

**REPORT UNDER RULE 2(vi) OF THE COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES**

**REPORT BY COUNCILLOR B BUSHELL – PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR  
REMARKABLE PLACE**

**Introduction**

As we recover from one of the most challenging periods in public service history, I am pleased to report that, overall, the services provided by Community Services staff and associated contractors, have remained at a good standard for the public.

In last year's report I set out that above and beyond the usual performance monitoring work, some additional focus groups had been established to drive forwards improvements where resources allowed. It is fair to say that whilst they are still meeting, work pressures have impacted what can be achieved by these focus groups, but none the less they have made some progress in important areas, namely tree planting, deterring unauthorised encampments, and rewilding. A little more detail on these points is set out later in my report.

One area of increasing focus, which has quite rightly drawn considerable resources out of day to day operational work so far, is that of preparation for the delivery of street scene contracts from 2026. Whilst it may seem a long way off, those who have been able to attend the all-member workshops will have seen that due to the legal and practical constraints, the timetable is actually very tight now given the volumes of work involved. For this reason it will have to take priority for staff time, and I ask members to be patient if they encounter delays in responses from the few staff on whom this burden currently falls. Given the scale of this work, and the potential financial impacts for the Council, members will understand that presently it must take absolute priority over other work, although I know staff will try to keep as many plates spinning as they are able.

To aid clarity with my report I have sought to divide the relevant work areas under my remit into clear service blocks. Clearly there are some interdependencies and overlap of resources as staff frequently work across areas, but I hope members find this approach broadly helpful.

**Open Spaces.**

**Parks and open spaces- general**

This year has seen Lincoln retain Green Flag Awards for its three main parks, as well as attaining a new first; a Green Heritage Award in recognition of the continued progress made in Boultham Park to reflect and record its history. These remain important recognition for the efforts being made to protect, maintain, and where possible improve, our open spaces offer.

The annual tree planting went off well last year, despite increasing complexity in finding suitable street scene sites that don't impact underground services, and difficulties with supply (due to increasing national and international tree planting demand). I have provided data on the numbers planted in the Arboricultural section below.

Restriction work around unauthorised encampments has been ongoing, with a new barrier in Hartsholme Country Park, and more work planned for the Skellingthorpe Road entrance, subject to funds being available. Last year saw a low level of such encampments, and without wanting to tempt fate, we hope this pattern/trend will continue.

The Council's rewilding of previously highly maintained verges and flower beds now extends to some 20ha. This is a significant improvement in the council's environmental credentials and will be expanded again shortly we hope. However, we are moving resources over a little to focus on some broader environmental initiatives, with experts now looking at such as greening in the city centre and assisting Carholme Golf Club to develop a practical environmental management plan (that will mean golf can co-exist with, and enhance in places, wildlife on the commons), and of course the council flag ship project of mass tree planting in a new nature reserve. More on this later in my report.

Very relevant to this, I should like to make mention here of an important element of the Environment Act 2021. This Act impacts a wide range of issues, including requirements on developers to enhance opportunities for wildlife as an outcome of any development, and for them to make payments to allow this to happen off-site, where appropriate. In preparation for this there is a new requirement for public bodies to develop Local Nature Recovery Strategies. Although formally vested in LCC as a statutory requirement, it is incumbent on CoLC to develop plans to feed into that so as to make the plan robust, and to ensure that developer funding is suitably targeted to protect and enhance biodiversity within the city boundaries. This will be a project that has increasing prominence as soon as greater guidance becomes available, expected early next year.

Another general open spaces point I would like to take the opportunity to raise, is that of communications. The Boutham Park project, combined with existing learning from Hartsholme Park's events programme, has shown that traditional forms of engagement with the public through formal press releases etc, are now too slow for many aspects of our work, and for such as event promotion. Equally, things that the council might wish to publicise may not be considered newsworthy by local media organisations, subject to what they have on that day. The learning has shown that social media is now considered mainstream for information, and whilst the council has restricted use of such approaches historically and been wary of risks associated with it for good reason, it is felt that for many low risk areas of engagement, such as event promotion, the time has come to consider its widened use for several environmental initiatives, not least our parks. Officers are thus tasked with a way to resource this, and to advise me how making increased use of social media might be achieved in the short/medium term. In the meantime members should expect to see increased promotion on the value of Lincoln's green spaces and trees in the coming months, utilising some drone footage. One to watch out for.

Finally, I would like to close this general open spaces introductory section by giving my thanks to all those who willingly give their time in support of open spaces in the city. This may be by work as a member of a Park Advisory Group, or by direct action in delivery tasks on site with the Volunteer Co-Ordinator. It may even be by time they give to other organisations who do good works in the parks. All of them deserve recognition for helping to look after and maximise the benefits that can be derived from open spaces, and whilst some data on volunteering is identified below, I wished to take this opportunity to record my own personal thoughts here.

## **Allotments**

Members will recall that as a part of a widespread investment strategy in allotments, a new site was opened in the south of the city. Whilst the other significant aspects of the strategy were reported previously, and are thus now consigned to memory, this new and still developing site at Melbourne Road open space stands as testimony to the investment. I therefore welcome the opportunity to briefly update members on its progress. The 38 plots are all fully let, and there is a long waiting list (currently 23 requests). The site has therefore developed an established allotment community and is, as a result, contributing to wider community development. As an established success, I felt it was worth special comment this year, but I also see no reason now why it will not endure and prosper from here onwards, and so this will be the last time I plan to make special mention of it in my reports. It will be folded into the wider allotment update in future.

As at the end of September 2022 the council's allotments had an occupancy rate of 96%. Those not let are in low lying areas that cannot be gardened without significant investment in terms of drainage. The 96% will not therefore be exceeded in the near future. All plots that can be used are being used, or are in the process of reletting, and there continues to be a steady demand for allotment tenancies which is expected to increase if the cost-of-living crisis continues in the long-term.

As we now look forwards to a period of greater normality for most, ever mindful of the waiting lists, we are now having to reverse the more relaxed approach taken in recent years on the issue of enforcement of tenancies where covid may have played a part. This approach was taken to take account of shielding and other requirements of the time, but clearly could not hold indefinitely. We anticipate some kick-back, which will be handled appropriately as we endeavour to make sure that those who just cannot or will not care for their plot properly make way for those who are more enthusiastic.

The new charge levels that the Council found necessary to introduce in February 2022 have now settled and had, as forecast, no impact on demand I am pleased to report. I continue to liaise personally with the allotment societies in the city to gauge feedback on this and other allotment service issues, and I am grateful for their engagement, feedback, and support.

## **Equipped Play Areas**

The Council maintains 28 equipped play areas across the city, ensuring that British Standards are maintained at all times for installation, inspections and maintenance.

High levels of responsibility and care unfortunately means relatively high costs, and this does impact on the council's ability to expand the service and expedite repairs at times. Working closely with the Property Services section, who order the repairs, safety is always the number one concern for this service. It is necessary to close play areas off at times, and officers are under clear instruction not to bow to public pressure to re-open sites unless the necessary safety requirements are in place.

A major refurbishment of Whitton's Park play area has been completed, making good use of some S106 monies. The site has been rather a victim of its own success, with high demand forcing closure for repair of some elements. The large zip-wire has proven especially popular, and further work is planned to shore-up the foundations for this shortly, so as to ensure its long term continued safe use.

A citizen panel survey in summer 2020 showed that 90.5% of respondents who gave an opinion were 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied with the standard of outdoor play provision. No further surveys on this specific topic have been undertaken since, but we do have feedback on open spaces generally- more of which later.

### **The Arboretum.**

It remains as a vital open space for many in the east of the city. Its fantastic heritage as one of Lincoln's very oldest public spaces means development opportunities can be restricted, but yet it also offers that unique window on our social history, critical in Lincoln's Victorian industrial past.

Unfortunately, the Arboretum Advisory Group has lost many of its members over time, but a recent meeting of interested and relevant parties gave fresh emphasis to rejuvenating the group. Despite the limited membership of late, improvements are still being made, and a new power supply to the bandstand will be established shortly. This is considered critical for events/activities, and it is hoped that this simple improvement will encourage community groups to step up and seek use of the site for a wider range of activities in 2023.

### **Boultham Park**

I am pleased to report that the phase one element of the Boultham Park project has now been both completed physically and signed off officially by the National Lottery as completed. The Council's commitments for maintenance endure in line with the funding commitment of course, as does the liaison with Linkage Community Trust as lead agency on the bid. These will continue long term.

