



## **Service Delivery Committee**

### **Operational Updates – Operational Update (Q2 2023/24)**

#### **BUILT ENVIRONMENT UPDATE**

##### **Planning**

In recent months there has been a significant increase in customer satisfaction in relation to planning applications and decision making. Initial customer satisfaction surveys undertaken in March 2022 highlighted a 62 per cent satisfaction in the service provided. This has now increased to over 90 per cent customer satisfaction in the latest surveys. The team is committed in continuing the upward trend in customer satisfaction. In addition, during this 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, all of the statutory Government targets have been exceeded as well as local Key Performance Indicators, with 100 per cent of all major planning applications determined within time, and 98.8 per cent of non-major planning applications determined in time against the Government target of 70 per cent. During this quarter, 100 per cent of Planning Appeals were won by the Council, with 3 out of the 3 appeals being dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate.

##### **Economic Regeneration**

In quarter 2, the Economic Regeneration Team has drafted the new Economic Regeneration Strategy for the Council, which will be reported to PFD Committee on 5th December 2023 with a recommendation that the document is approved. This Strategy will guide the work of the Council to 2028 and will align the work of the UKSPF with the Council's priorities. The Team delivered a highly successful Business Networking Evening in September, with a dramatic increase in attendees from the earlier events held pre-covid. The success of this event will feed into future events in the next calendar year. Our Key Performance Indicators for continuous improvement continue to be met and the UKSPF Programme is being delivered to its timeline. The team has developed an events calendar for the rest of 23/24 and 24/25. The proposed calendar will be shared with Members via the Members Bulletin and in subsequent updates.

##### **Housing**

###### **2023-24 Homelessness Management**

The Homelessness update is provided through the Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation report which also forms part of the Agenda for this meeting.

###### **2023-24 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.

As an example;

	Tenancy Termination Date	Tenancy Commencement Date	Total Days Void
1 Acacia Walk	01/06/2023	27/06/2023	26
17 Trunch Lane	28/06/2023	29/07/2023	31
47 Sington Rd	18/07/2023	12/08/2023	25
		<b>Total Days Void</b>	<b>82</b>

The total amount of void days is 82 days, divided by three properties = 27.33 days being the average void time.

The average void time target for 2023-24 has been set at 35 calendar days, this is to achieve top quartile performance in void property management and to ensure rent loss is kept to a minimum.

At the end of Q2 the average void time for the year to date was 44.71 days.

The table below provides an illustration of the number of properties let in a month and the total void days.



	Number of lets	Number of void days	Monthly average void time	Cumulative 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				
November				
December				
January				
February				
March				
<b>total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>1073</b>		<b>44.71</b>

### Average Void time without major work properties

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.

The nature of these works often results in a property being empty for longer periods of time. Removing properties that are subject to major works results in an average void time of 31.06 days.

	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	9	31.06
October				
November				
December				
January				
February				
March				
<b>total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>497</b>		<b>31.06</b>

### Housing Capital Programme



The team has completed work on upgrading the electrical installation to the 17 communal blocks at Boulter Crescent. The programme will shortly be suspended for the winter until the Spring 2024. The primary reason for this is because of the cold weather and shorter daylight hours would mean it is not appropriate to disrupt tenant's electrical supply in the winter months.

The housing team are running a domestic boiler replacement scheme. At the end of Q2 our contractor had upgraded 75 boilers through the replacement scheme in addition to installing 10 boilers as result of breakdowns where it was uneconomical to repair the boiler.

The team are currently consulting with leaseholders to install a new door entry system at Boulter Crescent and Bennett Way. It is anticipated that work will commence to replace the door entry systems from mid November 2023 onwards.

## **Lightbulb**

At the end of Q2 the number of adaptations requests that were processed by the team was 77:

- 63 minor adaptations
- 14 major adaptations

The average completion time was within the 20 week target.

The safe spaces project is a scheme designed to help and support people with hoarding issues. The number of Oadby and Wigston residents who have benefitted from support is 15;

- 12 open and on-going
- 1 waiting list
- 2 closed cases

Through Lightbulb we are supporting residents to improve their home environments and their wellbeing. Support workers will work one to one with residents whose daily lives are affected by hoarding behaviours and excessive clutter in their homes. Support workers aim to identify the barriers that prevent residents from improving their living conditions and empower them to overcome those barriers.

## **FINANCE UPDATE**

### **Revenues and Benefits**

#### **Benefits**

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

Demand on the Discretionary Housing Payment and Discretionary Council Tax Support schemes, which supports customers experiencing significant financial hardship, continues to grow. The Finance Inclusion Officer (FIO) plays a vital role in ensuring the right people are



supported through the cost-of-living crisis. Measures will be introduced during Quarter 3 to monitor the number of referrals and people being supported through the FIO.

There was an increase in the number of processing days taken to process New Claim's during Quarter 2, this was due to an issue identified with the monitoring of claims. This has now been resolved and should not have any further impact going forward.

Council	New Claims (up to 31.08.23)
Oadby and Wigston BC	18.17 days

Benchmarking with other local councils shows that new claims are processed on average between 15 – 30 days.

Processing of change in circumstances documents remains the fastest in Leicestershire.

Council	Change in Circumstances (up to 31.08.23)
Oadby and Wigston BC	3.06 days

Benchmarking with other councils shows that change of circumstances are processed on average between 5 – 19 days.

