

# Overview & Scrutiny Panel

## Progress Against the Environment Priorities

For performance from  
1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021

# Portfolio Holders



**Councillor  
Mrs Jan French**  
Deputy Leader of the  
Council



**Councillor Andrew  
Lynn**  
Portfolio Holder for  
Licensing &  
Community Safety



**Councillor  
Peter Murphy**  
Portfolio Holder for  
Open Spaces, Street  
Scene & Waste  
Management



**Councillor Steve  
Tierney**  
Portfolio Holder for  
Transformation,  
Communication &  
Environment

## Environment

### Projects from Business Plan:

#### **Continue to deliver environmental enforcement using fixed penalty notices and the court process for serious offences (Cllr Peter Murphy)**

The total amount of fly tipped incidents reported from April – December 2021 is 798 (lower than last year's total of 982) and household waste makes up the overwhelming majority.

As part of the council's commitment to tackle fly tipping across Fenland, officers continue to proactively investigate fly tipped sites to look for evidence.

Between April and December, 260 fly tipped sites have been investigated for evidence by sifting through the waste at the sites. Any evidence is removed, stored, and followed up often with Formal Interview Under Caution Documents sent by post.

17 interviews by post have been used during this time and resulted in 6 Fixed Penalty Notices for causing fly tipping. A total of 4 have been paid and brought in an income of £1,180. The remaining 2 are outstanding and, if remain so, will be referred to legal for prosecution.

In addition, there is currently 1 pending case for prosecution following non-payment of a Penalty Notice for a fly tipping offence which took place in Wisbech.

Despite the high numbers of fly tipped sites visited by officers, the evidence found is not strong enough to be enforced. A further 4 individuals were reminded of duty of care responsibilities as these 4 cases were not evidentially strong enough for fixed penalty notices.

In addition, 3 fixed penalty notices have been issued for cars parked on market days in March Market Place. All have been paid.

1 Littering Penalty Notice of £100 has been issued and paid.

1 Dog fouling Penalty Notice of £100 has been issued and paid.

Nuisance and abandoned vehicles also cause concern for our residents and during this time we have received reports of 180 abandoned vehicles which resulted in 10 being removed (an increase from last years' total of 175 but a decrease from last years' removal of 19). We have also had a further 131 nuisance vehicles reported which is lower than last year's 221. These are cars which are untaxed or parked poorly and so have been referred to either the DVLA or the Police.

Our work supporting local businesses to ensure that they are trade waste compliant has seen us refresh our Tidy Fenland Voluntary Code of Practice. Towards the end of 2021, we have been able to visit shops in key areas to give advice and support on disposing of commercial waste legally.

As a result, 6 businesses reviewed their waste disposal arrangements to ensure they were meeting duty of care requirements.

### **Deliver the Four Seasons events programme in partnership with our four market towns** (Cllr Peter Murphy)

Between April and December, the events programme started to rebuild after a year of restrictions in 2021.

Community group priorities were taken into consideration when redesigning what was possible in each of the four towns. Each town had different priorities.

Events were also designed for safety and within guidelines by working with the Safety Advisory Group (SAG), but also to provide opportunities for businesses to trade again.

An alternative Chatteris Festival was staged on 27 June 2021 which was scaled back to include activities that enabled social distancing, with the main event being a colour fun run around the field. The concept of the event was proposed by the volunteer committee who were keen to host an event for their community. The pilot colour run was very popular and will feature in the main festival next year.

During the summer, the Council successfully bid for Government Welcome Back funding. This meant that, in consultation with Fenland Town Councils and community organisations, we were able to develop and stage pop up events, attractions and green space rejuvenation throughout the district that has attracted visitors back into our town centres to kick start the economy again.

Whittlesey were the first to benefit from the fund which was used to stage 'The Big Bash' mini sports festival.

Family October half term events were next to feature in the events timetable for Chatteris, Wisbech and March. Chatteris also closed out the year with a town centre music event.

High Street arts events to attract shoppers will also run in Wisbech until the funding closes in March 2022.

The last of Fenland's Four seasons' events took place in December which were very much welcomed by local businesses. Over 130 pitches were snapped up by traders

for the first Market, which was held in March Town Centre. A huge range of quality gifts and produce was on offer and attendance levels remained consistently high. Traders and visitors alike travelled in from neighbouring areas. Additional safety measures were put in place to ensure attendees felt confident and safe.

