



Service Delivery Committee

Operational Updates – Quarter Three (2023/2024)

BUILT ENVIRONMENT UPDATE

Planning

The department continues to perform well in relation to statutory targets and KPI's. For Quarter 3, 70 out of 70 Planning Applications were decided in time or within an agreed extension of time and only 1 appeal decision out of a total of 3 was overturned by the Planning Inspectorate. In relation to Planning Enforcement and Tree Enforcement, there were no appeals against any of the Decisions made.

The Environment Act 2021 introduced mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) as a new requirement to be delivered through the planning system. In summary, development will be required to deliver a 10% increase in biodiversity above the pre-development status of a site and this will be secured through the determination of planning applications. The mandatory requirement for BNG commenced on 12th February 2024. To prepare for the introduction of this new legislation, officers and Members have attended training focusing on the role of BNG as part of the planning determination process.

The Preferred Options new Local Plan is currently being produced and is due for public consultation commencing the first week of April 2024. An All Member Briefing took place on 13th February 2024. We are still working to a deadline of submitting our Plan for Examination by June 2025 so that it can be examined under the existing planning Legislation.

Economic Development

Over Q3, we launched the new Economic Regeneration Strategy, after approval from the Policy, Finance and Development Committee. The strategy covers the period up to 2028 although the current focus is delivery of the UKSPF.

Introducing a Business Improvement District began in December with the inception meeting with the organisation leading the development of the BID. The aim is to hold the vote to introduce the bid in Q2 of 24/25.

Regarding UKSPF in general, the Team continue to spend the funding for 23/24 and expects to complete spending by the end of the financial year. Reporting and correspondence to DLUHC has confirmed that 80% of the funding needs to be spent to release year three funding upfront and we are on track to achieve this.

Work is underway to bring forward year 3 projects when funding is released.

Climate Change

The Climate Change Strategy is out for public consultation between 22 January 2024 and 4 March 2024. When finalised, this strategy will supersede the current Environment Strategy and Action Plan and will have more focus on climate change.



The next steps in regard of this agenda will be focused around delivering the short-term actions arising from objectives in the strategy.

Other climate related action continues: a further phase of Solar Together and Big Community (Energy) Switch group buying scheme is taking place in partnership with iChoosr; £5000 worth of consultancy funding is being made available from the Midlands Net-Zero Hub for an energy audit at Parklands Leisure Centre; in partnership with other local authorities (Green Living Leicestershire) funding has been secured to create a face-to-face service to support hard to reach households across Leicestershire access trusted energy efficiency advice and grants; and, further partnership work and grant funding is being used to increase EV chargepoint capacity in the borough.

We continue to work with other local authorities and partners to co-ordinated action on climate change which reduces duplication and prioritises limited resources.

Leicestershire Building Control Partnership

The Building Safety Act 2022 is bringing about radical changes in the building control world and most construction sectors The Leicestershire Building Control Partnership is working hard to understand what these changes mean and what we will need to put in place to meet our obligations.

One of the key risks is around the loss of experienced staff given that the Act requires experienced Building Control Surveyors to undertake additional qualifications.

The Partnership is supporting existing staff to meet the new requirements and focusing recruitment on staff from within the building industry who are keen to undertake the required training/qualifications. The Partnership is also continuing to voice concerns to DHLUC regarding the lack of any new burdens funding being offered or made available to Council's burdened with meeting these new legislative requirements.

In relation to our Borough, for the period from April to September 2023 the Partnership received 65 fee earning applications; 14 non fee earning application and completed 320 inspections.

Housing

2023-24 Homelessness Management

As reported in December homeless presentations are increasing. The pressures and demand for the Council's homeless services continue to increase and at the end of Q3 the total number of households in temporary and B&B accommodation was 44.

In a 12 month period there has been a 37.5% increase in the number of people being temporarily accommodated by the Council. Table 1 illustrates the number of households being accommodated on a monthly basis.

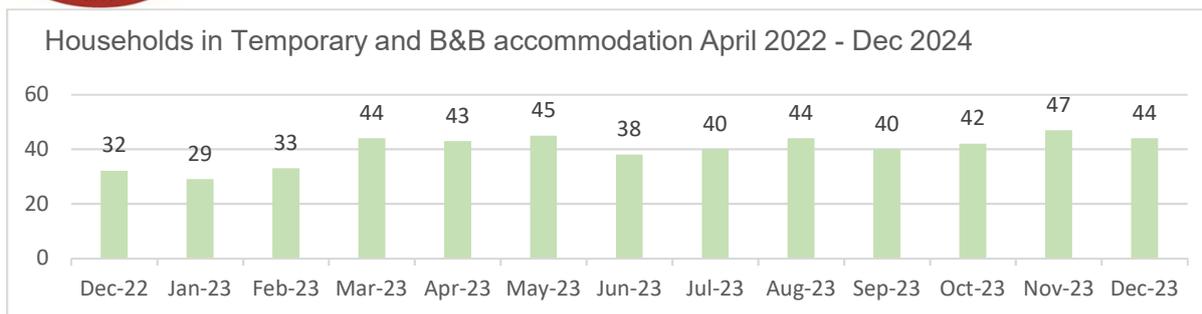


Table 1

Table 2 provides a breakdown of households in the types of temporary accommodation that the Council uses.

The biggest cost implication to the Council is the number of households in B&B accommodation. At the end of Q3 there were 29 household being accommodated in B&B.

2023-24	B&B	Hostel	HRA Stock	Private Lease Stock	Total
September	24	4	7	5	40
October	29	3	7	3	42
November	33	4	7	3	47
December	29	4	9	2	44

Table 2

The Housing Options Team secured a partnership agreement with Cedar Care which has 16 units of supported accommodation at Thorpe House on Countesthorpe Road, South Wigston.

Cedar Care provide tenancy support and work towards supporting people into more secure accommodation. The team are currently in the process of relocating 8 single households from B&B accommodation into Thorpe House.

The work to secure this arrangement is of significant benefit, both providing more suitable accommodation and a more cost effective solution compared to B&B.

Void Property Management

The Housing Team continue to review the way that they manage void properties to ensure the most cost effective and efficient processes are utilised to minimise the time taken to complete works and let property.

The definition of a void period is measured using the Best Value Performance Indicator 212 which defines a void period as being;

- The time in calendar days from the date when the tenancy is terminated up to and including the date when the new tenancy agreement starts. Where a notice has been served, the tenancy will not count as terminated until the notice period has ended and the Local Authority has possession of the property.



The rationale for adopting this method of calculation is that most social housing providers use this definition when measuring and reporting on void performance, this presents opportunities to improve performance through benchmarking with others.

It is also the most effective way of identifying the total amount of rent lost through a property being void.

In terms of the performance indicator we capture;

- the sum total of void time in the year
- the total number of void properties over the year.

By dividing the total void time of all void properties by the number of voids produces an average void period.

Table 3 below provides an indication of the number of properties let in each month of the year, the number of days void and the average void time for that month. The accumulative average void time column provides average void time for the year as it stands.