### Benefit Calls

Quarter 2	July	Aug	Sept
Number of calls	287	277	231
Number of calls answered	263	265	217
Percentage answered	91.63%	91.63%	93.93%
Number of abandoned calls	24	12	14
Average wait time before abandonment (m:ss)	1:37	1:47	1:37

### 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.

### Business Rates Calls

The call percentages answered were low during July and August because there was only one NNDR Officer able to access a licence in Storm. Once the issue was highlighted, the Senior Business Rates Officer was added to the list of Officers who could access a licence. September has seen a significant improvement due to this resolution.

Quarter 2	July	Aug	Sept
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Number of calls	40	18	55
Number of calls answered	34	16	55
Percentage answered	85%	88.88%	100%
Number of abandoned calls	6	2	0
Average wait time before abandonment (m:ss)	1.19	4.13	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.

Due to a full-time vacancy within the team, annual leave and sickness absences, the Council Tax Team have had staff shortages during quarter 2. This has had a significant impact on the amount of work outstanding. Recruitment for a Council Tax Officer was approved by SLT in September 2023. The new full-time Council Tax Officer should be in post at the beginning of November.

## Council Tax Calls

Due to issues highlighted above, the Customer Services Team have been providing assistance to the Council Tax Team by taking all calls. This has meant the team could concentrate on processing work and identifying training needs within the team.

Quarter 2	July	Aug	Sept
Number of calls	316	163	171
Number of calls answered	283	138	154
Percentage answered	89.55%	84.66%	90.05%
Number of abandoned calls	33	25	17
Average wait time before abandonment (m:ss)	2:37	1:29	1:18

## 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.

Q2 Council Tax Recovery	July	Aug	Sept
Reminders	1195	118	335
Finals	52	185	36
Summonses	55	280	154
Liability Orders	36	180	178

Q2 NNDR Recovery	July	Aug	Sept
Reminders	18	20	12
Finals	9	5	8
Summonses	25	14	5
Liability Orders	0	9	9

### Recovery Calls

Quarter 2	July	Aug	Sept
Number of calls	628	472	457
Number of calls answered	538	435	419
Percentage answered	85.66%	92.16%	91.68%
Number of abandoned calls	90	37	38
Average wait time before abandonment (m:ss)	3:54	4:18	4:12

### 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 Q2 are below the set target rate.

The slight decrease in Business Rates collection in September is primarily due to annual leave and Rateable Value changes.



The Collection Rate Improvement Plan remains a priority for the Revenues Teams.

Percentage of Debit Collected (Cumulative)	July	Aug	Sept
	%	%	%
<b>Council Tax</b>			
Target Rate	38.71%	47.95%	57.31%
Actual Collection Rate	37.89%	46.79%	55.98%
Actual Collection Rate 2022/2023	37.63%	46.80%	56.00%
<b>National Non-Domestic Rates (NDR)</b>			
Target Rate	38.05%	46.83%	55.92%
Actual Collection Rate	40.83%	48.21%	55.90%
Actual Collection Rate 2022/23	36.56%	44.71%	58.74%

### Property Statistics

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

Q2 has seen a reduction in the amount of non-domestic properties, this is due to deletions and reconstitutions (reorganisation and merges).

By bringing material changes and amendments to areas of occupation to the Valuation Office Agency's attention via Billing Authorities, for example, where 1 assessment is divided partitioned into 2 separate entities, we ensure the Rating List reflects the current state of Non-Domestic assessments in the Borough.

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 Rating List.

A review of the Direct Debit processes and procedures will be taking place during Q3. The review and the introduction of another Direct Debit (DD) date around the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month, should hopefully see an increase and improvement in DD collections.

	July	Aug	Sept
No of Council Tax properties	24,166	24,200	24,229
No of Council Tax Direct Debits	18,787	18,845	18,847
No of Single Person Discounts	7,612	7,620	7,635
No of Businesses	1,422	1,420	1,416

### IT Team

Throughout Q2 the IT team have been heavily involved in the Office relocation project and we have had a 'freeze' on all other works whilst we transitioned from Bushloe House to Brocks Hill. The work within this project included but not limited to:

- Final configuration of server room
- Moving servers from Bushloe to Brocks Hill
- Installing and setting up new network
- Installing and setting up wireless provision at building
- Setting up new desks and workstations including reception and meeting rooms



- Digitalising office sign in process, configuring door entry system & configuring Café area
- Full testing and go live plan, which was then implemented whereby no system down time for staff or Members was achieved.

The Bushloe House network has now been minimalised to bare minimum due to impending sale of the building. Throughout Q3, this building will be fully emptied and 'turned off' aside from Intruder Alarm and health and safety elements.

Although we had a significant transition, the section were still able to maintain a good level of service provision for users.

See key information of service delivery below:

	Type	Jul	Aug	Sept
Number of contacts	Email	153	123	125
	Phone	8	10	9
	Walk in	6	8	4

Standard	Target	Jul	Aug	Sept
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	0.7 days	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	99.9%	100%	100%	100%
Monitoring of system/software issues to drive improvements	Monthly Monitoring completed	Yes	Yes	Yes

Major changes completed by IT team	Jul	Aug	Sept
	Pre-works readying Bushloe House to transition to Brocks Hill Purchasing & installation of key equipment at Brocks Hill – notably in server room and ports/power	Full monitoring of network and user traffic to ensure maximum speeds and connectivity. Monitoring of firewall traffic and security	Final works of new network and - recommencing with patch and upgrade management for systems.