Wisbech Christmas Fayre followed suit covering a wide outdoor event space including the Horsefair, Market Place, Market Street, York Row and the High Street. Highlights this year included the introduction of an escape room which was very popular. Community organisations Twenty20 productions and Nine Lives Theatre were also instrumental in creating exceptional live entertainment programmes.

Plans are now well underway for 2022 Four Seasons Events.

### **Deliver the Recycling Action Plan** (Cllr Peter Murphy & Cllr Steve Tierney)

The changes in customer behaviour as a result of the pandemic has had an impact on waste generation and recycling across the area and indeed the country.

We know that by maintaining consistent refuse and recycling services throughout the pandemic, Fenland has preserved the levels of recycling and at times increased the quality of materials collected.

Blue bin tonnages in 2021 were very similar to the peaks achieved in 2020, **with a total of 5,014 tonnes** of waste collected for recycling April to November.

Customers are increasing what they choose to recycle, with increases in; Glass; Cardboard; office type paper; HDPE bottles (such as milk containers); PET clear bottles (water, cola bottles etc.); and Plastic tubs, pots and trays.

During April to November, the team collected **4,742 tonnes of materials suitable for recycling** presented by customers in blue bins.

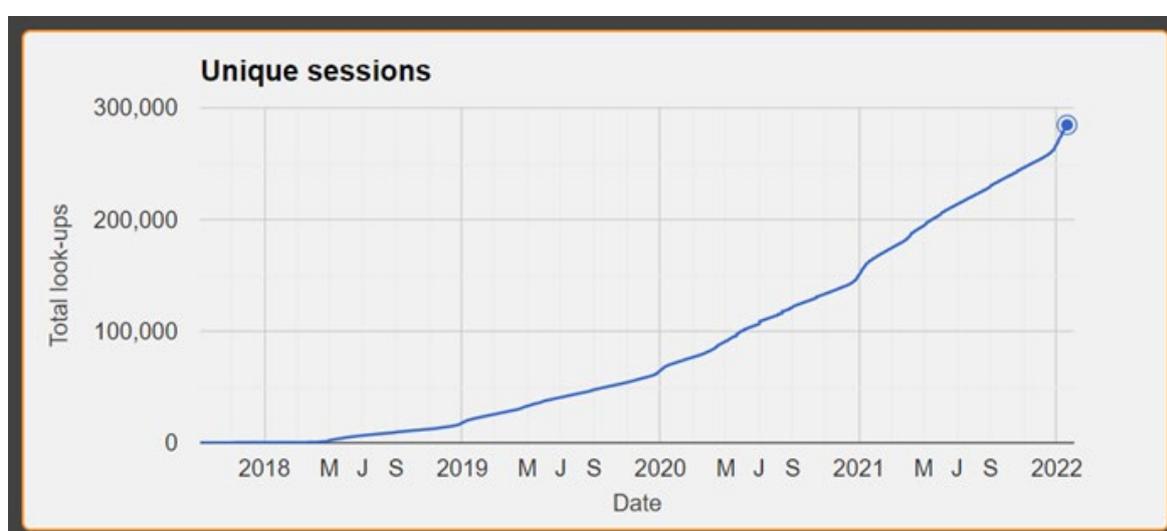
The value of paper and other materials continues to improve and reduces the net costs of sorting and treating the blue bin materials through the profit share in place with the contractor, based in Waterbeach, who transport, separate and sell the materials collected.

To support the Recycling Action Plan this year, with events, school visits and other activities compromised, other means of communication including social media and local newsletters have been exploited. The Getting It Sorted Volunteers have also been invaluable with their online training partnership with Cambridgeshire Skills and continued regular communications with their growing network of interested customers.

Calendars, parish magazine adverts and the recycling visits that took place have all focussed on the remaining single issue which is food waste and liquids within containers in the blue bin. We continue to promote emptying and rinsing containers with customers through regular communications such as collection calendars, adverts, social media and an insert in Council Tax bills.

The Fenland Bin App, now has a direct link to the Getting It Sorted website [www.gettingitsorted.org](http://www.gettingitsorted.org) where customers can check how to recycle different materials.

The Fenland Bin app continues to see regular usage with individual post-code lookups in the past year **exceeding 100,000**. This shows that customers are regularly using the app on the go on their mobile phones and tablets, and it is used on many different devices in their households.



An element of the recycling improvements this year has been the increase in on-street recycling facilities as part of the overall Litter Bin Replacement Plan and [Fenland Litter Strategy](#). This has seen **£25,000 of funding** from [WRAP](#) (a waste and resources charity funded by Defra) used to increase the number of **recycling litter bins** across Fenland's higher footfall areas.



