can be planted in your garden. However, there are a number of points worth considering:

- How much space is available? It is always best to ensure the space is sufficient to accommodate the tree at its mature height and spread
- Are there any overhead wires or below ground services?
- In what position is the tree in relation to the property? A new tree situated to the south or west may block afternoon or evening sun, while a tree to the north will not restrict direct light from entering the building

- What is the site usage and occupancy? Leaves of some species may cause problems, particularly in the autumn, by blocking gullies and gutters. Fruit can cause slippery patches and accumulation of honeydew may be damaging to surfaces and vehicles.
- 'Is this the right tree for this space?'

24. Buying or moving to a house with a tree in the garden?

Advice for new homeowners

So, you've found the house of your dreams, but what about the garden? Did you notice the trees? They may be in the garden or growing on land beyond the boundary of your new home. Trees can affect the future enjoyment of your property and garden.

The legal bits

Following your local search your solicitor should ask for a copy of any TPO affecting the property. They will be able to show you the date any Order was made, the plan and the schedule (where protected trees are identified) and should be able to explain the consequences.. Your house will not necessarily appear on the plan if it was built after the order was made. Although there may be no trees on your property, protected trees growing on adjoining land may also affect it and a search will not necessarily show this. Your property may be situated in a Conservation Area. This should also be revealed on your search and a similar level of protection will apply to any trees on your property.

25. So if I buy "The Oaks" can I fell one of the trees if it has a TPO on it?

Anyone can apply to us for Consent to carry out work to protected trees and each application is considered on its merit. A TPO is a statement by the Council that the tree is intended to remain unless there is a justifiable reason for it to be removed, such as if it is dead or dangerous. We will be happy to advise you on this. A tree is not generally considered dangerous merely due to its height, spread or close proximity to a building. It will normally take up to eight weeks for us to issue a decision on a tree work application. If you don't like the tree - don't buy the property. Do not assume that you can move in and then prune or fell existing trees.

26. Who pays if works are needed to trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders?

Trees on your property subject to TPOs remain your responsibility and this includes the cost of maintaining them properly. The TPO is there to ensure that the trees are not removed or made dangerous or unsightly due to poor pruning practice. By investing in your trees you could be directly improving your property and the appearance of the surrounding urban landscape. The presence of mature trees on a property can increase the property value and provide a more desirable environment.

27. So what do I do if I don't want trees?

If you do not believe that you can live in your proposed new home without major tree removal, then you may wish to reconsider at the purchase stage. You are not just buying the house, you are also buying the trees. They come as part of the package, not as an optional extra!

28. I am a keen gardener, how will the trees affect me?

- Leaves, twigs, fruit, pollen, and dead branches are a normal consequence of living with trees and are not sufficient justification for felling or pruning them

- Trees cast shade, which will increase as they grow
- Evergreen species cast shade all year round and their leaf litter decomposes slowly
- Lawns can be patchy underneath tree canopies due to competition for water, food and light.
- A few trees and shrubs are known to release or contain compounds which inhibit other plant species from growing nearby to varying degrees, those affecting grass include Eucalyptus, and Juniper.

29. Will the roots undermine my property?

Any prospective buyer would be advised to obtain a full structural survey. In practice it is most unlikely that tree roots will damage a properly constructed house. Trees do not actively seek out house foundations. They influence the sub soil in which they grow due to the amount of water they demand and this can affect the way certain soil types behave. So called shrinkable soils; such as clays and silts change in volume when water is removed or added, causing them to shrink or swell respectively. The effects of such movement on a building can be mitigated by the construction of appropriate foundations, which extend to a depth below that influenced by the roots of mature trees. A full structural survey should address such issues and highlight any areas of concern.

30. What if the tree is on my neighbour's property?

Anyone can apply for consent to prune a protected tree; however, the work will also require the permission of the owner.

31. The drive is cracking, can I replace it?

Yes possibly, but you must not:

- Sever the roots
- Fell the tree
- Change existing soil levels

You may also be restricted in the choice of surface you use (a range of products are available on the market for installation close to trees that are designed to reduce the impact on existing tree roots).

32. So why would anyone want a tree in their garden?

Trees are of vital importance in maintaining and improving the quality of life for people who live and work in the Borough. They are one of the most obvious of our natural assets, by virtue of their sheer size and prominence. As they do not last forever and are vulnerable to changes in their surroundings, we must ensure that future generations are able to enjoy the many benefits that trees bring to our environment. They can greatly enhance an area's appearance and character. They provide contrasts of size, colour and texture to the landscape. They provide habitats for wildlife and reflect the changing of the seasons. You could be one of the fortunate people who own an important tree within the Borough.

33. Can you recommend a good tree to plant?

We would love to!