

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

Date	3 JUNE 2013
Title	PROGRESS IN DELIVERING THE STREETS AHEAD CORPORATE OBJECTIVES 2012-13

1. PURPOSE/SUMMARY

This report sets out the Council's progress in delivering the Streets Ahead corporate objectives 2012-13.

2. KEY ISSUES

- Particular successes are:
 - Maintaining high levels of customer satisfaction with the refuse and recycling service.
 - The successful introduction of plastic tubs, pots and trays into the blue bin collections.
 - The introduction of Dog Control Orders for Fenland's open spaces.
 - Community volunteers have given over 4,000 hours of their time, carrying out work at 191 events
 - 6 Anglia in Bloom awards for Wisbech Town, March, Whittlesey, The Waterlees Ward, Manea Pit and the Payne Primary School in Parson Drove.
 - Green Flag awards for another year running in Wisbech Park and St Peter and St Paul's Gardens, Wisbech.

3. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Panel consider the progress made by the Council in delivering the Streets Ahead corporate objective.

Wards Affected	All
Forward Plan Reference No. (if applicable)	N/A
Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Peter Murphy Cllr David Oliver
Report Originator	Phil Hughes – Head of Parks & Leisure Mark Mathews – Head of Environmental Services Dan Horn – Head of Housing & Community Support

Contact Officer(s)	Richard Cassidy – Corporate Director richardcassidy@fenland.gov.uk Alan Pain – Corporate Director alanpain@fenland.gov.uk
Background Paper(s)	Corporate Plan 2012-15

Overview & Scrutiny Panel

3 June 2013

Progress of Streets Ahead Corporate Priority

April 2012 – May 2013

	Councillor Peter Murphy
Portfolio Holder for Environment & Streetscene and Chatteris Affairs	

	Councillor David Oliver
Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wisbech Affairs	

	Councillor Pop Jolley
Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Tourism and Markets	

SA1 Maintain current levels of waste, recycling & cleansing

3.1 Maintain current levels of waste, recycling & cleansing

- Deliver a high performing waste and recycling service

The Council's refuse and recycling service remains high performing and meets with customer satisfaction, whilst also delivering large scale service change and efficiencies.

Customer satisfaction survey results

Results from a customer satisfaction survey available online during December 2012 and January 2013 demonstrate that Fenland's refuse and recycling service continues to be well regarded by our customers.

Customers expressed their satisfaction with the service, and from 181 questionnaires completed, 94% were satisfied with the service; of which 80% (145 of the 181 returns) thought the service was either Good or Very Good.

Additionally, 96% of these customers were satisfied with the professionalism of the refuse staff in their area, and some examples of the comments from our customers were:

- *"A really excellent service"*
- *"Hard working team and great attitude"*
- *"The staff are always friendly, helpful, thoughtful and professional"*
- *"Always friendly and polite"*

Improvements to service

Customers have been interested in recycling more plastics for some time, and as a result of new recycling technology, we are now able to include plastic tubs, pots and trays in with the blue bin recycling materials already collected.

This service improvement has the potential to divert up to 600 tonnes a year away from landfill and the collected materials will be recycled into useful things like mobile phones, car parts and new plastic packaging.

This year has seen an increase of 200 tonnes in the amount of dry recycling collected, in part due to the improved range of materials collected.

Schools Recycling Competition

The Council's schools recycling competition has this year received entries of the highest quality. Portfolio Holder Peter Murphy, who judged the competition for children of Key Stages 1 to 3, attended local schools to present the winning children with their prizes and their own artwork prepared on wheeled bins.



The competition is designed to get students thinking about environmental issues and to link in to their key stages curriculum.



This project makes the links between recycling, litter and environmental issues, with the aim of encouraging increased awareness. It has also been demonstrated that these types of messages are taken home, increasing recycling and fostering improved respect for the local environment.

Recycling and Reuse High School Drama

Partnership working and a dynamic drama company are helping high school children across Fenland to learn more about how to reuse and recycle their waste. The RECAP (Recycling in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough) partnership, using funding from Cambridgeshire waste partner, Amey-Cepsa, has created a unique learning experience for Cambridgeshire Year 8 students.

Enact performing at the Thomas Clarkson Academy (Photos Recap and Wisbech Standard)





Designing an interactive and exciting assembly with drama group 'Enact' has paid dividends, with students really engaging with the drama sessions. The feedback has been that they really enjoyed the show and it was all " *about the things we care about*" .

