

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

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

**Introduction**

I am pleased to advise that once again, the services provided by Community Services staff and associated contractors have remained at a good standard since my last report. This is despite serious staff shortages in some areas, and notably the loss of two of the three Team Leaders in Community Services for protracted periods due to ill health. They have been missed, and my thanks go out to all those in their teams who have stepped up, down, or across the structure, in order to provide the necessary cover.

As requested previously, I have tried to shorten this year's report to make it easier for members to digest. It is however a wide-ranging portfolio, so I would still beg members indulgence just a little in a few areas where I feel extra detail is necessary to aid understanding.

That aside, my report remains based on a structure of service provision unchanged from past reports, as past feedback has suggested that a service by service approach has generally been helpful. As a reminder to the overall approach to delivery, members will be aware that services are predominantly delivered against a clear set of base standards set out in contract specifications, and that these are the base on which other service charges or initiatives can then be built. Although my report presents these as separate service areas members are asked to remember that there are clearly some interdependencies and overlap of resources, as staff frequently work across areas in the interests of efficiency.

In terms of ensuring that the base specifications are in place for the future, members will be aware that the satisfactory re-letting of all the Council's street scene contracts have been, and remain, my highest priority. Accordingly, I am pleased to report that the first step is now complete. The Council's waste/recycling and street cleaning contract has now been let.

Against some strong competitive bids Biffa have won the contract, which was assessed against a 70/30 quality / price split assessment, reflecting the fact that whilst price is obviously important, quality of service is also a key consideration for the outputs from this work. Although this contract does not start until September 2026, there is now a lot of work to do. Based on government advice, and that of our own procurement advisors, the contract has been let under a new NEC4 contract structure. This means that there will be many changes to the way staff operate the contract. Preparation for this is being programmed, and will start in earnest straight after the grounds/open spaces specification is completed and has been exposed to the market in October. Allowing for tender development, evaluation, and award requirements, we expect to make the formal award for the Grounds Maintenance contract no later than June 2025.

Outside of this considerable body of work, services under existing contracts have continued as usual, with several initiatives worthy of note which i will bring out in the appropriate areas.

In closing the introduction, I must make reference to the timing of this report. It is unfortunate that it falls in the autumn, not in the spring. Officers produce reports for me on certain aspects of service routinely, but several key aspects, such as the citizen panel results, volunteer hours, events programme, and operation of the camp site, are only available at certain times in the calendar year. This means that for the purposes of this year's report restricted information is available in some areas. The committee may wish to consider the timing of their request for my next report accordingly, to see if moving the date of the next report to early spring 2026 would be helpful. Coincidentally, it might also prove to be of assistance in terms of updating on progress with the street scene contracts, just prior to the new formats going live in September 2026.

## **Open Spaces.**

### **Parks and Open Spaces- General**

Not only has Lincoln just retained Green Flag Awards for its three main parks (Arboretum, Boultham park, Hartsholme Country Park) along with the additional Green Heritage Award in Boultham Park, but it can now boast an unprecedented fourth Green Flag park in Hope Wood.

A Green Flag bid was a prerequisite requirement of accepting the central government funding provided for the initial set-up of the Hope Wood project, and so officers have striven to meet that demand. It was expected that it would take a few years to reach the required standard, but I am delighted to say that it has been achieved at first time of submission. The success here, and at all our green flag sites, is testimony to the hard work of officers and a great number of volunteers. I am delighted to have the opportunity to thank them all through this report.

Associated with the above in no small way, the rewilding of the city continues. Many areas of open space can now be seen with long grass in the summer, where we have left it to grow so that wildflowers and grasses can reach maturity for the benefit of the local wildlife. These areas are then cut, and all arising cleared, so that the nutrition in the leaves does not return to the soil. The intent is to gradually reduce the fertility of the soil, so dampening the aggression of the more invasive species and permitting the more desirable wildflowers to compete and then thrive. This takes some time, but good progress is already being made.

New areas that will be added for next year include a section of Alderman's Walk, the open space on Maxwell Avenue, a wide verge on Nettleham Road, and a similar verge on Longdales Road. There are others.

This summer's Citizen Panel satisfaction survey has only just come in, and no data /analysis from that has been made available to me at the time of drafting. I will ensure that is included in the next report, but members can be confident that assessment of

the outcomes, and any necessary action will be taken promptly, be it a positive or negative result.

#### Contractor performance YTD

Indicator	Target	After Q1 24/25
Contractor performance points score	75- 200 points	Cumulative 185

This represents a fall in contractor performance which can be split out to show 20 in April, 45 in May, and 120 in June. It is not unusual to see high pressure /demand in June, which is the heaviest period for workload of the year, but none the less it shows a worrying trend.

On analysis this is predominantly tree work related, and connected with an increasing workload that the contractor has not been able to accommodate. Action taken in July to add a further tree team is expected to help, but will take time to filter through.

Concerns are not only relating to tree works, but also to a lesser extent, the cut/collect on rewilding areas and the service on allotments. All issues have been raised robustly with the contractor who has committed to the work programme being back on track by the end of October at the latest. Please see the allotment section below for more details relating specifically to allotments.

As a part of the ongoing performance review, I have also discussed the strategic direction of open spaces (see horizon scanning below), and the need for not only a clear plan for the future, but also how we better promote the work of the section and the value of the services. Last year we expanded our social media profile for parks and open spaces, and we plan to build on that with a review of the web site in the next few months.

#### **Key Location- The Arboretum.**

It's fantastic heritage as one of Lincoln's very oldest public spaces means development opportunities will always be restricted, but none the less it remains a highly valued asset, fulfilling the same objectives for local residents today in just the same way that parks were intended to do when they were first developed as a concept.

The Arboretum Advisory Group's Chair is stepping down at the end of this year. John East has been the Chair of the group since it was established to assist in steering the original restoration bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Several new members have joined the group, which is good news for its sustainability.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank John publicly for all his hard work and commitment in advance of his departure from the post.

## **Key Location - Boultham Park**

Last year I reported that both phases of the Boultham Park restoration project had officially come to an end, and since then the park has been settling to a new future at a rather slower and less intense pace.

The Chair and Secretary/Treasurer of the Park Advisory Group (Robert and Diane Pitchford) have stepped down now, as they have moved outside of Lincoln. The park is the worse for this change, but as for the Arboretum, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Robert and Diane for all their hard work and commitment to the park. Like John in the Arboretum, they have made a significant difference, and the true impact of their work is the legacy that is found daily by the many who continue to enjoy the park.

At the last meeting a new Chair was elected, and I thank and welcome Andy Malt to his new position. A long standing member of the group, I'm sure Andy will follow in the footsteps of Robert and Diane in assisting the Council to ensure a quality future for this much loved park.

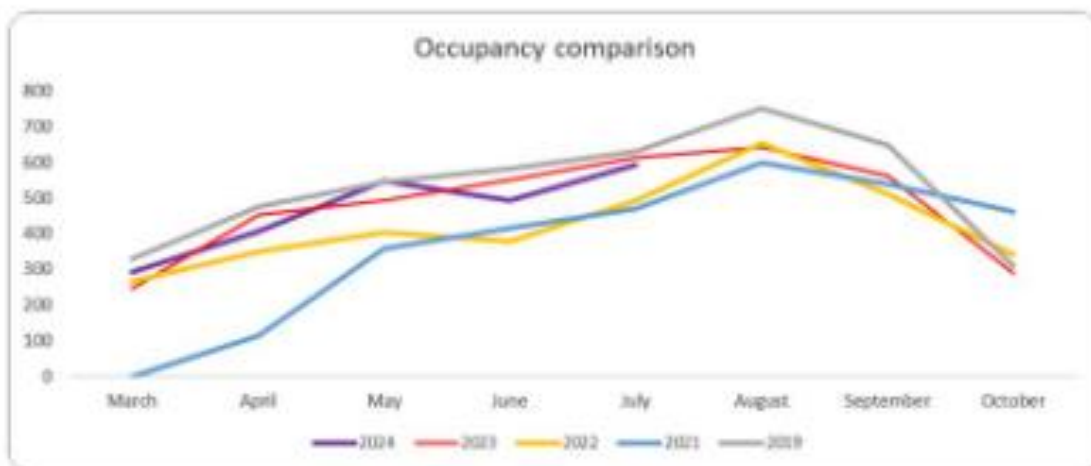
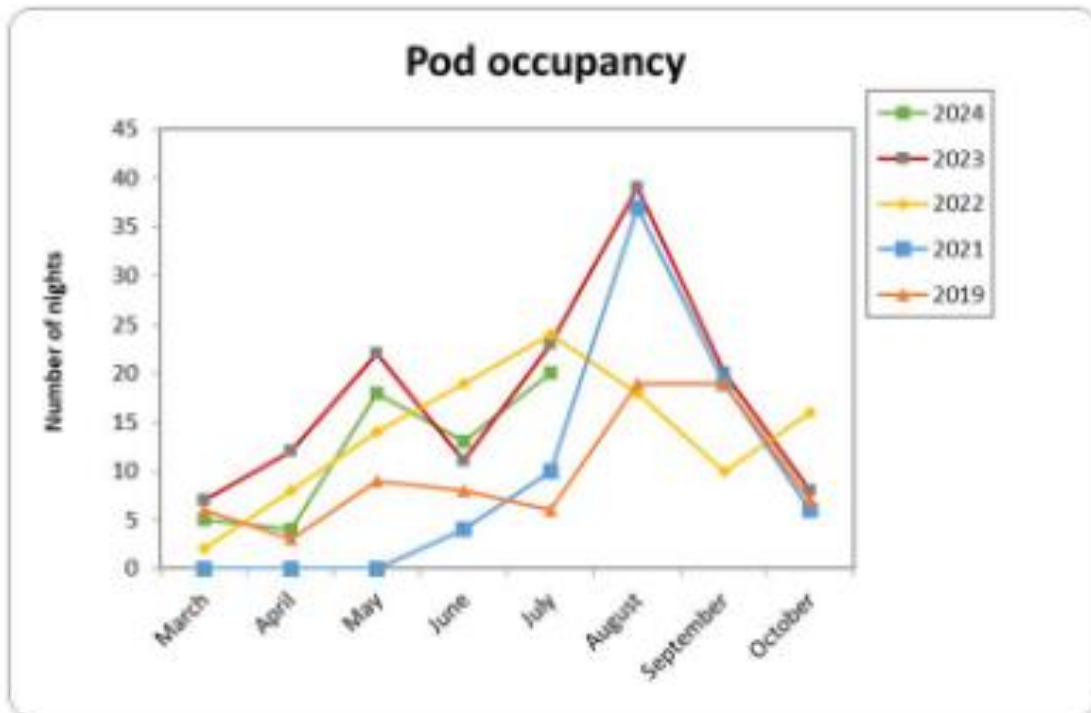
## **Key Location -Hartsholme Country Park / Swanholme Lakes and the Camp Site**

Still the top-ranking park in terms of visitor numbers, the site continues to suffer from the pressures of high demand.

2023 saw major investment in the lake outlet. A review of the flood plan has identified a few changes that are required, including the raising of the grated access to the lake drain valve, and some repairs to the toe drain turret brickwork. Some minor work has already been undertaken, and members can be reassured that whilst flooding cannot always be prevented, the Council has and is taking reasonable steps to mitigate the risks.

The camp site operations have all but returned to normal now, with demand this year being good, despite the prevailing unpredictability of the weather. Occupancy is close to pre 2019 levels, but as explained, as my report is being asked for part of the way through a year, I am not able to be conclusive about the full year out-turn just yet.

Below is a snapshot of occupancy so far, showing year on year comparisons. The first picture is for use of the glamping pods, which is down just marginally, whereas the second is the caravan/campsite overall, showing comparable performance to last year, only just under that of 2019.



Development of a Master Plan for the site, although currently un-resourced, does remain as an objective of the Council within its strategic plan as things stand. The Chair of the Park Advisory Group (PAG) has been approached, and advised that this will be a long term project. The first stage will be the development of a Conservation Management Plan for the site, so that any future proposals protect, enhance, and work around and with the important heritage of the site. The potential to use some S106 monies is being explored for this purpose currently, and it is hoped that that work, which could take more than a year to complete, will be able to start next year. This would permit some dovetailing with the Local Landscapes, Hidden Histories (LLHH) project (update below).

## **Key Location - Commons**

This year has seen significant work take place on the commons; all of this being reported to the Commons Advisory Panel (CAP), as is normal practice. The commons continue to benefit from additional income derived from an agreement with Lincoln City Football Club (LCFC) for car parking on match days, with this income set aside for work on the commons. The CAP are routinely given options and have set priorities for the income, and this is aligned with the Commons Management Plan.

Carholme Golf Club (CGC) has had a difficult year. The flooding which occurred when the catchwater drain broke its banks meant that a significant part of the golf course was under water for a prolonged period. Not only was this unplayable, but the soil structure was badly affected, damaging the sward to the extent that it has meant major turfing and re-seeding works.