	<p>Fully testing new network lines and internet lines at Brocks Hill in readiness for office move</p> <p>Then, full move of all servers – key services were only down during non working hours and no downtime of services were affected</p> <p>Full 'switch on' of Brocks Hill – including WI-FI, desks, network, servers. Security Testing undertaken to ensure safety of infrastructure</p>	<p>features to ensure new building was secure following full transition</p> <p>Final configuration of CCTV and external buildings at Brocks Hill</p>	<p>Commencing with VPN certification testing (as new certificates are required due to office relocation).</p>
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## **CUSTOMER SERVICE AND TRANSFORMATION UPDATE**

### **Customer Service Improvement**

The Customer Service Improvement team continues to work hard on measuring customer satisfaction levels, in Q2 three new surveys have been launched, allowing us to gather valuable feedback from the following service areas:

- IT Team
- Brocks Hill Reception Desk
- Food Safety Team

In the last quarter customers have completed 672 surveys across 14 different service areas. The team assist service areas to use customer feedback to make improvements, driving and then monitoring improvement actions.

During Q2 the improvement team has collaborated extensively with the Customer Service and Revenue teams to enhance the customer journey by increasing the first point of contact resolution rate. As a result of these efforts, this first resolution has significantly increased from 33% to 71%. This achievement was made possible through refresher training and upskilling of the Customer Service team, the implementation of a priority form, and the revision of the service level agreement between the teams. These changes ensure that customer queries are addressed efficiently and where possible at first point of contact, improving the overall customer experience.

Progress has continued in the development of a comprehensive training package for handling challenging customers. This e-learning package is designed to empower frontline staff with essential skills, including active listening techniques to defuse challenging situations, an exploration of the psychology behind difficult customers, and coping strategies



to enhance staff well-being. This training will be launched early next year to front line officers.

## **Communications and Marketing**

### **Our email subscription service**

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Q2 Totals</b>	<b>Comparison to previous quarter</b>	<b>Percentage of possible subscribers</b> (based on 42,000 adults registered to vote)
Total subscriptions	9844	+17.4%	23.4%

Please note that 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.

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Q2 Totals</b>	<b>Comparison to previous quarter</b>
Average subscriptions per subscriber	2.0	-0.0
Engagement rate	78.6	-1.5%
Open rate	51.3	-0.9%
Bulletins sent (in quarter)	44	-1
Emails delivered (in quarter)	58,359	-30%

### **Subscribers by topic (email subscription service)**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Number of subscribers</b>	<b>Comparison to previous quarter</b>
Citizen's Panel	109	No change
Community & Voluntary Sector	2233	+13.2%
Community Safety, Crime & Anti-Social Behaviour	655	+54.4%
Consultations & Surveys	2409	+12.1%
Council News & Information	5203	+12.2%
Health, Wellbeing, Sport & Leisure	3913	+7.8%
News for Businesses	963	+13%
News for Council Tenants*	701	+29.1%
Private Sector Housing News	574	No change
Recycling, Refuse & Bin Collections	4448	+6.1%



Sports Clubs	13	No change
What's On & Events	2608	+14.2%

\*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.

[Opportunity for borough businesses to improve accessibility and inclusivity](#)

[Council completes landmark move to cost saving, green, energy efficient new home](#)

[Countywide campaign to prevent fly-tipping launched](#)

[Borough community lottery to help boost good causes in Oadby & Wigston](#)

[Oadby & Wigston aiming for national glory in Britain in Bloom competition](#)

[Brocks Hill and Peace Memorial Park scoop 16th Green Flag awards!](#)

[Basketball programme setting young people in South Wigston up for a positive future](#)

[Councils join forces to tackle littering](#)

[Oadby & Wigston gets connected with free Wi-Fi](#)

[Another year, another Gold Award at East Midlands in Bloom!](#)

[Householders save with Solar Together scheme](#)

[Free town centre parking to support Christmas events in Oadby & Wigston](#)

### Social media

Measure	Facebook	Comparison to previous quarter
Number of Followers	4193	+99
Number of posts	116	-17.1%
Post reach*	58,790	-6.7%
Engagement – reactions, comments, likes and shares	7,587	-60.7%
Measure	Twitter	Comparison to previous quarter
Number of Followers	2672	+6
Number of posts	42	-63.2%
Post impressions*	19,700	-73.1%
Engagement – reactions, comments, likes and shares	184	-77.8%



\*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.

Please note, Twitter has recently introduced charges, which means the council's free account can no longer pre-schedule Tweets. Pre-scheduling tweets saves time and resource, allowing us to put messages up in bulk and in advance. For example we may schedule 10 tweets all in one go about a particular campaign, that will then go onto the platform over a period of several weeks.

The loss of pre-scheduling is impacting the volume we can put onto the platform with the same resource. We have discussed this predicament with other authorities, while also taking into account that the platform has been declining in popularity in recent years. Most authorities, including ours, are waiting to see what the future holds for the platform and monitoring the situation, before making a decision on whether to pay for the pre-scheduling feature.

### **HR Team Update**

The HR team have been working on a number of different projects/areas of work in Q2.

New appraisal and 121 forms and guidance documents for both processes have been developed and all line managers have been trained on the new process. The appraisals will be undertaken primarily in October with some undertaken in November/December due to operational challenges.

The new process will help us more effectively manage performance within the Council and also gain a better understanding of training & development needs across the organisation.

New probation forms and induction guidance have also been developed with training on these processes for all line managers planned for November 2023.

Significant work has been undertaken to set up further monitoring tools/trackers to ensure that we are able to monitor our performance and are able to track outcomes and decisions on HR related issues.

In addition the HR Pages on the intranet have been updated and refreshed to help our employees find the information that they need more easily and to allow them to self-serve.

### **People Strategy**

The People Strategy has been published following consultation with staff and approval at the Policy, Finance and Development Committee in September. Work continues to progress on its action plan.