Phase two, the lake, is also coming to an end. The delivery of activities is the outstanding aspect of the project, and this was originally scheduled to end in February next year. However, staff have managed to make adjustments with the National Lottery's agreement, to extend engagement and activities until July 2023. Alternative external funding via the National Lottery is being sought, in the hope of extending the engagement work for a further three years, not just at this park but across all our parks. Alas we won't know the fate of that bid until the new year.

Through to July, the Boutham Park lake project will enter the detailed evaluation phase, following hard on the heels of the first phase of the project, to assess the impact the project has had in the widest sense. Evaluation and formal closure for a project of this size will therefore take some time, but I expect to be able to report positively on this in my next report.

In concluding this section, I would take the opportunity to remind members that because of the improvement brought about in the park in recent years we were of course proud for it to be used as one of the areas designated for flower laying following the passing of the Queen

### **Hartsholme Country Park and camp site**

The park remains very popular indeed, with the impacts of heavy use during 'lock-down' still evident in several places.

The camp site has fully reopened, and although not attracting quite the same levels of business seen pre-covid, its recovery is sound, and gives grounds for optimism of a full recovery. Higher levels of reported 'staycations' have not unfortunately been reflected in bookings as of yet.

Year on year comparisons on business remain meaningless due to the effects of covid, but we have data that tracks performance over time, so can use 2019 as a baseline with confidence. The first six months of the year showed us to be down 767 spaces / night booked based on 2019. 2021 in full delivered 76.18% of 2019 income levels, and this year will exceed that, but we will not know exactly by how much until the accounts for the full year are concluded.

The use of the camping pods has proved to be popular since their introduction, especially at weekends. They continue to deliver not just income, but a facility for those visiting the city.

Satisfaction with the camp site is running at 92% on average, testimony to the diligence of the operational staff.

The decision to set camp site prices over a year in advance has proven advantageous, as was hoped, for some advance bookings.

As members will know Hartsholme has been subjected to a number of unauthorised encampments in recent years, and so a further measure has now been added to provide greater security for the main buildings and camp site by way of a pop-up bollard. Whilst no steps can ever present unauthorised access completely, this new measure adds a yet another deterrent.

Another capital project that has just come to an end in the park relates to the outlet at the dam wall. Members will be aware that the lake is in fact a designated reservoir, and as such is subject to monitoring and management requirements, including independent assessment. In recent years the independent engineer who undertakes the statutory inspections has flagged up the flood risks associated with the restriction of the outflow. This has led to enforcement that required the Council to act. Following

the letting of a suitable contract, over the last few months a company has opened up and remodelled the outlet to permit a greater outflow in flood circumstances. This is important work that will help better protect housing in the area from flood risks in exceptional circumstances.

In accordance with requirements for Green Flag status the management plan for the site is kept up to date, and the senior ranger will be submitting the events report shortly. By way of an interim update please see the Events and Activities section below.

Development of a Master Plan for the site, although currently un-resourced, does remain as an objective of the council within its strategic plan.

## **Commons**

This year has seen significant work take place on the commons; all of this being reported to the Commons Advisory Panel, as is normal practice. The commons have again been able to benefit from additional income derived from an agreement with LCFC for car parking on match days. Projects progressed include:

Pond clearance work West Common

Installation of benches, West Common and South Common

Opening of views on to the Viking Way

Flood alleviation work West Common entrance off Roseberry Avenue.

The Commons Management Plan has a work programme, and there are regular updates against that work programme.

The Carholme Golf Club, operating as they do on West Common land, have developed an Environmental Management Plan that will enhance biodiversity on the area occupied by the golf club, making the area better for the public, and affording the golf club a new/unique environmentally focused marketing opportunity. The first draft has been submitted and is under consideration currently. A revision is expected shortly.

## **Hope Wood**

I would like to make mention here of a new public open space being developed by the council, Hope Wood. This is accessible off Newark Road, via the cycle way, and sits adjacent Boultham Park. The project is making use of Levelling Up parks funding and will see a 3.5Ha site of low lying poorly grazed grassland transformed into a nature reserve with considerable tree planting.

The project is being delivered in conjunction with the Woodland Trust, and with support from Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust.

At time of drafting some basic site clearance work has been ordered, and designs are nearing their final stages. Materials are being ordered. Clearly it will take some years to establish, but it is expected that considerable progress and change will be evident in the spring. This is another exciting development in support of the council's climate change aims.

## **John Dawber Gardens**

This important site, commemorating as it does some of the city's historic twinning links, is in need of refurbishment. Unfortunately the financial climate has not made investment possible by the Council, but of late we have been approached by a local group who are in the process of establishing a formal charitable trust with the aim of taking on and attracting funding for the site's rejuvenation. We have been happy to work with them, both on some initial volunteer work, and in progressing the request for a lease of the site. This is to be considered shortly.

## **Events and Activities**

Under the auspices of our in-house established events/activities programme I can advise members that between January and November a total of 11,045 individuals attended events held at Hartsholme Country Park and Swanholme Lakes Local Nature Reserve, Boultham Park and the Arboretum. A total of ninety-four park-led events and 361 self-led events have been held (which have attracted 4342 participants for Park organised events and 6703 participants for self-led activities).

There is also a separate lottery funded programme of events/activities which will feature as a part of the post project review. This has included for some major events such as the opening celebrations, the Lincspirational Plants event, work with Sir F Hill school, social prescribing work. These have been inspiring projects and will be detailed in the final review, as is a requirement for the National Lottery funding.

The best attended self-led events held at Hartsholme were the weekly walking groups which use the network of paths within the park and had 1500 individuals attend. Since the outbreak of Covid in 2020 walking has become a more accessible way of exercising and this is reflected by the figures.

Other organisations which held events at the park came from a variety of sources which included, the University of Lincoln, Hartsholme Electric Model Boat Club (HEMBC), local schools and charities such as the RSPB and British institute for the Deaf (BID)

This year we also saw several networking and picnic type events held by the Ukrainian Culture Centre which have provided invaluable support for the community and the incoming families.

The Park-led event participants most favoured in the annual events calendar to date was undoubtedly the Hartsholme Halloween Trail (844). The amount of people who attended this activity was higher than last year and is nearly back to pre-pandemic levels.

Other events included in the 2022 events program which had high attendance figures included the Easter Egg Trail (638), Toddler Time (230), and the Jubilee Trail (90). Several adult activities such as the History events, Tree walks and Obelisk workshops, were also organised in 2022 which attracted good attendance figures.

## **Education**

In total 1263 people have engaged so far this calendar year attended in an educational visit at Hartsholme Country Park and Swanholme Lakes Local Nature Reserve (Ranger Led 583 and Self-Led 680). Attendees came from a variety of sources which included several local and non-local schools, and the Home Education network.

Self-guided educational events which proved popular in 2022 had 680 individuals taking part in a wide range of activities including Shelter building, Orienteering and self-guided walks on various subjects.

The most popular Ranger led activity undertaken in 2022, was Mini Beast Hunt followed equally by Shelter Building, Terrific Trees, and Woodland Art.

In 2022 a continuation of the successful education program which took place at Hartsholme continued at Boultham Park. Twenty-two events (609 individuals) to date have been programmed in and delivered within Boultham Park by the Education Ranger in partnership with the Boultham Park Lake Restoration Project and a local school Sir Francis Hill, and local Scout, Cub, and Beavers groups as part of the Outdoor Classroom Project.

These events were part of the lake restoration project (National Lottery funded) and were therefore not subject to a charge.

## **Volunteering**

In more recent years all volunteering for open spaces has been co-ordinated through a single post, ensuring consistency of approach in-line with Council policies, and co-ordination of resources.

The Volunteer coordinator submits an annual update on performance/progress at the end of the year. Below is an interim update so far for the calendar year demonstrating once more that volunteering is showing itself to be extremely beneficial both for our green space sites in terms of works undertaken, but also for the volunteers themselves, with mental health and wellbeing being more important than ever post the Covid 19 restrictions.

Our regular weekly Volunteers are now re-established and have continued their hard work, dedication and commitment on our Green space sites, with many of them now having been Volunteers with Lincoln City Council for over 7 years.

Of particular note, this year has also seen an increase in Office/Group days, with companies and businesses volunteering in groups of around 7- 15 employees and coming to sites for full days. This has proven to be very beneficial for team building and also for enabling employees to re connect with each other after Covid 19, especially useful with increased working from home.

Our main sites for Volunteering continue to be Hartsholme Country Park, Boultham Park, Birchwood Nature Park, Swanholme Lakes Local Nature Reserve and the South



Common. Below is a brief outline of tasks and projects carried out on each and the volunteer hours worked on each site so far this year.