**Deliver a competitive trade waste service** (Cllr Peter Murphy & Cllr Steve Tierney)

The commercial waste and recycling service offered to small and medium sized businesses continues to perform well this year.

Whilst supporting our small to medium sized commercial customers through the continued Pandemic, the team have successfully recruited 35 new customers so far this financial Year. In addition, we are on target to exceed our original budgeted income by £20,000.

### **Monitor and respond to the DEFRA Waste & Resources Strategy consultation with RECAP partners** (Cllr Peter Murphy & Cllr Steve Tierney)

The 3 consultations were issued by DEFRA during the summer of 2021. These were delayed because of the pandemic.

The RECAP board considered these lengthy consultations and offered a combined response to DEFRA for each of the consultations published.

DEFRA have now delayed their response to the consultations, and this is anticipated in Spring 2022.

The response to these consultations is expected to form the basis upon which Extended Producer Responsibility, Deposit Return Scheme and Collection Consistency elements of the Resources and Waste Strategy are to be delivered, along with timelines.

### **Review the current arrangements for parking enforcement (CPE) in Fenland** (Cllr Jan French)

The County Councils Highways and Transport committee approved the implementation of CPE on 7 September 2021, subsequently FDC officers produced a CPE update paper for Cabinet on 21 October 2021.

In addition to FDC, both South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire District Councils have resolved to implement CPE. A joint working group has been set up with all three Districts and Cambridgeshire County Council to collectively move the project forward and track progress.

FDC progress to date and current focus:

- 1) A specialist contractor has been appointed and has since undertaken a full Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) survey for all On-Street parking and waiting restrictions within the Fenland DC administrative area. Approximately 210 existing TRO's have been surveyed and a list of all queries and anomalies will be produced over the coming months for resolution by Cambridgeshire County Council and FDC prior to the TRO information being digitised. This is an extremely important part of the CPE implementation process, and the works are likely to take around 9 months to complete.
- 2) An initial site survey of all FDC managed Off-Street parking places has also been undertaken to inform the future enforcement boundaries. This information is currently being used to draft a new preliminary CPE Off-street Parking Places Order (OSPPO) in preparation for the implementation of CPE.
- 3) FDC officers will be working with County Council officers over the coming weeks on drafting a preliminary FDC/CCC agency agreement for consideration by the CPE project team. The agreement will set out delegated authority to FDC and define responsibility for things such as sign and line maintenance, CPE surplus income and deficits along with resolution of contractual issues associated with CPE enforcement and administration.
- 4) FDC officers are liaising with the CPCA to enable the funding agreement delivery timeline to be aligned with the CPE project implementation date.

Whilst the timeline required to implement CPE in Fenland is estimated to be approximately 2 years, there are several factors which could inadvertently result in project slippage. However currently the project is on track for the CPE designation order to be brought into effect in October 2023.

**Deliver the CCTV shared service with Peterborough City Council (Cllr Andrew Lynn)**

Please see performance update as part of the CSP agenda item.

**Other Projects:**

## **Open Spaces and Grounds Maintenance Contract Update** (Cllr Peter Murphy)

A good year for the Grounds Maintenance team (Tivoli) now in their 7<sup>th</sup> year of association with FDC. The full programme of grass cutting was completed with very few complaints and any inadvertent misses corrected with 24 hours. All hedge cuts under the contract were completed during November and December. Numerous tree works were completed across the district with a programme of new tree planting continuing over the winter.

Play area renovations and extensions were completed at Snowley Park (Whittlesey), West End Park (March), and Parsons Drove with further work at Huntingdon Road and Larham way (both Chatteris), Burdett Grove (Whittlesey) and Robingoodfellows Lane (March) imminent. Tennis courts in Wisbech Park were resurfaced, wildflower meadow has been planted at Manor Fields (Whittlesey) and repairs from vandalism and clearances have been instigated and completed at multiple addresses following issues raised by members of the public.

Team performance has been good with low sickness levels despite the prevailing climate and no contract defaults were issued in the whole year.

## **Street Lighting** (Cllr Jan French)

### **Street Light Repairs & Maintenance**

Between April and December, 163 streetlight faults were reported to the Assets & Projects (Engineering Team) and forwarded onto FDC's streetlight contractor for rectification. Only 50 of the fault reports were associated with FDC streetlights despite FDC having twice the number of assets as the combined Parish lighting stock. The relatively low number of FDC asset fault reports clearly demonstrates the benefit now being realised from the capital programme investment made to replace a number of the Fenland streetlight assets.

