

GEDLING PLAN 2021-22 ANNUAL REPORT

Serving people **Improving Lives**



Gedling Borough Council

www.gedling.gov.uk

Gedling 
Borough Council

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of how we did against the expectations set out in the Gedling Plan 2021-22. It shows our key achievements and performance measures for the year for each of our five corporate priorities and how we have delivered services and outcomes which support our ethos of 'Serving People, Improving Lives'.

When we presented last year's Annual Report we thought we had almost seen the back of the pandemic. Sadly, the last year proved that there was still a long way to go on that journey. Again, I couldn't have been more proud of our Councillors and officers who pulled together to support our communities. The Council excelled in its role as community leader and helped to coordinate the work of so many volunteers, both individuals and community groups, to provide support to our most vulnerable residents. This report shows the detail of how this was achieved.

Almost 3,000 of you responded to our biennial Residents' Survey. You told us that you found our services to be accessible, responsive and professional and that things like waste collection and clean streets were very important to you. We now plan to use those survey results to carry out further consultation so that we can build in the most important things into our new four-year Gedling Plan that will set our direction for 2023-27.

Some important projects have also taken place over the year, perhaps the most ambitious being the construction on the Arnold Market site with the creation of the iconic AMP building which is a new development that combines a new market area with small, independent shops and business space. It is truly transformational and something that will help to enhance our town centre, prosperity and community spirit in the area. Similarly, we completed the improvements to Carlton Square that has improved accessibility and provided additional landscaping to improve the visual amenity and environmental quality.

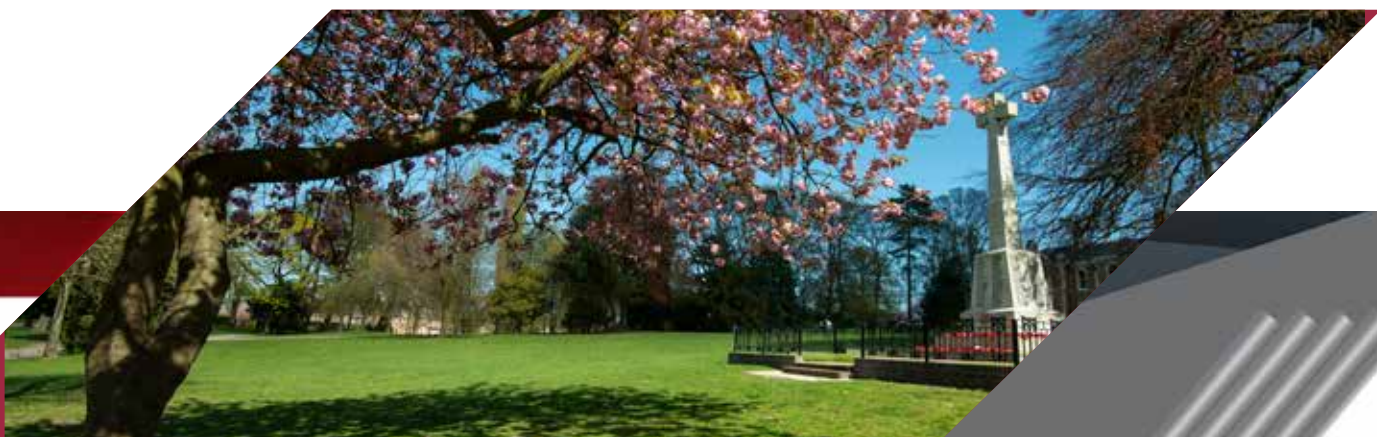
We have made particular efforts to improve our wider local environment over the last year too. We have appointed a Carbon Reduction Officer to support the Council in our work to aspire to be carbon neutral by 2030. Early work to contribute to this ambition includes the completion of our Green Lung Project - the planting of 1,200 native trees and shrubs at Gedling County Park and Digby Park. We have also announced plans to create a Holocaust Memorial at Gedling Country Park, which includes the creation of an orchard of trees and a sculpture.

I can only really finish this year's Annual Report as I did last year which is to say that we know that there are great challenges ahead including potential financial and environmental worries. But what I can also say in response to this is that I know that as a Council we have the right Councillors and officers with us to give us the best chance of meeting those challenges, as daunting as they may sometimes seem.

Councillor John Clarke

Leader of the Council

Arnot Hill Park



OUR RESPONSE TO THE COVID PANDEMIC

Our key achievements

2021/22 continued to be a busy year getting services re-opened following the early 2021 lockdown, while also continuing to manage the Covid-19 emergency response and recovery programmes of the Council. The Covid-19 response work continued until early 2022, supporting the vaccination roll out, covid testing provision and the national response to the Omicron variant.

Work this year has included:



Operation of a local Incident Response Team (IMT) until March 2022 that coordinated response operations on behalf of the Council working closely with Nottinghamshire County Council Public Health and NHS services. 116 Covid-19 IMT meetings took place since January 2020. Up until September 2021, we recorded detailed statistics regarding local Covid cases, deaths, R-Rate and vaccination take-up to assist a rapid response to local outbreaks.