### **Hartsholme Country Park and Swanholme Lakes Local Nature Reserve**

Tasks so far this year carried out by our weekly volunteers have included Path works, Fencing, small tree removal, drainage clearance and helping the Education and Events Ranger with projects and events such as Halloween.

There have also been groups from The Environment Agency, BT Call Centre, The Coop and Green Synergy coming to the site for Volunteering days, and in the case of Green Synergy, for training as part of their accredited course they were undertaking.

Volunteer hours = 968

### **Boultham Park**

The Lake Restoration Project has again provided volunteers with lots of varied tasks including, under storey planting around the lake edges, work on the stumpery area and dredging the lake with hand tools.

Groups have again joined us from BT Call Centre, Praxair Solutions, The Coop. Volunteers from Green Synergy spent 2 days planting and training for part of their Conservation and Countryside Management course.

Volunteer hours= 592

### **Birchwood Nature Park**

This site has been looked after by our regular weekly group, with one of the biggest projects being the laying of an established hedge around the meadow area of the park. This will continue into 2023 and hopefully will see 2 sides of the meadow hedge laid and completed. Other tasks have included pond clearance, tree removal from boundaries of nearby properties, wild flower meadow work and path works. The volunteers have made a huge physical impact on this site and improvements can clearly be seen from year to year.

Volunteer hours=336

### **South Common**

The Probation Service/Community Payback were working under Covid restrictions until the middle of 2022. This meant a limit on the number of people they could transport in vans, with a maximum of 2 people per van. They have also had their numbers greatly reduced due to courts struggling to process a back log of cases, and they have informed us this is unlikely to change until mid 2023. They have continued to remove the evasive Turkey Oak trees on site whenever suitable and will be working on a meadow area adjacent to the Vikings Way from September 2022.

Volunteer hours= 127

For the latter part of 2022, more office/work groups have been booked in to volunteer on our sites than ever before, along with Service Users from Green Synergy who have finished their training and are looking to gain more practical experience.

## **Arboriculture**

Tree care is always a priority for the Council as it strives to protect trees against the ever-present demands imposed on them in an urban environment.

In 2022, so far, the council have dealt with just under 2000 tree 'cases', some of which were small, but many were larger complex cases in relation to planning issues.

Some 503 work orders have been raised, with 176 still outstanding.

We planted 149 trees in early 2022, to replace those that had to be removed, underpinning the Council's 'one for one' replanting policy. This is up on the previous year's (2020/21) number of 134 for the same period. This year's tree planting programme is being developed now.

There have been 219 planning applications that have required tree reports. Additionally there have been 25 more detailed tree consultancy reports also.

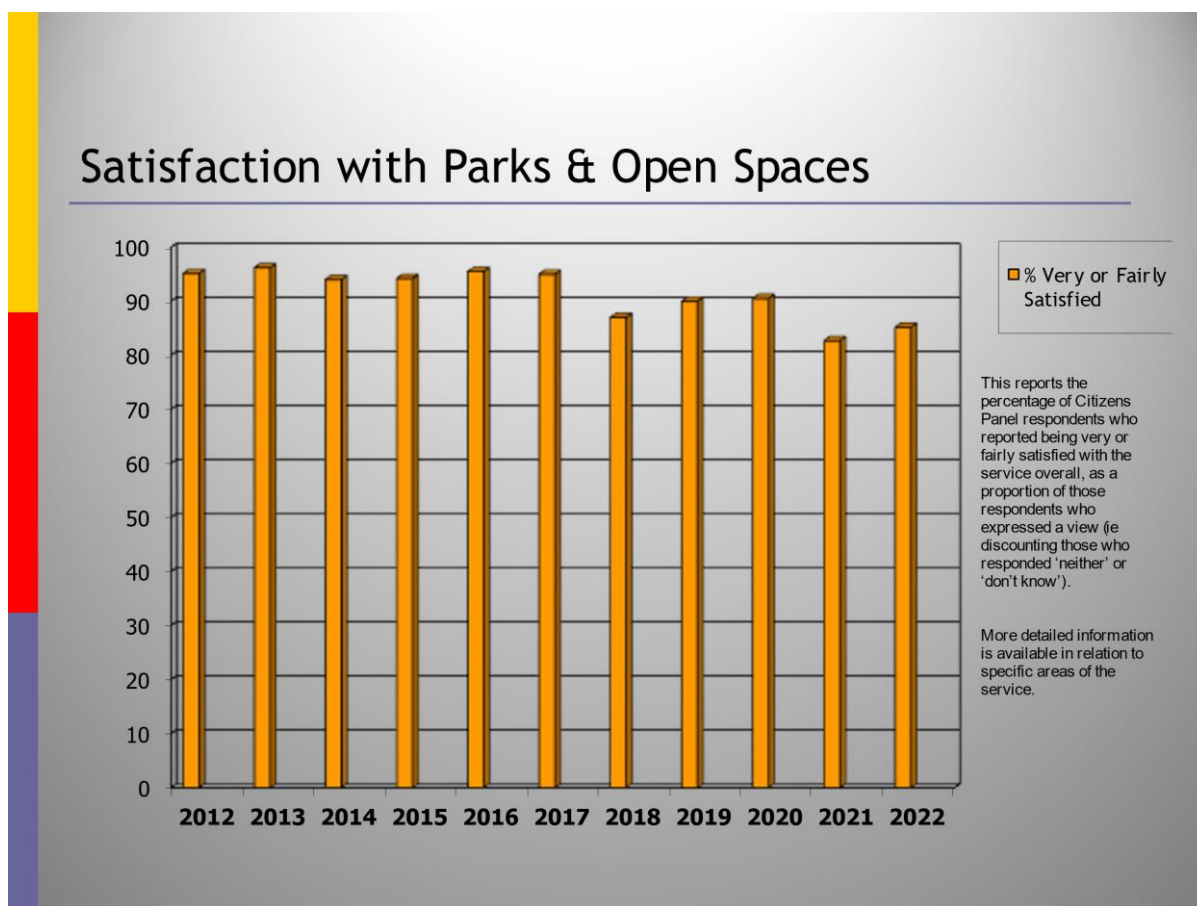
The backlog of tree works is a significant concern and is due to the inability of our contractor to recruit suitably qualified staff. The outstanding work is reprioritised within structured fortnightly meetings, to ensure priorities are met.

## **Travellers**

This year has seen just one unauthorised encampment which was on Skellingthorpe Road (down from four last year). However, another was attempted at Whittons Park, thwarted by the strengthened defences and early police intervention. Outside of the costs of staff time, clean-up costs were thankfully minimal.

Despite the fall in numbers, we are aware that this could change quickly, and so have retained a focus on adding further deterrent measures. Skellingthorpe sports fields remain a priority before the spring.

**Overview of satisfaction.**



The above is based on July 2022 Citizen Panel data, where a greater level of detail was also asked in relation to specific to parks, commons, trees, shrubs etc. Each was similar in outcome with a slight exception of trees having the slightly lower score.

For clarity, whilst numerous indicators are collected and reviewed for the service, the departmental KPIs for Q3 showed:

Indicator	20/21 target	Average of latest recorded outturns (may not be full year)
Contractor performance points score	50- 150 points	135
Satisfaction parks and open spaces	85% to 90%	85
Allotment occupancy	84% to 92%	96

**Street Scene**

This includes the provision and maintenance of street name plates and art installations, and the maintenance of bus shelters. The city currently has 111 bus shelters (66

Adshell/ 45 city council), and 22 art installations of varying sizes (now including five new ones in Boultham Park and the Boole Sculpture outside the bus station).

Historically there are two tiers of bus shelter provision. A contract for free provision of those where the advertising pays for the shelter, and those which the council has to manage and pay for. The budget for council-provided bus shelters was removed a number of years ago, when members took a decision that it could no longer afford to maintain bus shelters. Shelters damaged beyond repair are therefore removed. We continue to seek imaginative way to maintain and protect what we can, but ultimately the second tier of bus shelters will be removed over time unless other funding sources can be found.

## **Waste/Recycling**

The Lincolnshire Waste Partnership has been active this last year in the delivery of the action plan underpinning the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Lincolnshire (JMWMS). This document prioritises the work which drives change for waste services across the county, and ensures a joined-up approach is taken, so reducing any risks of confusion. The JMWMS is now several years old, and so is currently under review.

Members may be aware that we had expected a clear steer from government this year on details connected with the Environment Act 2021, which contained some fundamental changes in a few key areas of waste/recycling policy. Covid has delayed this, but the initial national consultation concluded, leading to further follow-up work taking place now.