In seeking approval for these works the golf club have needed to engage the Council for permission, and I have been happy to take the views of the Commons Advisory Panel as this has progressed. The various members have offered views on each proposal, and this has in turn let me form a view on behalf of the Council, which has ultimately seen the reinstatement works progress, but with a background of trying to take an opportunity to improve the environmental credentials of the golf club at the same time. I'd like to thank all the CAP members for their input to this process, and for CGC for recognising the opportunity that such adversity has presented.

As a condition of their lease the CGC have to work to an agreed Environmental Management Plan. This remains in development, but will be the focus of attention as soon as the reinstatements have settled.

## **Key Location- Hope Wood**

This new site is progressing well as a key plank in the Council's strategy to provide more natural habitat in the city. This accessible land can be visited off Newark Road, via the cycle way, and sits adjacent Boultham Park. The project has made use of Levelling Up parks funding and is seeing a 3.5Ha site of low lying poorly grazed grassland transformed into a nature reserve with tree and shrub planting.

This year has seen new interpretation boards, as well as some significant Corten steel sculptures put in place; including a large name sculpture to make clear the site's new and emerging identity. I have no doubt that these features, supporting the management plan, were instrumental in persuading judges that the site deserved its first Green Flag award. A notable achievement on first time of application, and my thanks go to the staff who worked on this, and the volunteers who have so ably supported the project.

The project continues to be delivered in conjunction with the Woodland Trust, and with support from Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust.



## **Key Locations- Allotments**

As at the end of June (Q1) 2024 the Council's allotments had an occupancy rate of 93%. Those not let are in low lying areas that cannot be gardened without significant investment in terms of drainage. The level of performance tends to fluctuate between 93% and 95%, it will not be exceeded in the near future without investment to bring wet plots into use.

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, although we have seen a slowing of this more recently.

Last year I reported that we would be tightening up on enforcing plot maintenance, post covid. We have done this gradually and continue to press on with this, incrementally tightening up the rules again.

Hand in hand with this we are trailing a new allotment maintenance project. One constant bugbear seems to be the annual vacant plot cut, which the contractor struggles to cope with given that it comes at a time of high demand, and the issues are compounded by fly tipping and dumping on vacant plots which hinder any works. We are now developing a rolling programme of plot preparations, site by site, where vacant plots will be cut and cleared and then a 'treatment' will be actioned to try to suppress weed growth for a protected period, to let any new tenant get a positive start. The 'treatment' options being considered are coverage with a thick black membrane sheet, a second/flow-up rotovation or a weed spray. We will trial these on different sites to see which works best. All have a cost associated with them, but it is felt that the existing system doesn't work well, so something new has to be tried. It is hoped that the upfront costs incurred will be offset by savings later, and create some happier customers.

Another innovation of note here is that the service has finally been able to move from a paper-based system to a specialist software system for all records. This means that staff can access records whilst on site, easily attach photographs to records, and issue standard letters at the click of a button. There will be a cross over data transfer period, but ultimately this positive change should make actions faster and more responsive. It will also help us in our further aim of moving the service to a Direct Debit payment system to make life easier for customers.

## **Key Locations- 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.

In terms of some positive improvements, a new climbing frame has been installed at Hartsholme Park, and orders have been placed to replace the safety surface at the Lawn and install a new Basket Swing.

On the downside we have seen an upsurge in vandalism unfortunately. This includes arson on the Skatepark at The Backies, Safety surface damage at Sudbrooke Drive, a window damaged on the multi-play at Queen's Park, and gate damage at Pullan Close. Obviously the cost of repairs impact significantly options for improvements.

The annual Independent Inspections have been carried out in July, and the resulting report has shown our standards to be good, with only a few minor suggestions.

## **Key Location- John Dawber Gardens**

The partnership with the John Dawber Garden Trust continues to work well.

The group has pulled in significant investment and transformed the site through both the investment and hard work. Whilst costs to the council have not dropped, the added value for the site is significant, and it now represents one of the best kept sites in the city. A credit to the volunteers involved.

## **Events and Activities**

In 2024 from January to August a total of 7100 individuals (approximately 3020 Park organised and 4080 self-led) attended events held at Hartsholme Country Park and Swanholme Lakes Local Nature Reserve, Boultham Park and the Arboretum.

A total of 53 park-led events and 320 self-led events.

The most well attended self-led events held at Hartsholme to present were the weekly walking groups, run by the Co-op which use the network of paths within the park and they had 1200 individuals attend.

Other organisations which held events at Hartsholme 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.



Again, this year we hosted several networking and picnic type of events held by the Regis Group and the Ukrainian Culture Centre which we are told have provided invaluable support for the community and the incoming families. Also, several events to increase a sense of wellbeing and mental health have taken place within the parks, such as sketching for wellbeing and silent discos.

The Park-led event participants most favoured in the annual events calendar to date was undoubtedly the Easter Egg Hunt (780).

Other events with high attendance figures in the 2024 included Toddler Time (135), and several adult activities such as the History events and Obelisk workshops, also attracted good attendance figures.

## **Education**

In total 1130 people have engaged, up to the end of July (Ranger Led 630 and Self Led 500). These are the numbers who have attended an educational visit at Hartsholme Country Park and Swanholme Lakes Local Nature Reserve.

In total twelve groups came from a variety of sources which included several local and non-local schools, Holy Cross Brownies and Home for Home Care which is an establishment which cares for children and young adults with severe disabilities.

Self-guided educational events which proved popular in 2024 had 500 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 2024 was Mini Beast Hunt, followed equally by Shelter Building, and Woodland Art.

In 2024 a continuation of the already successful education program established in Hartsholme was expanded to Boutham Park and South Common. Twenty-two events (540 individuals) have been programmed in and experiences have been delivered within Boutham Park and South Common by the Education Ranger. This is in partnership with the Local Landscapes and Hidden Histories initiative and four local schools (Sir Francis Hill, Bishop King, St Peter at Gowt's and Hartsholme Academy), and also local Scout, Cub, and Beavers groups as part of the Outdoor Classroom Project. In addition to this several workshops with Canwick Care Home with elderly residents suffering from dementia have taken place.

## **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 development of this role has been invaluable to the Council and it has grown over time, to the extent that it is now at capacity. We continue to seek ways to expand the staffing available to support this work, so we can take on more volunteers.

I am pleased to report the outcomes in terms of volunteer hours from 2023 below. These are easy to capture when we have large groups for a fixed period, but less easy to measure when people give time in less structured ways, so we know for example that the efforts of the Park Advisory Groups are not always captured. For this reason, these should be considered to be slightly low, but they remain a great indicator as to how important volunteers are, and how highly we value their engagement and support.

Boultham Park total volunteer hours=178

Hartsholme Country Park total volunteer hours= 1107

Birchwood Nature Park total volunteer hours= 688

Swanholme Lakes total volunteer hours= 950

Commons total volunteer hours= 311

Hope Wood 996

Total Hours for all sites 2022 = 4230

As is becoming customary now, through this report I would very much like to give 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.

## **Arboriculture**

Tree and tree care continues to be a high profile and contentious issue at times. We welcome the focus and importance attached to trees in the city by all concerned, as they are clearly a key aspect in creating the character of the city.

The Council's two arboricultural officers have dealt with many requests (some of which are by necessity very detailed), in relation to planning applications and conservation area consents, as well as the wider and more general requests.

This has resulted in the issue of 220 orders for works so far, all of which have to be monitored and assessed for accuracy/quality.

The work of this section does, by necessity, involve removing some trees for a wide range of reasons, but it also involves the planting of trees too, as required by Council policy.

Over winter 2023/24 I'm pleased to report that the Council planted 155 trees to replace the same number lost, but in city-wide terms this is enhanced by such as the Hope Wood project, where hundreds of other new trees have also been planted.

Last year I reported that the contractor was struggling with significant delays in actioning work, and an action plan was put in place. This removed the delays at the time, but we have seen a gradual return to significant delays developing since then. This has been reflected in the contractor performance points issues. A new action plan is in place, and, subject to us not encountering a severe storm of something, the delays will be back within tolerances by the end of October.

The further point of note in this section is the progress made on proactive tree surveys. Members will recall that this is a relatively new initiative for the council, and I'm pleased to report that approximately two thirds of all the city's open space trees have now been surveyed.

Members will note the size and scale of the task, but it is hoped that with just a few years now the Council will have mapped and have data on all trees in the city, aiding us to improve their care, and so better protect them as an asset for future generations.

Finally, last year I committed to prioritise the production of the city's first dedicated policy for tree care. I am pleased to say that this was considered positively at Policy Scrutiny Committee on 29 July 2024, and will be considered for adoption by the Executive on 16 September 2024. Some publicity will be launched subject to adoption of the policy, and linked to the surveying work we will be looking to enlist public help in identifying 'Lincoln's 10 Best Trees' (the ten most notable trees in Council ownership). This will of course be a vehicle for drawing attention to how important trees are in an urban setting, and the challenges we, and the trees, face.

## **Travellers**

In recent years the Council has suffered a number of unauthorised encampments by the traveller community. The numbers fluctuate. In 2021 we had four incursions, but in 2022 this fell to one, although a secondary attempt to access some land was thwarted. In 2023 we had no incursions, and up to the date of drafting, there have been no cases for us in 2024.

Our programme of 'target hardening', continues in an attempt to make access by such encampments more difficult. We are aware that one group tried to gain access to the Skellingthorpe Road field in 2023, but it seems the new barrier was a suitable deterrent, so they went elsewhere. The work to add further deterrents is continuing, and it is hoped to add another barrier at a new site which has been identified as being at risk in 2025.

## **Local Landscapes, Hidden Histories**

Members will recall that this project has arisen on the back of learning from the Arboretum restoration, and of course most recently Boultham Park's restoration. It also dovetails well with established history recording in Hartsholme Park.

In essence it is a three year project that started in July 2023 seeking to engage the public in the important history of some of our key parks and open spaces, by imaginative means. It also has as a key objective, not only uncovering more of the

history of the sites, but also recording them in a formal archive system. Key partners include Bishop Grosseteste University, Lincoln University, and a wider range of established heritage bodies in the city.

An events/activities/talks programme is ongoing and regularly published. The monthly talks at the Grandstand are proving to be especially popular, and supported by those interested in local history stalwart.

2024/5 will see the archive being developed in a much higher profile way, so watch this space.

## **Horizon Scanning**

There are several key issues either affecting our open spaces now, or likely to affect our open spaces in the future, that members need to be aware of.

Firstly, our financial pressures have not gone away. Open spaces are not a statutory service, and as such will never be first in the queue for funding or investment, despite their popularity and profile. As such, to stand any chance of making the Council's aspirations a reality, it is necessary to be both realistic about what can be achieved with the resources available, but also imaginative about how income may be derived. It is regrettable that the Council cannot prioritise investment in parks, but it is a fact that has to be faced that restricted long term funding is perhaps the single biggest threat to the desire to provide high quality parks and open spaces, not just in Lincoln but nationally.

To try to address this I have asked officers to draft an income policy for parks and open spaces, to give members the chance to consider the issue, and decide if/where looking for external funding would be appropriate. A priority has been not deterring use of parks by legitimate users, and trying to generate income by adding value to visitors' experience. What has been clear is that this is a complex topic, and highly variable, and as such has required a policy which is equally flexible, with significant discretion. Difficult as it has been to draft, a first version, having gone through Policy Scrutiny previously, will now go to the Executive for consideration on 16 September 2024, along with a strategy document to show what the policy would mean 'in action'. One vital aspect of the policy is that although it is the intention that the City Council will hold the funds generated by this initiative, it is the Park Advisory Groups who will direct the spending.

With new policies in place for tree care and income generation, subject to staff resources permitting it, the next step will be the development of an overarching policy for open spaces that will pull all the strands together. This document will also pick up other priorities for the Council, such as our ambitions for biodiversity enhancement, use of the most sustainable methods we can, and heritage protection.

Finally, very long term, we have agreed to engage in the very initial stages of the Lincoln and Witham Landscape Recovery Project. This is an ambitious project, headed by Doddington Hall who have been successful in securing funding for from The Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA). A very small team are now exploring the potential to enhance opportunities for wildlife in the wider area,

outside of the auspices of the well reported specific Doddington Hall rewilding project, by mapping sites with existing and future potential for wildlife, and then seeing how they might be both enhanced and connected. The project covers a large area from around Doddington Hall down to near Newark, and so is engaging around forty land owners, along with other wildlife interest and stakeholder groups. The project hopes to be in a position to report to DEFRA by the end of 2025, so members should expect formal reports on the project later this year as things progress, and as we learn what the implications would be for Lincoln if we are to remain engaged.

## **Street Scene**

This section covers a wide range of services associated with street cleansing and waste management.

## **Infrastructure**

This includes the provision and maintenance of street name plates, art installations, and the maintenance of bus shelters. The city currently has 111 bus shelters (66 Adshell/ 45 City Council), and 29 pieces cared for as art installations, of varying sizes, spread across the city.

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 it was acknowledged that these should be a county highways function, and the City Council could no longer afford to maintain bus shelters.

Ongoing discussions with Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) about the importance of bus shelters within a transport strategy has led to some positive conversations. A report going to Executive on 27 August seeks agreement to formally offer all the bus station stock, including transfer of the advertising contract, to LCC. By the time of my next report, I hope to be able to describe a brighter future for Lincoln's bus shelters.