As a result of the shows, 800 Fenland school students from Cromwell Community College, Sir Harry Smith Community College, Thomas Clarkson Academy and Neale Wade Community College were challenged to reuse and recycle more of their waste and their schools have committed to organising their own scrap clothes exchanges, fashion shows, art exhibitions or similar.

Levels of Missed Collections

With the exception of January, when poor weather, road closures in Wisbech and an accident involving Council staff, all affected collections, the levels of reported missed collections has remained around 300 each month. This averages at around 15 per working day. Given that a maximum of 280,000 collections are made by the team each month, an average of 15 missed collections per working day demonstrates a good level of service quality.

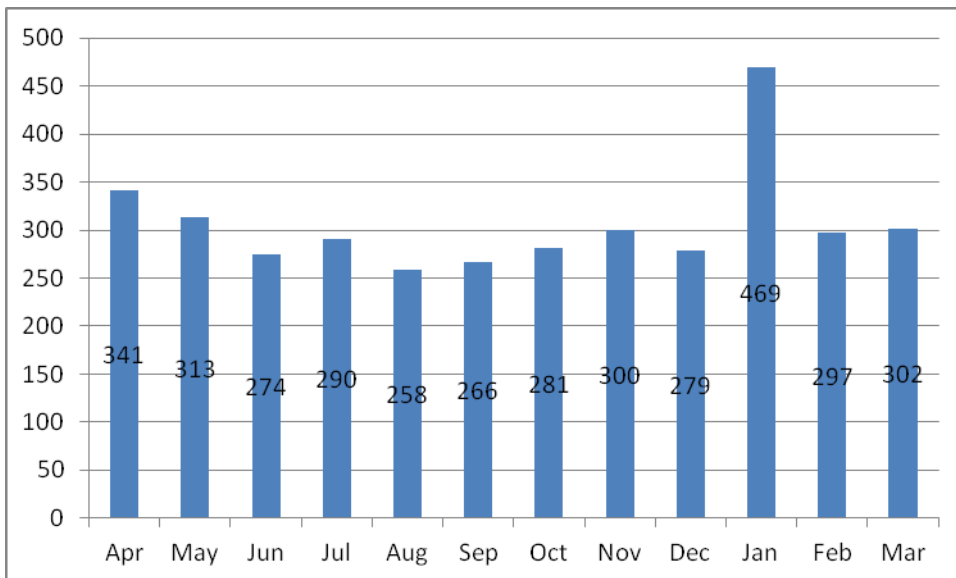


Table 1. Reported missed collections by month

Of the collections that were missed, 94% (3,455 out of 3,670 for the year) were collected by the end of the following working day.

Refuse Service Efficiencies

A new design of refuse vehicle is being used to support the refuse and recycling teams deliver a cost effective service to rural hamlets and the remoter parts of Fenland.



The vehicle, which started work in November, can collect two materials at the same time. It is being used to collect blue and brown bins from remoter locations and reduces the amount of miles travelled and fuel used, servicing these more difficult to reach locations.



This vehicle is an integral part of the Environmental Services efficiency work that has been running within refuse and recycling for the past few years.

The team has adapted well to the changes and this vehicle, being the suggestion of the frontline team, demonstrates our One Team approach to developing and implementing cost saving ideas that allow us to continue to offer quality services to our customers.

Bulky Waste Collection Performance

During the year, 549 requests were made for the collection of bulky items of waste, such as sofas, beds, fridges etc. 100% of these were collected on the advertised day.

Customers are also advised at the first point of contact of the available options for bulky waste collection, such as local charities that reuse suitable items and the local household waste sites that take domestic waste without charge.

Local Glass Bank Service

Against a background of significantly reduced values for glass and many authorities reducing or removing this type of service, in November 2012 Fenland signed up local recycling company Indigo Waste Services Limited from Thetford to provide the service in Fenland.

The new contract has allowed our customers to continue to choose between the blue bin and local recycling banks for their glass bottles and jars whilst reducing the annual costs of this service.

Overall, the 24 local bring bank sites remain well used by customers and collected 625 tonnes of textiles, paper, glass, books and media materials during 2012/13. This resulted in the local bring banks creating a net income of £24,000 to support services.

Waterbeach Waste Treatment Plant Breakdown and Impact

Operations were suspended at the Waterbeach Waste Treatment plant at the end of last year when the 150-tonne mechanical wheel failed. But the suspension only affects the treatment of the normal waste from the green refuse bins, prior to it going to landfill.