Although we do not have total certainty we do know a few key things:

1. A public body will be established to collect income from packaging companies for dissemination to those dealing with the effects /processing of waste packaging (Councils).
2. To obtain funding councils will be required to prove they are operating “effectively and efficiently”, which will be predicated on a consistent list of materials.
3. We will be required to collect food waste weekly (timescale for implementation to be determined)

Important points of note about the above.

Point 1. Levels of funding are not yet set out, but where income is being achieved this will be netted off against costs.

Point 2. Will be assessed, but the exact criteria is, as yet unclear. Potentially an independent assessor.

With regards to separate paper and card collections, these may not be mandated directly, but might be required as a part of the ‘effective and efficient’ assessment. Lincoln, as perhaps the most complex area in Lincolnshire in which to deliver separation of materials, is not scheduled to commence paper and card collections, within JMWMS, until 2024. Officers are preparing a report for member consideration, but are still awaiting the S51 notice from LCC, which is required for this change. Whilst

it is written into the outline programme this has not been signed off by Lincoln's members yet. For this reason 2024 remains provisional.

It is also possible that the guidance will set out with greater clarity the materials to be collected and methodologies for collection, which could impact the above decision. We are hopeful that the guidance will be published early in the new year, and this will of course be reflected in the revised JMWMS accordingly.

Councils across Lincolnshire continue to have a 'contamination' issue in the recycling stream, reflecting a national problem. Separate paper and card collections have an impact on these figures in that they both remove contaminated paper and card from the Mixed Dry Recycling (MDR) but also place renewed emphasis on sortation by residents though education and enforcement campaigns. The former is negligible in terms of tonnage measurements, so it is felt the latter plays a much bigger part. On that basis I have asked officers to develop a proposal for what we might do to improve our educational and support profile in the new year.

In terms of statistical performance please note that data is always lagged. This report reflects data up to end of June 2022 (Q1).

Domestic general (residual) waste disposed of has reduced by around 3.2% from 2020/21 to 2021/22 (this includes for growth in new properties). It is expected this may continue as a trend as a result of the recession, which is supported by the Q1 data below.

#### Financial years

20/21	547.6 Kg /pa	136.9 Kg/hh av per Q
21/22	530 Kg/pa	132.5 kg/hh av per Q

Q1 of 2022 (April to June) is showing a figure of 129.5 Kg/hh

Following the same trend, the number of residents using the garden waste service has declined. This is part of an erratic but gradual decline in numbers which is believed to be affected by disposable income.

2017	18,241
2018	17,794
2019	17,405
2020	17,514
2021	17,744
2022	16,785 to date.

The reduced buy-in to the green waste service has meant a corresponding reduction in composting tonnages .

#### Financial years

20/21	6231.28 Tonnes	16.17% of total waste stream
21/22	5787.32 Tonnes	15.65% of total waste stream

On the assumption that the green waste is still being created, we must assume that it will either be home composted, transferred to the HWRC sites directly, or in some

cases, hidden in general domestic or recycling waste. As the general domestic waste tonnages are down, and so are recycling tonnages (see below), there are grounds to suggest that the vast majority is going into HWRCs. However, this does not take account of the contamination rate in recyclable materials, running at 26% last quarter, which showed 18% was 'other' in nature, suggesting significant green waste (amongst other things) is now finding its way into the MDR. More detailed work is taking place around this, with the assistance of LWP colleagues.

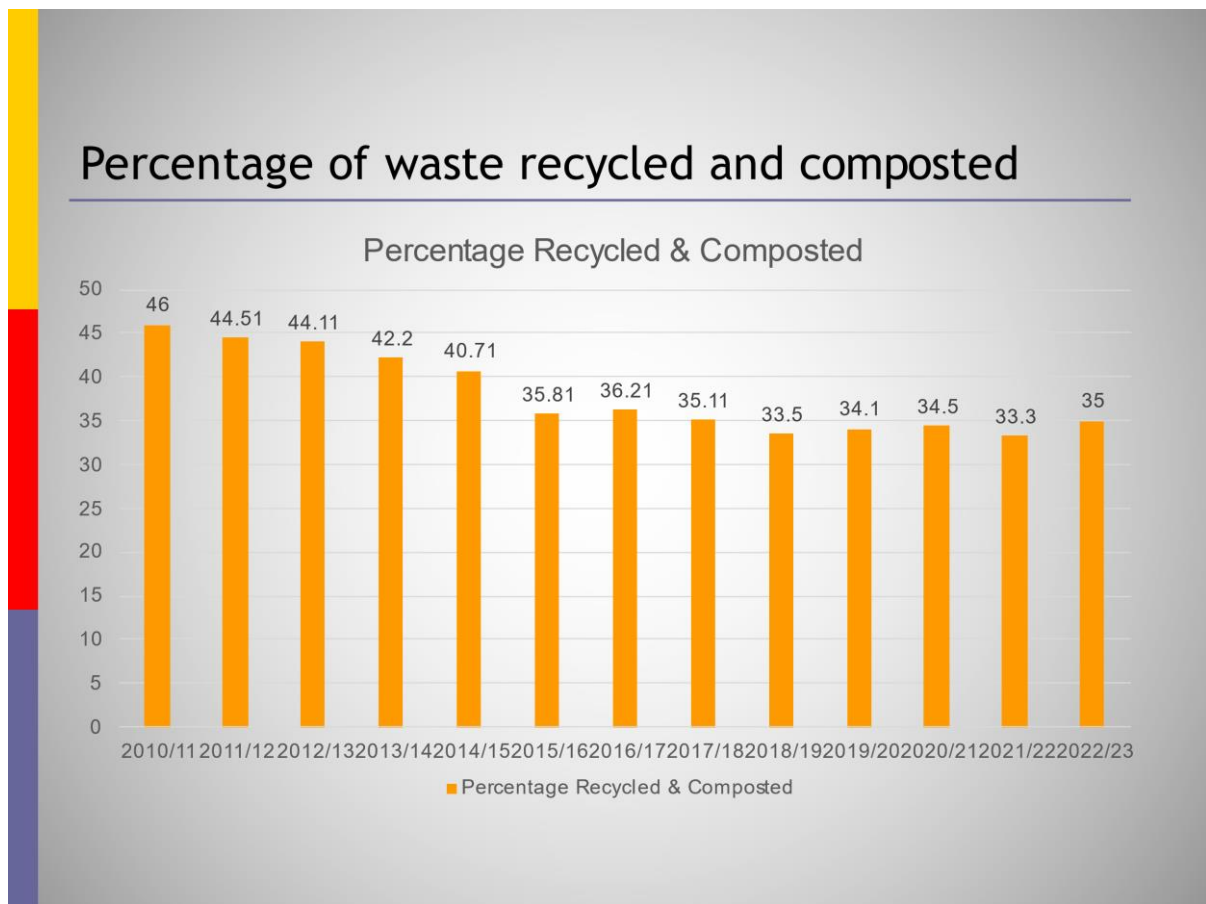
### Recycling tonnages

Below are the tonnages collected in MDR after contamination has been removed. It reflects the picture for general domestic waste.

#### Financial years

20/21 7048.09 Tonnes 18.29% of total waste stream  
 21/22 6543.86 Tonnes 17.7 % of total waste stream

The graph below shows combined performance and suggests that there has been a general levelling out of performance in the low to mid 30s. The final bar representing 2022/3 is **not** indicative of actual outturn for the year yet, as it only takes data to the end of June 2022.



NOTE. 2022/23 only reflects Q1 data so is not indicative of a full year's performance.

Satisfaction scores for waste /recycling services have not been tested in corporate surveys since 2021 so have not been updated. They are scheduled for November/December 2022.

For clarity, whilst numerous indicators are collected and reviewed for the service as a part of day to day operations, the departmental KPIs are:

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>20/21 target</b>	<b>Latest recorded outturns (may not be full year)</b>
Percentage of Waste Recycled /composted	33.5% to 39%	34.82%
Contractor performance points score	50 to 150 points	95
Satisfaction with waste services	90% to 96%	97%
Satisfaction with recycling services	90% to 96%	94.5%

## **Street Cleansing**

This section covers all areas of street cleansing, including street sweeping, litter picking, litter bin emptying, fly tipping, and the removal of graffiti and abandoned vehicles.

Fly tipping continued to be an issue for us this year. The installation of CCTV in the Sincil Bank area has proven to be beneficial with a notable reduction in these areas covered. This is helpful, but does show that suggestions that people did not know it was fly tipping due to cultural or language difficulties seems to be debunked to at least some extent. I am awaiting detailed assessment of the impact before reaching any conclusions.