### **HR Management Information**

#### **Headcount**

<b>Quarterly Comparison Current Year 2023/24</b>	<b>Quarterly Comparison Previous year 2022/23</b>
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Actual Headcount as at end of Q2 (30.9.23)			Actual Headcount as at end of Q2 (30.9.22)	
Headcount	Full Number	FTE	Full Number	FTE
Number of Permanent/Fixed Term Staff	183	175.97	176	168.58
Number of Temporary Staff (Agency Workers)	4	4	17	16.67
Total	187	179.97	193	185.25

In addition to the agency workers listed above there were also 465 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	41
Annual Leave/Contractual Bank holidays in lieu	178
Covering vacancy gaps for permanent staff	130
To aid compost crew due to increased heavy tonnages over the summer period arising from the weather conditions	116
Total	465

### Leavers

Quarterly Comparison Q2 2023/24 Leavers between 1/7/23 – 30/9/23		Quarterly Comparison Q2 2022/23 Leavers between 1/7/22 – 30/9/22
Number of Permanent/Fixed Term Staff	7	7
Number of Temporary Staff (Agency Workers)	5	1
Total	12	8

Leavers (Permanent/Fixed Term Employees) Quarterly Comparison		
Teams	Q2 2023/2024 Leavers between 1/7/23 – 30/9/23	Q2 2022/23 Leavers between 1/7/22 – 30/9/22
Clean & Green	0	0



Communications & Marketing	0	0
Community & Wellbeing*	0	2
Corporate Assets	0	0
Customer Services	0	1
Economic Regeneration	0	0
Finance	1	0
Health & Safety	0	0
Housing	2	1
HR	0	1
IT, Projects & Procurement	1	1
Legal & Democratic Services	0	1
Planning Policy & Development	0	0
Regulatory Services	0	0
Revenue & Benefits	2	0
Waste Services	0	0
Built Environment	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>

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

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

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

## **LAW AND DEMOCRACY UPDATE**

### **Regulatory Services**

#### **Environmental Health**

We continue to follow the Food Standards Agency (FSA) guidance in relation to food business inspections and how we approach new businesses. Essentially this requires us to prioritise those that are considered high risk which might be due to past performance, their food safety management systems or the types of food they make and prepare.

During quarter 2, 32 inspections took place along with a review of the backlog of the lower risk premises arising from the pandemic where 70 have been contacted out of 170 with 20 now no longer trading. The remainder will be programmed for contact during quarter 3 and 4 by using a self-assessment questionnaire and visit.



The sampling programme started in quarter 2 with 12 samples taken so far and this will continue for the remainder of the year. This is part of a regional programme set out by the UK Health Security Agency (formerly Public Health England) where samples are taken from work surfaces and of certain foods to test for micro-biological quality. These tests will help us to monitor the safety of food sold in our area. So far, 5 of the 12 surface swabs were found to be unsatisfactory which indicates that more effective surface cleaning is required.

Overall compliance rates are high, with 97% of all registered food businesses achieving a score of 3 (generally satisfactory) and 67% achieving a score of 5 (very good). In terms of the poorer performers there are 8 (2%) who fall below the generally satisfactory standard and work continues with these to improve standards. New businesses triaged during quarter 2 was 23.

There have been 25 food and health and safety complaints investigated in this period.

The duty of care campaign commenced during this quarter and we are working initially with food businesses with the focus of this work to ensure trade waste is being controlled and disposed of lawfully. Other businesses will be targeted going forward.

Day to day work was busy and wide ranging with a further 2 welfare burials handled, fly tips to investigate and service requests to action.

We also took part in 2 countywide campaigns, one on fly tipping and the other littering.

The sign below was placed in a known littering hotspot on Glen Road when in 3 days a total of 12 enforcement patrols were made.



The midland mainline electrification project continues and we are now working with other local authorities to ensure the controls and methods of work minimise any disruption to residents.

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 has commenced. This will deliver a number of



interventions across the school year. Two assemblies were attended by Officers from the Council to introduce the project and encourage pupils to get involved. The additional air quality sensor has now been installed and we are working with the school to share the results.

We are working with the principal contractors on the extension to the prison (houseblock H) and have imposed strict controls on noise and vibration to minimise any impact to nearby residents.

## Private Sector Housing

The team are dealing with 117 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	826
Applications received	861
Number of exemptions, empty homes undergoing renovation	15
Licenses pending	134
Licenses issued	694
Licenses withdrawn	33
Income	£630,184.01
Enforcement cases	2

### 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 £76,000 due to withdrawing prior to install	Private properties with mains gas supply (owned	73 to date	113 installed to date	Closure in progress with internal auditor, final measures in process



Project	Funding Awarded	Additional Narrative	Suitable Properties	Number	Number of measures	Status
	delivery of program		or rented)			of being installed.
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	22	Until funding is exhausted or LAD3 and HUG1 close
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



Project	Funding Awarded	Additional Narrative	Suitable Properties	Number	Number of measures	Status
Home Upgrade Grant, Phase 2 (HUG2)	£335,000	N/A	Private properties without mains gas supply (owned or rented)	TBC	TBC	Contract awarded and engagement with residents underway
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 Oadby and Wigston Borough Council Stock	128 forecast	To be confirmed following assessment	Tender for contract is currently out for bidding and the project team has nearly been fully established

## Licensing

As part of the ongoing service transformation the next stage will be to integrate back office systems and digitise forms to improve productivity.

A review of all our premises licenses continues to ensure they all up to date and appropriate payments are being made. A review of all our hairdressers and barbers has started and will be completed in quarter 3.