2023-24 Average Void Time

	Number of lets	Number of void days	Monthly average void time	Accumulative average void time
April	4	123	30.75	30.75
May	2	160	80	47.16
June	3	197	65.66	53.33
July	5	204	40.8	48.85
August	5	244	48.88	48.84
September	5	145	29	44.7
October	6	271	45.16	44.8
November	5	87	17.4	40.89
December	6	151	25.16	38.59
January				
February				
March				
total	41	1582		

Table 3

At the end of Q3, 41 properties were empty (void) for a total of 1,582 days resulting in an average void time of 38.59 days.

The target for year end is to achieve an annual average void time of 35 days and it is positive to see that our accumulative void times are moving in the right direction.



On occasions it is necessary to carry out major works on void properties. Major works could include, for example, kitchen and bathroom replacement; asbestos removal; and, property clearance/repair due to tenant neglect and abuse. This leads to properties being empty for longer periods of time. Members have been keen to monitor the average void time with the exclusion of major works properties. Table 4 provides a breakdown the void position excluding major works properties at the end of Q3.

	Number of lets	Number of void days	Monthly average void time	Cumulative void time
April	2	27	13.5	13.5
May	1	17	17	14.67
June	1	47	47	22.75
July	4	145	36.25	29.5
August	3	116	38.66	32
September	5	145	29	31.06
October	4	110	27.5	30.35
November	5	87	17.4	27.76
December	4	67	16.75	26.24
January				
February				
March				
total	29	761		

Table 4

Excluding Major work void properties the average void time at the end of Q3 is 26.24 days (29 properties divided by 761 void days).

Void Contractor Performance

The Housing team procured UK Gas as the void contractor in January 2023. The contractor has carried out void work to approximately 66 properties in this period. The nature of works are inclusive of minor void works, such as gas and electrical installation testing, cleaning, and major works including kitchen and bathroom replacements and upgrades.

The Housing team meet with UK Gas on a weekly basis for operational void meetings and the contractor has played an important role in working to reduce the average void times.

Contractor performance is discussed at monthly contract meetings and the team discuss the contractor's performance against measures that include;

- Right First Time on handovers
- Accurate valuations/invoices
- Complaints handling



- Compliancy

The contractor is performing to expectations against the KPI and there are no issues of significance since the appointment of the contractor.

Damp and Mould

The Housing department is in the final stages of drafting a Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy. The purpose of this policy is to set out Oadby and Wigston Borough Council's approach to dealing with reports of damp, mould and condensation within the Council's housing stock.

The policy is aligned with Housing Ombudsman 'Spotlight on Damp and Mould' publication and it supports the Housing Ombudsman's drive to provide a service that is better, fairer and more reasonable in managing the issues of damp mould and condensation in people's homes.

At the end of Q3 the Housing Team have carried out 2,481 day to day repair jobs. Of this number 40 (1.65%) were connected to damp, mould and/or condensation in a home.

Year	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	Total
Total Number of all repair jobs processed	2,294	4,005	3,854	3,266	2,754	3,631	1,693	2,481	21,497
Awaiting Inspection (Damp mould and or condensation reported as an issue)								6	
Job Raised (Damp mould and or condensation reported as an issue)								1	
Completed jobs/Inspections (Damp mould and or condensation reported as an issue)	50	59	40	37	36	46	27	40	280
% of jobs processed (Damp mould and or condensation reported as an issue)	2.17 %	1.47 %	1.03 %	1.28 %	1.34 %	1.26 %	0.70 %	1.65 %	1.30%

Table 5

The property services team have adopted a zero tolerance approach to the management of damp and mould. When a report of damp or mould is reported the inspection is categorised as urgent and attendance is usually carried out within 24 hours of having received a report. Where Officer resources are limited we will appoint a contractor to carry out inspections also.



The property service officers are trained to Housing, Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS) level and in addition we have procured the services of specialist contractors including Envirovent, Rentokil.

Lightbulb

This forms the subject of a separate report on the Agenda for this meeting.

FINANCE UPDATE

Revenues and Benefits

Benefits

The Benefits team is responsible for the administration of Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support and Discretionary Payments.

During the period 02.10.23 to 13.11.23, the Benefits Team were responsible for completing 153 Household Support Fund referrals for Leicestershire County Council. This additional work had an impact on our Benefit processing times during this period.

Processing times for changes in circumstances remains below the Leicestershire average.

The Team have also been processing additional work which the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) funds. This involves contacting customers to carry out full case reviews to avoid the risk of fraud and error. As of (October) the team were recorded as completing 15% of Intervention work, discussions with the DWP have led to an improved focus on this and completion rates have increased to 36.47% by (December). The latest Management Information from the DWP is positive. They are satisfied with our upward trajectory.

General Benefits Performance

Council	New Claims (up to 31.12.23)
Oadby and Wigston BC	20.40 days

Benchmarking with other local councils shows that new claims are processed on average between 10 – 21 days.

Council	Change in Circumstances (up to 31.12.23)
Oadby and Wigston BC	3.63 days

Benchmarking with other councils shows that change of circumstances are processed on average between 3.6 – 12.1 days.

Benefit Calls

Quarter 3	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of calls	469	291	199
Number of calls answered	452	279	191
Percentage answered	96	96	96



Number of abandoned calls	17	12	8
Average wait time before abandonment (m:ss)	1:07	0:17	0:20

Finance Inclusion Officer

The Financial Inclusion Officer (FIO) works to support families and individuals who are facing financial hardship. Referrals are made to the FOI from Benefits, Council Tax, Recovery, NNDR and Housing teams.

The FIO supports customers to make claims for additional funding, through Discretionary Payments or Household Support.

From November 23, we have started to record the number of referrals being made to the FIO to demonstrate how the Revenues and Benefits Teams are providing additional financial support to customer.

FIO referrals	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of referrals	Not collected	47	38

Business Rates

The Business Rates Team is responsible for the administration and collection of £12.2m of National Non-Domestic Rates. The Team has a duty to correctly bill over 1,400 non-domestic properties.

The Team has a number of assessments held with the Valuation Office Agency, where they have raised Billing Authority Reports to amend the Rating List or bring new assessments into Rating, for example, the VOA have attended Brocks Hill Offices to assess for Rating. Once these amendments are received the team are trying to produce bills timely, to ensure in year collection.

The Team have identified a group of new assessments on Magna Road, they are now pursuing the issue of completion notices to get these assessments rated and increase our yield.

Business Rates Calls

Quarter 3	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of calls	50	26	15
Number of calls answered	48	26	15
Percentage answered	96	100	100
Number of abandoned calls	2	0	0
Average wait time before abandonment (m:ss)	0:03	N/A	N/A



Council Tax

The Council Tax Team is responsible for administering and collecting £36.5m of Council Tax. Revenue is collected on behalf of Leicestershire County Council, the Leicestershire Police Service, the Combined Fire and Rescue Service, Central Government, and Oadby and Wigston Borough Council. The team have a duty to ensure the correct billing of over 24,000 households within the borough.

During Q3 the Council Tax Team reviewed our Single Person Discount caseload by comparing this to the Electoral Register data.

Additional work was carried out on Empty Properties which resulted in an increase in empty property premiums.