## **Graffiti**

Under lockdown we saw a drop in graffiti, but alas that has not been sustained. We remain committed to graffiti removal as a mainstay of showing commitment to a clean environment. However, getting graffiti cleared is not easy, as much of it is on private property, and as such it is the landowner's responsibility to clear it or at least to give permission for us to do so. Some choose not to, and others won't respond to offers of help from the council.

The below includes all graffiti removed, apart from utility boxes.

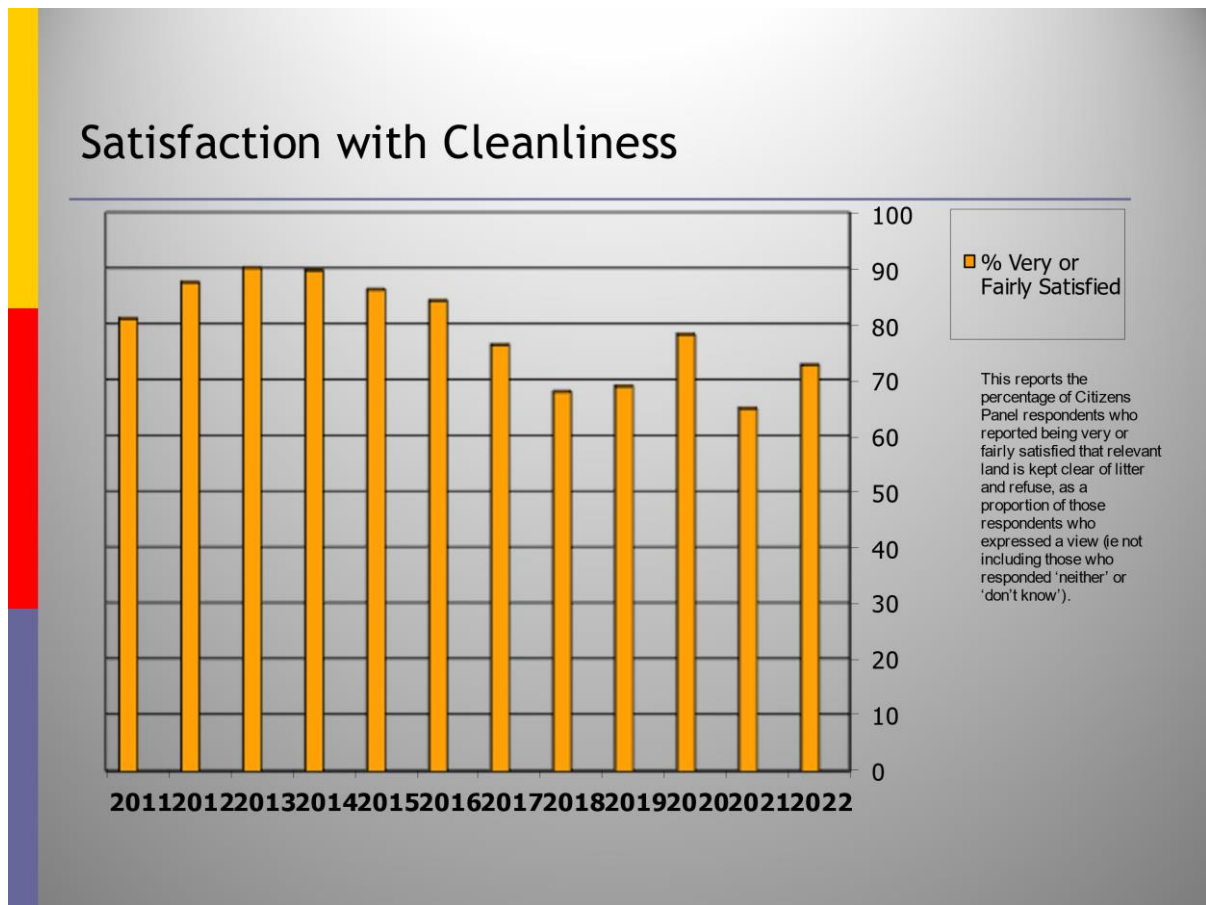
2021 Non-Offensive Graffiti – 23 cases removed  
 2021 Offensive Graffiti – 17 cases removed  
 TOTAL = 40

2022 Non-Offensive Graffiti – 30 cases removed so far  
 2022 Offensive Graffiti – 15 cases removed so far

TOTAL = 45

## Litter Policy

Volunteer litter picking continues to be popular, including many who work through the Council's Volunteer Co-ordinator and work in an organised group. Some however work independently. The Council's continued enthusiasm for volunteer action has to be tempered a little by its responsibilities to make sure, so far as we are able, that such voluntary activities only work on authorised areas and of course that they do this safely. A clear policy has been drafted and adopted to guide this work across the county.



In the summer Citizens Panel survey 2022, 72.8% of respondents who expressed a view reported being very or fairly satisfied with the cleanliness of the city. A higher performance than was seen in the last year. This is always a challenging issue to achieve a good satisfaction score on, and this is a welcome improvement. I will be working closely with the staff and contractor to seek out further incremental improvements this next year. Assessment of the feedback provided means that the focus will be on leaf clearance work, fly tipping, and graffiti. Points I will also want to take up in the service specification documents for 2026 onwards.

For clarity, whilst numerous indicators are collected and reviewed for the service the departmental KPIs are:



<b>Indicator</b>	<b>20/21 target</b>	<b>Latest recorded outturns (may not be full year)</b>
Contractor performance points score	50 to 150 points	80
Satisfaction with cleansing services	68% to 80%	72.8%

## **Public Toilets**

Last year was an especially difficult year for the service as it went through significant review to meet some very challenging savings targets. Regrettably the scale of the savings meant that this impacted staff numbers with redundancies being unavoidable, and restrictions on the availability of services being necessary.

Ultimately the savings plan has been delivered, but the effects are still being felt by the service, as resilience is now much depleted adding to the burdens on remaining staff. I wish to express my gratitude to all those involved with this service, as they have been required to show considerable patience and fortitude.

Charges of 20p per use have been in operation at the Bus station, Castle Square and Tentercroft street since January 2017. Covid lockdowns affected income as can clearly be seen below.

	<b>Castle</b>	<b>Lucy Tower</b>	<b>Tentercroft Street</b>	<b>Bus Station</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>2016/17</b>	£1,731.93	£988.20			£2720.13
<b>2017/18</b>	£10,029.31	£4,588.02	£917.65	£3,115.35	£18,650.33
<b>2018/19</b>	£8,354.97	£2,278.05	£9,176.03	£17,843.46	£37,652.51
<b>2019/20</b>	£8,380.77	£172*	£9,207.88	£18,179.43	£35,940.08
<b>2020/21</b>	£6,134.30	£0	£77	£12,806.74	£19,018.04
<b>2021/22</b>	£9,587.07	£0	£8,504.37	£20,508.21	£38,599.65
2022/23	£3675.42	£0	£4173.33	£9620.23	£17,468.98

This service has again achieved high standards for those facilities entered into the Loo of the Year awards, with Tentercroft achieving gold standard, and Castle and Bus Station platinum standard.

## **Sport and Leisure**

The past year has been a mixed year for sport and Leisure both locally and nationally. Nationally there has been both a slow recovery from the coronavirus pandemic which saw the sector significantly impacted but also additional measures last winter due to the Omicron variant. Locally the main swimming pool at Yarborough Leisure Centre was shut in January 2022 due to emergency repairs following a routine inspection of the ceiling.

## **Yarborough Swimming Pool**

In January 2022 we made the decision to close the swimming pools at Yarborough Leisure Centre following a routine inspection of the ceiling and roof void. This inspection raised concerns regarding the supporting structure of the suspended ceiling. Further exploratory investigations revealed that this was limited to the main pool and the learner pool was subsequently boarded off reopened.

Work then quickly progressed to identify the issues and solutions to allow the main pool to be reopened and the final works consist of -

- replacement of the existing suspended ceiling,
- the removal of any redundant equipment in the roof void,
- ventilation to reduce the humidity in the roof void,
- improved and easily accessible lighting,
- move the pool ventilation tubes to more easily accessible areas for maintenance.

The project is complex and many of the preparatory works earlier this year are the type of things that would have been carried out prior to having to close the pool, in an ideal world.

In July 22 on site works started including boarding across the entire pool and erecting scaffolding covering the entire area of the pool and pool surrounds from ground floor to the suspended ceiling, including some bespoke support trusses. So far, the ceiling has been replaced, new ventilation equipment installed and the scaffolding has started to be removed.

We are now waiting for the new ventilation unit to be sited on the pool roof, connected and then the site tidied up. We are on target to have the pool opened by the end of the year.

During the entire time we have ensured that the teaching pool remained open and Active Nation have delivered an intensive programme of lessons and public use in the pool.