The Licensing and Regulatory Committee on 21 September 2023 agreed to amend the Street Trading Policy to allow a half a day permit and dual permits for traders to operate across the whole borough rather than having to specify a specific area. In addition, following consultation on a hackney fares review the Committee agreed to change the rates subject to the appropriate public notice procedure. Proposals were also discussed about changes to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy to promote low emission vehicles, encourage more wheelchair accessibility, and clarify age and executive criteria. Consultation will now take place with drivers and operators to seek their views before further consideration and decision at a future Committee.



There have been numerous investigations into complaints about taxi drivers and several have received penalty points on their licence.

### Q2 licenses processed

New and renewal vehicles	99
New and renewal drivers	57
New and renewal operators	3
Street collections	2
Small society lottery	1
House to house	14
Other licences	6
Licensing Act	24

Overall there has been a 117% increase in new driver applications during 2023 when compared with the previous year.

### **Community Lottery**

The lottery started on 5 August 2023 and we now have 19 approved causes who have joined with 501 tickets currently sold weekly which is generating an annual £15,631.20 for good causes.

### **Corporate Assets**

Corporate Assets has had multiple demands on its resources in period Q2.

CA received 561 enquiries through the DASH system. Numerous further enquiries came direct to CA team members through calls, and other communications through regular channels. In addition the routine FOI's, complaints, request and members enquiries were also received. As with Q1, DASH and other enquiries are currently flagging up many land ownership searches and concerns.

There was significant input from the team into the office move to Brocks Hill, from both the property management, building compliance and Health and Safety implications, handover and coordination of the grounds and other related works to support the move as well as supporting and ensuring security in the closing down of Bushloe House and transferring utilities and other aspects. Brocks Hill offices still have a 1 year 'snagging' period which from the point of handover, has meant an ongoing period of communications with Kier.

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

In addition the operational, management and support teams have supported the Boroughs entry to both the regional East Midlands in Bloom and the national Britain in Bloom entries on behalf of OWBC inputs. Judging took place in July and August. Last minute impacts to this came from LCC not undertaking the highways spraying which meant additional resource input was required from C&G.

The Clean & Green have had a challenging period in which the weather has had a significant impact on where resource is directed. Ongoing rain and warm weather has meant there has



not been a break from the grass growing and between the preparations for 'in bloom', the grass has invariably grown at a faster rate than it was being cut.

The new cleansing team member has reduced the need for the green team to cover for cleansing operations. In addition, this operative has covered for the vacant sweeper operative role.

A significant input of resource from the Clean & Green team was required to underpin the Boroughs entries into the 'In Bloom' competition and during the two separate judging periods. Further additional resource was also required due to LCC not undertaking their commitment to highway works such as the highway/pavement weed spraying.

The Clean & Green team Supervisor has unexpectedly been away from the role for the period.

The Cemetery Officer completed their induction and subsequently took over the lead on the cemeteries and the allotment service. All elements of the role now sit with the CO.

The cemeteries service Sexton is in post now and resuming duties. A cemeteries action plan is being drafted to provide areas of focus and priority.

Cemetery maintenance has been under increased scrutiny this year, particularly on the grounds maintenance grass cutting, particularly where the frequency has invariably been the same as previous years but the growth rate of the grass itself has increased due to the warm wet weather and not slowed as would be usual in the early to mid-summer months.

Parking continues to provide regular enquiries.

The weather has impacted many operations this year, and the constant ideal growing conditions has meant no slowdown in the rate of the grass and shrub growth – this being particularly evident where the clean & green team juggle the demand on the resource with parks, public and housing land maintenance together with the ongoing demands to deliver for the 'In Bloom' preparations and also Brocks Hill office grounds.

Recruitment was completed for the Assistant Corporate Assets Manager and a candidate appointed – although this is unlikely to ease the pressure on the team overall with the CA admin role being vacant still.

## **Community and Wellbeing Leisure Services**

### **Leisure Services – Provided by SLM**

Q2 has again been very challenging for the Leisure Contract with a continued trend in reduction of use. This is particularly with Swimming and Fitness Sessions and in an overall reduction in member numbers, which when coupled with continuing high delivery costs particularly with utilities, it does bring a level of concern to the management of the sites.

Although maintaining high and challenging targets to recover the membership, feedback continues to be received that the main concern with joining the centres is the car parking charges and the GYM Group in Oadby who opened last year offering a cheaper experience along with free parking.



Everyone Active continue to deliver on a wide ranging offerings and activities and continue to develop this with their Active Communities Manager who is looking at increasing the community offering, providing for activities and one's that are tailored to delivering on the Councils health and wellbeing strategies and initiatives.

Review: An average attendance of 59,050 per month (except spectators), came to the leisure centres during the quarter which in contrast to the previous year, the average attendance was over 61,990 customers per month. Two factors attributable to this downward trend, as mentioned above is the introduction of car parking charges and coupled with the general cost of living issues which has seen people review their leisure spend and review all their non-essential spending.

There has been notable increases in some activities, and in particular the use of the soft play centre which over the same quarter last year saw a like for like increase of over 50%. This is primarily in relation to the inclement weather that we saw over the summer period bringing activity users in site. The other significant growth in general is in swimming lessons, where there has been improvement in spectators due to the highest amount of swimming lessons being delivered in the area ever, averaging just under 3000 children being taught each week.

