

9. Performance of the Streetscene Service

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Purpose of the Report

To update and inform the Area North Committee on the performance of the Streetscene Service in the Area for the period October 2009 – April 2010.

Public Interest

The report is to inform interested parties of what the Streetscene team has been doing in Area North since October 2009, and to indicate what the service will be focussing on over the coming months.

Recommendation

Members are invited to comment on the report.

Report

Since the last report, the service has focussed on finishing the previous financial years work programs and delivering the new seasons workload. We believe that we have achieved some satisfying results; the main points regarding work in Area North, are listed below: -

- Achieved an annual NI 195 result of 7% (street cleaning) improved from 8.6% in 08/09
- We have renewed the grounds maintenance contract with the Yarlinton Housing Group
- Delivered the winter service enhancement program
- Planted 26,000 spring flowering bulbs across the Area

Operational Works

The normal street cleaning and horticultural maintenance programs continue to be delivered on a year to year basis, and business has continued as normal with seasonal work programs delivered to tackle leaf fall, ditch maintenance, shrub bed maintenance, rural road litter picking and winter grass cutting. We believe that these programs have both maintained the standards set by the team generally while making some small improvements to traditionally difficult areas, both cleansing and horticultural.

It is these small improvements that have enabled us to continue to improve our NI 195 results to their current levels. Looking forwards, we aim to develop a team from among

our existing staff who will focus on areas of cleansing which are visible to us all but are difficult to access due to site specific traffic management issues.

This year we have once again carried out considerable bulb planting across the area with planting taking place in Compton Dundon, Somerton, Chilthorne Domer, Huish & Kingsbury Episcopi, Pitney, Langport, Fivehead, Montacute, South Petherton, Barrington and the Seavingtons.

Our teams have also been involved in some re-landscaping works around the area, carrying out tree and bulb planting, deep cleaning, tree pruning and scrub removal at Abbey Fields in Curry Rivel; and hedge cutting, scrub removal, deep cleansing, re-grading of grassed areas and fence / gate repairs at Hills Orchard in Martock.

The Hills Lane (Martock), work was carried by our teams working with a number of people from the County Training programme who gained some valuable work experience through their involvement with the operations. We feel that the area has benefited from these initial works, and this will act as a platform to continue to improve this important access route.

Cocklemoor car park in Langport received a visit from our tree gang who removed one large tree and carried out a reduction on another. These were considerable works, but have made quite a difference to the look of the area.

Our responsive team continues to clear fly tips from across the district, and from August through to March a total of 196 incidents were addressed, with notable peaks in the number of incidents in both December and March.

Yarlington Grounds Maintenance

The team is pleased to inform members that it was successful in tendering for Yarlington Housing Groups grounds maintenance contract. The Streetscene Service has delivered horticultural works since the formation of the housing group and the impact of seamless grounds maintenance is hugely beneficial to the look of South Somerset. The contract was tendered on a Europe wide basis and we are delighted to have been selected to continue to provide the service over the coming years.

Break Down of Service Requests

The chart below is a break down of the nature of requests received by the service between August 2009 and March 2010 indicating the predominantly responsive nature of most of the contacts made to the service by the public, indicating that the routine maintenance works being delivered are to an acceptable standard, but a responsive approach is also very important.

The types of requests also give an indication of the seasonal variations in work it is noted that as the lighter nights are appearing, the level of littering & fly tipping increases as does the amount of dead animals as they roam in search of territory.

Nature of call	Aug 09	Sept 09	Oct 09	Nov 09	Dec 09	Jan 10	Feb 10	Mar 10
Trees	0	4	2	2	2	0	1	1
Grass	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Hedges	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other – Horti	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Fly tips	15	23	23	18	27	21	19	32
Litter/Glass	3	1	2	3	3	3	4	21
Litter Bins	1	5	1	0	1	0	2	1
Household Rubbish	1	2	2	2	2	2	4	3
Needles	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sandbags	0	0	0	4	1	0	0	0
Dead Animals	5	5	17	7	4	3	6	8
Graffiti	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Sweeping	0	0	0	5	1	0	0	1
Dog Fouling (street cleaning issue)	2	1	0	0	1	3	0	0
Stray Dogs	3	3	3	8	11	4	11	2
Abandoned Vehicles	0	3	10	2	3	2	3	2
Other – Enforcement	0	1	5	2	1	2	1	4
Flyposting	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Dog Fouling (Enforcement issue)	0	1	2	0	2	1	2	3

National Indicators

Following changes to the streetcleaning service, we are delighted to show that our street cleaning performance (NI195) has again improved from 8.6% 2008/9 to 7% in 2009/10. The areas that continue to score the lowest are 'industry and warehousing' and areas of this nature can be, depending upon the type of industry, difficult to keep free of litter and debris.