There was an increase of 96 additional properties within the Borough during Q3 (24,229 end of September 23 rising to 24,325 end of December 23).

Council Tax Calls

The Customer Services Team answer the first tier of Council Tax calls, this include enquiries such as occupations and vacations of properties, simple discount/exemption and billing enquiries. The more complex queries are transferred onto the Council Tax Team. The call stats below related to these calls.

Quarter 3	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of calls	180	170	152
Number of calls answered	166	150	134
Percentage answered	92	88	88
Number of abandoned calls	14	20	18
Average wait time before abandonment (m:ss)	0:57	1:55	2:01

Recovery

The Recovery Team are responsible for collecting unpaid Council Tax, Business Rates and Housing Benefit Overpayments.

The Team issue reminders, final notices, summons, and liability orders to customers for unpaid Council Tax and Business Rates.

Factors which affect the volumes of recovery documents are:

1. Payments received from customers vary each month.
2. The amount of information received which requires additional action/investigation.
3. Accounts being reviewed pending contacts e.g. reminders being removed or summonses being cancelled.

We did not have a summons run during December. This was due to the court dates not allowing sufficient time for us to write to customers before the Christmas break.



Q3 Council Tax Recovery	Oct	Nov	Dec
Reminders	336	306	239
Finals	68	69	53
Summonses	25	261	0
Liability Orders	128	26	0

Q3 NNDR Recovery	Oct	Nov	Dec
Reminders	18	27	62
Finals	17	17	1
Summonses	7	10	0
Liability Orders	3	3	0

Recovery Calls

Quarter 3	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of calls	430	454	345
Number of calls answered	393	425	311
Percentage answered	91	94	90
Number of abandoned calls	37	29	34
Average wait time before abandonment (m:ss)	4:25	3:30	3:14

Collection Rates

Performance of the Council Tax and Business Rates Team is measured through a comprehensive series of indicators. Collection rates and arrears levels are also reported as part of the Council's Key Performance Indicators.

Oadby and Wigston's collection rates for Q3 are below the set target rate. The Teams will continue to work on updating the Collection Rate Improvement Plan.

Percentage of Debit Collected (Cumulative)	Oct	Nov	Dec
	%	%	%
Council Tax			
Target Rate	66.79	76.09	85.20
Actual Collection Rate	64.68	73.43	82.25
Actual Collection Rate 2022/2023	65.17	74.30	83.25
National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR)			
Target Rate	65.14	73.99	82.29
Actual Collection Rate	64.42	73.08	81.03
Actual Collection Rate 2022/23	66.16	74.66	81.29



Property Statistics

The number of properties within the Borough continues to rise month on month.

The timely working of NDR VOA Schedules of amendment to List and balancing totals and number of hereditaments ensures we bill accurately against the current 2023 Ratings List.

	Oct	Nov	Dec
No of Council Tax properties	24,250	24,288	24,325
No of Council Tax Direct Debits	18,855	18,846	18,800
No of Single Person Discounts	7,619	7,626	7,619
No of Businesses	1,416	1,418	1,417

IT Team

Throughout Q3 the IT team have moved towards fully documenting the new infrastructure in the new offices. Following the physical transition, it is imperative to have our infrastructure fully documented and auditable.

The Teams attention has recently been on carrying out updates of key systems that had previously been on 'change freeze' due to the office move.

Bushloe House has also been fully decommissioned from an IT perspective and all contracts (relating to Bushloe House) have been terminated with immediate effect.

Although, the main focus for 6 months was transitioning to the new offices, the section were still able to maintain a good level of service provision for users, ensuring targets were met.

See key information of service delivery below:

	Type	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of contacts	Email	151	166	87
	Phone	10	25	12
	Walk in	15	35	9

Standard	Target	Oct	Nov	Dec
Response time for urgent issue	Within 1 day	Less than 1 day	Less than 1 day	Less than 1 day
Response time for routine issue	3 working days	0.9 days	1 day	0.7 days
Turn-around time for new starters set up	5 working days	All within 5 days	All within 5 days	All within 5 days
Overall system uptime	99.90%	100%	100%	100%
Monitoring of system/software issues to drive improvements	Monthly Monitoring completed	Yes	Yes	Yes



Major	Oct	Nov	Dec
changes completed by IT team	<p>Completed final elements of office move, including CCTV, Building management system and Depot works</p> <p>Completed upgrades to relevant systems following the change freeze that was implemented during the office move phase of the project.</p>	<p>Planning large infrastructure change relating to resilience with dual running firewalls – which includes load balancing and giving resilience for hardware failure.</p>	<p>Approval for firewall works, scheduled for January.</p> <p>Monitoring VPN connections to improve stability in WFH.</p> <p>Change freeze implemented from 15th December due to Christmas break – ensuring no works leave the Council vulnerable over a 2 week break.</p>

CUSTOMER SERVICE AND TRANSFORMATION UPDATE

Policy Performance and Transformation

The Policy Performance and Transformation Team played a key role in helping the Council achieve the Customer Service Excellence award for the fourth consecutive year. The 2 day assessment took place in December 2023 and was year 1 of the three-year cycle. All 57 elements of the award were examined and extensive evidence was presented. The Assessors full reports can be found at Appendix 2.

In addition to passing the award, the Council achieved 8 compliance pluses, for areas in which we have excelled. This is the highest number of compliance pluses we have ever achieved in the first year of the cycle. Six of the compliance pluses were awarded for new areas of progress, meaning improvements continue to be made over different sections and areas of the Council.

Various improvements have contributed to our success with the award, including the expansion of customer-facing services through the hubs and Brocks Hill reception, increasing the number of customer satisfaction surveys driven by customer insight and subsequent improvements made because of them.

As well as recognising the work that has already been achieved in the authority, the award provides a framework for driving continuous improvement.

In addition to the work on the award, the team has played a lead role with the Corporate Assets/Clean & Green Service Review. Recommendations have been made and an implementation report has been issued. The team have already made big improvement to handling customer contact, specifically by simplifying the process through which enquiries are routed to a single entry point. This has resulted in improved customer contact times and a reduction in associated complaints. Further improvement work is ongoing within the team driven by an action plan and review meetings.



Communications and Marketing

Our Email Subscription Service

Measure	Q3 Totals	Comparison to previous quarter	Percentage of possible subscribers (based on 42,000 adults registered to vote)
Total subscriptions	10,502	+6.6%	25%

Please note

Whilst there are 42,000 registered voters in the borough, it is unlikely that every adult in each household will sign up to our email subscription service. It is more realistic to aim toward one adult in each property signing up. There are currently 24,038 household properties in the borough.

Measure	Q3 Totals	Comparison to previous Quarter
Average subscriptions per subscriber	2.0	-0.0
Engagement rate	76%	-2%
Open rate	52%	+0.7%
Bulletins sent (in quarter)	46	+2
Emails delivered (in quarter)	114,602	+96%

Subscribers by Topic (email subscription service)

Topic	Number of subscribers	Comparison to previous Quarter
Citizen's Panel	106	-2.7%
Community & Voluntary Sector	2525	+13%
Community Safety, Crime & Anti-Social Behaviour	948	+44.7%
Consultations & Surveys	2663	+10.5%
Council News & Information	5331	+2.4%
Health, Wellbeing, Sport & Leisure	4195	+7.2%
News for Businesses	1037	+7.6%
News for Council Tenants*	805	+14.8%
Private Sector Housing News	574	No change
Recycling, Refuse & Bin Collections	4684	+5.3%
Sports Clubs	13	No change
What's On & Events	2923	+12%

* There are 1,203 council properties in the borough



Press Releases

The following links are to press releases sent by the authority during this time period.