## **Waste/Recycling**

In terms of statistical performance of existing services, performance remains acceptable. Please note that data is always lagged. This report reflects data up to end of June 2023 (Q1).

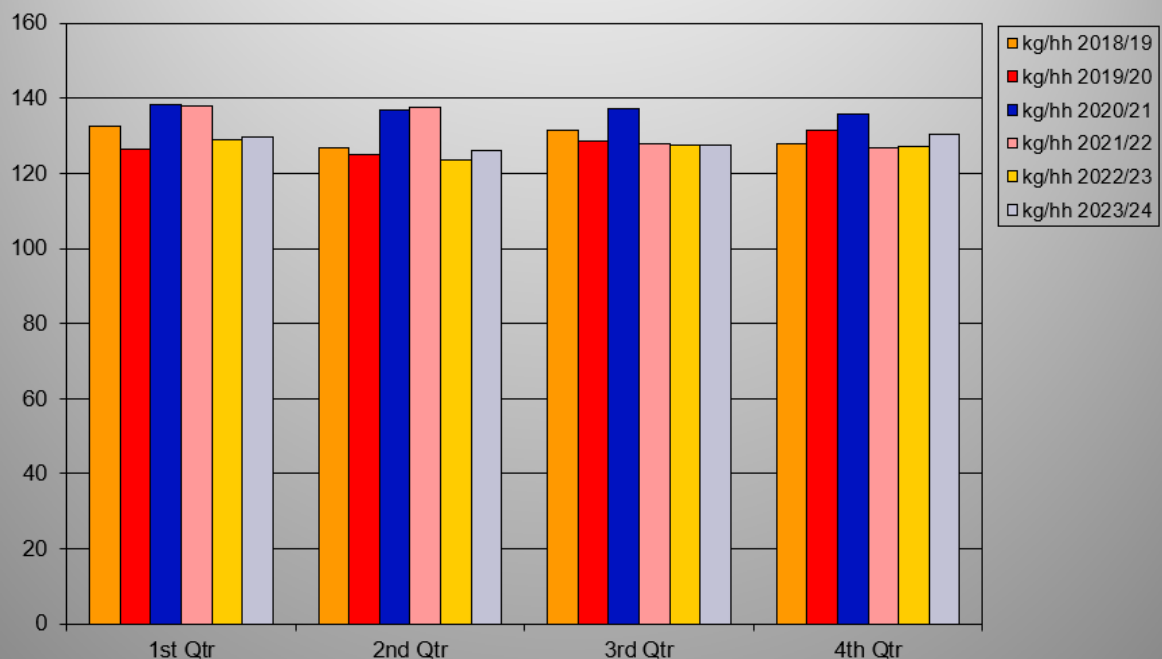
Domestic general (residual) waste disposed of has increased just slightly last year, compared to the previous year, but remains considerably down on past years (this includes for growth in new properties).

Financial years per Household.

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
22/23	507.5Kg/pa	126.89Kg/hh av per Q
23/24	510.06kg/pa	127.52 Kg/hh av per Q

## Residual household waste per household

(data is one quarter behind)



When considered against comparable authorities Lincoln is only just slightly higher than the published median for our grouping, which is around 500Kg/hh/pa.

The number of residents using the garden waste service has dropped just marginally this year (so far). There had been a gradual decline in numbers over the years, which was thought to have been as a result in a drop in disposable income, but last year threw up something of an anomaly. The marketing has been strong again this year, highlighting the benefits of the green bin scheme, and it might be that residents are now realising that the charge offers excellent value for money, compared with paying a contractor to dispose of the waste, or the time and effort required to take the waste to a Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC). There was no increase in charge this year, making Lincoln's scheme the cheapest in the county.

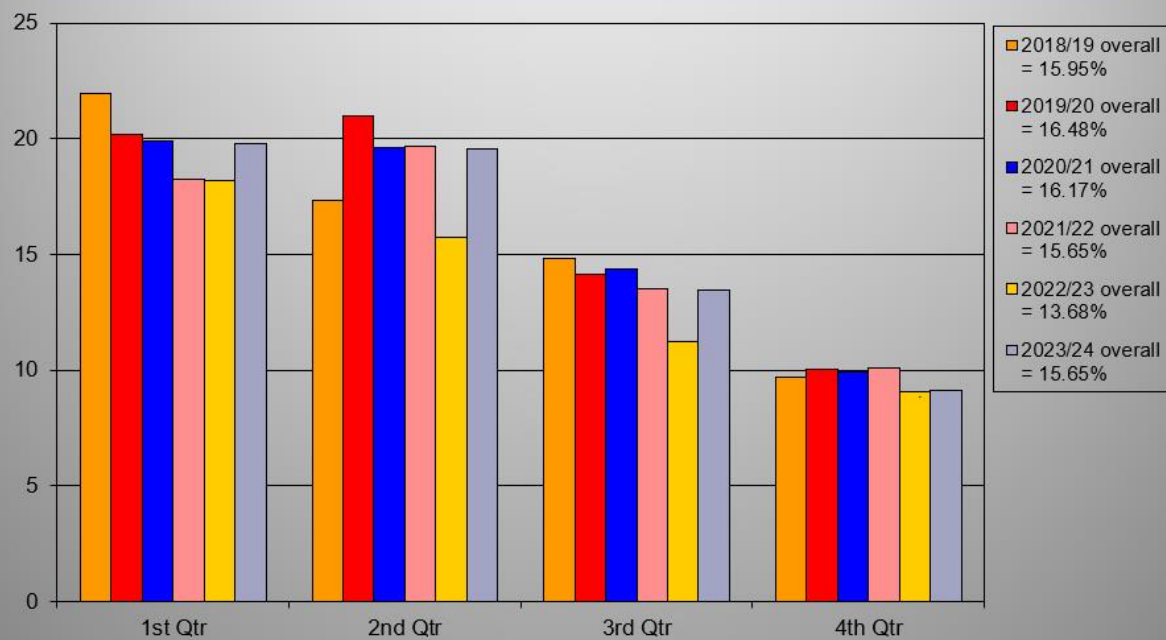
Number of bins being emptied:

2017 18,241  
 2018 17,794  
 2019 17,405  
 2020 17,514  
 2021 17,744  
 2022 16,785  
 2023 18,559  
 2024 17,927 (at time of drafting)

The increased buy-in to the green waste service seen above has now been reflected in the data for tonnages collected (see below), which had not always been the case.

# Percentage of waste composted

(data is one quarter behind)



## Recycling Tonnages

Below are the tonnages collected of Municipal Dry Recyclate (MDR) after 'contamination' has been removed.

Financial years

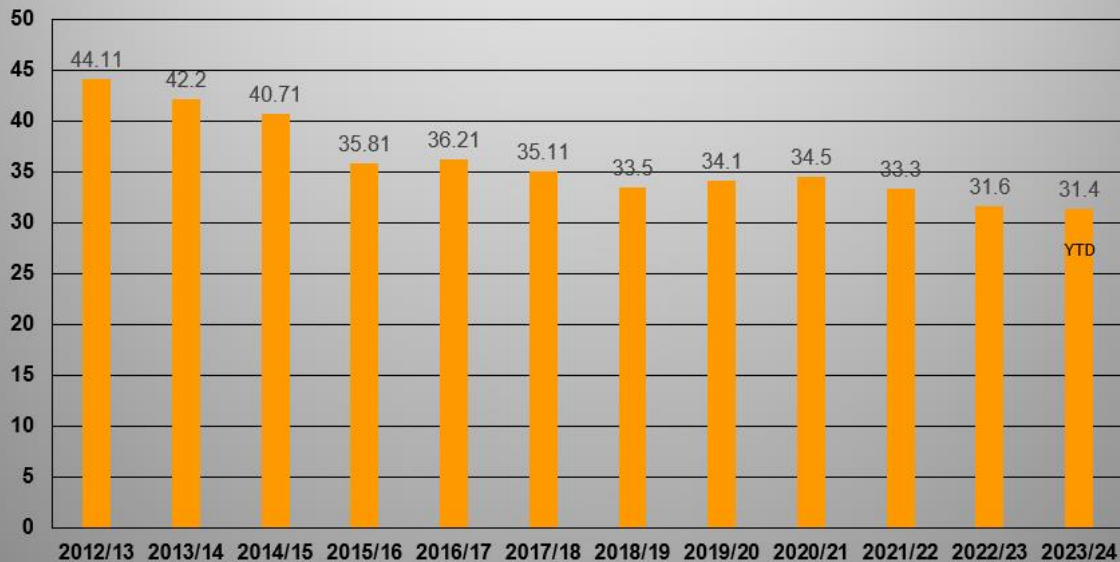
20/21	7048.09 Tonnes	18.29%	of total waste stream
21/22	6543.86 Tonnes	17.70 %	of total waste stream
22/23	6193.00 Tonnes	17.88%	of total waste stream
23/24	5570.38 Tonnes	15.79%	of total waste stream

The reduction is a worrying trend, and I draw members attention to my comments on possible action later in the report.

The graph below shows combined performance for dry recyclate and composting, and suggests that there has been a general levelling out of performance in the low to mid 30s.

## Percentage of waste recycled and composted

(data is one quarter behind)



Comparison with 'near neighbours' shows high performance of 44% and low performance of 25%. Whilst Lincoln therefore sits below average on that score spectrum, there are reasons for this, and again I draw members attention to my comments on possible action below

Before considering options, it is important that members understand the context of the data provided to them. What appears to be a simple set of data is actually more complex to unpick than is perhaps first imagined.

To aid understanding it is best to see the waste stream (everything being thrown out by a household in bins) as a whole first, and then to divide it up into its constituent parts, initially grouping them by how they are handled for processing.

Green Bin. Green wastes are quite self-explanatory. Simple rules and easily understood. Contamination is very low. This goes for composting.

Black bin. General waste . Goes to the EfW. No sortation for contamination necessary.

Brown bin. MDR. What can be taken in here is a mix of materials that LCC prescribe as being prepared to recycle. It is important to note that this is NOT what can theoretically be recycled. It is only what LCC say they will take. This can be influenced by many factors for example: availability of recycling plants/handlers to actually take the material, impact on recyclability of a material by mixing it, the cost of processing.

A good example of how complexity is added to the data is paper and card. Eminently recyclable, when collected with other materials, can become affected by the other materials in the bin. Food on paper does not render it unrecyclable necessarily, but it



lowers its grade, potentially significantly. At extremes the value of a material such as paper can go from being valuable and generating an income, to being a burden that costs money to process. So 'contamination' might be something that is clearly not readily recyclable, like a tin of paint, or it can be something that LCC simply don't want because it would cost them money to recycle, like paper/card with food stain on it.

Even taking this into consideration there is no doubt that some areas of Lincoln's recycle is of poor quality, and heavily contaminated. LCC report this as around 16%. If comparison with near neighbours is a yard stick (and we have to be careful in doing this as each council has different criteria for what it will/will not accept) Lincoln is worse than all 'near neighbours. However, some of these are also reporting zero contamination, which must add suspicion to the validity of the data being reported.

All of the above aside, it is recognised that Lincoln's performance is not as it should be or as members would want it to be, and there is a desire to improve this considerably whilst still making sure that the service remains popular and reports high satisfaction levels.

Equally, LCC have asked the City Council to do what it can to clean up the recycle, for the reasons highlighted above. It has asked Lincoln to consider introducing separate paper and card collections to some or all of the city, and to increase its enforcement of contaminated bins by rejecting them from collections. This is something we do now, but LCC would like to see a much harder line being taken.

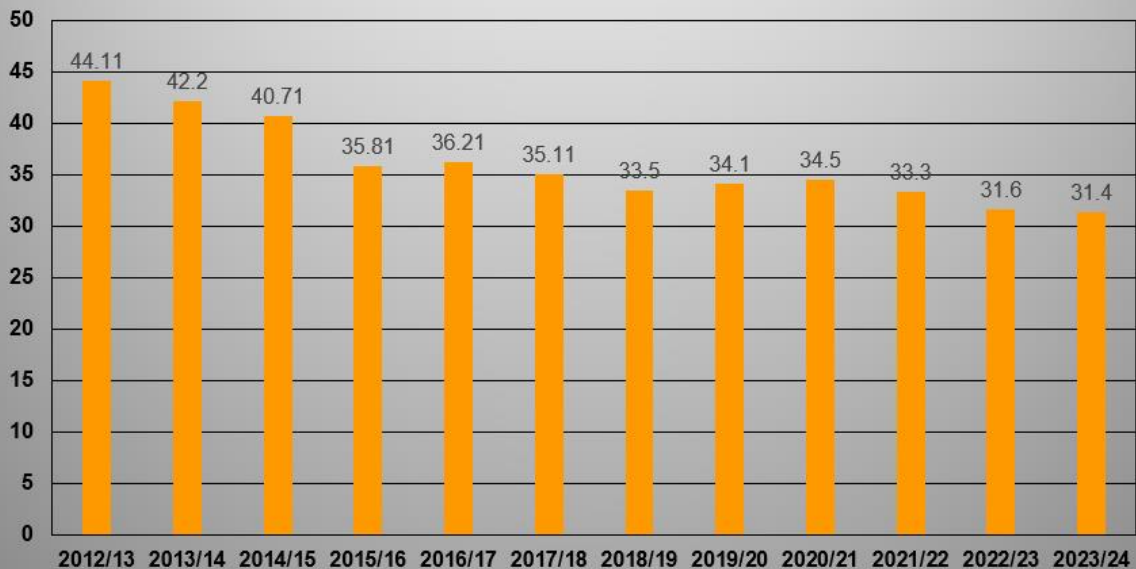
It is therefore my commitment that one or more reports be produced for members on this subject before the end of this year. The papers will focus on options around the introduction of paper and card, considering both the viability of this for the city's streets, but also the impact on outcomes. There will also be a close look at other options, such as education and enforcement packages.