Overall, however we are pleased with the look of the district and believe that it is now more important to focus on 'difficult to access areas', which, even though they may not contribute greatly to the National Indicator score, will make a considerable improvement to the appearance of the district, and public perception of how clean it is kept.

Local Area Quality Inspections

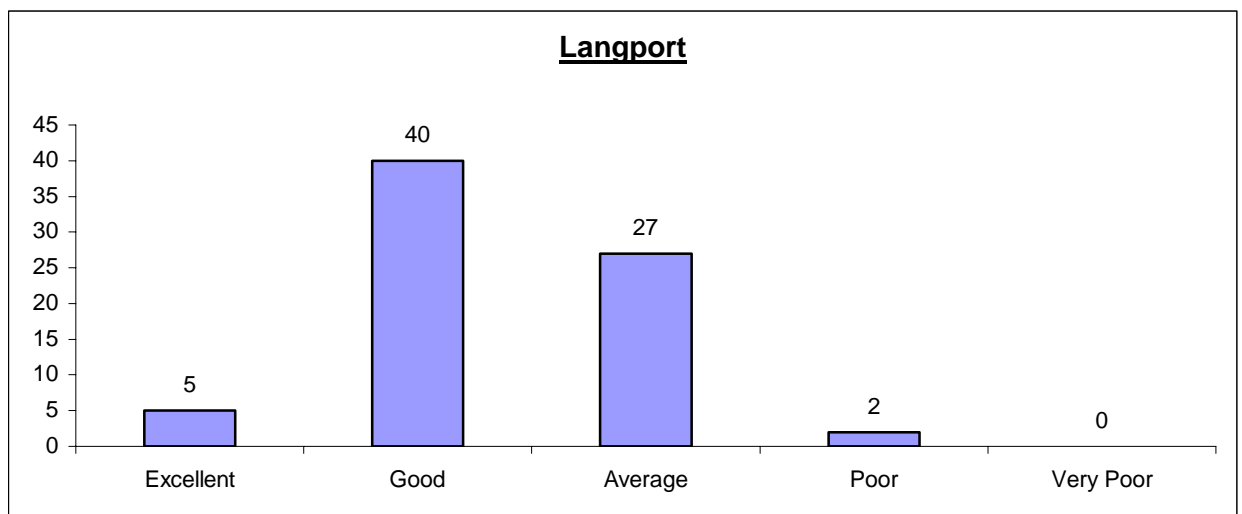
Once again we have carried out monitoring of the overall standards of streetcleaning and grounds maintenance via the process of site inspections carried out in conjunction with the local ward members. The results from these inspections are reported in the table below.