[Armed Forces Breakfast - Tuesday 7 November](#)

[Get involved with our fang-tastic town centre trails this half-term!](#)

[Grant scheme launches to support community projects in Oadby & Wigston](#)

[Christmas light switch on events - save the dates!](#)

[Oadby & Wigston's flower power celebrated in national competition](#)

[Borough veterans are invited to an Armed Forces Breakfast - Sunday 19 November](#)

[Remembrance parades planned for Oadby & Wigston](#)

[New app launches to boost Oadby & Wigston businesses](#)

[Borough council making tough decisions to deliver balanced budget](#)

[The Handmade Elephant scoops top prize in borough's annual Christmas shop front competition](#)

[1,000 free trees gifted to residents and community groups in Oadby & Wigston](#)

Social Media

Measure	Facebook	Comparison to previous Quarter
Number of Followers	4280	87
Number of posts	138	18.90%
Post reach*	52,986	-9.80%
Engagement – reactions, comments, likes and shares likes and shares	14,984	97.40%
Measure	Twitter	Comparison to previous Quarter
Number of Followers	2,682	10
Number of posts	42	-2.30%
Post impressions*	15,506	-21.20%
Engagement – reactions, comments, likes and shares	80	-56.20%

*Facebook and Twitter use different terminology to track similar figures. In using 'Reach', Facebook are telling us the number of **unique people** that saw at least one of our posts. In using 'Impressions', Twitter is telling us the number of times our tweets were seen overall.



HR Team Update

The HR team have been working on a number of different projects/areas of work in Quarter 3.

The new appraisal and 121 processes were launched in Q3. This process has given us a much better understanding of our performance and training needs across the organisation.

Of those completed appraisals the split of ratings across the Council were as follows:

Rating	Number of Ratings	Percentage
Excellent	45	30%
Good	95	63%
Requires Improvement	10	7%

In terms of training needs this was mostly concentrated on mandatory health & safety training, professional/job specific training and management development training.

New probation forms and induction guidance were also developed earlier in the year and training on these processes along with more general training on managing performance outside of probation and motivating staff will take place in February and March 2024. This was postponed from November due to other pressures.

Payroll

The HR team implemented the April 2023 pay award in December and also commenced the 2023-2024 internal payroll audit.

HR Policies

The Organisational Change Policy and associated guides have been updated.

A Recruitment and Retention Initiatives Policy and associated forms were also drafted for further consideration.

People Strategy

Work continues on the People strategy to progress on its action plan.

HR Management Information

Headcount

Quarterly Comparison Current Year 2023/24 Actual Headcount as at end of Q3 (31.12.23)			Quarterly Comparison Previous year 2022/23 Actual Headcount as at end of Q3 (31.12.22)	
Headcount	Full Number	FTE	Full Number	FTE
Number of Permanent/Fixed Term Staff	186	178.77	173	165.6



Number of Temporary Staff (Agency Workers)	6	6	14	13.6
Total	192	184.77	187	179.2

There has been a reduction in the number of agency workers within Planning, Finance and Revenue & Benefits within the previous 12 months.

In addition to the agency workers listed above there were also 276 days covered by agency workers within the Waste & Recycling team. These can be summarised as follows:

Reason for cover	Number of agency days worked
Sickness	22
Annual Leave/Contractual Bank holidays in lieu	91
Replacement for Permanent Staff	60
Extra Agency staff to cover extra Monday & Tuesday rounds & compost	103
Total	276

Leavers

Quarterly Comparison Q3 2023/24 Leavers between 1/10/23 – 31/12/23		Quarterly Comparison Q3 2022/23 Leavers between 1/10/22 – 31/12/22
Number of Permanent/Fixed Term Staff	3	9
Number of Temporary Staff (Agency Workers)	4	6
Total	7	15

Leavers (Permanent/Fixed Term Employees) by Service Area Quarterly Comparison		
Teams	Q3 2023/2024 Leavers between 1/10/23 – 31/12/23	Q3 2022/23 Leavers between 1/10/22 – 31/12/22
Clean & Green	0	0
Communications & Marketing	0	0
Community & Wellbeing*	0	2
Corporate Assets	0	1
Customer Services	0	1
Economic Regeneration	1	0



Finance	0	0
Health & Safety	0	0
Housing	0	1
HR	0	0
IT, Projects & Procurement	0	1
Legal & Democratic Services	0	0
Planning Policy & Development	1	1
Regulatory Services	0	0
Revenue & Benefits	0	0
Waste Services	0	2
Built Environment	0	0
SLT	1	0
Total	3	9

*In Community & Wellbeing typically the majority of these positions are grant funded and this is awarded on a 12 month contract.

As you will see from the table below staff turnover has decreased. We are now in line with the sector average which is 16.2%.

Staff Turnover - Yearly comparison		
	2022/23	2021/22
Average Head Count for the period	178	171
Number of Leavers	29	32
Staff Turnover	16.29%	18.71%

LAW AND DEMOCRACY UPDATE

Regulatory Services – Q3 Update

Environmental Health

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) have made it clear that delivering food inspections and regulating businesses must be a priority going forward. We have two Officers who are competent to undertake such inspections and we are on track to ensure all our high risk premises are completed in the current financial year.

During Quarter 3, 17 inspections took place. There has been some staff absence due to sickness during the quarter which has slightly delayed our inspection schedule. Outstanding inspections will therefore be programmed during Quarter 4 by either the use of a self-assessment questionnaire or visit as necessary.

The sampling plan continues in line with the regional programme set out by the UK Health Security Agency (formerly Public Health England).

Overall compliance rates are high, with 98% of all registered food businesses achieving a score of 3 (generally satisfactory) and over 60% achieving a score of 5 (very good). In terms of the poorer performers there are 5 (1%) who fall below the generally satisfactory standard and work continues with these to improve standards. New businesses to be triaged is 40.

There have been 23 food and health and safety complaints investigated in this period.

