

**PORTFOLIO:**

**ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT**

Report of  
Portfolio Holder:

**COUNCILLOR  
ELSIE MARTLEW**

**Councillor Elsie Martlew  
Environment & Transport Portfolio Holder**

**HIGHWAYS SERVICES**

**Public Realm Improvement**

Under a Section 106 agreement a scheme is being developed to improve the public realm of the Caldewgate/Shaddongate area. This will see improvements to paving, bus shelters, fences/barriers, landscaping, car parks etc in the area and it is hoped to provide a piece of artwork in Paddy's market. Funding is provided from Sainsbury under a Section 106 agreement.

**Tour of Britain Cycle Race**

Arrangements are in-hand to prepare for the Tour of Britain Cycle Race on the 12<sup>th</sup> September 2012. Permission is required for the placing of any sponsors banners or advertising and this permission has been granted by the County Council for Tour of Britain sponsors banners to be placed on railings around the highways on a trial basis. There may be some inconvenience to residents and businesses during the morning due to road closures. However the event creates a great opportunity to promote Carlisle, especially after the success at the Tour de France and the Olympics and to see sporting heroes like Bradley Wiggins and Mark Cavendish.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

### **Enforcement and Education**

The new Enforcement and Education Team Leader Morven Anson has started with the City Council and her appointment coincides with the launch of the “Love Where You Live” campaign to clean up Carlisle and reduce the incidents of dog fouling; littering and fly tipping. Three investigations are already underway in relation to fly tipping offences.

Members of the Environmental Health Service carried out an educational campaign on the 1<sup>st</sup> of August speaking to a large number of people in the City Centre. If the exercise had been an enforcement exercise then 13 fixed penalty tickets would have been served for littering, which include 7 for dropping cigarette ends, and 1 fixed penalty ticket could have been served for dog fouling. Regular enforcement campaigns are scheduled for the future starting from September.

### **Private Water Supplies**

The Council is obliged to assess 404 private water supplies within the District to ensure the water is fit to drink. It is interesting to note that rather than improve private water supplies the recent wet weather means a lot of run off comes from fields polluting many private water supply sources. 7 out of 17 private water supplies sampled over the last few months have been failing with high coliform bacteria – these supplies are being told to boil their water before consumption.

### **Cut Fruit Sampling**

Environmental Health Officers have been involved in a nationwide co-ordinated sampling study with the Health Protection Agency, looking at the bacterial quality of pre cut fresh fruit.

Samples have been taken of commercial cut fresh fruit, commonly available in retail, catering and restaurant premises, and included packed and self-packed/served fruit. (This is not whole fruit that is cut just before consumption in the home). This type of product had been recognised as a source of *Listeria monocytogenes*\* from a pilot study that identified 8% of fruit salads carried the bacteria, with cut melon often being the primary source of contamination. (*\*Listeria monocytogenes is one of the less common “food poisoning” bugs and can grow at refrigeration temperatures. In healthy adults it may cause mild symptoms. However it can cause serious problems in pregnancy and within the elderly population.*) Precautions to take include, keeping cut fruit refrigerated, keep the fridge at the right temperature and use within use by dates.

The good news for Carlisle is that since January this year only 1 sample taken by our officers was unsatisfactory out of 29 samples taken (3.5%). Where an unsatisfactory result was found, the premises have been re-visited, advice given and re-sampling has indicated satisfactory result.

## **GREEN SPACES**

### **Love Parks Week (21<sup>st</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> July)**

The annual celebration of Carlisle's parks and green spaces attracted around 8,000 people in total, enjoying a varied programme of activities in parks throughout the city.

With the traditional opening event of a 'pop-up park' in the city centre, the week included 'Picnic and Play' at Keenan Park, 'Parkfest' at Fusehill Street and a 'Green Gym' at Acredale Road play area. Over 40 partner organisations were involved in supporting Love Parks Weeks and 6 'Friends' groups organised events themselves – the community and the Council working together.

### **Weed Spraying**

Highway weed-spraying is carried out by a contractor working on behalf of both City and County Councils. The contract includes 3 seasonal treatments, and the second spray was completed between 30<sup>th</sup> July and 8<sup>th</sup> August. This was 3 weeks later than originally planned, the delay caused by wet weather. The spraying vehicles are fitted with a satellite tracking device and we are provided with complete records of the streets treated including the date, time and speed of the vehicle.

### **Keenan Park Play Trail and Youth Shelter**

A project to transform the play area at Keenan Park came to completion in July with the installation of the youth shelter, previously in the grounds of the closed North Cumbria Technology College. The local community was closely involved in the project, including the 'Together We Can' group from Botcherby and the newly formed 'Friends of Keenan Park'.

## **WASTE SERVICES**

### **Bins out too early**

We have received complaints from residents regarding bins being presented days in advance of the actual collection date.

We are starting to clamp down on bins/bags left out too early any resident who persistently offends will be fined by our enforcement team under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

### **Seagulls**

There is a problem with seagulls causing a mess by ripping the refuse bags open prior to collection. We are trying various things to alleviate this problem one of which is to move as many areas as we can onto bins. We have started this process in Aglionby street and we are in the process of delivering bins to this area. In some places it will not be possible to move to a bin collection

and we are investigating how the use of sacks can be more sustainable and more robust to protect refuse sacks from attack by seagulls and pests.

Therefore we are also requesting that residents who remain on bags be careful with their waste, secure it in the sack and present it on the day of collection rather than the evening before collection.

Longer term, the City Council is working on an improved action plan to address the problem with seagulls.

## **Street Cleaning**

### **Area Working:**

Following on from the work on area working, the street cleaning has been split into two areas and two street cleaning supervisors have been appointed – Neil Dixon for the City Centre and West area and Robert Mitchell covering the East and Rural areas. These working areas mirror partner areas ( eg the Police) and will aid a multi agency approach to environmental problems caused by anti-social behaviour in particular.

### **Sweeping Routes**

The sweeping routes for the new sweepers are currently been mapped out and the trial of these new rounds will commence upon delivery of the new vehicles (1<sup>st</sup> September 2012) for a 2 month trial and evaluation.

### **Rapid Response Team**

From the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2012 the rapid response team will be fully operational. This team has been funded for two years.

### **Olympic Torch/ Tour of Britain**

All the cleaning teams did a great job of ensuring the city was cleaned during the torch procession and after the evening event in Bitts part. A similar approach will be taken following on from and in preparation for the Tour of Britain event in September.

## **DATABASE IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Local Environment “Back Office” Database**

In order to tackle the problem of good quality management and performance information there is a project ongoing to implement the use of a new database to manage Local Environment information. This new database will be used to record and manage all of our activities and enable more accurate reporting. Longer term we will be able to use the information to identify problem areas and target resources to resolve problems.

This will be an invaluable tool for us to be able to track and manage requests and to help us in ongoing improvement of the waste service.

The project is in its first phase, which involves service requests within Waste Services. This has been “Live” since Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> July, and we are now in a “settling down” period in which development and tweaking is ongoing. Next, it is planned to provide the database for service requests within Neighbourhoods and Green Spaces.