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

Indicator	Q4 outturn
Percentage of Waste Recycled / composted (target 34% to 37% High is good)	35.54%
Contractor performance points score (target 50 to 150 points per Q. Low is good)	2023/24 Q1 95 Q2 325 Q3 40 Q4 100

## Percentage of waste recycled and composted

(data is one quarter behind)



### Imminent Changes.

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 plan has recently been updated.

Over and above the local action plan, we have of course been awaiting clarity on the implications arising from the Environment Act 2021, which proposed some fundamental changes in a few key areas of waste/recycling policy. Covid has delayed this, but the initial national consultation concluded, leading to an announcement in late October on a few key issues. There is little new news since last year, due both to covid and the elections. Greater clarity is expected shortly.

Things we already knew:

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 was 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 remains unclear.

New information:

1. Food waste collections will be a statutory requirement for all households, and must be introduced by no later than April 2026
2. Free garden waste services will not be part of the legislation. All organic waste can go into the same collection.
3. There is a clear materials list that must be collected as recycling, but there is no requirement to separate these into different bins (as many Councils do). A MDR collection, as we have in Lincoln, is acceptable.
4. Plastic film will be added to the list by no later than April 2027.

Important points of note about the above.

1. Food collections will be the biggest upheaval in our waste stream management for many years. It is about an extra 2.4 million collections each year. New burdens funding will be subject to the Council proving collections are “effective and efficient” but they haven’t said what that means yet.
2. No pressure for kerbside sortation (the way to get the highest recycling rates but at the highest cost). Removing the need for Councils to report why they collect the way they do under a Technical, Environmental, Economical Practicality (TEEP) assessment is expected but has not been enacted yet.
3. The recycling materials list is confirmed as the same as we understood it to be, so no change there for now, but the addition of taking plastic film from April 2027 is noted.

The impact of this, and the pressure that will be exerted on waste /recycling services in the next few years should not be underestimated. Not only are we in the process of mobilising for a new contract starting September 2026, but before then, unless the legislation changes again to include for some greater flexibility, we will need to implement food waste collections to every house. Significant challenges lie ahead of us now, and this is without reference to any other initiatives we may wish to implement to try to improve our recycling rate, as the national challenge for the LWP is still to achieve 55% by 2025 and 65% by 2035.

It is not lost on me that we will now need to look at bringing in food waste collections before the end of the existing contract. I will not rehearse the difficulties of the predicament here, as most will be obvious, but it will be easier now that we know Biffa have retained the contract than if we were working with another provider. DEFRA have been made aware of the contract award, and we await their update on funding, as promised.

## Horizon Scanning

To a large extent the immediate future for these services has been prescribed by government. However, whilst the new policies set out what government will and will not mandate, they are not transparent on exactly how it expects each authority to reach the challenging national targets.

My aim is clear in that the priority is to retain the stability of our services and ensure that good quality waste services are delivered well throughout any period of change.

We do need to retain a focus on reducing the volumes of waste produced, and contamination levels within what is produced, but this must be done sensitively and ever mindful of the pressures on residents who may struggle to store more bins or understand the waste/recycling system.

It is accepted that the Council is only one player in what makes up the complex waste production, collection, and processing stream, but none the less it has influence beyond just collecting the wastes, and I believe it must continue to play its part and show leadership in the promotion of waste reduction and recycling initiatives.

## Street Cleansing

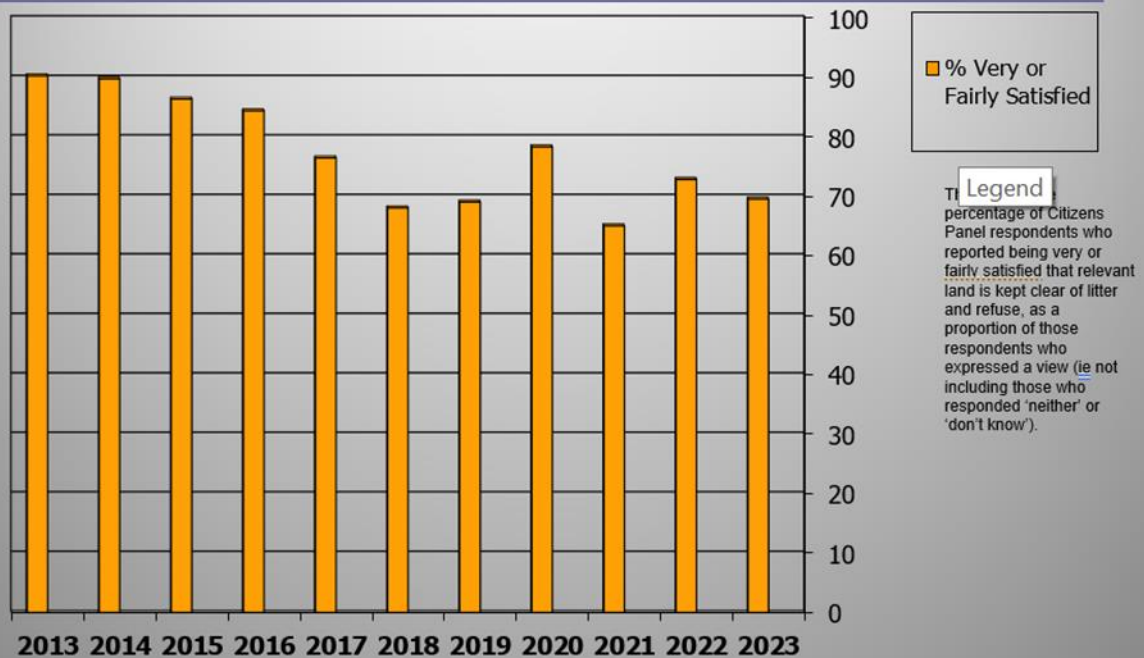
This section covers all areas of street cleansing, including street sweeping, litter picking, litter bin emptying, fly tipping, and the removal of graffiti and abandoned vehicles.

In the summer Citizens Panel survey 2023, 69.5% of respondents who expressed a view reported being very or fairly satisfied with the cleanliness of the city, a small fall of 3.3% on last year, but last year was up a little on the year before, suggesting a norm around this level has been established. Due to the timing of this report, I am not able to update on last year's data, as I won't receive this until the end of the year.

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

Indicator	2022/23 target	Recorded outturns in 2023
Contractor performance points score	50 to 150 points per Q	Q1 170 Q2 70 Q3 60 Q4 55
Satisfaction with cleansing services	68% to 78%	2023/4 69.5%

## Satisfaction with Cleanliness



## Graffiti

Graffiti, or perhaps more correctly 'tagging' has become an issue in Lincoln in the last year. It has hit in spates, and is undertaken by a few individuals. 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. Where necessary the Public Protection and Anti-Social Behaviour (PPASB) team have become involved and have made use of powers to seek landowners to cooperate, and this has had significant success.

The below includes all graffiti removed (excluding utility boxes) so far this year.

	Total reported	Reported and cleaned within :	Reported but cleaned outside of :	Outstanding (to be cleaned )			Cleaned independently/ continental
				Response from land owner awaited	Response from landowner but other issues	Contractor not yet responded as requested.	
Offensive cases	20	24hrs=14	24hrs=3	0	0	0	3
Not offensive cases	137	30 days=57	30 days=3	49	3	6	19

This compares with a total case load of 46 in 2023.

With regards to utility boxes, we are trialling some new paint, which makes it more difficult to get graffiti to stick to, and when on, much easier to remove.

We are also exploring options to wrap utility boxes, to see if an option might be simply to remove the wrap, and then re-wrap a box, as some cars are done these days.

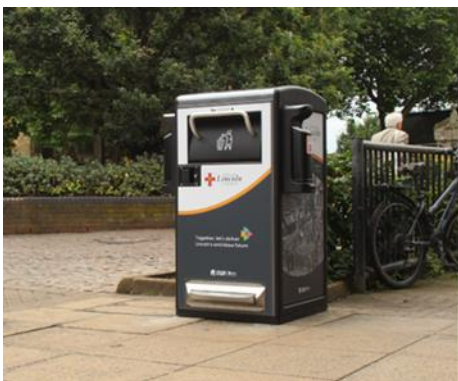
Additionally, we are looking into the cost of putting murals on some boxes. This has proven popular in the Sincil Bank area.

### **Compactor Bins.**

Last year I reported on a trial of six solar powered compactor bins in high street areas. They were located where we were aware we got the most litter, and the highest number of complaints about overflowing litter bins.

Being a 'smart bin' meant that they measured how full they were, advising when they needed emptying, and every time the doors were actually opened for emptying. This data was transmitted to staff, so they could see how full bins were getting, and how effective our contractor was at emptying them.

The data showed the bins to be highly effective, reducing staff time attending bins unnecessarily and whilst the public have been keen to use them, the technology has made sure that they did not get full. They have therefore been popular with both staff and the public, leading to a targeted expansion of the service, taking us to ten bins in total. The commitment to these efficient bins has been included within the new contract, meaning that tenders submitted have been able to note the efficiency gain, and tighten tendered prices for this aspect of the service accordingly.



### **Shopping Trolleys.**

In last year's report I noted that we were seeing increasing numbers of abandoned shopping trolleys blighting the city. I asked Officers to contact the local supermarkets to seek co-operation, but the response saw no tangible difference on our streets. Accordingly, I asked Officers to move to the next option, which has been to set up an enforceable scheme, whereby shopping trolleys picked up are now impounded and the supermarket responsible given time to either collect the trolleys, have the trolleys

delivered back to them, or agree to their disposal. In any event there is now a charge from the Council for their handling , and if necessary, disposal.

The scheme started in March. So far in the 5-month period March to August 146 abandoned trolleys have been removed from the streets of Lincoln.

### **Horizon Scanning.**

As a part of the preparations for the new contracts members considered at some length what priority was to be given to these services when considered against open spaces and waste/recycling. In recognition that it was a stable but well delivered standard now, members gave this a lower score than the other areas.

Waste/recycling are fast changing areas of work, but less so street cleansing. However, that does not mean it won't be subject to change and new demands, as aspirations grow. I therefore think that the exploration of new ideas is wise, and the innovation offered by such as compactor bins has real potential.

I am also especially keen that we look at the disposal of litter wastes. At the moment we are unable to recycle these in any way, but I feel this is a lost opportunity, and whilst current cultures (not to mention disposal contracts) prevent it, I believe that it is something that will emerge in the next few years, and we would be well to be preparing for this.

### **Public Toilets**

The service continues to struggle to settle, post its reorganisation in 2021. Recruitment has been an issue, and the age profile/health of the existing staff cohort represents an ongoing challenge.

Charges of 20p per use have been in operation at the Bus Station, Castle Square and Tentercroft Street since January 2017, and the table below shows the income received so far. It does not cover the cost of provision, but is of help to offset operating costs. Covid lockdowns affected income at times, as can clearly be seen below, as has the provision of free toilet facilities at the new Central Market. The impact of the later will be assessed more carefully when a full year's data has been collected.

	TOTAL
2016/17	£2,720.13
2017/18	£16,981.06
2018/19	£38,069.43
2019/20	£38,748.82
2020/21	£19,035.69
2021/22	£39,101.85
2022/23	£37,708.56
2023/24	£36,269.99
2024/25 (to end July)	£10,799.52

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

### **Food, Health and Safety**

The Team continues to prioritise public health, taking a risk-based approach, in line with the Food Law Code of Practice and LEAN Systems. This allows the service to focus on those businesses that present the greatest risk to public health. As we have a large number of tourists this team protects not only our residents working in the city but also our visitors.

### **Resources**

The Team currently consists of the Team Leader, 2 Environmental Health Officers and one Senior Food Safety Officer. There is currently a Food Safety Officer vacancy, however we are using a contractor to fill this gap. We are hoping to recruit into the vacant post from September 2024.

### **Summary**

Over the financial year 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 the Team has been fully operating in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice. This is the first year since the Covid pandemic having been operating a post-covid recovery plan (in line with Food Standards Agency (FSA) protocol).