## Leisure Centre Stats

19<sup>th</sup> July 2021 saw the implementation of step four of the covid 19 road map. However, the leisure centres kept the booking systems and social distancing in the gyms and classes which limited numbers but built confidence in returning members.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>Quarterly Usage Yarborough</b>				
Pre-Pandemic (April 19 to March 20)	188,529	190,051	174,255	169,164
2021/22	39,879	87,485	76,946	66,896*
2022/23	51,958	60,934**		
<b>Customers who would recommend Yarborough Leisure Centre</b>				
2021/22	Not available during the pandemic			62%*
2022/23	50%	55%		

\*All pools closed 6<sup>th</sup> Jan 22, Teaching Pool reopened on the 31<sup>st</sup> Jan 22. After the pandemic, swimming was the largest % rise in exercise activities across in England.

\*\*Swimming lessons in the Teaching Pool increase monthly, including use by some Primary Schools and splash sessions for family use.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>Quarterly Usage Birchwood</b>				
Pre-Pandemic (April 19 to March 20)	57,774	57,138	57,321	57,144
2021/22	20,230	34,549	33,393	39,613
2022/23	33,468	37,616		
<b>Customers who would recommend Birchwood Leisure Centre</b>				
2021/22	Not available during the pandemic			83%*
2022/23	77%	81%		

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>AGP hours usage both sites</b>				
Pre Pandemic (April 19 to March 20)	520	555	612	630
2021/22	895	790	806	775
2022/23	689***	635		

\*\*\*Loss of a major booking to their own refurbished facilities. Returned in Q3 along with another large club.

### Other activity

- Both Yarborough and Birchwood received a certification of “Very Good” in the Quest Prime Recovery Assessments, (national benchmarking award) for business recovery and customer confidence following the reopening after the pandemic. This is the second highest level of the award, lasting for a year Oct 2021-22.
- Birchwood Leisure Centre scored 94.6% on their external mystery visit for Quest for exemplary customer service and experience.
- Yarborough have been chosen as the status of Lincoln’s Hub for the delivery of the NHS’s Cardiac Rehabilitation provision.
- At the Lincolnshire Sports & Physical Activity Awards in Nov 2021 Active Nation were the winners of the “Organisation that has gone above and beyond to continue to provide sport and/or physical activity to support/benefit the health and wellbeing of an individual or groups of individuals”.
- Active Nation Lincoln were nominated for the workplace well-being award coming second out of all the nominees

### Lincoln 10k

- A new contract was procured in early 2022 with the successful contractor being Run For All (the previous contractor). The first race under the new contract on 30<sup>th</sup> October was a smaller than previous years with 2481 entered and 2079 finished. This was a combination of the short timescale from awarding the contract and a general reduction in entries for this kind of event seen nationally. A Family Fun Run before the main event was trialled this year.
- The date for next year’s event has already been announced and applications are already open so we hope that numbers will increase significantly next year.

## **Recreation Services**

The Recreation Service has weathered the pandemic storm with pitch hire and community centre use returning to prior levels and in some cases exceeding former use.

Officers have worked with NHS Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board to deliver a vaccination hub at the Weighing Rooms on Carholme Road. This required coordinating sensitive works to a listed building to enable a clinical environment and logistical challenges to relocate long standing hirers and their equipment. We are grateful to our hirers, in particular the Lincoln Band, for their help and flexibility in enabling this essential programme to be delivered. The Weighing Rooms replaced the Lincolnshire Show Ground as a regional hub and over 500 people a day continue to be vaccinated.

Lincolnshire YMCA have approached the service with a request to adopt and improve St Giles Community Centre and invest in the site with funding from the government Youth Investment Fund. Whilst this is at an early stage it would see significant improvement to the centre with a focus on facilities for children and young people.

Earlier this year saw £30,000 of s106 funding used to improve the pitches on The Backies. This site now supports Lincoln Griffins girls' teams for matches and training.

## **Food, Health and Safety**

The Food, Health and Safety Team continue to prioritise protecting public health, taking a risk-based approach, in line with the Food Standards Agency's Recovery Plan which is described below. This allows the service to focus on those businesses that present the greatest risk to public health.

### **FSA Recovery Plan**

The Covid 19 pandemic continues to have an effect on the service and the delivery of official controls.

In order to assist Competent Food Authorities to recover from the impact of COVID-19, the Food Standards Agency's (FSA) issued guidance in the form of a Local Authority Recovery Plan to ensure that resources are targeted where they add greatest value in providing safeguards for public health in relation to food.

As a minimum, Local Authorities should deliver official food controls and related activities as detailed in the Recovery Plan. This will remain in place until decisions are made by the FSA on the modernisation of the food hygiene delivery model and the revised food hygiene rating scheme. The new model is due to be fully implemented in 2024/2025.

We have a Lincoln Recovery Plan complementing the FSA plan.

The Recovery Plan is being implemented alongside delivery of basic service activity:

- official controls where the nature and frequency are prescribed in specific legislation and official controls recommended by FSA guidance that support trade and enable export
- reactive work including enforcement in the case of non-compliance, managing food incidents and food hazards, and investigating and managing complaints
- sampling, and
- ongoing proactive surveillance.

### **Food, Health & Safety Team**

In terms of staff resources, the team consists of the Food, Health & Safety Team Leader, 2 Environmental Health Officers and 2 Food Safety Officers.

### **Volume of Work – Food Safety and Public Health (01/11/21 – 31/10/22)**

- Service Requests (eg. Food and health & safety complaints, food hazard warnings and requests for advice on food safety , health & safety and public health related matters) – 1415
- Food Hygiene Inspections (Official Controls) – 552
- New food business registered - 192
- Food and Environmental Samples Taken – 125
- Infectious Disease Notifications – 30
- Health & Safety Inspections where matters of evident concern found - 8
- Accident Notifications – 43 of which 2 were investigated

### **Official Food Inspections Delivered**

Between 01 November 2021 and 31 October 2022, 552 inspections were carried out. In this time period 290 written warnings were issued, 13 formal Hygiene Improvement Notices served and there were 2 businesses that voluntarily closed due to the public health risk.

### **Examples of Food Safety & Public Health Complex Cases**

During this period, the team have dealt with a number of complex cases. Examples include the following:

- Covid related outbreaks
- Several businesses were complex due to persistent non compliances and it took some time to get them to a stage where they were broadly compliant
- A business with an infestation of rats

### **Examples of Health & Safety Complex Cases**

- A business was served with a Health & Safety Prohibition Notice due to dangerous work equipment, this prevented potential serious injury to employees
- A business was served with a Health & Safety Prohibition Notice due to a dangerous work activity, where there was a serious risk of a fall from height and so this activity was prohibited

- A business was served with a Health & Safety Prohibition Notice due to a dangerous structure being used for the storage of food. This resulted in the removal of the structure and it improved the working conditions for employees and had an affect on food safety too
- An accident investigation where an employee climbed up onto a roof through which he fell.
- Six Informal Notices were issued for matters of evident concern.