Elm Parish Council joined the FDC streetlight repairs and maintenance contract during the summer, and the first repair works were undertaken to Elm Parish Councils lighting stock in September. New streetlight ID plates have since been procured and installed on Elm PC streetlights displaying updated contact information to aid future fault reporting.

### **Capital Street Light Replacement Works**

The streetlight replacement works continues to make progress and to date approximately 600 FDC streetlights have now either been replaced or had the existing lanterns upgraded to LED. A further 25 units are currently on order and are scheduled to be installed over the coming months and it is estimated that these works will be concluded in March/April 2022. Following completion of the capital programmed works, LED streetlights will account for approximately 70% of the Councils own lighting stock.

In addition, the Engineering Team are currently co-ordinating streetlight replacement works on behalf of Gorefield, Christchurch, Tydd St Giles, Parson Drove and Newton Parish Councils and are likely to co-ordinate defective streetlight replacements for Elm Parish Council going forward.

Seven of the Parish Councils and Clarion Housing Association who had previously entered into a 3 year streetlight service level agreement (SLA) (2018-2021) with FDC have been contacted in respect of extending the SLA for a further two years to coincide with the end of the current streetlight repairs and maintenance works contract in July 2023. Responses from five of the eight organisations have so far been received with three responses still awaited. All organisation responses received to date have elected to remain with FDC for this service provision.

Street light replacement and upgrade works to the Town Quay Berth at Wisbech Commercial Port commenced in November and are expected to be completed in January/February.

### **FDC Car Park Maintenance** (Cllr Jan French)

Between April and December, a number of routine repairs and maintenance works were undertaken within several FDC managed Car Parks throughout the District. Works included gully cleaning, drainage channel maintenance, tree maintenance, pothole and fence repairs along with refreshing road markings at a number of locations.

Further repairs, maintenance and minor improvement works will be scheduled for 2022 over the coming months for FDC managed Car Parks.

The complete relining and reconfiguration of the parking bays in Chapel Road car park, Wisbech was undertaken in October as much of the existing bay markings had worn away. The opportunity was also taken to implement a number of operational and safety improvements to the overall layout whilst incorporating a white lined pedestrian footpath along with some additional parking bays.

The works were undertaken in stages in order to minimise the impact on loss of available parking and the mobile COVID testing unit was also accommodated and continued to operate throughout the works. The improvements have been well received by car park users.

### **Getting it Sorted Volunteers Update** (Cllr Peter Murphy)

Fenland's 35 trained recycling champions have worked around the restrictions placed

upon them at different points in the year volunteering a total so far of:

- **550** hours by attending 24 groups,
- creating a [landlord/HMO pack](#) for **100** landlords so far,
- **1,643** recycling enthusiasts who receive regular emails about recycling,
- **8,347** public visits to the [www.gettingitsorted.org](http://www.gettingitsorted.org) website about what to recycle,
- **571** hits to the Fenland education webpage [www.fenland.gov.uk/education](http://www.fenland.gov.uk/education) and online [teachers' resources](#)
- **77,829** views of social media posts shared
- Launched the online volunteer training package for Cambridgeshire

In cooperation with Cambridgeshire Skills, the volunteers launched their online training package for 'would be' recycling champions.

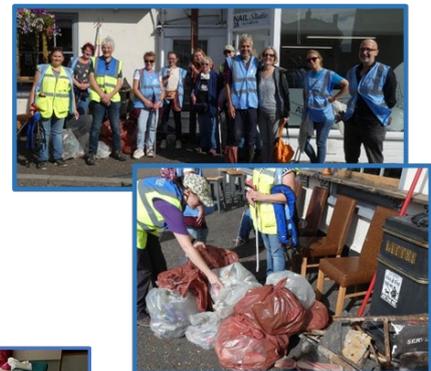
Cllr Murphy launched the new accredited online recycling volunteer training package, available to all Cambridgeshire residents in the autumn. [Cambs Skills](#) offer a range of mentored training online to Cambridgeshire residents.



The training videos and information were all developed by the Fenland Getting It Sorted volunteers for the benefit of customers across Cambridgeshire.

Volunteers have returned to attending events, charities, assisted with information in food parcels and organising activities across the area.

Often in cooperation with other volunteers from Streetpride, In Bloom and similar, the volunteers have been litter picking riverbanks and separating recycling, educating groups, attending fetes and training people how to best use their waste.