Description	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Total	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Total	Variance
Swimming	31,267	34,454	34,225	99,946	29,977	30,659	28,614	89,250	-10,696
Gym/Fitness Classes	23,113	25,161	21,182	69,456	23,641	24,350	21,120	69,111	-345
Sports/Activities	5,195	4,808	6,564	16,567	5,573	6,329	6,887	18,789	2,222
Activity Total	59,575	64,423	61,971	185,969	59,191	61,338	56,621	177,150	-8,819
Spectators	7,028	6,427	9,107	22,562	12,860	12,790	12,551	38,201	15,639
Grand Total	66,603	70,850	71,078	208,531	72,051	74,128	69,172	215,351	6,820

Membership	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Average	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Total	Variance
Gym	4,756	4,817	4,825	4,799	4,431	4,427	4,431	4,430	-370
Swim Lessons	2,831	2,838	2,936	2,868	2,902	2,992	2,995	2,963	95
Total	7,587	7,655	7,761	7,668	7,333	7,419	7,426	7,393	-275

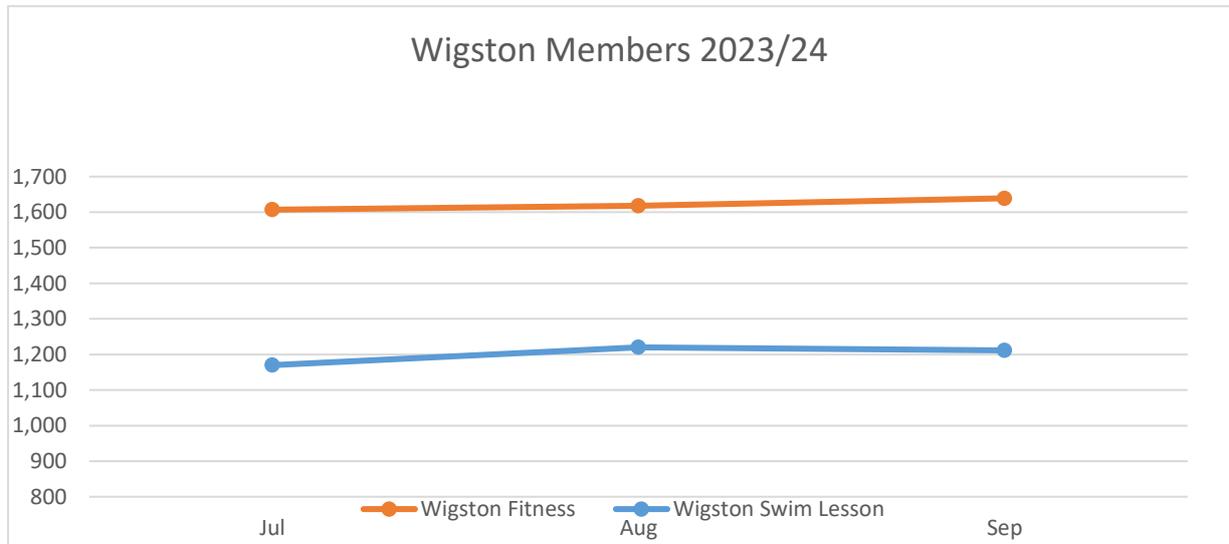
#### Membership Numbers:

Fitness and Health Membership numbers have grown over the last quarter by 45, but is still significantly lower than at the same period last year where it is currently 394 down like for like. However, this is across the contract and shows that Parklands has lost 568 members as against a growth of 174 at Wigston. The latter being attributable to the refurbishment programme and low price point there.

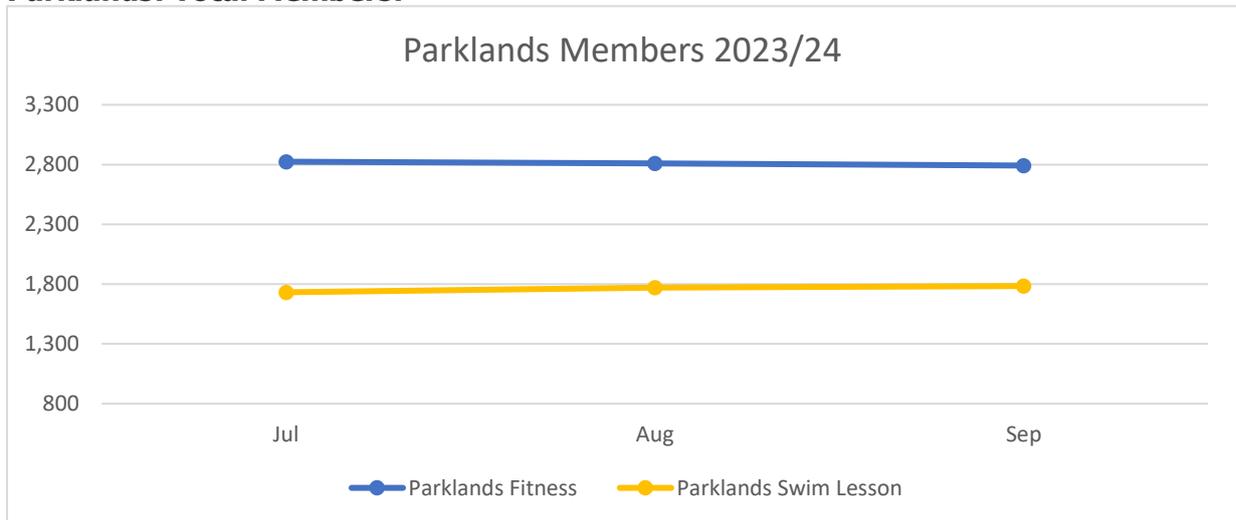


Membership numbers dropping particularly at Parklands despite maintaining the price point throughout the year and is in stark contrast to the other Everyone Active contracts in Leicestershire and further afield which have all showed continued growth post Covid.

### Wigston: Total Members:



### Parklands: Total Members:



### Community Well-Being:

The Leisure Centres have been busy in Q2 looking to deliver the years Community Wellbeing Plan and this has been one of the major positives of 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.