The Team is consistently above the low target (95%) for the measure 'PIMS - FHS 1 for the percentage of premises that are fully or broadly compliant upon food, health and safety inspection'. The Team has consistently performed above the low target of 15 days for 'achieving compliance from the date of inspection PIMS - FHS 2'. Over the fiscal year to quarter 1 of this fiscal year the average time to reach compliance from the date of inspection was 6.99 days. For 'PIMS - FHS 3 – percentage of food inspections that should have been completed and have been' the average for the 5 quarters was 84.85 – this is due to the ending of the FSA recovery plan which resulted in 103 low risk food premises being returned to our inspection programme. This was dealt with effectively with a project utilising the Alternative Enforcement Strategy as provided by the Food Law Code of Practice. As such upon finishing the fiscal year for 2023 to 2024 the Team was performing at 99.52% with a low target of 90%.

**Table – Volume of Work for the 01/04/2023 – 30/06/2024 (fiscal year and quarter 1 of current fiscal year)**

	01/04/2023 – 30/06/2024
Service requests (e.g. food, health & safety complaints, food hazard warnings, advice and guidance and public health.	1668
Food Hygiene Inspections Total	773
Food hygiene inspections – physical inspections completed	729
Food hygiene inspection – Alternative Enforcement Strategy	44
Total number registered food premises	1092



New food business registrations received	331
Food and environmental samples taken	44
Infectious disease notifications	30
Health and safety inspections where matters of evident concern identified	4
Accident notifications	62
Accident investigations	6
Personal skin piercing registrations processed	101
Premises skin piercing registrations processed	17

For comparisons to be made please find below a summary table between fiscal year 2022 – 2023 and 2023 – 2024

	2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024
Service requests (e.g. food, health & safety complaints, food hazard warnings, advice and guidance and public health.	1315	1316
Food Hygiene Inspections Total	582	600
Food hygiene inspections – physical inspections completed	570	556
Food hygiene inspection – Alternative Enforcement Strategy	12	44
Food and environmental samples taken	109	30
Infectious disease notifications	21	26
Health and safety inspections where matters of evident concern identified	8	3
Accident notifications	48	51
Accident investigations	1	6
Personal skin piercing registrations processed	28	88
Premises skin piercing registrations processed	12	14

There is a significant difference between the number of Alternate Enforcement Strategy (AES) between the two fiscal years due to the Teams adoption of a project to reduce the number of outstanding low risk inspections as a result of the Food Standards Agency (FSA) recovery plan. The increased number of personal skin piercing registrations is the result of the City hosting a tattoo convention in October 2023 resulting in 44 personal registrations being submitted and processed. The decline in sampling between fiscal years is indicative of work pressures in other areas of the Team's activities, such as dealing with matters of evident concern for health and safety.

#### **Examples of Complex Cases for 01/04/2023 – 30/06/2024 (fiscal year and quarter 1 of current fiscal year)**

As well as carrying out several hundred routine food inspections and dealing with over a thousand service requests, the Team have also dealt with a number of complex

cases with between 12 -16 non-compliant businesses at any one time. Examples of complex cases include:

### Food Safety

- A food hazard warning issued by the Food Standards Agency resulted in visits to 50 food business within the City at short notice to determine whether they were selling the affected products and to feedback intelligence to the Food Standards Agency.
- As a result of a food complaint related to the consumption of raw oysters an Officer was able to feedback information through the UK Health Security Agency and the Home Authority (Colchester) to a national study on an increase in food poisoning associated with raw oysters and water quality of fisheries within the UK.
- Voluntary closure of a food business due to the Officer finding a cockroach infestation during their routine and unannounced food hygiene inspection.
- Voluntary surrender of 15Kg food presented for sale past its 'Use By' date at a retail premises on Monks Road because of a complaint from a member of the public. This resulted in the inspection of the premises, disposal of the food and debt recovery for the disposal costs.
- The Cornhill Market reopened in the same month as the entertainment venue 'Stack' resulting in 30 new food business inspections to be completed within 28 days of them opening.
- Fruit fly and drain fly infestation resulting in the voluntary closure and major structural works to allow the reopening of a food premise within the City.
- The receipt of a complaint, subsequent inspection and works to achieve compliance of a low risk retailer where the Food Business Operator (FBO) was urinating in a bottle rather than using the first floor toilet facilities.
- The voluntary closure of takeaway with a mouse infestation. The Officer worked with the FBO and the FBO realised they were out of the depth and chose to close the business permanently.
- Our contractor worked with a national chain to improve procedures for service of less than thoroughly cooked burgers.

### Health and Safety

- Gas leak detected coming from a takeaway when an Officer was walking past the premises. The FBO was out of the country, Officer had to contact Cadent and make enquiries to get hold of landlord to gain access to the property to prevent possible danger to employees, tenants in the flats above and members of the public.
- Offering advice to a business premises when raw sewage overflowed into large retail shop during storm Babet.
- Air B&B - following the receipt of a complaint, Officer had to take enforcement action to resolve a problem with dangerous electrics in a holiday let.
- Ongoing investigation of a major H&S incident which is subject to legal proceedings.
- Working with the Lincoln Tattoo Convention 2023 to get the venue and all artists registered for the two-day event held at the Engine Shed.

- Investigating allegation of poor practice for an Aesthetics Practitioner and helping the practitioner to understand their responsibilities in the absence of licensing.

#### Other

- Increase in rodent complaints following storm Babet and increased water levels.

#### Licensing

During the financial year 2023-2024, the licensing team have issued the following licences

Licences processed	2023-24	2022-23 data
Vehicle Licences	458	409
Test Certificates	802	688
Private Hire Operator Licences	4	3
Private Hire (PH) Driver Licences	276	234
Hackney Carriage (HC) Driver Licences	14	21
Premises Licence Applications	194	183
Personal Licence Applications	93	99

The above data shows the output of the Licensing team in relation to 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 14 drivers were referred through to the Private Hire and/or Hackney Carriage Licensing Sub- Committee. The breakdown of the outcomes of the 14 sub-committees is as follows:

- 10 Licences granted
- 4 Licences Refused

There were also 2 drivers who had their badges revoked with immediate effect in the interest of public safety. One was in relation to allegations of a sexual nature. The other was following a serious road collision with a pedestrian.

The below table shows the number of licences that were active at the end of quarter 4 of the financial year 2023-2024:

Licences active at year end	2023-24	2022-23 data
Premises Licences	404	405
PH Drivers	441	409
PH Vehicles	310	290
PH Operator	20	22
HC Driver	35	33
HC Vehicles	31	31

The performance indicators for Licensing were refreshed at the end of 2022/23. The comparison data for previous financial years is not available but will be included in future reports.

The financial year 2023/24 saw Private Hire Vehicles and Drivers, that were registered in other areas, increasingly appearing in the City. This has mainly been driven by the expansion of Uber around the country. This is currently being discussed at a national level due to the inability to effectively monitor the drivers when they are operating outside of their registered area.

Despite the increase of 'out of town' vehicles appearing in the City the private hire trade in Lincoln has continued to recover, post Covid, and a recent influx of new applications has meant numbers continue to grow. For comparison, the numbers at the end of quarter 1 2024-2025 are as follows:

- PH Drivers 467
- PH Vehicles 327
- PH Operator 18
- HC Driver 35
- HC Vehicles 31

## **Recreation and Leisure Services**

### **Community Centre Overview – 2023-24**

2023-24 saw the Community Centres maintain growth in hourly usage and footfall, with a 35% increase in usage on 2022-23 and a 30% increase in footfall.

This increase is despite the transfer of administration of St Giles Community Centre to the YMCA in September 2023.

All CC Footfall			
	2022-23	2023-24	% Variance
April	3987	13052	227%
May	4534	16586	266%
June	3416	13791	304%
July	3516	14271	306%
August	10851	16532	52%
September	18378	13223	-28%
October	23805	18974	-20%
November	19872	17227	-13%
December	18642	16740	-10%
January	16305	20936	28%
February	14200	17468	23%
March	14059	17985	28%
<b>Total footfall</b>	<b>151565</b>	<b>196785</b>	<b>30%</b>

All CC Hourly Usage			
	2022-23	2023-24	% Variance
April	318.5	958.75	201%
May	416.5	1052	153%
June	411	1018.75	148%
July	370	1041	181%
August	571.75	959.25	68%
September	793.75	921.5	16%
October	906.5	932.25	3%
November	993	942.75	-5%
December	865.25	945.5	9%
January	864.5	923	7%
February	947.75	897.5	-5%
March	1181	1087.25	-8%
<b>Total hourly usage</b>	<b>8639.5</b>	<b>11679.5</b>	<b>35%</b>

## Breakdown of Community Provision – 2022-23 / 2023-24

	All CC Community Provision (Hourly Usage)				
	2022-23				
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Community	280.75	260.75	241.25	338.75	1121.5
Health	314.75	844.25	1477.25	1464.25	4100.5
Sport	318.75	352.5	283.5	290.5	1245.25
Education	0	19.5	53.5	81	154
Training	16.5	43.5	314.75	302	676.75
Religion	70	77	273	418.25	838.25
Env'ment	0	0	0	0	0
Music	127.25	128	93	89	437.25
Party	18	10	24.5	9.5	62
Total Hours Usage	1146	1735.5	2760.75	2993.25	8635.5

	All CC Community Provision (Hourly Usage)				
	2023-24				
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Community	360.25	268	185	253.5	1066.75
Health	1499.5	1449	1324	1374	5646.5
Sport	367.25	342	279.75	358.75	1347.75
Education	48	35.5	55	49.5	188
Training	248	136.25	162.5	112.5	659.25
Religion	380.25	519.5	640.5	582.75	2123
Env'ment	0	0	0	0	0
Music	104.25	139.5	136.25	142.75	522.75
Party	22	32	37.5	34	125.5
Total Hours Usage	3029.5	2921.75	2820.5	2907.75	11679.5

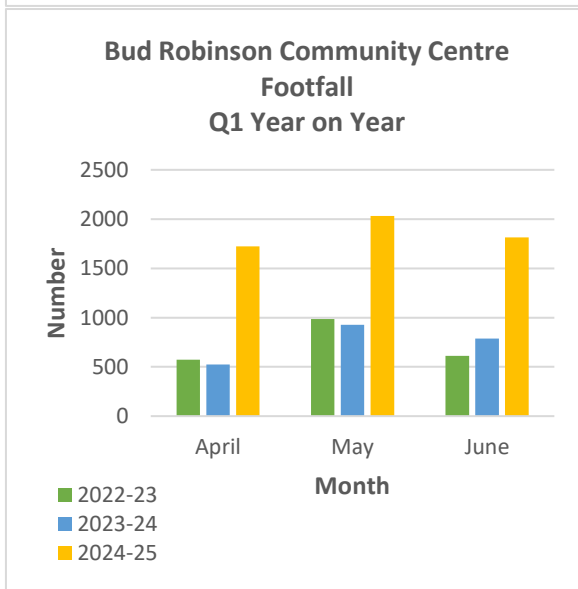
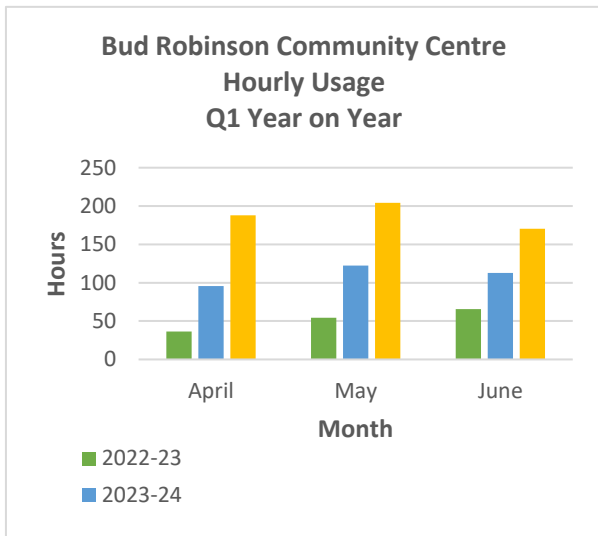
### Bud Robinson Community Centre

Regular training course bookings from hirers such as GMB Union, UBU and Secure Care UK, amongst others, has seen usage increase at the centre year on year.

During 2023-24, Club 87, a social and recreational group aimed specifically at young people with disabilities, has seen an increase in attendees resulting in an additional room being required for their activities.

Weekly church bookings on a Sunday morning allow for services to be held by three religious groups building congregations of people of all ages.

The graphs below highlight the increase in usage and footfall in Q1 from 2022-23 to 2024-25:



## Comparison of Q1 Community Provision at Bud Robinson Community Centre – 2022-23 / 2024-25

BRCC Community Provision (Hourly Usage)			
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
	Q1	Q1	Q1
<b>Community</b>	92.5	116.5	198
<b>Health</b>	24	0	6
<b>Sport</b>	0	0	0
<b>Education</b>	0	0	0
<b>Training</b>	0	100.25	240
<b>Religion</b>	36	103	118.5
<b>Environment</b>	0	0	0
<b>Music</b>	0	0	0
<b>Party</b>	4	11	0

### Grandstand Community Centre

The NHS Vaccination Centre has been using the Weighing Rooms at the Grandstand Community Centre since the Covid outbreak and has recently renewed it's booking until the end of March 2025.

