



# Licensing and Regulatory Committee

Jon Wells

20 June 2024

Oadby & Wigston | Our borough -  
the place to be

# Environmental Health

# Parklands Pilot Project update



Anti-idling  
campaign

Student  
ambassadors

It is known that  
many schools are in  
areas above  
pollution limits  
(actionforcleanair)

News

## School project helps tackle poor air quality

By STAFF REPORTER

INITIATIVES are under way to tackle poor air quality that is thought to be having a detrimental effect on health.

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council said observations and data in Blaby Road, South Wigston, suggest that high levels of commuter traffic and congestion at peak times are causing concerning levels of air quality.

It said this is a particular problem for people with existing health concerns, but also negatively impacts children and can increase the chance of conditions such as asthma.

An air quality monitor will be installed close to the school to provide improved real-time data on levels of pollution.

There will be lessons for school pupils about the positive impact they and their families can have on air quality and the environment.

Pupils will be given an activity tracker to encourage more walking and cycling instead of car journeys and there will be a learn to cycle programme with Key Stage 1 children.

Parents will be encouraged to turn off vehicle engines outside the school gates.

Councillor Carl Walter said: "There is clear data that shows air quality around Blaby Road is poor and we want people to start thinking about how this is affecting others, especially the younger generation."

"Partnering up with Leicestershire County Council and Parkland Primary will help start raising the profile of this problem in the community."

"Educating youngsters and having

**TRAFFIC LEVELS  
THOUGHT TO BE  
HAVING IMPACT  
ON THE HEALTH  
OF YOUNGSTERS**

them help carry messages about issues of this nature is a proven way of creating a positive impact.

"Clearly, though, this is about far more than just school traffic."

"The issue is commuter traffic in general and the impacts of this."

"Our work with Parkland Primary is a way to start provoking these conversations in the community so we can all look at our lifestyles and ways in which we can reduce car travel and increase our active travel such as cycling and walking."

Councillor Louise Richardson, Leicestershire County Council cabinet member for health and well-being, said: "Air pollution has serious negative effects on people's health, and is something that Leicestershire County Council takes very seriously."

"Initiatives like this can make a real difference, and it's great to be part of a project which educates and encourages parents and children to do their bit to improve the environment for everyone."

Laura Pryor, healthy schools co-ordinator from Parkland Primary, said: "The health and wellbeing of our pupils is hugely important to us at Parkland."

"As such, we're very excited to be part of this project which is working to directly improve the lives of our pupils."

“Data shows air quality is poor and we want people to start thinking about how this is affecting others”

Coun Walter



TAKING STEPS: Elsa Rios Robert with her message about air quality near Parklands Primary

Clean Air Day  
20 June

Modeshift

Move it March

WOW tracker

Data analysis from  
zephyr

Monitoring and  
evaluation

Banner  
competition

Monitoring and  
evaluation

# Environmental Health

- Air quality Annual Status Report (ASR) to complete by 30 June 2024 for Defra
- Commence consultation late this year on a new Air Quality Strategy
- Staff changes and reduction in capacity – different way of working
- Food – update in the separate report
- Canal street – prohibition notice served by fire service
- Welfare burials continue - 3 incl. one from Australia. Govt briefing following police investigation into Legacy Independent Funeral Directors
- Graffiti and fly posting policy
- 13 food complaints received
- Repackaging and labelling investigation
- Health and safety improvement notice
- Noise abatement notice from commercial premises



# Dogs

- Animal Care Services Ltd are contracted to provide our statutory stray dog service:
- Agreement runs from 1/4/2023 for 3 years (plus 2-year extension if Council requires)
  - In the last 12 months they have collected 20 strays on our behalf
  - Make provision for kennelling, returned to keeper (15) rehoming (3) and destruction (2)
- Stencilling requests
  - 15-20 per year, based on requests received
- Patrols are part of the contract
  - 6 hours per week
  - Target known problem areas and parks along with open spaces
  - Focus on stencilled areas to judge the effectiveness
- Assist with dangerous dogs and banded breeds



# Licensing

# Licensing

- Service transformation continues to integrate office systems and digitise forms
- Driver fined for smoking in his cab – fixed penalty notice
- Premise licence review complete
- Hairdresser and then close contact services review
  - Issued Premises Registrations 33
  - Premises Applications (Not Issued) 15
  - Issued Personal Registrations 43
  - Personal Applications (Not Issued) 19
  - Outstanding Applications 29