- Provided free swimming sessions for 1815 children over the summer holidays.
- Through the summer, Everyone Active delivered a HAF (Healthy Activity and Food) programme funded by LCC that covered 4 sites across South Leicestershire, which included Wigston Pools & Fitness. The HAF programme was run as a pilot and secured funding across all Leicestershire contracts. The HAF provision ran in South Leicestershire included Junior Gym memberships for young people aged 11-16 over the summer and a free meal at the leisure centre on their visit. This programme is aimed at children whom are on the free school meals program. 56 young people accessed this offer and we are now currently writing the specification to run this programme across the winter, spring and summer of 2024.
- There are 31 care leavers and care experienced young that are currently accessing the gym in Oadby & Wigston.
- Everyone Active are working with Leicester City Football Club on their Violence Reduction Network programme to offer 3-month gym memberships to young people aged 11-18. In this quarter, we have had a further 6 referrals: 4 taking up the option at Wigston.

Targeted Groups	2022-23	2023-24	Variance	% Variance
Exercise Referral	1,692	1,955	263	16%
Children and Young People	18,689	19,657	968	5%
Community	658	810	152	23%
Older Adults	1,798	2,129	331	18%
Total	22,837	24,551	1,714	8%

This is on top of the below activities delivered for free in the local community.

- Free Weekly Children’s soft play sessions for the Menphys 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 centres have provided over £8000 of free activities included within the above and it is pleasing that these activities / memberships are small to no cost to the community as it is identified the value that this brings to increase the health and wellbeing benefits to the whole community.

General:

The Active Communities Manager is proving to be an asset to the team with their role to increase community usage (much of which is free). This is having a positive impact on the overall health and wellbeing picture in the Oadby and Wigston area which is certainly showing success in the short term on numbers attending services and in particularly the social value that the centres bring to the Borough which is said to be worth over £855,000 in the last quarter alone.



## **Health and Wellbeing**

Relationships amongst health partners have further developed in Q2. Officers attended an event for the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary for the NHS on Bell Street in Wigston as well as supported a Community and Volunteering event at the Salvation Army in South Wigston. Stakeholders were engaged with and promotional leaflets were distributed to advertise the Borough's services.

Q2 saw the first Mental Health Networking meeting hosted at the Menphys Centre in South Wigston. In attendance were Local Area-Coordinators, mental health leads, PCN, Schools Sports Partnership, LCC and the voluntary sector. The meeting was to introduce partners, network and discuss initial plans with how to operate an effective working group to support residents.

Further to this, the Oadby and Wigston Locality meeting was chaired by the Health Lead at Blaby DC. Core health teams attended to discuss operational matters.

The Community Health and Wellbeing Plan working group met, and shared health priorities and work being undertaken in the Borough. The Integrated Care Board are working closely with partners, including the Council to develop the plan and organise future working groups in Q3, as well as the future stakeholder's event in November which is set to be hosted in the Brocks Hill Council Offices.

Sport and physical activity has really started to take off across Oadby & Wigston this quarter. As mentioned previously, quarter one was focusing on maintaining ongoing activities and aligning working practices between the old Active Oadby & Wigston methods and the ongoing Active Blaby processes. This is now complete, and delivery of activities has started in earnest. Some key services were delivering summer events with the Children and Family Wellbeing Service to support parents in encouraging their children into activities, the introduction of Rounders and Walking Hockey as a social physical activity for women and have planned delivery of three Steady Steps programmes. Officers are well embedded into health and community sectors within the Borough and building relationships deeper to enable the effective launch of the Physical Activity Pathway which will be communicated over the next few weeks. Quarter three will bring more delivery and preparation for new activities such as the JUST programme, a boroughwide initiative encouraging women to get active in the new year.

The financial output at the end of quarter two is excellent. Additional funds have been sourced from the beginning of the year through Active Together Let's Get Moving fund (£4,000) and one more Steady Steps programme (£3,060). From the current total expenditure budget of £81,033, £43,344 has been spent which is 53.5% at the halfway point of the year so the programme budgets are on track. Income is also projected to be greater than budgeted to provide additional expenditure budget by the end of the year.

## **Youth Engagement**

Leicestershire County Council's IMPACT Team continued their football sessions for young people on Blaby Road Park in Q2. 10 sessions were held with the aim being raising awareness of respect, conflict resolution skills, discouraging dangerous behaviour, inclusivity, consequences, building relations and a sense of community in the group. A total of 126 young people attended throughout the summer.

Evaluation forms were conducted with the young people where feedback highlighted positive engagement and providing a sense of structure during the school summer holidays.



Leicester Riders commenced their Positive Future sessions on Blaby Road Park in July. Sessions were held twice weekly with two Leicester Riders coaches. These sessions were funded by the Community Safety Partnership and later, the UKSPF. Included within the commissioning of the project, was food and drink for the young people who attended. Some sessions have seen more than 20 young people take part in the basketball where good relationships have been built between them and coaches.

Due to the success of the project, sessions were extended past the school summer holidays into Q3. This, as well as organising a trip for the young people to a Development Day at the Morningside Arena to watch a Leicester Riders game later in the year.

Boxing sessions to improve mental wellbeing for students at South Wigston High School finished in July at the end of the school year. Students who took part in the activities led by a semi-professional boxer all provided positive feedback with the sessions, improving their mental health, attendance and behaviour. Those who participated received certificates and medals. Two young people who particularly achieved during activities were given signed boxing gloves. Again because of the success, plans are underway to continue the sessions in Q3.