Compostable kitchen and garden waste from the brown bins is treated in separate facilities at the Waterbeach site and continues to be used to make soil conditioner.

Recyclable material from the blue bins continues to be sorted by the Council's contractor at their facilities in Peterborough and Crayford, before being taken elsewhere to make new products.

AmeyCespa, the County Council's contractor who runs the Waterbeach site, have said substantial repair work is required at the plant, meaning that it might not be back in full operation until 2014.

Customers have been encouraged through Fenlander articles and press releases to continue to use their blue and brown bins, because the breakdown does not affect these services.

Investigations are continuing to determine the cause of the mechanical failure.

Fenland's Recycling Performance

Overall recycling performance in Fenland remains strong, with more materials being collected for recycling than last year, but operational issues at the County Council's Waterbeach plant affected the final recycling figures this year.

The target for 2012/13 was to recycle 52% of the household waste collected. Unfortunately, the wet summer made it difficult for the County Council to process all of the compostable material our customers collected and almost 700 tonnes of compostable material was landfilled.

More positively, customers continued to put good quality recycling materials in their blue bins, and collected 8,500 tonnes of plastics, paper, card and cans this year for recycling. This is 200 tonnes more than last year, which is a fantastic performance.

The end of year figure is 50%. This is a strong performance, because the 700 tonnes of compostable waste lost reduced the final figure by a little more than 1.6%. This would have placed us close to our target of 52% if it could have all been treated.

- Deliver a high performing street cleansing service
- Deliver a high performing Rapid Response fly tipping service

The Street Cleansing team delivers an important service in support of the council's priorities. In April 2012 the street cleansing team adopted modern working practices, reduced costs and have continued to maintain the high quality of the service that they deliver.

The following highlights demonstrate the quality of work undertaken during 2012/13.

- The Rapid Response teams have dealt with 99% (977) of the 987 requests for service by the end of the next working day.
- The team have responded to 18 requests to remove graffiti.
- The newly formed Village Response Team dealt with 99% (150) of the 151 village requests for service on the same or next working day.
- Of the 758 street cleanliness inspections performed, 98% (743) have been found to be of a suitable standard.
- Our community cleansing satisfaction survey across the year found that 87% (162) of the 186 respondents were satisfied with the cleansing service in their area.
- Additionally, the 526 inspections performed since September 2012 demonstrate that the public toilets are working, clean and suitable for use 94% of the time (494 inspections).
- Since April, 11 compliments have been received about staff within the team.
- Finally, whilst we don't always get it right, all of the 7 cleansing complaints that did require investigation were responded to and resolved within 10 days.

Deliver the Street Scene Officer service

- Deliver a fair approach to enforcement of environmental standards across the district

The Street Scene Team continues to perform well. The Enforcement element of the PIE agenda proved particularly successful.

The Street Scene Team are out on patrol and liaising with customers, engaging with local community groups, businesses, town councils and the Police to improve the quality of the local environment for the local community.

Prevention, Intervention and Enforcement Work

Prevention

The team has continually engaged with the community, spending more than 50% of their time out on high visibility patrols. On average, over 350 conversations per month have been recorded where environmental issues were discussed with the public. They endeavour to fulfil the Council's excellent customer service standards by reaching out to residents whilst on patrol, offering support on the New Horizons Outreach Vehicle and through hosting surgeries at the local libraries.

Preventative work has also involved helping to deliver 'Safety Zone' educational events to 500 Year 9 students regarding the importance of caring for their local environment.



Furthermore, the team visited each town during October to raise awareness of the new dog control orders to prevent responsible dog owners from falling foul of the changes to where dogs are allowed.

Intervention

The team have intervened in a number of situations throughout the year in order to ensure an escalation of the situation did not arise. Examples of a few of the successful interventions carried out are:

- **Tillery Park, Wisbech**

This was a joint initiative with the Police, where a significant reduction of the levels of anti-social behaviour has resulted. Prior to the intervention campaign there were, on average, 32 items of alcohol related litter in evidence. Recent surveys have shown a reduction to an average of 2 items

- **Diana Close, Whittlesey**

The community had reported high levels of dog fouling, and following door to door visits, out of hours patrols and the erection of signage, the levels of fouling have reduced significantly.

- **Wisbech Town Centre**

Regular intervention takes place to tackle flyposting in Wisbech Town Centre and maintain the appearance of the shops and roadsides.

- **Tophams Yard, Chatteris**

The area was looking neglected and was attracting anti social behaviour. This alleyway regularly had alcohol related litter and had been subjected to minor vandalism.



