



Cabinet Member Report for Environment

Northampton Borough Council

22 July 2019

Environmental Services Contract

Far Cotton sacks trial started on 5th April 2019 – first 8 weeks have shown an improvement in both recycling rate and cleanliness report and talks are underway with Veolia regarding extending the scheme to other parts of the borough.

Spring/summer grounds maintenance works well underway with grass cutting currently on the fifth cut and doing well despite the very challenging weather which has resulted in the teams being completely “rained off” on certain days in June. Preparation is also well underway to support both NBC and other stakeholders ‘In Bloom’ and Green Flag preparations.

Veolia/Northampton Borough Councils Envirogrant scheme has now concluded for 2019 with the 6 applicants and other stakeholders attending the award ceremony hosting by NBC at the Guildhall on 24th June 2019. The following projects received funding this year:-

Friends of Dallington Village - aim to bring colour to the entrance of the village (via Mill Lane) by building a raised wooden planter, which will be maintained by the group and residents.

Friends of Thornton Park - aim to increase interest in the park by restoring a forgotten rockery with new plants and stones and opening up the area. The volunteers will also meet regularly to maintain the area.

Bradlaugh Fields and Barn - aim to enhance imaginative play opportunities by creating an outdoor classroom using wildflowers, mud kitchens and blackboards for the benefit of local schools, playgroups and families.

Spring Lane Primary School - aim to improve the local area by allowing year five pupils to ‘pay it back’ during two afternoon sessions a week over six weeks, helping to plant flowers, paint equipment and clean up spaces.

Northampton Sea Cadets - aim to improve the condition and environment of the River Nene and encourage more wildlife by removing waste and plastic from the river, monitor wildlife and raise awareness of environmental issues.

Northampton Hope Centre - aim to improve access to sustainable foods by hosting five ‘Grow your own’ workshops at their allotments in St David’s and supply participants with simple resource packs.

In addition, Idverde’s Community Investment Fund has provided funding to the Friends of Bradlaugh Fields and Bellinge Community House.

We continue to work with both Veolia/Idverde and the multi faith group to modernise the Cemeteries service, extending both the working hours and the operational hours of the cemeteries to allow later notification of and internments.

Parks and Open Spaces

Upton Country Park Phase II

Work has begun to upgrade existing footpaths, install a new east-west 3m wide multi-use footpath from Upton Park Phase I to Kislingbury and form new secondary interconnecting footpaths within the Park generally following the course of the river. New gated entrances will also link with the adjoining housing developments and new links will also be formed to existing footpaths and bridleways. Other works include forming new feature entrances with interpretation signage and installing litter/dog bins at strategic points, foot bridges to span the flood flumes, new directional and information signage throughout and various other measures to ensure the ongoing maintenance of the park and control its other use as an area for sheep grazing. The work is being carried out by Idverde and they have been in communication with local residents as part of the Considerate Contractor's Scheme. This will shortly be extended to householders and businesses that might be temporarily affected by the increased traffic movements at the Kislingbury end

The Council is also working with Natural England and the Wildlife Trust to turn selected areas (south of the river, east and west of Upton Valley Way North) into wet grassland to form a habitat suitable for breeding waders. This is expected to immediately follow the completion of the above works.

Abington Park Aviary

Work has begun to install security fencing around the aviary to protect the birds from activists and other antisocial behaviour that can sometimes take place late at night. Also, having proper opening and closing times will give the birds rest time from the noise of the visiting public.

Errington Park

Additional bollards and a height restrictor have been installed to help prevent unauthorised vehicular access to the park. This will allow park users to enjoy, play and feel safe when using the park. The park is also about to benefit from some new outdoor gym equipment and some additional play equipment in the children's enclosed area.

Lings Wood – Wildlife Trust Area

A new barrier gate has been installed just inside the entrance to the wildlife area to help combat the ongoing issues of fly-tipping, which normally takes place when their staff have gone home. A number of the fly-tippers have been caught and have received £400 fines, wardens continue to work hard to gather evidence to pursue the culprits.

Environmental Health

The total number of fixed penalty notices issued by the environmental enforcement team during June was 319. 37% of these were issued to people who are aged between 20 and 29 and 67% were issued to males.

Officers from the food and safety team have contributed to the investigation of a number of national food safety incidents, liaising with businesses in Northampton that are potentially involved in the supply chains of a range of products.

Air Quality

The Annual Air Quality Status Report for Northampton has been completed and submitted to DEFRA. Once the report has been verified it will be published on the Council's website

Councillor Mike Hallam
Cabinet Member for Environment