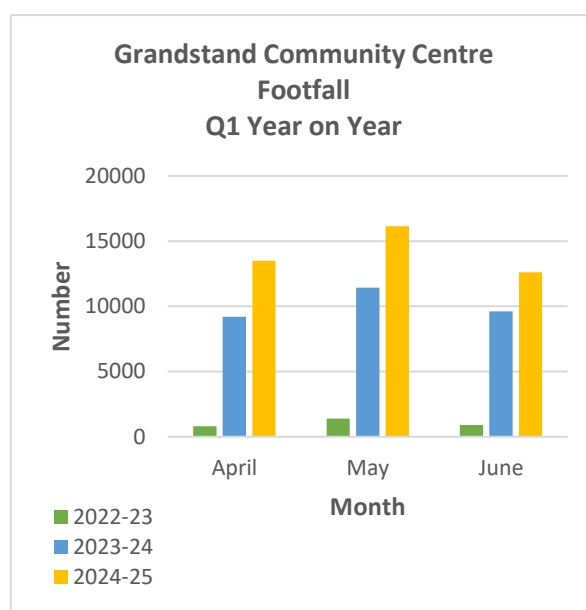
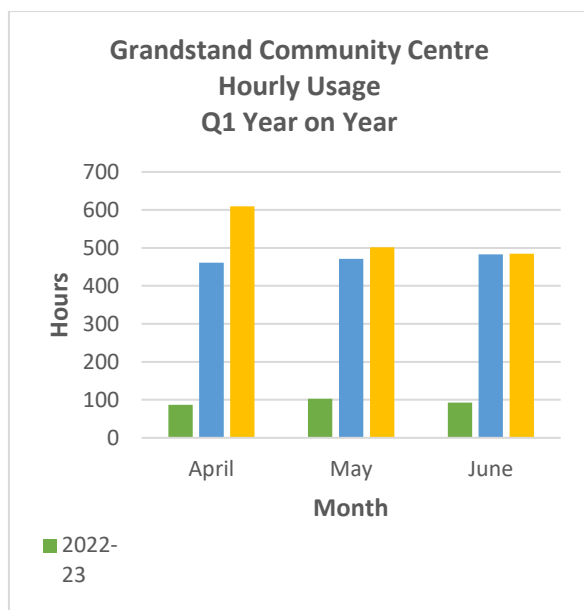
In April 2024, a training provider held a course in the Main Hall for 30 ambulance crew completing their driving qualifications. The venue allowed space for completion of first aid, seminars and exams, as well as providing adequate car parking provision for many ambulances.

City of Lincoln Brass Band have held music rehearsals at the Grandstand Community Centre since March 2016 and continue to meet twice a week in the Main Hall.

Regular monthly bookings by City of Lincoln Council's Local Landscapes and Hidden Histories team provides a History Café and seminars by external speakers.

**The graphs below highlight the increase in usage and footfall in Q1 from 2022-23 to 2024-25:**





### Comparison of Q1 Community Provision at Grandstand Community Centre – 2022-23 / 2024-25

GCC Community Provision (Hourly Usage)			
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
	Q1	Q1	Q1
Community	81	27	57
Health	55.5	1256.5	1223
Sport	12.5	19	8
Education	0	0	0
Training	1.5	9	162
Religion	34	33.5	80.25
Environment	0	0	0
Music	97.75	58.75	65.5
Party	0	11	0

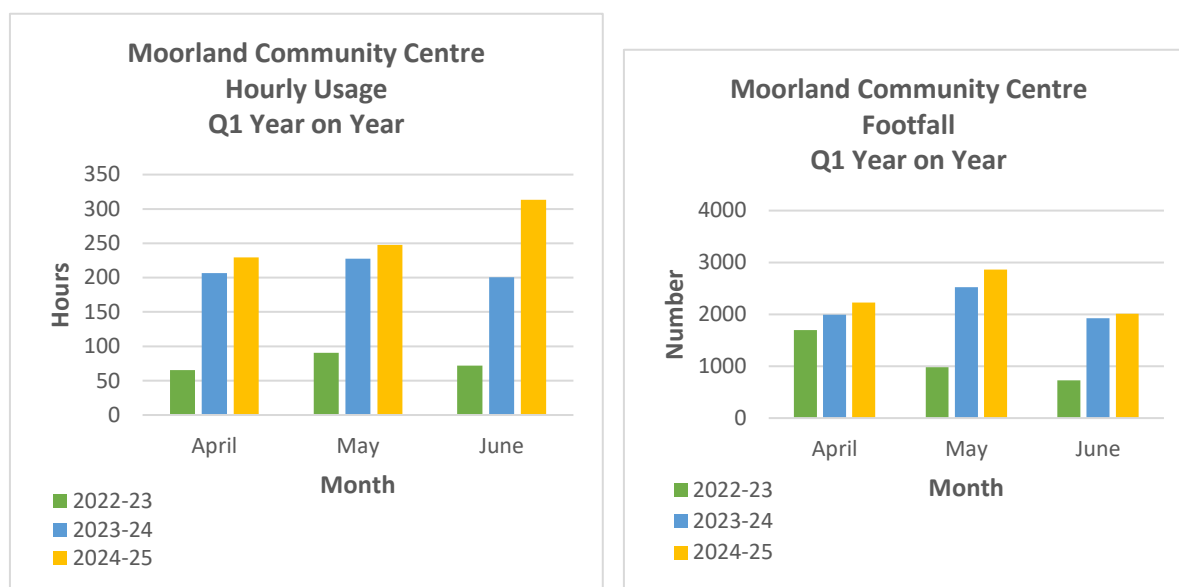
### Moorland Community Centre

Voluntary Centre Services (Urban Challenge Ltd) moved into Moorland Community Centre on Monday 17 June 2024, where they will be delivering a programme of community activity focused around the venue. Following successful internal and external refurbishments, they are now engaging with residents, creating a welcoming community hub and working with local organisations to develop a programme of support. Project Officers will be working in and around the venue, supported by members of the wider VCS Team, engaging with regular hirers.

Zest Theatre recently used the car park at Moorland Community Centre to set up The Zone, a pop-up structure enabling young people to take part in activities, alongside experienced youth arts workers.

Go-Gro, a charitable organisation inspiring individuals and communities through creative projects, will be starting a 10-week cookery course, in the newly installed kitchen, from September 2024.

The graphs below highlight the increase in usage and footfall in Q1 from 2022-23 to 2024-25:



### Comparison of Q1 Community Provision at Moorland Community Centre – 2022-23 / 2024-25

MCC Community Provision (Hourly Usage)			
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
	Q1	Q1	Q1
<b>Community</b>	39	142.75	191.5
<b>Health</b>	34.5	42.5	52
<b>Sport</b>	142.25	172.75	206.5
<b>Education</b>	0	45	45.5
<b>Training</b>	0	6	22
<b>Religion</b>	0	225.5	273
<b>Environment</b>	0	0	0
<b>Music</b>	0	0	0
<b>Party</b>	12	0	0

### Sudbrooke Drive Community Centre

Sudbrooke Drive Community Centre's proximity to the local play park, as well as kitchen, toilet and wet weather facilities, makes it an ideal venue for contact visits and

regular bookings by Leeds and Wakefield Councils allowing families to remain in close contact.

The Small Meeting Room provided a location for one-to-one tuition for a youngster with additional needs. A quiet space, with an outside area, to let off steam before resuming studies.

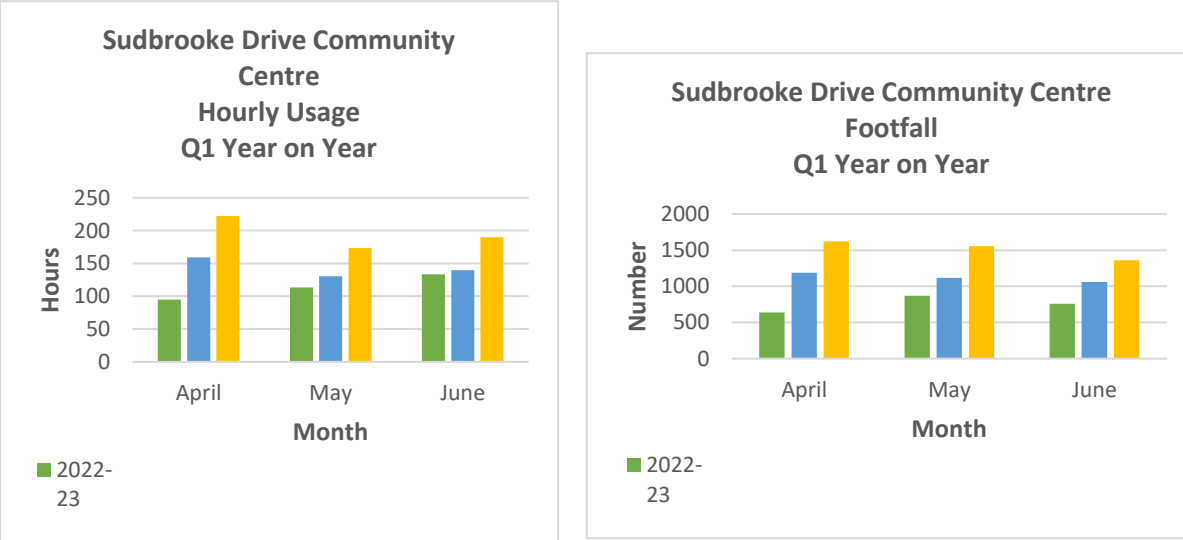
Lincoln Ukulele Band and Lincoln Concert Orchestra hold regular music rehearsals within the Large Meeting Room and store their extensive music library within the venue.

The Main Hall is used for several sporting activities including, Karate, Badminton and Judo. The introduction of Pickleball in November 2023 has resulted in regular weekly bookings.

Stardust, a drama group providing an opportunity for young adults with additional needs to practice their love of theatre and passion for performing, will relocate to Sudbrooke Drive Community Centre in September 2024.

Following a successful grant application (including UKSPF funding), and extensive refurbishment works starting in September 2024, Alive Church will be creating a community hub within the current Large Meeting Room from January 2025. The refurbishment works will alter the layout of the venue with the creation of office space, a second large meeting room and additional storage space.

**The graphs below highlight the increase in usage and footfall in Q1 from 2022-23 to 2024-25:**



## Comparison of Q1 Community Provision at Sudbrooke Drive Community Centre – 2022-23 / 2024-25

SDCC Community Provision (Hourly Usage)			
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
	Q1	Q1	Q1
<b>Community</b>	38.25	41	69
<b>Health</b>	200.75	200.5	147
<b>Sport</b>	56	113	194
<b>Education</b>	0	3	50
<b>Training</b>	15	7.5	7.5
<b>Religion</b>	0	18.25	43
<b>Environment</b>	0	0	0
<b>Music</b>	29.5	45.5	74.5
<b>Party</b>	2	0	0

### Recreation Grounds Overview

#### Football Pitches – King George, Sudbrooke Drive, Skellingthorpe Road and Moorland

The 2023-24 football season saw 9 Sunday League adult football teams using King George V Playing Fields, Sudbrooke Drive Playing Fields and Skellingthorpe Road, whilst 3 teams from the University of Lincoln also used Skellingthorpe Road for their league fixtures. Lincoln Griffins also used Moorland Playing Fields for their ladies' fixtures.

Two local junior football clubs fielded a total of 13 teams, consisting of boys and girl's teams, at both Skellingthorpe Road and Moorland Playing Fields.

Unfortunately, due to the low-lying land at Skellingthorpe Road, there was some disruption to fixtures owing to the inclement weather experienced during the season and flooding of adult and junior pitches. The season however ended successfully, as planned, after many cancellations and rearranging of fixtures.

Please see below comparison of annual football income, noting the 18% increase in booking income from 2022-23 to 2023-24.

<b>Football Income Comparison</b>						
	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2023-24</b>
<b>Adult Teams</b>	£4,293.60	£3,277.41	£2,680.00	£4,961.72	£3,916.80	£5,140.80
<b>Jnr Teams</b>	£4,558.80	£966.72	£648.00	£957.84	£2,695.80	£2,646.24
<b>One-off Bookings</b>	£390.29	£558.66		£505.97	£351.00	£429.80
<b>Total</b>	<b>£9,242.69</b>	<b>£4,802.79</b>	<b>£3,328.00</b>	<b>£6,425.53</b>	<b>£6,963.60</b>	<b>£8,216.84</b>

Looking forward to the 2024-25 season, there are 6 Sunday League adult football teams scheduled to use the pitches. Unfortunately, despite an increase of teams playing within the league, the obstacles faced last season with the flooding of pitches has impacted on those wishing to use Council owned facilities. There will only be 1 team using Skellingthorpe Road compared to 4 team's last season.

Currently, there are 10 junior teams from one football club using Skellingthorpe Road for the 2024-25 season. Confirmation has not yet been received for the number of junior teams intending to use Moorland.

### **West Common Cricket Pitch and Pavilion**

The 2023-24 cricket season saw 3 adult teams using West Common Cricket Pitch and Pavilion for home fixtures.