Following Covid-19 safety guidelines a number of community events and holiday activity programmes were delivered in the Borough during summer 2021.



We used the Government's Contain Funding to support our key statutory services such as Environment Health to recover and catch up with work following our deployment on Covid-19 compliance work during the previous year.



The IMT supported the coordination of Covid-19 testing sites at Druid's Car Park in Arnold, Lambley Lane Recreation Ground and the Richard Herrod Centre.



The IMT coordinated the reopening of Council offices and facilities as part of the Government's Covid-19 roadmap, ensuring risk assessment and mitigation measures were in place for a safe re-opening of our services.



The Richard Herrod Centre operated as a Community Vaccination Centre until October 2021 and then opened for vaccinations again as a pop-up centre in December 2021 as the Omicron variant emerged. In total over 150,000 Covid-19 vaccinations were received by residents at the site.



The Gedling Covid-19 Recovery Fund was launched in 2021 to support local community organisations in their aid for our most vulnerable residents as they emerged from lockdown.

OUR RESPONSE TO THE COVID PANDEMIC

Our key achievements



We worked closely with retailers and businesses to ensure they re-opened and were following the government covid guidelines.



Working with Nottinghamshire County Council, we developed an assessment process for targeting mobile vaccination services using local vaccination take up data. This has been adopted as a good practice approach across the County.



Our Customer Services team facilitated the Household Support Fund to financially aid our most vulnerable residents during 2021.



We have been shortlisted for a national MJ Award for our work at the Richard Herrod Centre as a Humanitarian Hub and Vaccination Centre.



Approximately £1.2 million of Covid Additional Relief Fund (CARF) grant was paid to businesses in April 2022.

OUR PRIORITIES AND WHAT WE DELIVERED

COHESIVE, DIVERSE AND SAFE COMMUNITIES

To promote strong, resilient communities and reduce hardship and inequality

Our key achievements



We approved a new Equality and Diversity Policy and Action Plan following consultation with residents and local community groups. The policy can be viewed by visiting www.gedling.gov.uk/equality



We have been highly successful in working with Community Activity Providers to deliver Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programmes over Easter, summer and winter 2021. The programme has also been maximised by additional HAF delivery at family events, resulting in over 1000 Free School Meals and SEND eligible children and young people aged 5 - 16 in Gedling and their families benefitting from the scheme.



Successful Outreach services are now running across the Borough with weekly sessions run by our Customer Services team at the Carlton Hub.



A new council policy to protect animals and vulnerable people from firework displays was agreed. All public displays on council owned land will now need to be advertised in advance, and local suppliers will be encouraged to stock quieter fireworks. We will be working with other relevant authorities to ensure the current rules around the purchase and setting off of fireworks is enforced across the borough and county.



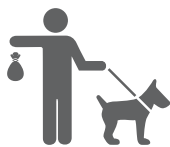
A range of successful events were held throughout the year including Remembrance events, a programme of Summer events, Christmas markets and light switch-ons, Gedling Play Forum events and play-pack distributions, a half term event at the Newstead Centre and a welfare community day at Bestwood Miners Welfare.



New CCTV equipment has been installed at Carlton Square and Arnold Town Centre as part of the council's commitment to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in the borough.

Our key performance measures

48 fixed penalty notices were served for litter and dog fouling.



Over £1million was spent on disabled adaptations to enable residents with disabilities to remain living independently in their own homes.



Bonington theatre saw over 28,000 visits.



Average time to process new Housing Benefits claims (in calendar days) was 13.5 days against a target of 15 days.



99.2% of fly tipping incidents were removed within 4 working days.



OUR PRIORITIES AND WHAT WE DELIVERED

HIGH PERFORMING COUNCIL

To be a high performing, efficient and effective council

Our key achievements



We completed our biennial Resident's Survey, the results of which will be used to inform our new Gedling Plan for 2023-27.



Our ICT team provided laptops and other equipment to allow employees to continue to work in a flexible and agile way thus saving money, creating efficiency and meeting the needs of our customers.



The constitution was reviewed and approved to ensure it is as robust and up to date as possible to allow for effective governance.



We approved a new efficiency programme and achieved a balanced Medium Term Financial Plan.



We successfully completed County and Police & Crime Commissioner elections in the midst of the pandemic and also a by-election.

Our key performance measures

94.4% of calls to our Contact Centre were answered or a call back made.



We have 44,000 'Keep Me Posted' email newsletter subscribers.



Almost 3,000 of you responded to our biennial Residents' Survey.

KEEP ME POSTED

Over 98% of Council Tax was collected.



OUR PRIORITIES AND WHAT WE DELIVERED

VIBRANT ECONOMY

To promote and drive sustainable growth across the borough to meet current and future needs

Our key achievements



We successfully completed the full administration and payment of 20 different grant schemes totalling £31.4m of support to local businesses facing financial difficulty during the Covid-19 pandemic and re-opening periods.