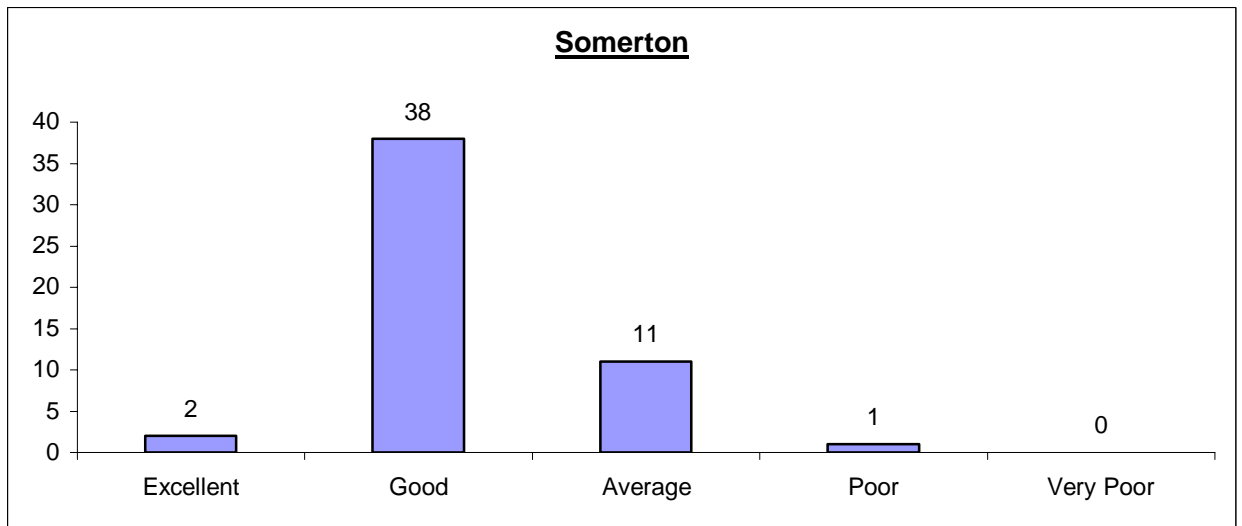
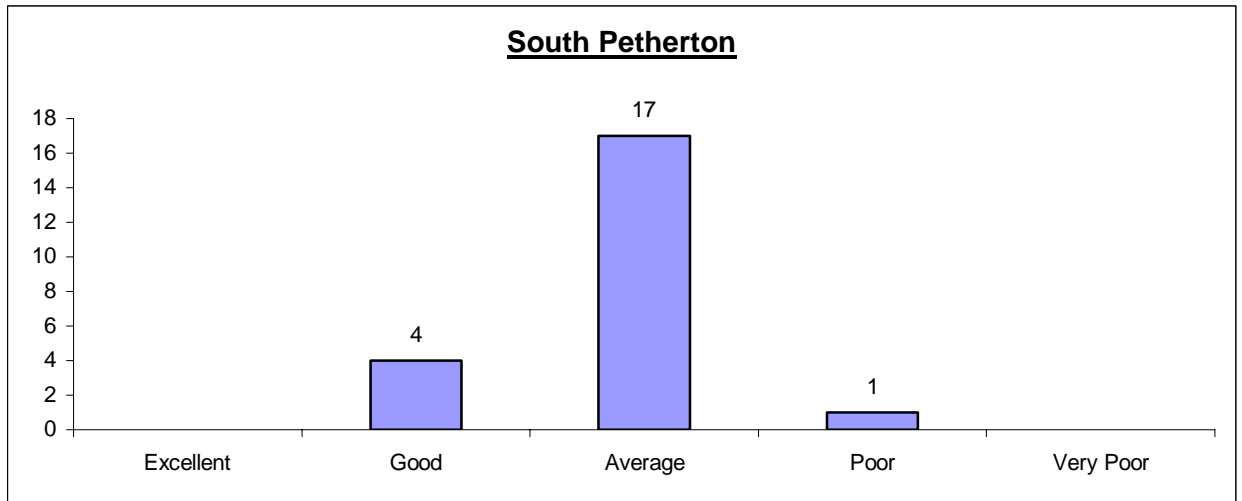
Month	Location	Results
August 2009	Martock, Drayton & Curry Rivel	61% Good 20% Fair 19% Fail
<i>*Fails due to need for hedge cutting which had just started</i>		
September 2009	Langport, Huish Episcopi & Long Sutton	57% Good 29% Fair 14% Fail
<i>*Fails included shrub beds in Langport & Huish needing routine maintenance</i>		

Month	Location	Results
October 2009	Montacute, Stoke Sub Hamdon & Norton Sub-Hamdon	47% Good 47% Fair 6% Fail
November 2009	Hambridge, Shepton Beauchamp & Kingsbury Episcopi	59% Good 26% Fair 15% Fail
<i>* Fails included Road sweeping (leaf fall mainly)</i>		
December 2009	Ash & Chilthorne Domer	43% Good 43% Fair 14% Fail
<i>* Fails included Road sweeping (leaf fall mainly)</i>		
January 2010	Somerton, Compton Dundon & High Ham	43% Good 43% Fair 14% Fail
<i>* Fails included Sweeping and maintenance of hard surfaced areas</i>		
February 2010	Long Load & Martock	44% Good 50% Fair 6% Fail
March 2010	Drayton, Long Sutton, Langport & Huish Episcopi	47% Good 37% Fair 16% Fail
<i>*Fails included Light detritus evenly spread around the towns</i>		
Target Set	90% Pass, 50% at Good Level	
Overall Performance	87% Pass, 50% at Good Level with 13% fail	

Customer Satisfaction Surveys

We have recently been carrying out our annual customer satisfaction surveys in various towns across the district looking at what the public on the street think of the services we deliver where they live. In Area North we carried out surveys in Somerton, South Petherton and Langport, surveying 155 people to date (we will continue to survey members of the public over the coming weeks in order to increase the number of responses we receive).





Although the survey is not yet complete, we believe that it gives a good indication of how the service is perceived by the people who matter most.

Enforcement

Our officers are currently working on the development and introduction of Dog Control Orders and the team have completed all of the consultation and the document will be brought to draft for consideration by members.

Officers have continued with regular patrolling across the area, which may be triggered by contact from a member of the public, town or parish; alternatively they may simply be arranged in light of historical knowledge. As a result, patrolling is widely carried out. Recently in Area North this has been targeted around Ham Hill, with dog issues; fly tipping and littering being the main focus. The patrolling has led to enforcement action being taken against some offenders.

Patrolling has also been carried out in Langport to tackle dog fouling and fly posting. In Tintinhull, fly tipping and dog patrolling, especially on the sports pitch has been the focus

of the team. In addition to these issues, regular patrolling has been carried out at Curry Rivel, Fivehead, Somerton, Martock, South Petherton, Isle Abbots, Stembridge, Long Sutton and Stoke sub Hamdon to focus on preventing and tackling incidents of dog fouling.