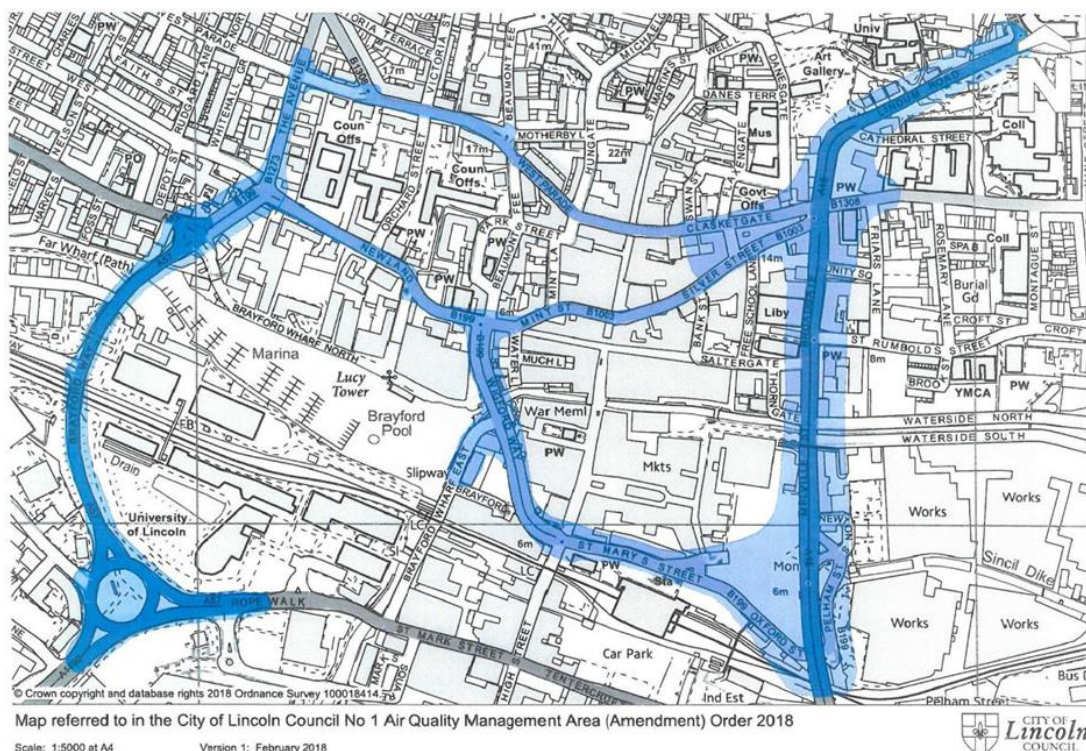
## Local Air Quality Management

The Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) process set out in Part IV of the Environment Act (1995) places an obligation on all local authorities to regularly review and assess air quality in their areas, and to determine whether or not the national air quality objectives are likely to be achieved. Local authorities are required to produce an Annual Status Report (ASR), which details the current air pollution levels and provide updates on measures to improve air quality and any progress that has been made.

Where an exceedance is considered likely the local authority must declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and prepare an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) setting out the measures it intends to put in place in pursuit of the objectives.

The Council currently has one AQMA in place due to historic exceedances of the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide, a pollutant closely associated with road traffic (as well as other combustion sources). The AQMA closely follows the main road traffic routes through the centre of the city as can be seen on figure 1 below.

Figure 1 – Current AQMA No.1



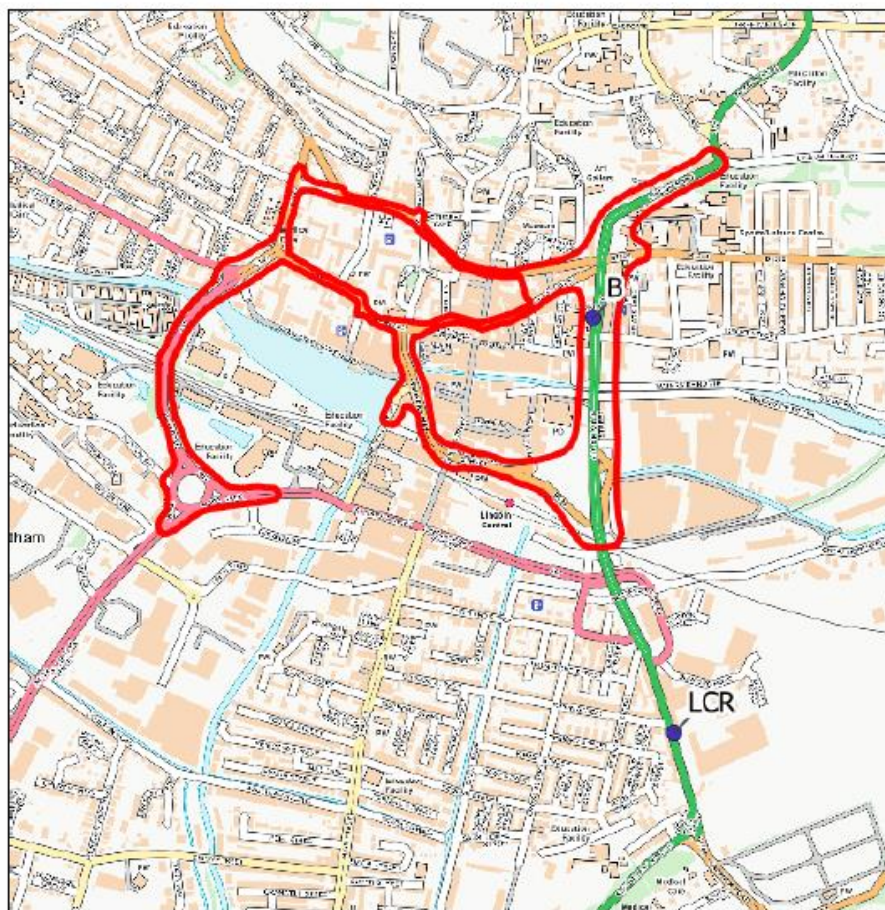
The Council continues to maintain a monitoring network covering the busier roads in the city where pollution levels are expected to be at their highest. The pollutants that are measured include nitrogen dioxide and particulates known as PM<sub>10</sub> (i.e. particulates smaller than 10microns).

Nitrogen dioxide is monitored at 19 locations using a combination of diffusion tubes (low cost passive samplers good for providing data on long term trends) and a continuous analyser (the reference method for assessing both short term and long term exposure). The continuous analyser is part of Defra's national network, which means that the data from that site is subject to their QA/QC and data management protocols.

We also have a continuous PM<sub>10</sub> monitor on Broadgate, which provides data on an hourly basis.

The monitoring sites can be seen in figures 2 & 3 below.

Figure 2 – Continuous analysers

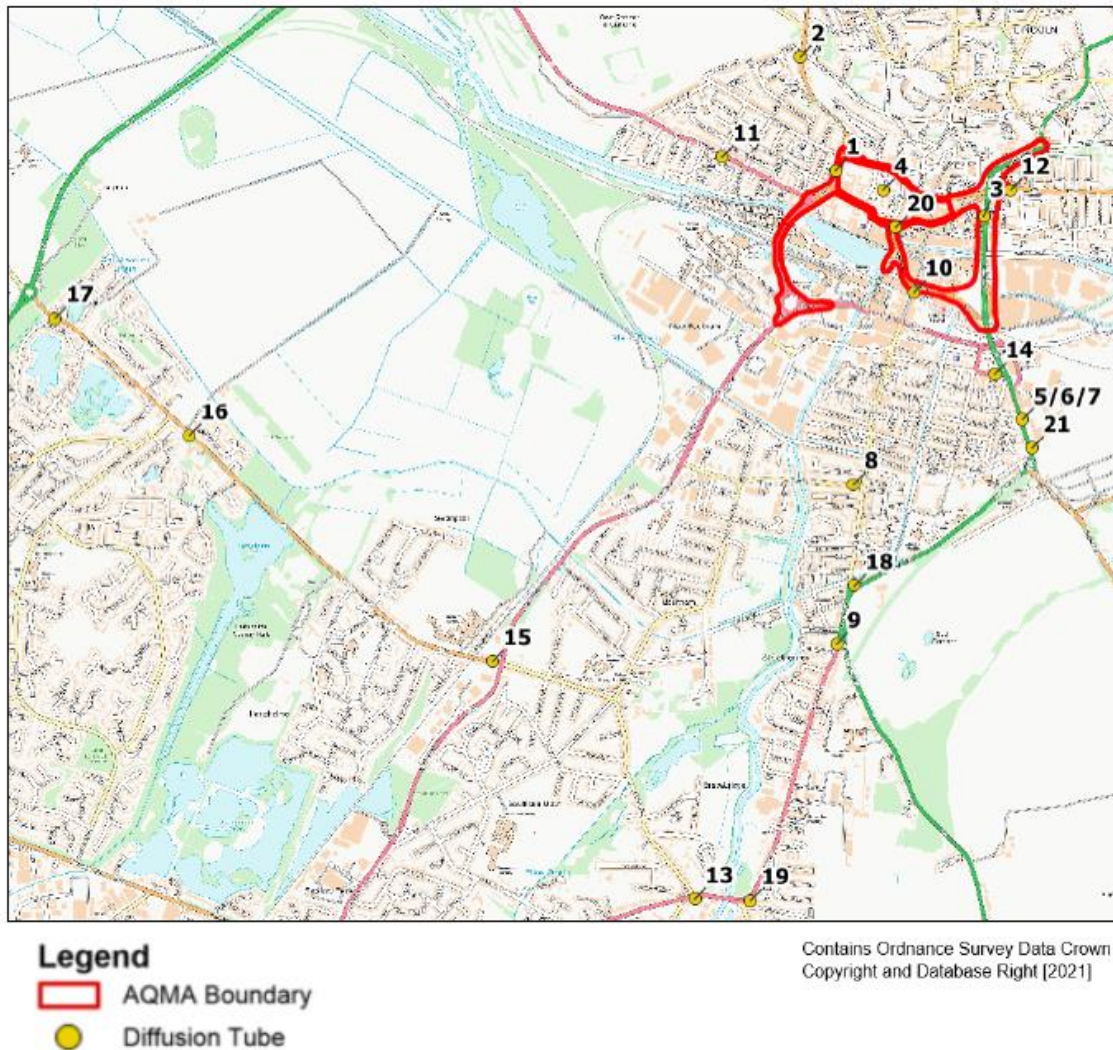


**Legend**  
[Red outline] AQMA Boundary  
[Blue dot] Automatic Station

Contains Ordnance Survey Data Crown Copyright and Database Right [2021]



Figure 3 – Nitrogen dioxide diffusion tube sites



Although the Council still has an AQMA in place, our monitoring network has not identified any likely exceedances of the national air quality objectives since 2018, when monitoring on Broadgate saw a potential breach of the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide. No other monitoring location within the city has seen an exceedance of the air quality objectives since 2013.

