

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 April 2015 – September 2015.

Recommendation

Members are invited to comment on the report.

Report

The major focuses of the service so far for this period that affect Area North, are listed below.

- Routine cleansing and grounds maintenance
- Highway weed control

Operational Works

As usual the main focus of the service has been the delivery of routine street cleansing and grounds maintenance across the Area. One area of work that has received on-going focus has been the highway weed killing operation. The services' quad bikes are now operating and have completed one full application of herbicide across the district and are well underway with the second spray, in line with the annual work program. This change to the service has not only made the operation more efficient, but has made a visible difference to the look of the district. Some species of plants are showing resilience against the herbicide used and we are tasking out teams with manual removal of these. You may notice these growing in road drains and certain kerbsides, and without changing the chemicals that we use, we have no other practical way of removing these.

In association with these approaches, we are fitting weed removal brushes onto the road sweepers which will focus on removal of soil & weeds that have built up on kerbed areas of the roads around the Area. We aim to have made a notable impression into this work plan before the winter weather arrives.

Our partnership approach to working with Martock & Somerton using the services pavement sweepers continues and again I give my thanks to all of those involved in making this a success. Since the last report, we have replaced the older pavement sweepers with newer models and these are being deployed across the district. In order to maximise the use of this equipment we are looking to reorganise our staffing of the service in order to obtain the best standard of cleansing possible using our current resources.

As normal, we have continued to focus on managing the number of flytips found in the district and we are pleased to observe that the number of flytips this year for the period April to

August is 108 incidents; this compares to 118 for the same period in 2014 showing an 8.5% reduction in fly tipping incidents.

The chart below shows the numbers of fly tips collected from Area North over the year.

AREA NORTH:	Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15	Jul-15	Aug-15	TOTALS
Aller		1				1
Ash						0
Barrington						0
Beercrocombe						0
Bower Hinton						0
Chilthorne Domer	1					1
Compton Dundon	1	1				2
Curry Mallet	1	1	3	2		7
Curry Rivel	1	4				5
Drayton			1	1		2
Fivehead		3		3	1	7
Hambridge & Westport				2	1	3
High Ham			1			1
Huish Episcopi				1	2	3
Ilton					1	1
Isle Abbotts	1		1			2
Isle Brewers						0
Kingsbury Episcopi	2		2		2	6
Langport		1				1
Long Load				2		2
Long Sutton				1		1
Lopen						0
Martock	3	2		2	4	11
Montacute	1	2	6	2		11
Muchelney						0
Norton Sub Hamdon	1					1
Pitney						0
Puckington						0
Seavington		1		2	1	4
Shepton Beauchamp						0
Somerton	1	1	1	1	1	5
South Petherton	3	1	4	3	8	19
Stocklinch						0
Stoke Sub Hamdon				1		1
Tintinhull	1		2	2	6	11
TOTAL AREA NORTH	17	18	21	25	27	108

We believe that our approach toward clearing flytips as soon as they are found or reported, while working to maintain the area in the cleanest possible manner is deterring people from

dumping their waste which reflects in these figures. We will of course monitor this trend to see if this pattern continues to improve.

Our horticultural teams completed last years work schedule and are now well underway with this seasons work. In our annual work program we have so far delivered:

- 13 of the programmed 16 grass cuts on most grassland and 8 of the programmed 11 cuts of highway verges.
- 3 of the programmed 5 applications of herbicide on planted areas
- 1 of the 2 applications of herbicide on designated hard surfaced areas
- The first (and major) of the 1 or 2 hedge cuts per year
- We have started the second of the 3 pruning operations that we carry out throughout the year

Annual maintenance of small trees is undertaken during the winter period.

We are on target to deliver the routine weekly clearance of flood screens. The annual ditch maintenance operations on SSDC controlled flood alleviation schemes is programmed to commence in the w/c 2nd November 2015. Plus - Other non-routine works and arboricultural works are being programmed as part of our winter work program.

We are holding a number of spring flowering bulbs for naturalising that are available to parishes, these have previously been planted by local groups of volunteers. Should members wish to access these plants, please contact our Principle Horticultural Officer – Steve Fox who will be happy to work with you on this matter.

The team has continued to develop the pond at St Cleers in Somerton, following the dredging of the silt and the removal of some reed mace, we appointed a specialist aqua-care specialist to install native marginal and aquatic planting. Over the winter period we aim to replant the surrounding landscape area with a mixture of suitable plant species. This will at a later date, budget allowing, install interpretation boards detailing the wildlife around the pond, the plant species growing and install benches for visitors to use while they enjoy the area.

During the summer, the service completed the maintenance of Public Rights of Way on behalf of the County Councils work program. We will review this contract on an annual basis and tender for the work if we feel it is appropriate for the service and beneficial for the council.

In addition to these areas of service, the officer team has submitted a capital bid for the coming year to seek funding to improve paths and access through open spaces in order to improve accessibility. We will keep members informed of developments regarding this matter.

What's coming next?

- Winter work programs shrub bed maintenance, ditch clearance
- Ongoing developments to the cleaning systems along the main roads and A303 in particular
- Completion of the years highway weed control program

Financial Implications

All of the matters highlighted in the report have been achieved within service budgets.

Implications for Council Priorities

- Continue to deliver schemes with local communities that enhance the appearance of their local areas.
- Continue to support communities to minimise floodwater risks.
- Maintain street cleaning high performance across the district.

Background Papers

Progress report to Area Committees on the Performance of the Streetscene [Service](#).