**Garden Waste Service Update** (Cllr Peter Murphy & Cllr Tierney)



already, with bin tags, bespoke webpages, parish news adverts, along with letters and emails directly to existing subscribers and non-subscribers.

For all customers, the Christmas calendar, delivered on around **45,000** green bins from mid-November were supported with social media and adverts in local Discovery magazines.

Direct debit customers will start to receive their new subscription stickers for the coming season during February.



### **Customer Satisfaction 2022.**

Initial results from the recent customer satisfaction survey hosted on the Council website shows that **97% of the 416** people who responded to the survey were satisfied with the service provided. The survey was sent by email to 3,000 of our garden waste customers.

Many of the responses thank the frontline team for continuing again this year to reliably provide the service when other authorities were unable to maintain similar services.

### **Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Waste Partnership (RECAP) (Cllr Peter Murphy & Cllr Steve Tierney)**

This year in preparation for the proposed changes to waste collection the partnership commissioned a waste analysis of residual waste across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough as a comparison to that completed in 2019. The results of this work will be published in the spring.

The key piece of work for the partnership since April has been preparing the collaborative responses to the 3 Defra consultations on Extended Producer Responsibilities, Deposit Return Scheme and Collection Consistency. These were returned in the summer and the partnership now keenly awaits the response from Defra prior to forming plans around the resulting waste strategy for the area post 2022.

Importantly the partnership has continued to share best practice in support of continuing waste services in the face of driver shortages and the continued impacts of the pandemic.

### **Community Safety Partnership Update (Cllr Andrew Lynn)**

## **Op Grippled – Loan Sharks Awareness Project June/July 2021**

The Community Safety Partnership Loan Shark awareness project was successfully delivered during June and July in partnership with the England Illegal Money Lending Team (IMLT).

Other partners involved in the delivery of this project were 3 Primary Schools, Fenland District Council, the Horsefair, Taxi operators, Cambridgeshire Libraries, Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Blackfield Creative.

The primary schools were identified due to their location within areas of high deprivation and/or high proportion of pupils from deprived households.

### **Work with Primary schools**

The project worked with yr. 6 children in Orchards, Ramnoth and Burrowmoor schools delivering Loan Shark awareness assemblies, banner design competitions, and creative workshops.

The children's artwork and IMLT information about the dangers of Loan Sharks are being displayed in libraries across Fenland.



### **Schools Design Competition**

The Loan shark awareness project concluded with a design competition for the Yr 6 pupils. They were challenged with designing a banner to warn of the dangers of loan sharks and raise awareness of the support that is available to victims through the Stop Loan Sharks Project.

The three winners and will see displayed as across



winners of the received a prize their designs banners in locations Fenland.

Two runners up from each school also received prizes in recognition of their hard work.



All the designs from the competition were showcased this summer as part of a touring display in Fenland's libraries.

### Raising Awareness

Fenlands Community Safety team have increased community awareness of the dangers of Loan Sharks through a series of social media posts, press releases and community initiatives.



Awareness Campaign – Taxi & Street Cleansing Vehicle

Library Display



Awareness Campaign – Public Areas

The Horsefair

The Horsefair supported the Loan Shark awareness campaign by hosting an awareness raising session which was delivered by Community Safety and the IMLT.

The Horsefair were also able to support by displaying large posters in the main shopping areas.



## Other Activities

Community Engagement Sessions

These sessions are designed to raise awareness amongst the community of key community safety issues that may affect them, their family and friends or the wider population.

Subject matter experts are invited to participate and answer questions submitted by the community.

During 2021 the partnership has held sessions on topics which include: -

Domestic Abuse & Coercive Control, Home & Garden Safety Community, Modern Day Slavery, Road Safety Engagement and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

You can access these sessions via the website link – [\(CSP\) – Fenland District Council](#)



### [Work Force Development](#)

Its important front-line professionals and volunteers who are likely to have contact with vulnerable people are kept up to date with information and policy changes on a variety of subjects. Having this knowledge empowers the front-line professional or volunteer to recognise issues, offer preventative advice or make relevant referrals.

Our development sessions are attended by staff from FDC teams, police, probation, traveller teams, young people workers, family workers, children centres, food banks, volunteers, schools, healthcare workers, faith groups, community organisations and citizens advice.