Also highlighted in Langport were incidents of commercial waste fly tipping which has led to officers checking waste transfer notes issued in order to clamp down on this problem. At Aller, officers have been working to tackle incidents of both fly tipping around the village and litter on the riverbank, having erected signage aimed at fishermen who appear to be the cause of this problem.

Across the area, we have experienced problems with residents putting their excess domestic waste into litter bins, an issue which is frustrating especially as some of the waste deposited could have been recycled.

We continue to encourage communities to get involved in looking after their neighbourhoods and have supported community litter picks at Langport, Somerton and Stoke sub Hamdon with further events booked for Huish Episcopi. As well as community events, officers are always available to conduct educational visits such as was done at Martock to coincide with the works at Hills Lane.

Parish Lengthsman

The Parish Lengthsman scheme based around South Petherton continues to be funded through 2010/11. The scheme recently announced the retirement of David Muir who made a great contribution to the success of the scheme since its conception. However the scheme has since appointed David Ogilvie as the new Lengthsman and we are looking forward to working with him.

In addition to this scheme, a Lengthsman scheme based around the Turn Hill Ward, with five parishes including Aller, Pitney, Long Load, Long Sutton (lead Parish) & High Ham is being developed. The scheme has a possible start date of July 2010 and the group are working hard to make the required arrangements, having already identified funding and a scheme administrator.

Watercourse Maintenance

One of the teams priority tasks is the operational maintenance of flood alleviation schemes for the District Council and the Environment Agency. These ditches and trash screens are located across the district with a number of sites being in Area North. In Area North we maintain the following sites:

SSDC Watercourses

Ref	Parish	Location
N1	Ash	Yeovil Road, Ash to Foldhill Lane
N3	Bower Hinton	Rear of Rose & Crown to Dimmocks Lane; Hoop Lane; Broad Lane
N4	Compton Dundon	Compton Street, Combe Hollow
N5	Curry Rivel	Parsonage Place - Dyers Road; Drayton Lane
N 6	Curry Rivel	Portfield Lane
N7	Drayton	East Street, roadside collector

Ref	Parish	Location
N8	Huish Episcopi	Wagg Drove, rear of Mill Brook
N9	Ilton	Podgers Lane
N11	Montacute	Townsend, rear of Yeovil Road, Montacute Park, Mill Copse
N13	Pitney	Various
N14	Shepton Beauchamp	Buttle Close; Sheepway; rear of North St.; Silver St.; Lambrook Road
N17	Stocklinch	Stoney Lane; Owl Street
N18	Westport	B3168
N19	Isle Brewers	Monks Dairy to Northmead Lane
N20	Seavington	Water St (ditch d/st of Winchester Cotts)

Environment Agency Watercourses

Ref	EA Ref	Parish	Name	Location
5.5	N16	South Petherton	Hele Lane	Hele Lane to Silver St
5.8	N 8	Huish Episcopi	Wagg Rhyne	From railway bridge at Wagg Drove to junction with Mill Brook (south of A372)

The horticultural winter maintenance and maintenance of watercourses across the district was completed by Christmas as this gives us the best protection from flooding incidents arising from a lack of maintenance.

Actions following the last report

Summer maintenance programs started in mid March, a little later in the year than previously, due to a late start in the growing season and adverse weather conditions.

- Hills Lane in Martock has received considerable cleaning and re-landscaping works
- Extensive bulb planting works have again been carried out across the Area
- Hedging work at Piece Lane in Shepton Beauchamp were completed
- Focus on rural road litter clearance has led to a considerable work program being delivered
- A number of trees have been planted at various locations around the Area

What's coming next?

- Summer horticultural maintenance works have started with mowing and shrub bed maintenance programs in place
- Highway weed control will be carried out in towns across the district. In Area North this includes the urban areas of Langport, Curry Rivel, Somerton, Martock, South Petherton, Stoke/ Montacute & Tintinhull. All other highway weed control on rural roads, in villages and elsewhere is delivered by the County Highways contractor.

- The fence at Bracey Road recreation ground will be replaced with a metal bow top style
- The path leading to the play area in Hills Lane Park in Martock will be resurfaced

Financial Implications

All issues highlighted in the report will be achieved within service budgets.

Corporate Priority Implications

- 2.8 Improve Street and environmental cleanliness by reducing levels of graffiti, litter, detritus, fly-tipping and Flyposting
- 2.9 Increase resident satisfaction on country parks, open spaces, street cleaning, car parks and public toilets

Carbon Emissions & Adapting to Climate Change Implications (NI188)

Carbon emissions arising from use of vehicles will not change because no increase or decrease in the level of Streetscene activity has been proposed. The maintenance of water courses described will ensure good resilience to extreme flooding events that can be increasingly be expected in the future.

Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no implications for equalities or diversity associated with this report

Background Papers: *Previous progress reports to Area Committees on Performance of Streetscene*