# Licensing

## Q4 Licenses Received

New and renewal vehicles - 112

New and renewal drivers - 28

New and renewal operators - 0

Street collections - 2

Small society lottery - 0

House to House - 2

Other licences - 6

Licensing Act - 13



# Private sector housing

# Energy grants projects

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 delivery of program	Projected underspend of £29406.47 due to withdrawing prior to install, any outstanding properties	Private properties with mains gas supply (owned or rented)	72	110	Fully closed down and audited. Performance figures will be provided after Q1 24/25.
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	Closed and confirmation of spend returned to Lightbulb.
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

These programmes are designed to fund energy efficiency measures such as cavity wall insulation, loft insulation, solar panels and external wall insulation for households who are on low income.

Home Upgrade Grant, Phase 2 (HUG2)	£335,000	N/A	Private properties without mains gas supply (owned or rented)	TBC	TBC	Project currently under review due to national delivery challenges and local issues satisfying the qualifying criteria. Possible withdrawal being considered.
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	65		Works commenced and installs underway. Data being compiled for tenant report and press release.

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# Property licensing

Q4	Licenses issued	Income
Number of rented properties - 833	Pending – 111	£637,334
Number of applications received - 879	Issued – 975	
Number of Exemptions and empty properties – 18	Withdrawn – 93	

# Empty homes

Work with Council Tax, the Housing Team and property owners to return empty homes back into use

Was 132 now 46

Service requests now at 116 and includes work to investigate tenant complaints, work relating to minimum energy efficiency standards and houses in multiple occupation

## News

By STAFF REPORTER

A FORMER abandoned factory is now a block of 13 apartments known as the Hat & Cap Works after being purchased by a council in 2018.

Abandoned for over two decades, the Victorian-era textiles factory in Canal Street, South Wigston, had fallen into disrepair and was labelled an eyesore by residents.

They also dubbed the building, one of the oldest in the town, dating back to 1885, the Pigeon Factory as it had a history of bird infestations.

Following exhaustive failed attempts to find the abandoned factory's owner, and gaining approval from the Secretary of State, Oadby and Wigston Borough Council served a compulsory purchase order to allow it to take control of building before selling it to developers ready to create the new homes.

The Hat & Cap Factory is just one of the empty buildings in the borough the council has brought back into use.

The authority said it is committed to reducing the amount of long-term vacant properties in the borough, and from 2004 - 2022 managed to reduce the total number by over 50 per cent from 283 to 132.

Borough councillor Bill Boulter said: "Empty homes and abandoned properties are a wasted asset which can cause a real blight on their surroundings, and the Hat & Cap Works is an excellent example of how council action can lead to regeneration for not just the building, but also the surrounding area.

"Tackling empty properties not

## HISTORIC TOWN BUILDING NOW 13 FLATS



MAJOR MAKEOVER: The Hat & Cap Works now and, above, inside the vacant factory in 2018

# Former 'Pigeon Factory' lands new lease of life

only improves conditions for neighbouring residents, but also provides valuable urban housing stock which is especially important given our borough's limited space.

"We've made great progress in

reducing our number of vacant homes, and while our rate is now well below the Leicestershire average it is important that we continue to ensure that we do everything in our power to bring empty properties

in the borough up to their full potential.

"While revitalisation is our priority it is also important that we preserve our local history and character and in the case of the Hat & Cap Works,

part of the South Wigston Conservation Area, we are pleased to have ensured that the outside has been restored to showcase the original Victorian features."

There are many interventions which the council can take to persuade owners to bring properties back into use, with a compulsory purchase order the strongest power available.

Other avenues include offering advice on and encouraging private rentals, placing a council tax premium on empty homes, or issuing an empty dwelling management order which allows the council the bring the house back up to standard and recover the costs.

The three-storey factory unit now features a mix of four two-bedroom flats, as well as eight, one beds and one studio apartment.

# Community Lottery

Report on the use of the general fund

Anniversary draw on or around 5 August 2023

Now raising approximately £14,196 per year for good causes in our area

Number of tickets sold weekly 455

Causes signed up 23