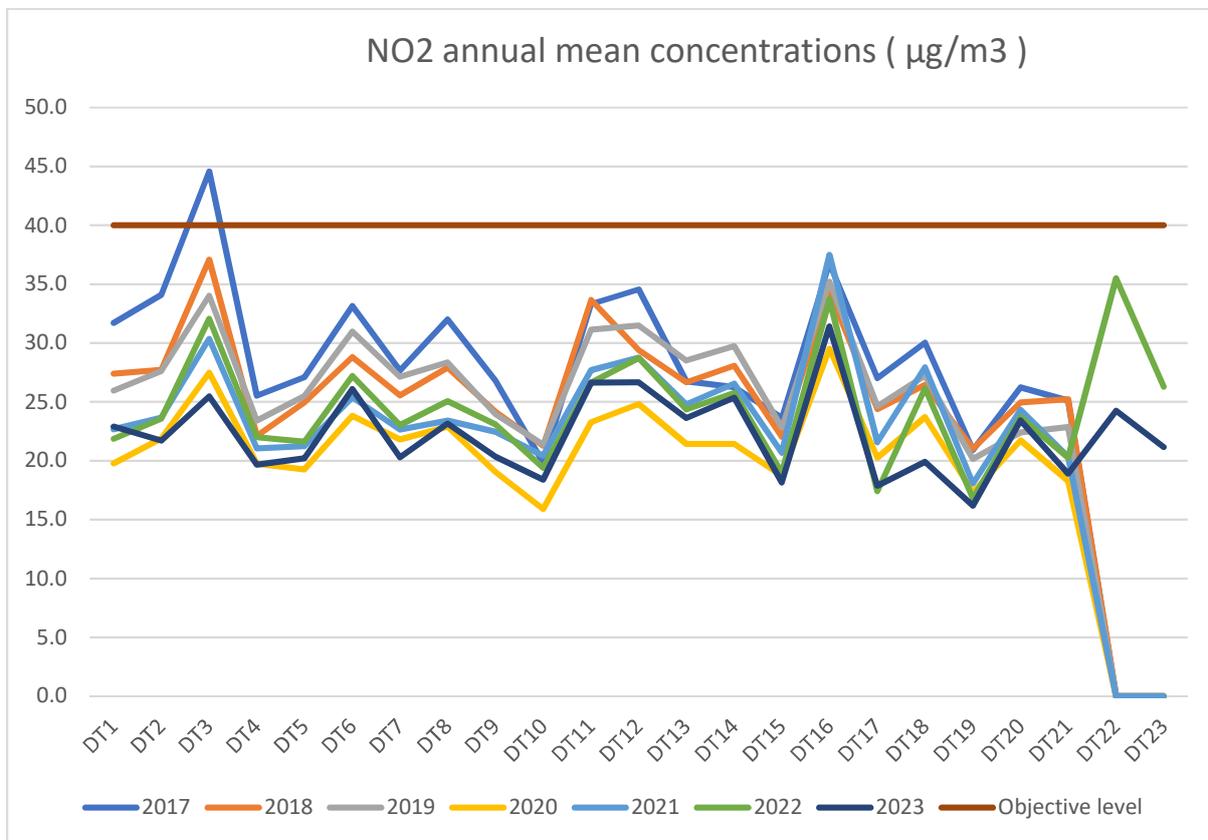


Day to day work was busy and wide ranging with a further 4 welfare burials handled, fly tips to investigate and service requests to action.

The midland mainline electrification project continues and we have now been consulted on the provisional proposals for the bridge works along the line.

Following the receipt of complaints about alleged vibration damage arising from works to the prison extension, investigations are ongoing with the principal contractor.

Air quality monitoring continues throughout the area and the chart below is a summary of the 23 diffusion tube readings showing the annual mean concentrations of NO₂ for the years 2017 to 2023 compared with the objective level of 40ug/m³. The highest levels are measured along the A6, Canal Street/Blaby Road junction and along Blaby Road in South Wigston.



The Blaby Road air quality project run jointly with Public Health, Leicestershire County Council, GPs, CCGs (Clinical Commissioning Groups), the South Leicestershire School Sport Partnership and the Respiratory Working Group continues. Key work so far:

- a. Student ambassadors are supporting the project (6 year 5 pupils).
- b. Parkland Primary School is taking part in the school gates banner competition.
- c. Press releases are ready to go, awaiting parent/guardian permission to use photos.
- d. Move it March (the "Move It March" project aims to encourage children and young people across South Leicestershire to become more physically active and increase the number of children achieving the recommended guidelines of at least 60 minutes of exercise every day) where pupils will have access to an activity tracker is ready to launch.
- e. WOW activity tracker current engagement is 48%. A summary report will be produced in the spring term and the team are looking at ways to increase participation.



- f. The Modeshift (travel plans) and Gearing you Up (educational programme for year 6 pupils which is delivered in school by the Safe & Sustainable Travel Team to teach them how to maintain and fix their own bikes) projects are scheduled for delivery in the spring terms.
- g. The anti-idling campaign is set up ready for delivery in February 2024.
- h. Data from the new zephyr monitor will be shared with the school and lead teacher who is also taking a proactive role in looking into linking wellbeing, mental health, community youth, and healthy eating initiatives.
- i. Monitoring and evaluation will continue throughout the school year.

Private Sector Housing

The team are dealing with 108 ongoing cases linked with empty homes, disrepair, energy standards and houses in multiple occupation.

Selective Licensing Scheme

Summary in the table below

Number of rented properties	828
Applications received	868
Number of exemptions, empty homes undergoing renovation	20
Licenses pending	129
Licenses issued	702
Licenses withdrawn	37
Income	£634,354.01
Enforcement cases	7 penalties served (£3,000 each) with 3 currently under investigation

Empty Homes

There are currently 53 empty properties we are engaging with to try and bring them back into use (this figure may vary from figures provided by revenues due to property not being liable for Council Tax, this could be due to an internal exemption, or the property being deleted by the valuation office).

Energy Grants

Summary below of the energy efficiency grant projects the Council is delivering.

Project	Funding Awarded	Additional Narrative	Suitable Properties	Number	Number of measures	Status
Local Authority Delivery Phase 3 (LAD3)	£528,000 + £327,000 additional funding secured due to successful	Projected underspend of £29406.47 due to withdrawing prior to install, any	Private properties with mains gas supply (owned	72	110	Fully closed down, passed audit and now in process of returning underspend



Project	Funding Awarded	Additional Narrative	Suitable Properties	Number	Number of measures	Status
	delivery of program	outstanding properties	or rented)			of £29,406.47
Better Care Fund	£150,000	Funding agreed by lightbulb to be spent in line with LAD3 project used to supplement Solar Panels with batteries for energy storage which was not included in the original brief	Can be used for either LAD3 or HUG1 properties	20	20	LAD 3 now closed, £138,156.02 spent on 10 Solar PV measures and 10 Solar Panel Batteries
Home Upgrade Grant, Phase 1 (HUG1)	£55,000	£6,436.30 underspend due to approved properties falling through and cost of measures, further research has been conducted prior to HUG2 to ensure successful delivery.	Private properties without mains gas supply (owned or rented)	4	5	Closed and audited
Home Upgrade Grant, Phase 2 (HUG2)	£335,000	N/A	Private properties without mains gas supply (owned	TBC	TBC	In process of submitting batches of properties and measures for approval to



Project	Funding Awarded	Additional Narrative	Suitable Properties	Number	Number of measures	Status
			or rented)			Department for Net Zero and Energy Security prior to installation
Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, Wave 2.1 (SHDF)	£579,501.18	Requested value of funds as per approved project plan, awaiting formal award letter. SHDF funding is match funded by the Authority.	Only OWBC stock	128 forecast	To be confirmed following assessment	Project team has been established, contractor has been procured and proactive engagement with tenants in progress.