Due to the inclement weather experienced during the winter of 2023-24, and the location of the cricket pitch at the lowest point of the Common, it has not been possible to hold any cricket fixtures this season. This has been incredibly disappointing for all teams with scheduled fixtures and the grounds maintenance team are working hard to facilitate games from September 2024.

Please see below comparison of annual cricket income, noting the 5% decrease in booking income from 2022-23 to 2023-24, and the loss of income for the 2024-25 season.

<b>Cricket Income Comparison</b>				
	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>
<b>Adult Cricket</b>	£868.14	£1,303.87	£1,213.97	£0.00
<b>Junior Cricket</b>			£21.00	£0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£868.14</b>	<b>£1,303.87</b>	<b>£1,234.97</b>	<b>£0.00</b>

The West Common Cricket Pavilion is also used by the Lincoln Commons Horse Association, who use the facility free of charge to hold meetings, and local schools who hold their Sports Days on the West Common.

## **Sport and Leisure**

This past year has again been a challenging year for Yarborough and Birchwood, although usage is on the rise, usage numbers are still not at Pre-Covid levels. As shown below.

Quarterly usage Yarborough	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Pre pandemic19/20	188,529	190,051	174,255	169,64
2021/22	39,879	87,485	76,946	*66,896
2022/23	*51,958	*60,934	*57,864	73,612
2023/24	99,520	103,392	98,617	115,974
2024/25	113,680			
*Main pool closed for ceiling works				
Quarterly usage Birchwood	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Pre pandemic19/20	57,774	57,138	57,321	57,144
2021/22	20,230	34,549	33,393	39,613
2022/23	33,468	37,616	31,185	35,483
2023/24	38,209	42,118	38,687	44,443
2024/25	41,503			
AGP hours usage both sites	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Pre pandemic19/20	520	555	612	630
2021/22	895	790	806	775
2022/23	689	635	806	728
2023/24	761	663	826	826
2024/25	773			

The cost of living is still high with household budgets stretched, Active Nation have been creating new offers to enable people to access the facilities and exercise on a smaller budget.

Rising energy cost in winter 2023 on top of the previous financial year utilities already being up 400% on previous year is causing real concerns, luckily the summer 2024 period saw warm weather and a stabilisation of the energy costs, though it is now predicted energy costs will increase in October, yet again causing considerable hardship to leisure centre/s and users alike.

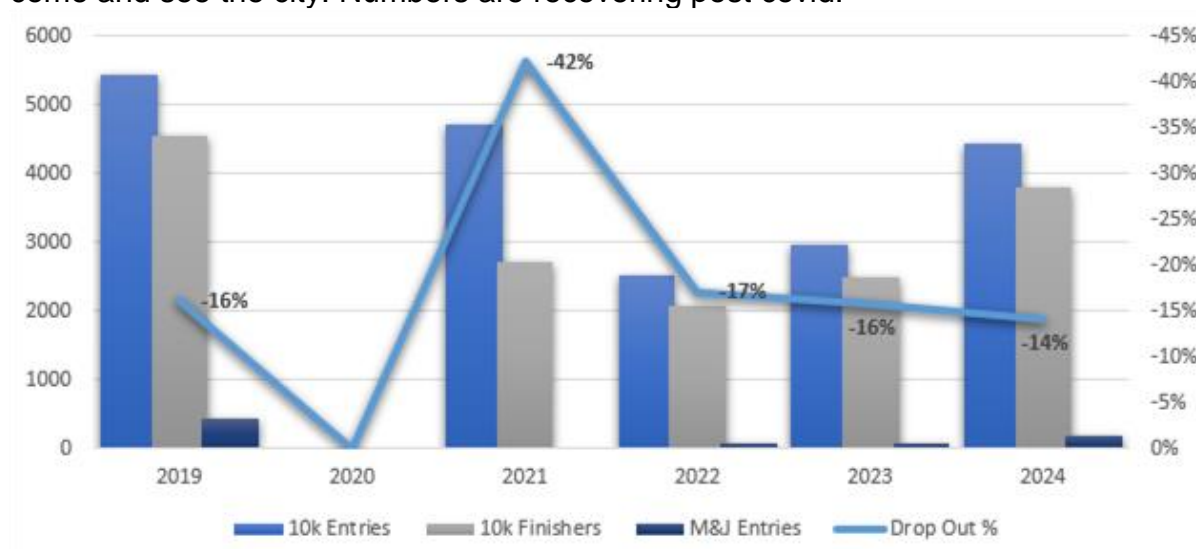
Last year we reported that the Council had applied for over £1.5 million of swimming pool support funding from Sport England, the pot was predictably oversubscribed but the Council was able to secure a significant amount for Solar Panels and energy and heat recovery systems for some of the pool fans, which once fitted will bring down the utility consumption/bills. The work will be programmed into financial year 2024/25 with the benefits being seen after the installation.

During the summer 2024 a permanent EGYM was installed at Yarborough, a trial set up had previously been installed to gauge interest. The users of this AI governed equipment saw the benefit of using this equipment on their health and bio age quickly, the equipment is engaging and guides you through the exercises and provides motivation to finish each exercise. Some of the stats from this equipment for May - July are shown below.

- Average unique users a month of 464 of which an average of 67 are new users.
- Retention of the user's month to month is approx. 80%
- In the first month of using the equipment the individual users Bio Age (health body age) decreased by approximately 11.8 years on average. The user's strength improved by 22% approximately, which is important for any age, but essential for the over 50's for healthy aging. A big plus for the health of the City.

## City of Lincoln 10k

The Lincoln 10k road race is commissioned by the City of Lincoln Council and delivered in partnership with the Jane Tomlinson Run For All charity and is an important event in encouraging residents to engage in physical activity and visitors to come and see the city. Numbers are recovering post covid.



## Engagement

A key focus for Run for All is to engage further within the local community, encouraging those that are not able to participate to support through other ways, such as volunteering, joining the Event Support Team, providing a cheer station or entertainment out on course. As well as representatives from the below groups:

- Lincoln District Scouts
- Lincoln Sea Cadets
- Pink Ladies Running Club
- Army Cadets
- Park Run
- 

For the Mini and Junior event there was a face painter and child friendly activations to support our younger field (aged 3+) and two bands providing entertainment on the route, with the City of Lincoln Brass Band being one.

## Stats

The 10k entries increased 50% in 2024 from 2023, which sees the event heading towards the pre-covid entry levels. The field is 56% male with 2474 participants this year.

2024 saw 302 corporate / team challenge entries, with 247 representing the University of Lincoln.

On the day dropout rates across the industry are decreasing and 14.2% drop out rate was seen for the 10k.

The majority of the field continues to be represented by <40 years old, with the 40-49 age category being the second largest field.

The Mini and Junior event series are now starting to see entry levels return following covid, with 187 participating this year, which is in line with other Mini & Junior events across the UK. 150 free places were offered across 28 schools.

## Charities

Six partner charities supporting the City of Lincoln 10k and Mini and Junior Events in 2024:

- Sophie's Journey
- Lincoln & Notts Air Ambulance
- RSPCA Lincolnshire
- YMCA Lincolnshire
- Lincoln City Foundation
- Linkage

## Sustainability

Run for All are still on their Sustainability journey, however some of initiatives are summarised below:



- **Finisher goody bags** - are made from sustainable sugar cane and we are exploring more sustainable options for 2025/2026 event seasons
- **T-Shirts** - We now offer the ability for participants to purchase an event place without a t-shirt, ensuring that only those that want one receive one
- **Generators** – We now hire battery powered only, removing petrol and diesel requirements
- **Cardboard** - 95% of cardboard boxes removed from waste
- **Waste** - We hire Dry Mix Recycle bins for our events. The waste in these bins is segregated so that any general waste placed into them is then placed into a normal general waste bin and water is removed from the bottles to ensure that they can be recycled
- **Transport** – Promote the use of public transport, walking or cycling to our events where safe to do so
- **JOGON Again** – We have partnered with JOGON to support removing 1 million pairs of running shoes from landfill

### **Showmen's Guild Pleasure Fairs**

Historically these have taken place on the common in April and September each year, the September Fair was originally set up by Royal Charter, this rich history continues to the present day.

Each fair is open for five days to the public with varying rides and attractions, approximately 4500 people attend each fair, usually families in the afternoon and early evening, changing into older children, teenagers and adults in the evening.

The Showmen's Guild work very hard to create a friendly and fun atmosphere, in all weathers and carry on the tradition, very little anti-social behaviour is experienced at these events now which enables the events to be appealing to all.

### **Progress against our Physical Activity Strategy**

Physical Activity Strategy 'To deliver, support, facilitate and above all inspire Lincoln residents to be more active, more often and make physical activity part of everyday life.'

By providing a community space, facilitating the delivery of exercise classes and providing adequate space for health professionals and community groups to offer guidance and support for those living with health conditions, City of Lincoln Council Community Centres play an important role in the delivery of the Physical Activity Strategy.

The NHS Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board continue to deliver the vaccination hub at the Grandstand Community Centre, Weighing Rooms and are scheduled to attend until April 2024, providing a clinical environment, accessible, vital care to the local community.

Zumba, an exercise based, dance class has been a long running booking at the Grandstand Community Centre and the recent introduction of Yoga at Sudbrooke Drive Community Centre, offer an alternative to attending a gym facility for local communities looking at improving physical and mental wellbeing.

Badminton hire is available at both Moorland and Sudbrooke Drive Community Centres. Primarily used by Council employees, with a benefit of 50% discount, promoting physical wellbeing within the workplace. Regular weekly bookings are keyholder trained so a caretaker is not required, reducing barriers to the hirer.

The recent rise in popularity of Pickleball has resulted in enquiries for the hire of Badminton courts to facilitate games. The Recreation Officers have purchased Pickleball equipment to allow for newcomers to access the game within the centres. Pickleball is a sport that can be enjoyed by children and adults encouraging family activity.

Martial Arts groups continue to be regular hirers of the centres, offering weekly classes to both adults and children, promoting exercise, a healthy lifestyle and confidence building within a community setting. The number of groups has recently increased to four regular, weekly classes.

Lincoln City Foundation, a local charity dedicated to creating healthier, happier and inspired communities, offer Kurling and Carpet Bowls on a weekly basis at Moorland Community Centre. As a part of the EFL Trust, Extra Time initiative these activities are aimed at making a positive difference to the lives of retired and semi-retired people, providing them with the opportunity to meet like-minded people from the local area.

One You Lincolnshire currently provide a strength and balance programme, aimed at people over the age of 65 years, at Sudbrooke Drive Community Centre. By providing local, affordable rooms to facilitate these free services City of Lincoln Council aid people requiring support to make sustainable changes to improve their health and wellbeing and live a longer, happier life.

The Alzheimer's Society and Forget Me Not Café offer fortnightly sessions at Bud Robinson Community Centre to provide support and guidance for those people living with dementia and Alzheimer's, as well as their family and friends.

The Recreation Grounds are another area regularly used for seasonal, sporting activities. West Common Cricket Pitch continues to be used by the two main Cricket Clubs in Lincoln, Rustons and Carholme Cricket Clubs, as well as standalone clubs, 66 such as Monks Cricket Club. Skellingthorpe Road Playing Field, Sudbrooke Drive Playing Field, King George Playing Field and Moorland Backies are currently home grounds to 13 Adult and 13 Junior teams, including Lincoln Griffins, an all-girls team

and the University of Lincoln Men's football. Working in partnership with the Lincoln Sunday League and University of Lincoln to offer regular football provision.

As detailed earlier in this report, statistics are being gathered monthly to establish the current offering of community provision, both in hourly usage and footfall, at the Community Centres. The data has been broken down into nine key areas, community, health, sport, education, training, religion, environment, music and party, to monitor usage and highlight areas requiring improvement, as well as those areas excelling.