As a result of the street scene officer's intervention, the footpath received a makeover and is now regularly patrolled by officers to deter antisocial behaviour.

- **Norwood Road, March**

The footpath connecting Norwood Road to the open space in Robingoodfellows Lane was attracting litter.

Monitoring of the footpath is carried out in partnership with the local PCSO. The area has been cleaned up, a litter bin installed, litter levels have decreased significantly and the footpath looks more inviting to the public.

- **Aliwal Road, Whittlesey**

Working with Network Rail, Cambridgeshire County Council, Street Pride, The Probation Service, Police Community Support Officers and local residents, the team have improved the riverside underpass, removing and

treating the range of graffiti present and dramatically improving the amenity of this area.



Before



After

Enforcement

The team conducted regular enforcement patrols throughout the year. A series of 'Enforcement Days' were held in each market town, where high profile patrols were carried out.



- 15 fixed penalty notices were issued for littering offences, along with 33 verbal and 17 written warnings.
- 35 fixed penalty notices were issued for parking infringements on March Market Place.
- 81 abandoned vehicles were investigated, with 3 being removed.
- 2,723 issues raised by the public were investigated and dealt with by the Street Scene Team in 2012/13.



- Work with key stakeholders to develop an advanced waste partnership in Cambridgeshire

The Cambridgeshire authorities have been working to draw together a detailed business case for the future of waste collection and disposal in Cambridgeshire. This project is designed to look in detail at how improved partnership working could provide service improvements and reduced costs.

This work builds upon the outline work delivered by the RECAP Partnership during 2011.

The partnership has recruited a Project Manager, who is now overseeing the project and taking forward work to present back to the board later in 2013. This temporary post is funded by RECAP partners and is in place to coordinate the future project work.

It is intended that a more detailed member briefing is produced in relation to this work in due course.

3.2 Delivering community projects that improve the environment and our streetscene

- Deliver the "Pride in Fenland" campaign

Dog Control Orders

In support of providing good quality public open spaces, a consultation was completed in August 2012 on plans to implement Clean Neighbourhood Act powers across Fenland in relation to dog behaviour.

The feedback from town councils and the 161 responses demonstrated strong community support for the proposed dog control orders, with:

- 98% of respondents agreeing with changes to dog fouling powers,
- 93% agreeing that officers should be able to require a dog be placed on a lead in a park or green space,
- 94% agreed with the exclusion of dogs from Fenland's gated children's play areas, and
- 55% of respondents felt that dogs should continue to be excluded from open public cemeteries.

As a result of this consultation feedback, and comments received, a number of changes were made to the orders approved by Cabinet in September 2012.

Street Scene officers took to the streets to advertise the new Dog Control Orders which came into force in October 2012. Events were held in each of the Fenland towns where local residents had the opportunity to find out about the extra powers the Council now has. The powers allow FDC to tackle issues such as dog fouling and ensuring that children's play areas are clean and safe.

Following the launch, regular enforcement patrols are taking place and signage is also on display throughout the district, showing people the areas from which dogs are excluded or where they must now be kept on a lead. Details of each area are on the Council's website.

- Support community Street Pride and 'Friends of' groups to deliver events within their local areas

This has been a productive year for the 15 groups of volunteers who have taken Pride in Fenland by dedicating their time to improving the street scene and green spaces. With the support of the Council, over 200 local residents have contributed to 191 separate events since March 2012.

Residents and businesses have really gone the extra mile to make where they live even better; from litter picking, removing graffiti, cutting back overgrowth, creating willow dens, to planting 33,000 daffodil bulbs - their dedication has been extraordinary.

4,194 volunteer hours have been donated in total in the past year.

- Create more opportunities for the community to help preserve and manage the local environment

The Council continues to work with nearly 30 local community groups, encouraging them to take an active role in the management of their local open spaces.

Instead of an ad-hoc approach to community involvement in open spaces, several Friends and Street Pride groups have set out their aspirations for improvements and the management of their local open spaces. These plans span two years and allow the Council to plan support to the local groups and the desired changes to the open spaces accordingly.

January saw the first combined meeting of StreetPride, In Bloom, Friends of and Nature Groups at the Boathouse in Wisbech. Cllr Murphy welcomed over 60 people to the meeting who worked together to highlight local issues and how they would like to see their local community group develop.

This work further strengthens individual community groups and the impact that they are having on their local open spaces.