Licensing

As part of the ongoing service transformation the next stage will be to integrate back office systems and digitise forms to improve productivity. This work will commence during Quarter 4.

A review of all our premises licenses is largely complete with approximately £44,000 received in respect of payments owed. Work continues to resolve outstanding cases and as and when necessary suspend licenses. A review of all our hairdressers and barbers has started and will be completed in Quarter 4.

The Licensing and Regulatory Committee in December 2023 approved the updated Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy which came into effect on 1 January 2024.

Q3 Licenses Processed

New and renewal vehicles	98
New and renewal drivers	39
New and renewal operators	0
<u>Street collections</u>	7
Small society lottery	1
House to house	5
Other licences	2
Licensing Act	18



Community Lottery

The lottery started on 5 August 2023 and we now have 22 approved causes who have joined with 562 tickets currently sold weekly which is generating an annual £17,534.420 for good causes. This has been boosted by Christmas special draws.

Corporate Assets

Corporate Assets has had multiple demands on its resources in period Q3.

CA underwent an internal service review, all members of the team fed into this process.

Ongoing longer term sickness has put a strain on staff deployment in operational services as had the restriction on recruitment within the CA team

CA received 278 customer enquiries through the DASH system. Numerous further enquiries came direct to CA team members through calls, and other communications channels. In addition the routine FOI's, complaints, request and members enquiries were also received.

As with Q2, DASH and other enquiries are currently flagging up many land ownership searches and concerns.

There was continued input from the team into the office move to Brocks Hill, from both the property management, building compliance and Health and Safety implications, and significantly dealing with the ongoing process of 'snagging'. Ongoing period of communications continue with Kier.

Property related general and one-off maintenance was ongoing as usual – but with the added pressure of the transition between offices.

Capital works featured significantly with the team committed to completing all works prior to the end of Q4. The Brocks Hill Play Area will be commissioned in Q4 for completion after Easter.

The Clean & Green Team have had a challenging period in which the weather has had a significant impact on where resource is directed. Ongoing periods of rain has hampered some winter works as well as access to some sites and sports pitch marking and maintenance.

Vehicle breakdowns and being off the road have had an impact. Replacement fleet items are overdue and being planned for. Nevertheless, the winter maintenance is underway.

The Clean & Green team Supervisor had unexpectedly been away from the role for much of the period due to illness.

A substantial programme of training and competency has been completed to ensure operations compliance across most works. The H&S officer has supported with a suite of H&S and related training within the team.

The cemeteries service Sexton is settled into post now and continues duties along with the cemeteries operative. A cemeteries action plan is being drafted to provide areas of focus



and priority. Cemetery maintenance has been under increased scrutiny this past year, particularly on the grounds maintenance and winter works are underway in many sections.

Parking continues to provide the regular enquiries.

The Assistant Corporate Assets Manager was appointed from within the team – although has not yet eased the pressure on the team overall due to the CA admin role not yet being backfilled.

Community and Wellbeing

Leisure Services – Provided by SLM Ltd

The last quarter has continued the trend of the previous quarters this year with reduction again in the user numbers month on month and also on like for like from the previous year.

Everyone Active raise concerns that despite their teams pushing a strong service delivery with an activity package at a competitive price, car parking charges are having a heavy influence on new customers joining.

It is upsetting to see this is the case despite the site teams pushing to deliver a strong service delivery with an activity package at the right price, however it is still the trend that the Car Parking Charges are the biggest issue and challenge to people joining and using the centres which are predominantly outside of our hands.

Everyone Active will continue to deliver on a wide ranging offering of facilities and activities which is without doubt the widest in the area and we also look to develop this with our Active Communities Manager to whom we are looking at increasing the community offering providing for more activities and one that is tailored to delivering on the councils health and wellbeing strategies and initiatives.

Review:

An average attendance of 58,500 per month, came to the leisure centres during the quarter which in contrast to the previous year where the average attendance was over 60,000 customers per month coming through the doors.

Notable decreases, predominantly in October and November with December consolidating like for like on the previous year. These decreases were heavily weighted towards swimming in October and November, and gym use every month.

Description	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Total	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Total	Variance
Swimming	30,816	29,488	17,142	77,446	27,818	24,355	18,874	71,047	-6,399
Gym/Fitness Classes	20,345	21,289	17,626	59,260	21,504	19,526	16,206	57,236	-2,024
Sports/Activities	6,006	3,578	6,062	15,646	4,863	4,546	4,880	14,289	-1,357
Activity Total	57,167	54,355	40,830	152,352	54,185	48,427	39,960	142,572	-9,780
Spectators	8,479	12,652	7,369	28,500	12,843	12,306	8,791	33,940	5,440
Grand Total	65,646	67,007	48,199	180,852	67,028	60,733	48,751	176,512	-4,340



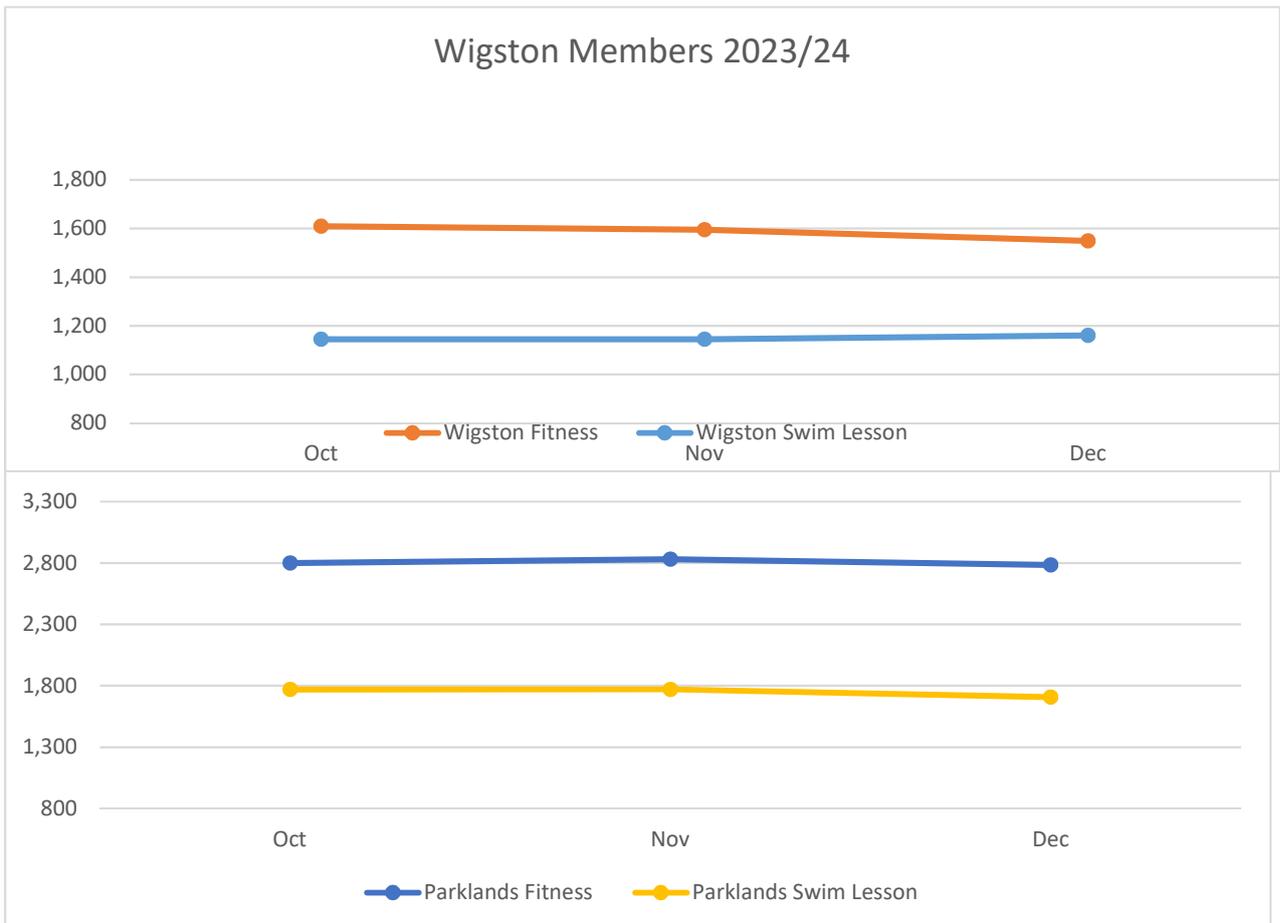
Membership:

Fitness and Health Membership numbers have decreased over the last quarter by 205, and is still significantly lower than at the same period last year and we are showing currently 215 down like for like at Parklands.

Membership numbers dropping particularly at Parklands despite our maintaining of the price point throughout the year is in stark contrast to the other Everyone Active contracts in Leicestershire and further afield nationwide which have all showed continued growth.

Membership	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Total	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Total	Variance
Gym	4,728	4,672	4,385	4,595	4,409	4,426	4,334	4,390	-205
Swim Lessons	3,007	2,994	2,938	2,980	2,913	2,916	2,868	2,899	-81
Total	7,735	7,666	7,323	7,575	7,322	7,342	7,202	7,289	-286

Wigston: Total Members:



Community Well-Being:

The Leisure Centres have been very busy this Quarter looking to deliver the years Community Well Being Plan and this has been shown in one of the major positives of our delivery with increases across the board in all health and wellbeing categories, hitting



targeted groups from young people to ageing adults and people with health inequality issues.

- **Healthy Communities**

- In Q3 we started a partnership with Vita Health who run the talking therapies contract for Leicester NHS. This partnership seen us have their talking therapies bus at 6 of our Leicestershire sites, then building on this partnership we held mental health upskilling workshops for our centre staff.
- In November we launched a new pan-inclusive football session at Parklands. The attendance has been very slow coming into the new year, but we have started to create partnerships with local day centres. So, this will start to pick up in Q4.
- In Q3 the women's no strings session has had 90 attendances at Parklands.
- In Q3 the health classes that we run had 927 attendances. This is broken down into 847 for Heartsmart and 80 for steady steps maintainers.

- **Healthy Ageing**

- Through Q3 the senior sessions are running very well with 530 attendances across the various sessions. These included 335 for senior badminton and 195 for new age kurling.
- In November we launched a new walking football session at Parklands. This was funded through the Leicestershire County FA. Through this quarter we have had 34 attendances, which is a great start. We will hopefully grow the attendance for this session in Q4.

- **Healthy Lives**

- In Q3 we are working to support the district councils with the exercise referral self-referring process. This means a client no longer requires a GP sign off to be cleared to take part in exercise, they can refer themselves.
- Through Q3 we have had 53 starting the programme as GP referral clients. Currently we have 133 GP fitness members with 113 at Parklands, 77 of these are paying by DD and 20 at Wigston with 4 paying by DD.
- Specific health campaign memberships delivered across both sites with 54 current Parkinson members, 6 registered carer memberships and 2 PARS memberships.

	Qtr3	Qtr3		
Targeted Groups	2022-23	2023-24	Variance	% Variance
Exercise Referral	1,799	2,087	288	16%
Children and Young People	12,388	14,760	2,373	19%
Community	588	1,113	525	89%
Older Adults	1,824	1,937	113	6%



Total	16,599	19,897	3,299	20%
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This is on top of the below activities we deliver for free in the local community.

- Free Weekly Children's soft play sessions for the Memphies Charity Group.
- Free Coffee for VASL Carers
- Free Memberships for PARS
- Free Memberships for Parkinsons Sufferers and their Carers with over 40 free memberships provided for.

The Leisure Centres have provided for over £6000 of free activities included within the above and it is pleasing to be able to offer these activities / memberships at small to no cost across to the community as we identify the value that this brings to increase the health and well-being benefits of the whole community.

General:

Everyone Active continued to be pleased with the centres delivering a vital community role and engaging with many thousands of people throughout the year but note as in previous reports that from history that we could be a lot busier.

There are a number of factors as discussed which has continued to drive the numbers down, including but not exhaustively

- The budget gym on the doorstep of the sites with FREE Parking
- The cost of living crisis which is certainly making users look at their leisure spend more so than ever before.
- The Christmas period which notoriously sees spend down year on year.

The Active Communities Manager is a real asset to the team with their role to increase community usage (much of which is free) is hopefully having an impact on the overall health and well-being picture in the Oadby and Wigston area which is certainly showing success in the short term on numbers attending our services and in particularly the social value that our sites bring to the borough which is said to be worth over £725,000 in the last quarter alone.

Everyone Active commitment to work with in the local community continues and we will push the customer service level of our delivery to local people with our aim to become the customer number one choice for activity in the area once again.

Health and Wellbeing

The stakeholder engagement event for the Borough's Community Health and Wellbeing Plan that took place in November and was led by the Integrated Care Board. Over 40 partners who work across the Borough in health, education and community services attended.

After an afternoon workshop delivered at Brocks Hill Council Offices, discussions around priorities for the Borough highlighted the following for development of actions, some of which will interlink;

- Communications



- Housing and health
- Reducing loneliness and isolation
- Improving mental health
- Physical activity
- Physical health; dementia, cancer screening, muscular skeletal health
- Focus on vulnerable children and young people; obesity, poverty, poor mental health

Engagement of residents and action planning will now take place over the next quarter and be discussed and developed with the Health Partnership group.

Meetings took place with the Children, Family and Wellbeing Team, Parklands Primary School and Beauchamp College to respond to concerns around family mental health concerns. Discussions surrounded young people and vaping, substance misuse and staff and parent mental wellbeing. Insights from these meetings will direct actions for the Oadby & Wigston Mental Health Action Plan which will be delivered by the Leicestershire Partnership Trust (LPT) at the NHS Trust whilst being supported by the Council and local partners from the next financial year.

A wellbeing audit has been drafted and will soon go live to both primary and secondary schools across south Leicestershire. The aim, to gather insight into young people's and staffs mental health and what demand this has on current service provision.

Sport and Physical Activity

Since Q2, further work has been undertaken to integrate the physical activity service with local partners, such as GP surgeries, the Primary Care Network, Integrated Neighbourhood Team, leisure providers and local community groups and services, with this being driven by the launch of a new, central physical activity referral pathway.