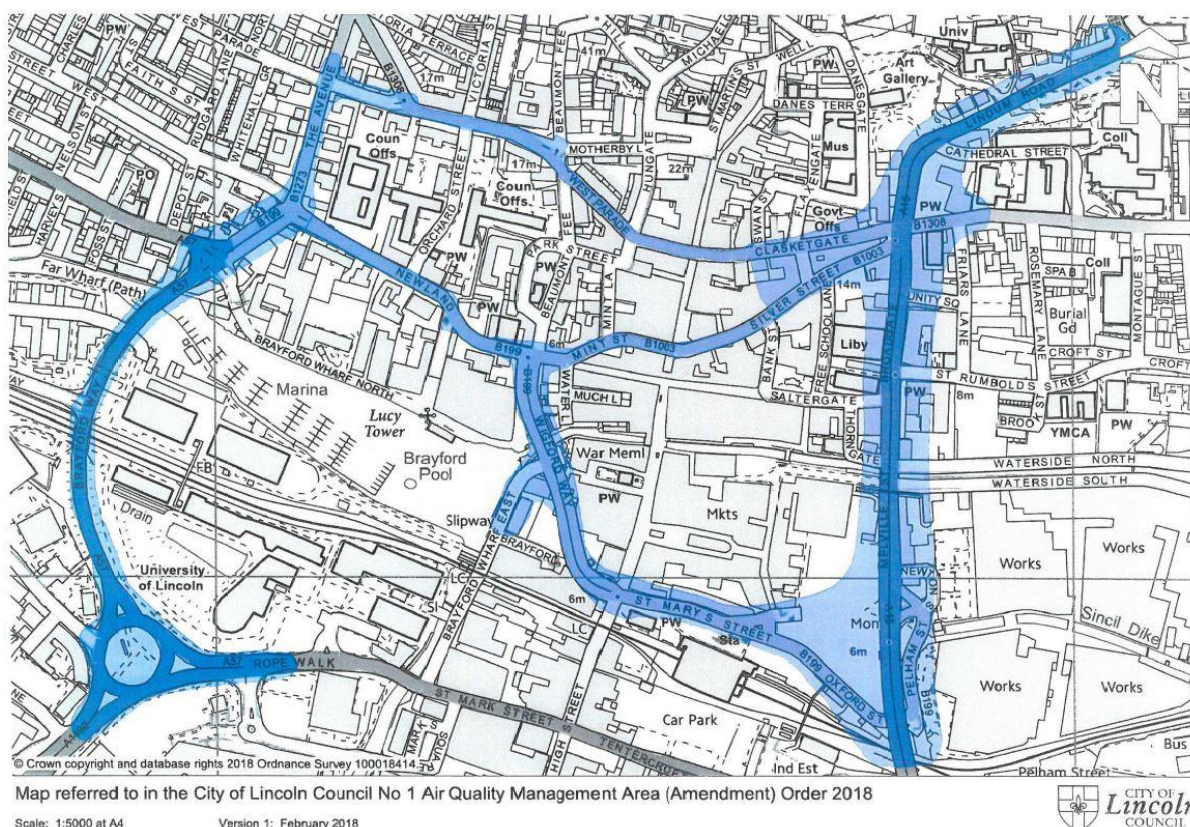
### **Local Air Quality Management**

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).

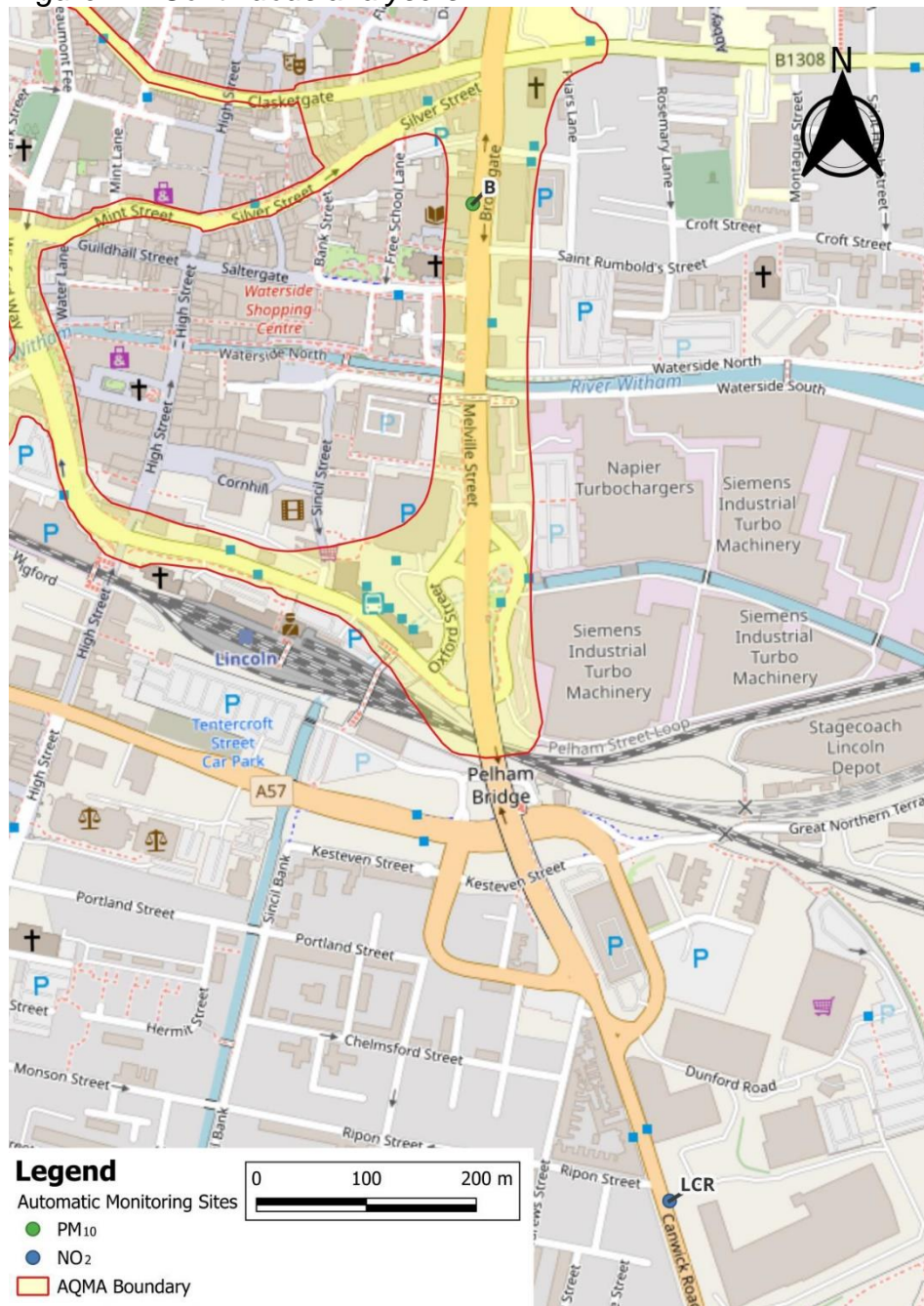
Nitrogen dioxide is monitored at 18 locations using a combination of diffusion tubes (low-cost passive samplers good for providing data on long term trends) and a continuous analyser (the reference method for assessing both short term and long term exposure). The continuous analyser is part of Defra's 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, 3a & 3b below.

*Figure 2 – Continuous analysers*



*Note: LCR – Nitrogen dioxide analyser; B – PM<sub>10</sub> analyser*

Figure 3a – Nitrogen dioxide diffusion tube sites in and around the AQMA

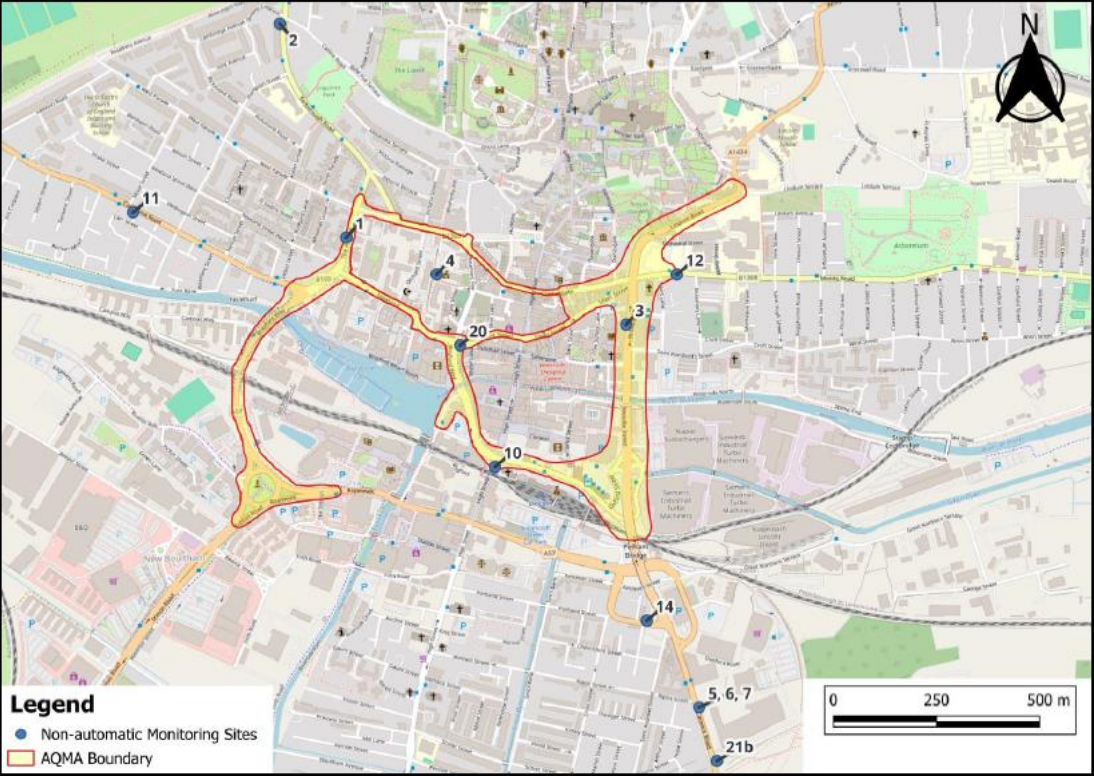
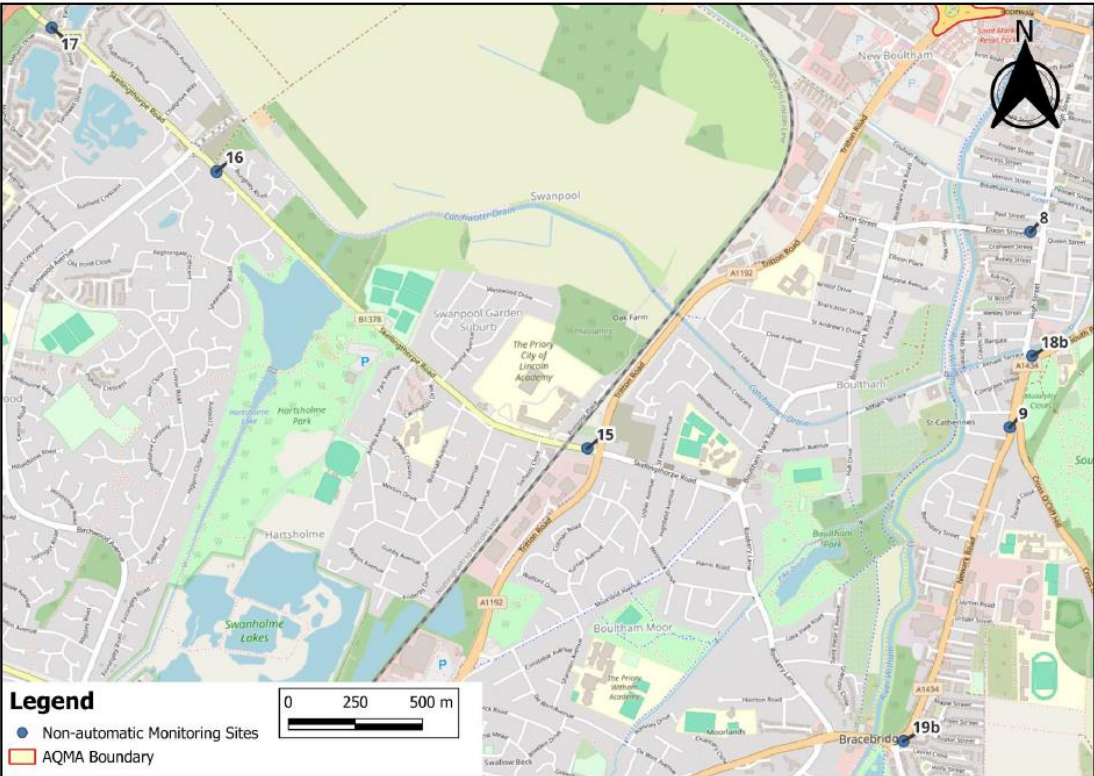


Figure 3a – Nitrogen dioxide diffusion tube sites outside of AQMA



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 2023) is presented within the Council's Annual Status Report 2024, which has recently submitted to Defra for approval.

All monitoring locations continue to indicate a good level of compliance with the relevant national air quality objectives. As such, we are proposing to commence the formal measures to revoke the remaining Air Quality Management Area by the end of 2024, a move which is encouraged and supported by Defra.

### **Bereavement Services**

It has been a difficult 6 months in Bereavement Services. Staff at Lincoln Crematorium reported six incidents where they believe colleagues had not dealt with ashes in accordance with the wishes of the deceased's family

We have put measures in place to ensure the crematorium can continue to operate to a high standard as we move forward, using experienced industry professionals from the country's leading supplier of crematorium cover staff to support existing staff.

We have organised a full review of procedures and processes at the crematorium by an experienced, independent specialist in crematorium management. In addition, we also requested an immediate inspection of the facility by the Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities and this is currently in progress. An action plan has been developed and good progress is actively being made against this.

During the 2023 calendar year Crematorium carried out 1752 cremations and is the second busiest crematorium in the county after Grimsby (1794) and is broadly similar to 2024 figures.

From 9 September probably the biggest change in Death Certification in England and Wales for over 100 years has taken place which is the introduction of a Statutory Medical Examiner System. This means independent scrutiny by a Medical Examiner will become a statutory requirement prior to the registration of all non-coronial deaths in England and Wales from this date and the use of medical referees will be removed at some point.

**Councillor Bob Bushell**  
**Portfolio Holder for Remarkable Place**