The most recent verified data (for 2021) is presented within the Council's Annual Status Report 2022, which was submitted to, and accepted by, Defra during the summer.

In the 5 years up to and including 2019, all the long-term monitoring sites showed an improving trend. This trend continued in 2020 and into 2021. Figures A1, A2 and A3.

Figure A.1 – Trends in Annual Mean NO<sub>2</sub> Concentrations at Monitoring Locations within AQMA

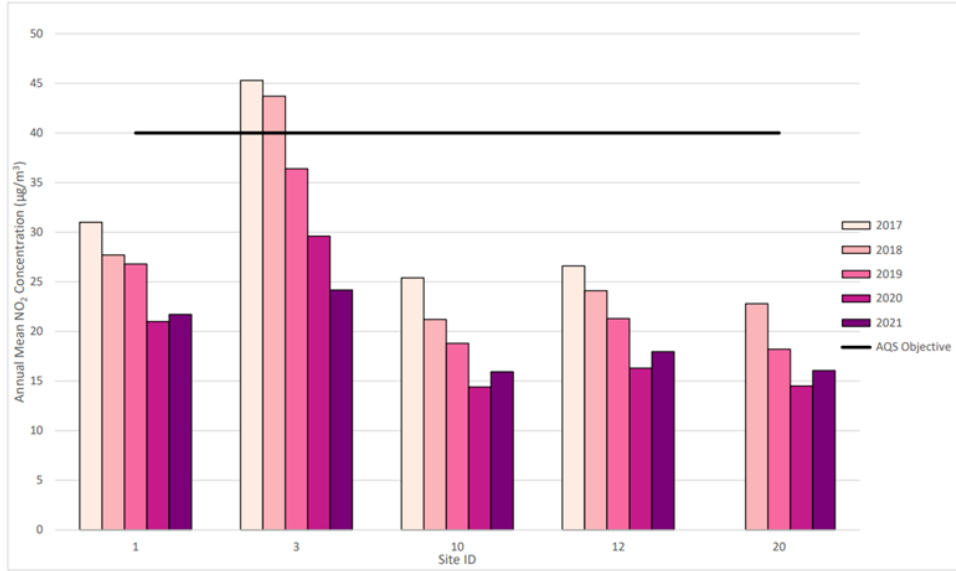


Figure A.2 – Trends in Annual Mean NO<sub>2</sub> Concentrations at Monitoring Locations Outside of AQMA

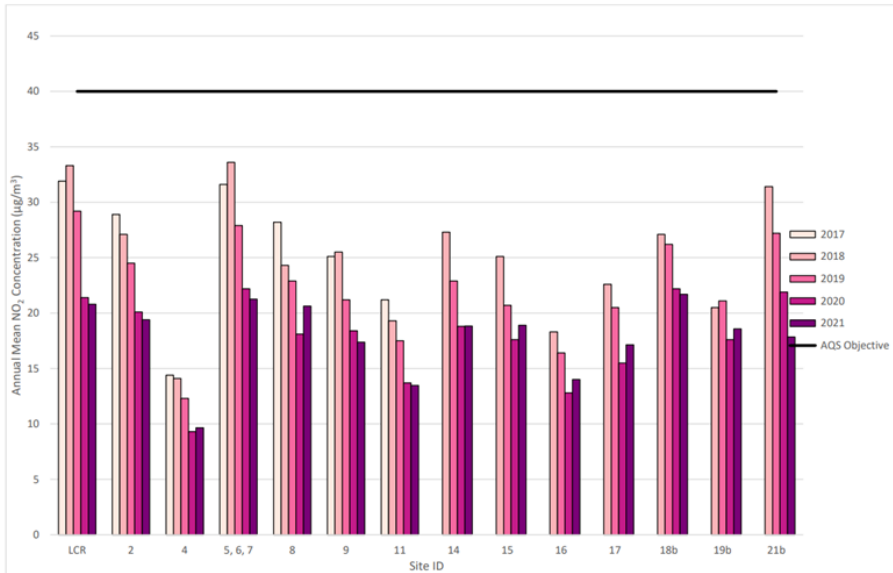
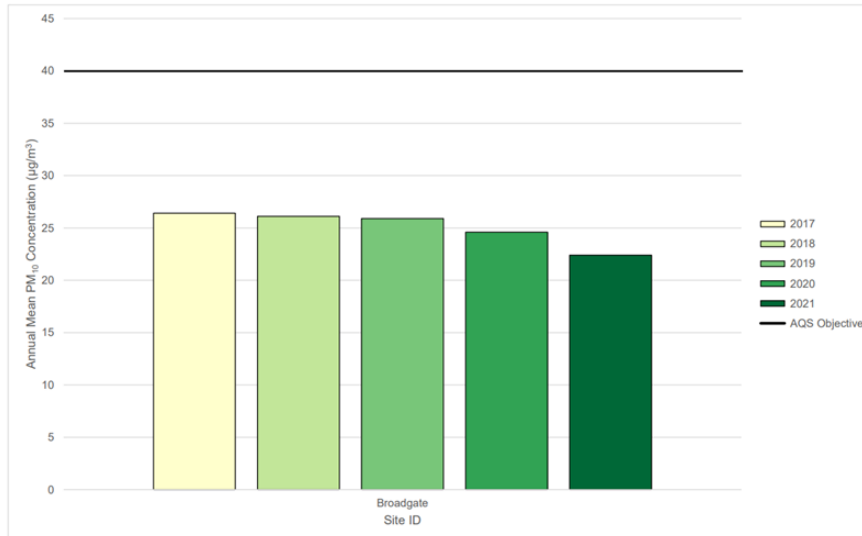


Figure A.3 – Trends in Annual Mean PM<sub>10</sub> Concentrations



Some of the improvements seen in 2020 and 2021 will inevitably have been driven by the response to Covid-19 reducing the amount of traffic on the city centre roads.

However, the opening of the Lincoln Eastern Bypass and embedded changes to peoples work habits will also have had a beneficial impact on the levels being monitored at a number of sites within the City, over and above those resulting from pandemic restrictions.

The available air quality data in 2022 indicates that the pre-pandemic trend of air quality improvements have continued. As such, if this trend is borne out once the full, validated, 2022 monitoring results are available, it is likely that we will seek to revoke the remaining AQMA, in consultation with Defra.

Our current air quality documents are available to the public via the Council website at <https://www.lincoln.gov.uk/environmental-issues/local-air-quality>

## **Licensing**

During the financial year 2021-2022, the licensing team have:

- Issued 420 Vehicle Licences
- Issued 711 Test Certificates
- Issued 1 Private Hire Operator Licence
- Issued 224 Private Hire (PH) Driver Licences
- Issued 20 Hackney Carriage (HC) Driver Licences
- Issued 157 Premises Licence Applications
- Issued 81 Personal Licence Applications

The above data shows the output of the Licensing team in relation to new applications received over the past year. It doesn't consider the management of the various categories of licences which are already in effect during the same period. During the last year 13 drivers were referred through to the private hire and/or hackney carriage subcommittee. The triennial Gambling Policy review was also completed during the last year.

The end of the 21/22 financial year brought the adoption of the Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards. The main impact of these standards on the Licensing services is the need for 6 monthly checks via the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). This brings a greater administrative burden for the team when compared to the previous 3 yearly DBS refresh checks. There are currently 396 active PH driver licences and 34 HC driver licences.

The long-lasting effects of COVID-19 Pandemic remain uncertain for the Licensing Service. The Pandemic saw a drop in the number of new applicants for most of the licensed areas. We are starting to see a rise in the number of PH + HC driver applications, but this is in comparison to recent years where the numbers dropped

due to macro-economic factors. The amount of new and active Premises Licences is also rising when compared to last year's figures.

The future demand on the Licensing Service is very difficult to predict, much like many other service areas. With it being a full cost recovery service, the external economic factors such as the rise in inflation, cost of living crisis and probable recession, make future budget and Fee setting a difficult task to balance.