Blaby have received a total of 108 referrals to programmes from residents, with offers consisting of gym-based exercise and community offers such as walking sports (hockey, netball, cricket and football), walks, Steady Steps and Steady Steps Plus amongst others. Parklands Leisure Centre have been integrated onto Blaby's database system, so referrals can now be transferred and accessed by the Leisure Centre, improving information sharing and reporting.

Just Get Involved, a programme which encourages women aged 18+ to join physical activity sessions ran by community instructors, was launched across Oadby and Wigston for the first time. The team are working with 4 instructors who deliver sessions including

Karate, Yoga and 55+ exercise classes to encourage participation in the Borough through incentives and rewards. So far, 95 women have signed up to take part in the programme.

Promotion of programmes and campaigns has continued on the Active Oadby and Wigston accounts, seeing continued growth of 75 new followers and a 23% increase in post engagement, resulting in 1031 Facebook page visits over the quarter.



Participation Numbers - Level 2 Programmes

Session	Location	Started	Attendance
Walking Football	Wigston Academy	Ongoing	70
Walking Netball	Wigston Academy	Ongoing	97
Walking Cricket	Beauchamp College	Ongoing	46
Walking Hockey	Uni of Leicester Sports	Ongoing	78
Total			291

Participation Numbers- Level 3 Programmes

Activity	Location	Started	Attendance
Seated Activity	Freer Centre	Ongoing	187

Exercise Referral - Leisure Facility	Parklands Leisure Centre	Ongoing	92 Referrals Sent
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Participation Numbers- Level 4 Programmes

Steady Steps			Participants	Attendance
Oadby 2	Barnabas Centre (Oadby)	28-October	7	127
Wigston 1	Wigston (Freer Centre)	20-Nov	10	156

Youth Engagement

Leicester Riders continued their Positive Future sessions on Blaby Road Park until the end of October. Numbers of young people attending since the summer sessions however did drop. Strong factors that would have influenced this would be the darker and colder evenings.

The proposed Development Day at the Morningside Area was postponed until numbers at the sessions increase to that similar to the summer months.

The Community and Wellbeing Team are looking to utilise the sports hall located at the rear of South Wigston High School to relocate the Leicester Riders sessions. This to attract increased numbers during the colder months in Q4.

Boxing sessions to support students at South Wigston High School once again commenced in October after the successes of the previous school year. This has been extended to engaging boys as well as continuing the girls' sessions. The aim still to accommodate students who are struggling mentally or the school are concerned with their behaviour.

At the Children and Young People's Forum in October proposals for youth engagement in the Borough were put forward, and suggestions made as to which other parties or services it would be beneficial to have input into the Forum in future. A second meet of the CYP



Forum is planned for late January 2024 where a draft Youth Engagement Strategy is to be discussed for further development ahead of submission to the Council's PFD Committee later in the year.

Community Safety

During Q3 the Community Safety Partnership was informed that its Safer Streets 5 bid, made at the end of August, had been successful with the Home Office agreeing to fund all approaches put forward within the bid. The Home Office agreed that the match funding elements proposed met the remit of Safer Streets, and the OPCC crucially agreed with this releasing the Partnership's funding allocation through the Police and Crime Plan for use with Safer Streets.

Approx. £90,000.00 will be made available to the Partnership in the first year of Safer Streets, with an additional £32,000.00 of OPCC funding, for investment in target hardening, 15 additional HD CCTV units, 2 ANPR-equipped speed indicator displays for deployment in the Borough, personal safety items such as alarms, purse bells, and key pouches, and associated costs for all listed plans.

These workstreams must either be completed, or underway with funds exchanged, by the end of March 2024 which will make this the Partnership's priority through 2023-24 Q4.

Anti-Social Behaviour

The ASB Officer has logged and investigated **10** reports of ASB in Q3, please see chart below for monthly breakdown:

Q3		
Number of ASB logged/investigated by ASB Officer: 10		
Number of incidents per month		
October 23	November 23	December 23
3	4	3

Of these 10 ASB reports, issues remained that of a wide range. Most common reports included 'Noisy neighbours', 'Verbal abuse' and 'Taking drugs'. Incidents were also reported that included, 'Damage to buildings' and 'Racing cars'.

Investigations into each report lead to:

- **6** perpetrators being identified
- **1** perpetrator after investigations took place received no further action
- **4** perpetrators received words of advice
- **1** perpetrator was then reported to have continued the ASB and therefore was served a written warning
- **1** organisation has been served a Community Protection Warning Notice

2 of the 10 reports were referred and are sitting on the Joint Action Group.



The Council's Tenancy and Estates Manager received training on Sentinel and will be supporting a member of staff to gain access to the system to ensure cases are logged and investigated efficiently.

The Council's Housing Department continue to log ASB on the Sentinel system, please see chart below for monthly breakdown:

Q3		
Number of ASB logged on Sentinel by Housing Department : 0		
Number of report logged per month		
October 23	November 23	December 23
0	0	0

The Council therefore in Q3 have recorded and investigated **10** reports of ASB, please see chart below for number per area breakdown:

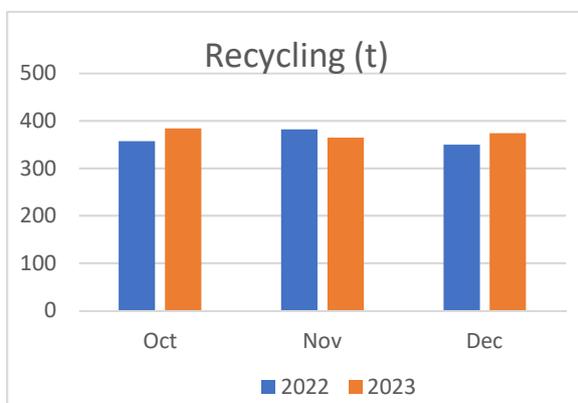
Q3		
Total number of ASB reports: 10		
Oadby	South Wigston	Wigston
3	0	7

Refuse and Recycling

In Qtr3 2023-24 there has been an overall increase of 61.34 tonnes in the refuse collected, this is a 2.81% increase compared to Qtr3 2022-23.

For the recycling tonnages, there has been an increase of 34.07 tonnes in Qtr3 2023-24 compared to Qtr3 2022-23. This translates to a 3.13% increase of recycling collected between these periods.

For the green waste collected there was an increase of 20.78 tonnes in Q2 2023-24 compared to the Q2 2022-23, which equates to a 4.48% increase. There were no collections in December as the service is suspended for 3 months during the winter months.





The chart below shows the breakdown of tonnage of the total waste collected per month.

Waste Type	October		November		December	
	Weight (t)	%	Weight (t)	%	Weight (t)	%
Green Waste	266.76	17.64%	217.90	15.34%	0.00	0%
Recycling	383.80	25.38%	364.50	25.66%	374.04	33.18%
Refuse	785.42	51.94%	765.66	53.89%	694.68	61.63%
Other	76.10	5.03%	72.64	5.11%	58.49	5.19%