Early plans are also being worked on to redevelop the Borough's Youth Council with initial conversations regarding this, aimed at agreeing a new format for the Youth Council including a revised schedule of meetings, taking place at the Children and Young People's Forum in October where relevant Partner Agencies, such as the County Council and some private youth work services, will have input into its development. It is envisaged that two meetings of the CYP Forum will take place before the first meeting of a renewed Youth Council takes place in the new year.

### **Community Safety**

In early August the OPCC informed the Community Safety Partnership that Oadby & Wigston had been selected by the Home Office as a 'Safer Streets' area eligible for significant funding investment, up to £300,000 focussed on Neighbourhood Crime. A 50% match funding requirement applies to the Safer Streets budget which meant to qualify for the full funding available £150,000 in match funding over three years, also focussed on Neighbourhood Crime, needed to be committed to by the OPCC, the Community Safety Partnership, and Leicestershire Police. This was achieved through commitments to CCTV (new camera units and associated infrastructure), target hardening in relation to burglaries, speed monitoring and ANPR units, and additional policing hours.

Officers from all three organisations put significant time into achieving the match funding threshold in order to meet the Home Office's deadline of 29 August. This was met and the Home Office is now expected to make its final decision on the bid's success by the end of October 2023.

### **Anti-Social Behaviour**

The ASB Officer has logged and investigated **27** reports of ASB in Q2, please see chart below for monthly breakdown:

<b>Q2</b>		
Number of ASB logged/investigated by ASB Officer: <b>27</b>		
Number of incidents per month		
July 23	August 23	September 23



7	13	7
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Of these 27 ASB reports, issues remained that of a wide range. Most common reports included 'Noisy neighbours' and 'Shouting and swearing'. Incidents were also reported that included, 'Taking drugs', 'Hooliganism/loutish behaviour' and 'Games in inappropriate/restricted area'.

Investigations into each report lead to:

- **10** perpetrators being identified
- **4** perpetrators after investigations took place received no further action
- **4** perpetrators received words of advice
- **1** perpetrator received a written warning
- **1** perpetrator who resided in a Childrens Care Home was served a Notice of Seeking Possession and has subsequently left. Their behaviour also included offences investigated by Leicestershire Police

The ASB Officer continued to work in partnership with Leicestershire Police through Q1 into Q2 who have been leading on a case which involved ASB in Wigston Town Centre caused by young individuals of school age. The number of phone calls into Leicestershire Police reduced after early Council and Police intervention with the young people identified.

**1** young person remained on an Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC), but due to ill health in their family, meetings were not attended. The young person was subsequently taken off her ABC as well as refusing to accept support offered by the Children and Family Wellbeing Service.

This case was still discussed at the Joint Action Group (JAG) further where reports from the IMPACT Team found that there was little engagement with young people in Wigston Town Centre due to not seeing numbers present.

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

<b>Q2</b>		
Number of ASB logged on Sentinel by Housing Department : 4		
Number of report logged per month		
July 23	August 23	September 23
0	0	4

The Council therefore in Q2 have recorded and investigated **31** reports of ASB, please see chart below for number per area breakdown:

<b>Q2</b>		
Total number of ASB reports: <b>31</b>		
Oadby	South Wigston	Wigston
13	6	12



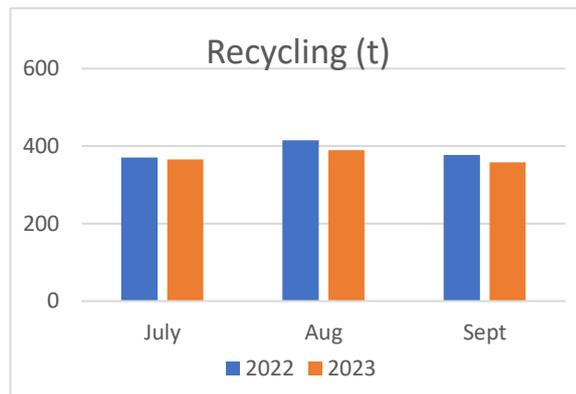
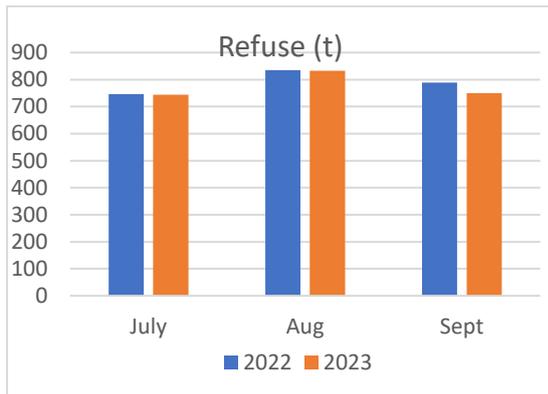
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## **Refuse and Recycling**

In Q2 2023 there has been an overall reduction of 45.56 tonnes in the refuse collected, this is a 1.92% reduction compared to Q2 2022.

For the recycling tonnages, there has also been a reduction of 50.58 tonnes in Q2 2023 compared to Q2 2022. This translates to a 4.35% reduction of recycling collected between these periods.

For the green waste collected there was a considerable increase of 337.86 tonnes in Q2 2023 compared to the r2 2022, which equates to a 47.68% increase.



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

Waste Type	July		August		September	
	Weight (t)	%	Weight (t)	%	Weight (t)	%
Green Waste	326.00	21.72%	428.55	25.07%	294.91	20.21%



Recycling	365.10	24.33%	389.00	22.76%	358.10	24.54%
Refuse	743.84	49.56%	832.14	48.69%	749.54	51.37%
Other	65.80	4.39%	59.50	3.48%	56.67	3.88%