- Work with businesses to inform and promote innovative environmental practices

The Council is working with more than 180 businesses that form the local Green Business Club. Member businesses receive regular information on energy efficiency and management and have taken part in 5 events in the past year.

With energy costs rising, local businesses are interested in ways in which they can reduce energy costs, as well as appeal to customers by demonstrating that they care for their local environment.

The Government has recently launched the Green Deal; Fenland is working with other Cambridgeshire authorities to appoint key contractors to carry out Green Deal work across the area. By procuring reputable businesses to carry out work on behalf of householders, it is anticipated that the Green Deal roll out in Cambridgeshire will gather pace later in 2013.

- Provide market town events and activities to improve the viability of our town centres.

Promoting Fenland's Markets

Improving our markets by attracting additional traders and improving footfall is essential to ensure that the markets remain a successful asset to Fenland towns in the future. The poor weather in 2012 has not helped traders and footfall in our markets.

Promotion this year has focussed on a question that challenges people to think about their support for their town market. An increasing number of local events are planned at markets in the coming months.



March St George's Fayre 2012

This was the first 'Four Seasons' event in the calendar and thanks to the kind weather it attracted around 8,000 people to the town centre.

Supporting event venues recorded the following visitor numbers:

- Travellers Heritage: 500
- Children' Activities in the Library: 620
- March Museum: 700
- Church craft Fair: 1000

Feedback from town centre businesses and Town Councillors was very positive. The programmed activities are arranged to engage with all sectors and ages within the community and many charities and youth groups use this event to raise awareness of their activities, to recruit supporters as well as raise funds.



Chatteris Historic Festival and Jubilee Celebration 2012

The event was extended due to the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and delivered with community partners, attracting many visitors to the benefit of the whole town. Some local businesses set up stalls to promote their goods and services and engage with potential customers in a social setting. Local organisations took spaces and joined in the range of various activities over the weekend.

Despite poor weather conditions, the event was delivered successfully, with around 3,000 visitors on Saturday - when the first 'Party in the Park' was held. Other activities were staged over the following two days, culminating in an 'It's a Knockout' competition on the Monday.

Whittlesey Festival 2012

Thousands of visitors attended the fifth annual festival. New attractions included a community walking parade – acknowledged by the High Sheriff of Cambridgeshire. Other events included a classic car show – with more than 100 entries, climbing walls and fairground rides for children, a schools art competition & exhibition, and an Arts & Crafts market.

Public feedback has been very positive for this event and community involvement has increased each year with more groups and schools engaging in the activities. Local businesses have taken the opportunity to take space within the event area to raise their profile and increase their business.

Wisbech Christmas Market

Once again the Christmas market successfully highlighted what a great town Wisbech is;



- There were a multitude of stalls, street acts, interesting activities for all ages and even reindeer.
- The good weather really helped the event and to keep the customers in the town for several hours.
- Many more people turned out in 2012 than the previous colder years.

Future Work

The Markets & Events team are currently working to create a Market Town & Events Development Plan to help increase footfall in the markets and promote tourism, linked to the adoption of the new 2012-17 Leisure Strategy.

- Participate in the 'In Bloom' awards scheme

The Council supports local In Bloom groups with entries into the Eastern Region competition as attractive towns and open spaces help local people feel proud about where they live, as well as attracting visitors to the area.

This year The Landscape Group worked hard against the unseasonably poor weather during June 2012 to complete the planting of around 58,000 bedding plants in Whittlesey, Chatteris, March, Wimblington and Wisbech. The traditional bedding schemes previously awarded "Best" in the Anglia region are well known and ensure that the towns are an attractive place to live in and visit.

For the first time all 4 Market Towns entered Anglia in Bloom, as well as Parson Drove and Manea also continuing to enter.



The Butterfly – Part of the Rainbow Theme at St Peter's Church Gardens

In Bloom Results:

Town (6001-12000 Residents):

Silver Gilt Award: Chatteris

Large Town (12001-35000 Residents):

Winner and Gold Award: Wisbech

Silver Gilt Award: March,

Silver Award: Whittlesey

Urban Community:

Silver Award - Waterlees

Best Conservation Project:

Manea Pit.

