

PORTFOLIO:

ENVIRONMENT & HOUSING

Report of
Portfolio Holder:

**COUNCILLOR
RAY BLOXHAM**

**Councillor R D Bloxham
Environment & Housing Portfolio Holder**

HOUSING

HOUSING NEEDS & DEMAND STUDY (HNDS)

A study was commissioned in March 2011 jointly by Housing and Planning with consultants GL Hearn. The study took place during the spring and summer.

A final draft report was produced in September and a stakeholder event was held on 10/10. This study will form the background document for the development of the Housing Strategy and will inform the Local development Framework (LDF) process.

HOUSING STRATEGY

The Housing Strategy for the period 2011–15 has been developed over the spring and summer this year. The strategy has been out to consultation during September and October.

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

A scheme involving the use of council owned land at Dalton Avenue, Carlisle has attracted funding from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) for the development of 37 affordable rented housing units over a two year period in partnership with Lovell's.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

AIR QUALITY

The latest stage in the Council's review and assessment process for air quality was the submission of the 2011 Progress Report. The detail of the report has now been appraised and accepted by DEFRA. The report can be viewed on our website, under Environmental Health:

http://www.carlisle.gov.uk/environment_and_waste/environmental_health/air_quality/air_quality_documents.aspx

The most recent monitoring data for 2010 has revealed that, on the whole, air quality across the district remains good. However there are some locations within the city where the annual mean concentration for nitrogen dioxide (mainly from traffic) is above the objective level.

Our air quality monitoring network will continue unchanged during 2011-12. Data recorded after the opening of the Carlisle Northern Development Route will allow accurate 'before and after' comparisons to be drawn. The new bypass is likely to positively impact inner city traffic congestion and should have a knock on improvement in traffic derived air pollution in key areas.

ENFORCEMENT ACTION

Officers from the Environmental Health Service have recently been involved in 2 successful prosecutions in Carlisle Magistrates Court. Both cases involved different breaches of the Health & Safety law and brief details are as follows;

Dorothy Perkins Retail Ltd. pleaded guilty after failing to comply with an Improvement Notice served following a number of complaints relating to very low temperatures within the store. The Notice was served following several attempts to resolve the matter informally by EHO's. The Company were fined £1000 (reduced from £1500 for entering a "guilty" plea) with costs of £1426.58 awarded plus a £15 victim surcharge

Also, the owner of the Massala Spice House, Denton Holme, pleaded guilty to failing to comply with 2 Improvement Notices relating to a tandoori oven at the premises.

OFFICER DEVELOPMENT

- Congratulations go to Rebecca McKee and Michael Cunningham for successfully completing the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health's level 3 Award in Training Skills and Practice. The qualification will enable the Service to deliver CIEH vocationally-related qualifications, such as the CIEH Level 2 Awards in Food Safety.

WASTE SERVICES

As part of a new waste reduction campaign, staff from the Council's Waste Services section along with colleagues from Resource Cumbria have been visiting properties within the Botcherby area to see what help they need to recycle more of their household waste. The campaign has also has the support of Riverside Housing Association. The visits started in late July and are still ongoing.

Residents are being encouraged to:

- Recycle more of their rubbish by using Carlisle City Council's kerbside Greenbox (paper; glass bottles and jars; and tins and cans can all be recycled within a Greenbox), Greenbag (plastic and cardboard can both recycled in Greenbags) and Garden waste bin services;
- Keep their gardens free of waste by making sure that rubbish doesn't accumulate.

To encourage residents to recycle more, Botcherby householders have been provided with a range of practical help and advice. This has included additional recycling containers (if needed); free 'box hat' covers for their Greenboxes (to reduce the risk of materials being blown away from the container); collection

calendars, so they know when to put their recycling out for collection and 'waste audits' to show them exactly what can be recycled.

The campaign is already proving to be a success. More than 300 properties have been visited and over 90 Greenboxes and 140 Greenbags have been issued to local residents. As a result of the campaign many more households are actively recycling in Botcherby than were doing so beforehand helping to ensure that Carlisle's excellent recycling record is maintained.

NEIGHBOURHOOD & GREEN SPACES

COUNTRYSIDE VOLUNTEERS

The new Carlisle Countryside Volunteer Team has been established by our Countryside Service, meeting every other Monday to carry out practical conservation tasks, including wildflower management in Kingmoor South Nature Reserve; footpath drainage work and a day of footpath edging at Petteril Valley – so far 24 volunteer-days have been donated.

Future tasks which the group will take part in include pond clearance, boardwalk construction, coppicing and woodland management.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

On the 27th September 4300 daffodil bulbs were planted along the banks of the River Caldew, outside Bousteads Grassing. A community event run by the CA2 Green Group and supported by Neighbourhoods and Green Spaces, the bulbs were planted by 50 children from Year 2 at Robert Ferguson School – thanks to head teacher Mr Frost.

FRIENDS OF THE PARKS

Friends of Melbourne Park have carried out a number of practical task days at the park, including pulling of the invasive Himalayan Balsam from the banks of the river Petteril and two litter-picking sessions. The Friends are putting up a notice board in the park in order to promote the volunteer events and to spread the message about cleaning up after dogs.

Friends of Hammond's Pond have been successful in attracting a grant of £2,400 through the Groundwork Trust to help purchase equipment for the park. The Friends annual Halloween event takes place on Friday 28th October. This year's charities are Help for Heroes and Eden Valley Children's Hospice

HEALTHY CITIES WEEK

As our contribution to Carlisle's 'Healthy City Week', Neighbourhoods and Green Spaces organised:

- Guided tour of 'Fit To Grow in Currock' allotments, followed by a cookery demonstration by John Crouch in Hammonds Ponds cafe – healthy dishes using fresh ingredients from the allotments – around 15 attendants – despite poor weather.
- Come and try Outdoor Gym – at Acredale Rd play area.

HIGHWAYS SERVICES

CAR PARKING STUDY

A car parking study is underway by Buchanans to advise the Council on future management and charging policy in our Car Parks. Buchanans are working to a brief prepared by the City Council.

CCTV

The CCTV system has been modified so that the Police can now control one CCTV camera whenever the City Council control room is closed. This will ensure that incidents can be actively dealt with 24/7.

HIGHWAYS

Footway reconstruction scheme on Greystone Rd, near Margaret Creighton Gardens, is almost complete.

Footway reconstruction scheme on Petteril Bank Rd, opposite shops, to commence next week.

Footway slurry seal programme is now complete; this involved surfacing sections of footways at many locations around City and rural locations.

Castle St repair works complete, proposed that Castle St, Finkle St, Annetwell St (part) be surfaced next spring as part of larger surfacing programme