Our HR team worked with East Midlands Councils and our own service teams to set up our Kick Start scheme - a national scheme through which young people up to the age of 25 can gain temporary paid work experience funded by the government.



Our self-build matchmaker service was launched, which aims to match landowners who are considering selling their land with people who want to build their own home within Gedling Borough.



Working with West Notts College and the County Council, we took part in a Supported Internship programme which provided practical and real work experience for students with additional needs to help them become more employable once they leave college.



Our planning team produced a residential design guidance, which will be used to negotiate future planning applications and will promote higher design standards.



We continue to make good progress with the AMP (Arnold Market Place), with construction now nearing completion and promotion and marketing well underway.



We worked collaboratively with partners to secure development funding and the delivery of the new Gedling Access Road to improve journey times, reduce congestion through Gedling village and facilitate the delivery of new homes and businesses to the Borough.



The main resurfacing works at our Carlton Square development are now complete and plans are underway for improvements to the shopping area.

Our key performance measures

37 affordable homes were delivered (gross) against a target of 20



100 % of major planning applications were progressed within 13 weeks against the target of 90%



81 long term empty homes were returned to use as a result of our intervention.

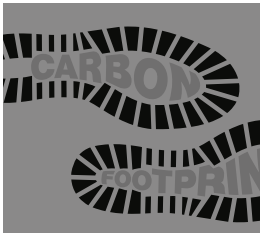


OUR PRIORITIES AND WHAT WE DELIVERED

SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

To promote a sustainable environment

Our key achievements



Following extensive public consultation our Carbon Management Strategy and Action Plan were approved, with over 100 actions to drive the council forward to achieve our ambitious net zero target by 2030.



Our new waste and recycling policy was developed and approved to increase recycling rates and create a more sustainable way of disposing of waste in the borough.



Work began to develop a borough wide Heritage Way – a recreational route that highlights the many locations and iconic places across the borough.



We extended our annual free bulky waste collection for a sixth year, offering a free collection of large household items to all residents, subject to availability and on a first come, first served basis. All slots were allocated and the offer was open to all.



Our Gedling Big Spring Clean and other local litter pick activities were once again highly successful, with many volunteers taking part. Lots of positive feedback was received from local schools and groups.



Gedling Country Park was further improved by the addition of an outdoor seating area at Café 1899, a new tree trail, and the planting of approximately 600 further trees as part of the Green Lung Project.



We adopted the Linby Conservation Area Character Appraisal which sets out guidance for the preservation and control of change to ensure the Conservation Area continues to retain its special architectural and historic interest.



We were once again delighted to receive Green Flag Awards for four of our flagship parks - Gedling County Park, Arnot Hill Park, Burton Road Jubilee Park and Bestwood Country Park.

Our key performance measures

Nearly 1,700 trees were planted in the Borough.



98% of streets surveyed had acceptable levels of litter.



33.9 % of household waste was recycled.



OUR PRIORITIES AND WHAT WE DELIVERED

HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

To promote the health and wellbeing of our residents

Our key achievements



We have continued to improve our Leisure Centres including the introduction of personal training, purchase of equipment ready for the launch of virtual aqua classes, new bike storage facilities, essential pool maintenance and the development of a new Leisure Management System to improve the overall customer experience.



Our Health and Wellbeing team and commissioned partners operating in the borough continues to collaborate on key opportunities. Joint projects have included a Let's Talk Wellbeing service, commissioning of further Citizens Advice Bureau services in GP settings, the development of family food clubs and the GoodSam NHS volunteer pilot national consultation.



A new swimming scheme was launched to help people in the borough to be more active and enjoy swimming. The Swimming Passport scheme enables Gedling residents aged under 16 and over 65 to swim for free at dedicated weekly sessions at leisure centres.



The "One Step at a Time" project to address isolation and loneliness continues to match volunteers with identified individuals that need some support to re-engage in community based activities. In Gedling the concept is being co-ordinated by Jigsaw homes and is focused in the Carlton area.



We were awarded over £90k from the Football Foundation towards the facility improvements at Lambley Lane Recreation Ground, which will enable local football clubs to deliver grassroots football in a positive environment. Further sites at Ravenshead, Arnold Town FC and Goosedale have also been successful in investment.

Our key performance measures

The learn-to-swim scheme has grown from 2,426 members pre-Covid to 3,501.



96% of food premises scored 4 or 5 in the national food hygiene-rating scheme.



Health and Wellbeing E-newsletters have been circulated throughout the year to over 6,000 recipients.



There were over 800,000 visits to our Leisure Centres.



There are now 279 registered Gedling residents with access to the Armed Forces Leisure Card scheme.





Candle vigil to remember those who lost their lives to covid in Gedling



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Tel: 0115 901 3901

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