Best Young Peoples Project (aged 12 years and under):

Jubilee Garden, Payne Primary School, Parson Drove

3.3 Promote a safer Fenland

- Work with our partner organisations to reduce crime and anti social behaviour in Fenland
- Help residents improve their safety and reduce the risk of them becoming victims of crime
- Help businesses to tackle crime against them including theft, arson and damage to premises
- Establish partnership actions to target locations of community concern or where incidents of crime and anti social behaviour are high

Please note that a Fenland Community Safety Partnership update was reported at the meeting on 11th March 2013 -

<http://www.fenland.gov.uk/aksfenland/images/att4203.pdf>

3.4 Provide quality parks and open spaces in Fenland

- Maintain standards in our parks and open spaces

The Council looks after many open spaces across the district, along with more than 50 play areas. Ensuring that these spaces are of a good standard for the public to use is a key part of the open spaces team's work. In partnership with the grounds maintenance contractor, The Landscape Group, (TLG), grass cutting, tree maintenance and shrub bed maintenance are carried out throughout the year.

Summer 2012 was the wettest on record. This led to issues with the grass cutting regime across the district, with TLG unable to cut grass on schedule. Additionally, once cut, the arisings lay in clumps across the green spaces. This

led to customer dissatisfaction. Additional action was taken to improve the ongoing work, including the addition of extra labour and equipment by the contractor to ensure that standards were addressed quickly.

TLG has since developed a wet weather action plan to ensure that, if certain 'trigger' events take place, additional resources will be brought into play to help ensure that standards are maintained at a high level – despite any future adverse weather.

Improving Play Areas in Fenland

Parkour at Wenny Rec, Chatteris

An innovative new play area was opened this year at Wenny Recreation Ground. Instead of settling for a traditional play area, the Town Council and local users asked for a climbing frame to replace the previous unit that had worn out. The Parkour or free running equipment that has been fitted is both a climbing frame, as well as an exciting unit suitable for the sport of 'free running' or Parkour. Free running is seen as perfect exercise for those who may not be interested in conventional competitive sports. Its aim is to travel from one point to another, negotiating obstacles along the route as efficiently and nimbly as possible.

Customer feedback, following an opening day demonstration, has proved very positive. Recently young people have demonstrated the equipment and uploaded their video footage onto YouTube – highlighting the quality of the equipment and its versatility. The video may be seen here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wm6UYXevoxI>

Furrowfields Multi-use Games Area and Play Area Extension, Chatteris

The area was commissioned after public consultation, with the equipment purchased through section 106 funding.

The Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) and extended playground, which includes a climb net and basket swing, were formally opened by Cllr Murphy on his last official day as Chatteris Mayor and attended by Town and District Councillors.



Cllr Peter Murphy, Mayor of Chatteris and FDC Portfolio Holder for Environment & Street Scene opening the MUGA, with FDC Leader of the Council Alan Melton, Town Councillors and FDC officers in goal.

Improving Fenland's Cemeteries

The Council has invested over £100,000, ensuring that there is sufficient space in March's Eastwood Cemetery to continue burials for the medium term. The previous cemetery was running very low on capacity, so the Council has extended the cemetery, adding capacity that will be sufficient for many years to come. The Council manages 6 open cemeteries and following the recent work at Eastwood, all cemeteries now have sufficient capacity for the medium term.

- Maintain existing Green Flag awards for Fenland parks to raise standards.

Once again the Council was successful in maintaining the Green Flag Awards for St. Peter and St. Paul's Church Gardens, Wisbech and Wisbech Park.

The award is the benchmark national standard for parks and green spaces in the UK, with entries judged against 8 key criteria that include; A welcoming place; clean and well maintained; community involvement; management.



The award is recognition that The Council and local Friends Groups are managing the open spaces in an effective manner, ensuring that the public can access quality open spaces that meet or exceed the Green Flag criteria.

Performance

No.	Description	Baseline	Target 2012/13	Year To Date	Variance
3 - Streets Ahead					
LPI ES 1	Requests for Rapid or Village Response service actioned same or next day	96%	93%	99%	7%
LPI ES2	% of streets meeting our cleansing standards upon inspection	98%	93%	97%	4%
LPI ES3	% of streets clear of graffiti and flyposting upon inspection	100%	97%	98%	1%
LPI ES4	% of household waste recycled and composted	51%	51%	51%	1%
LPI ES5	Community satisfaction with cleansing services	New	80%	87%	8%
LPI EH1	Street Pride and friends events supported	New	80	104	86%
LPI EH2	Number of Green Business Club Members	143	150	181	18%
LPI HCS5	% of those involved in our programmes who state they feel safer after attending an event	78%	65%	88%	35%
LPI POS1	Number of community led management action plans for Fenland's key open spaces	4	6	6	0%
LPI POS2	% of those asked who are satisfied with FDC parks and events	New	80%	86%	7%