During this year subjects covered have included Domestic Abuse delivered in partnership with the County Domestic Abuse Partnership (DASV) and Refuge. Hate Crime with Cambridgeshire Constabulary and FDC. Stop Suicide Awareness with MIND and Scams & Cybercrime with

Cambridgeshire Constabulary and CAPASP.

These sessions are very well attended with generally between 40 & 50 people logging on.

### Community Volunteering

It was recognised by the partnership that community volunteering interest had increased following the first COVID-19 lockdown in 2020.

However, there was concern people didn't know where to look for opportunities to volunteer.

This has led to the development of a webpage that can be found on the Fenland District Council website. On the webpage, the groups/organisations that accept volunteers are listed in categories to include

- Children & Youth
- Community Organisations
- Community Safety
- Community Support
- Community Transport
- Environmental
- Historical Interest
- Road Safety

webpage - [www.fenland.gov.uk/article/15823/Volunteering-Groups](http://www.fenland.gov.uk/article/15823/Volunteering-Groups)

### **Street Drinking Update** (Cllr Andrew Lynn)

Partnership meetings have continued to provide a focus on street drinking and associated ASB. The COVID-19 pandemic has possibly been a factor in the reduction of incidents being reported by the community and recorded by police and observed occurrences of street drinking by partners.

The fewer street drinkers being observed and the need to comply with social distancing requirements has also hindered the delivery of some on the ground support services.

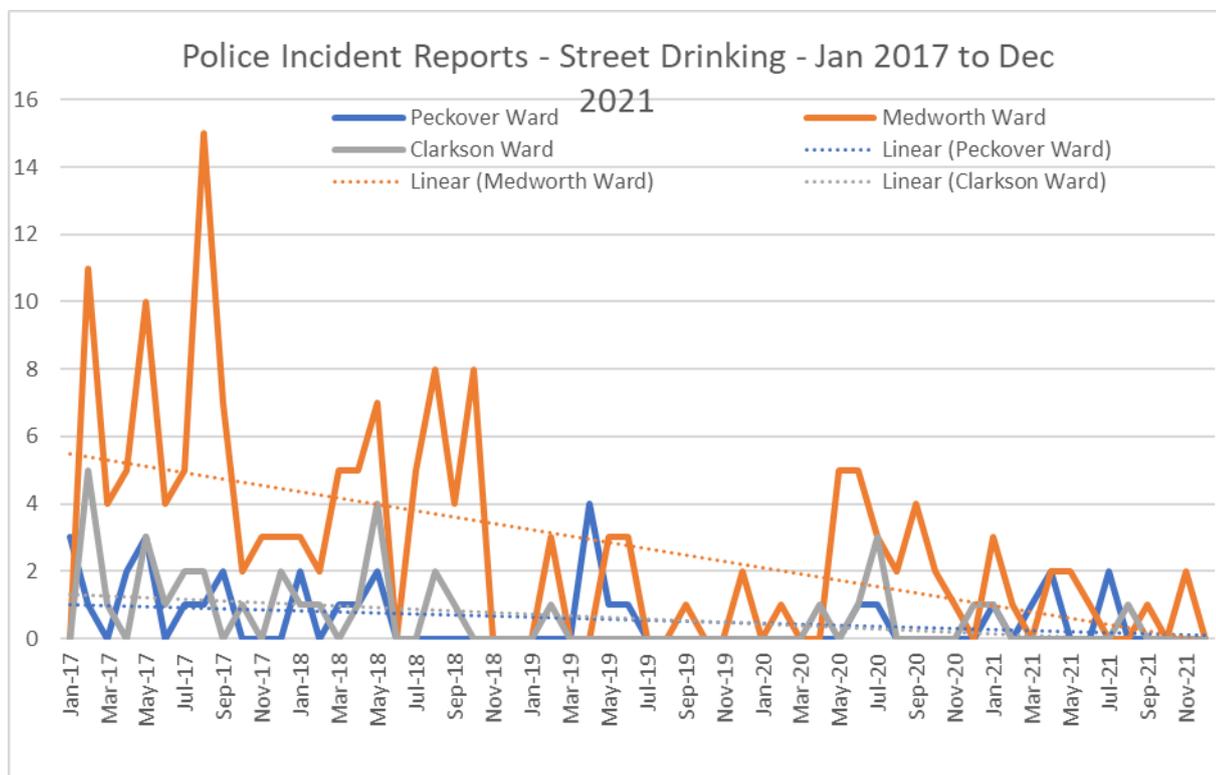
However, as social distancing restrictions have been eased there hasn't been the increase in street drinking occurrences that had been feared.

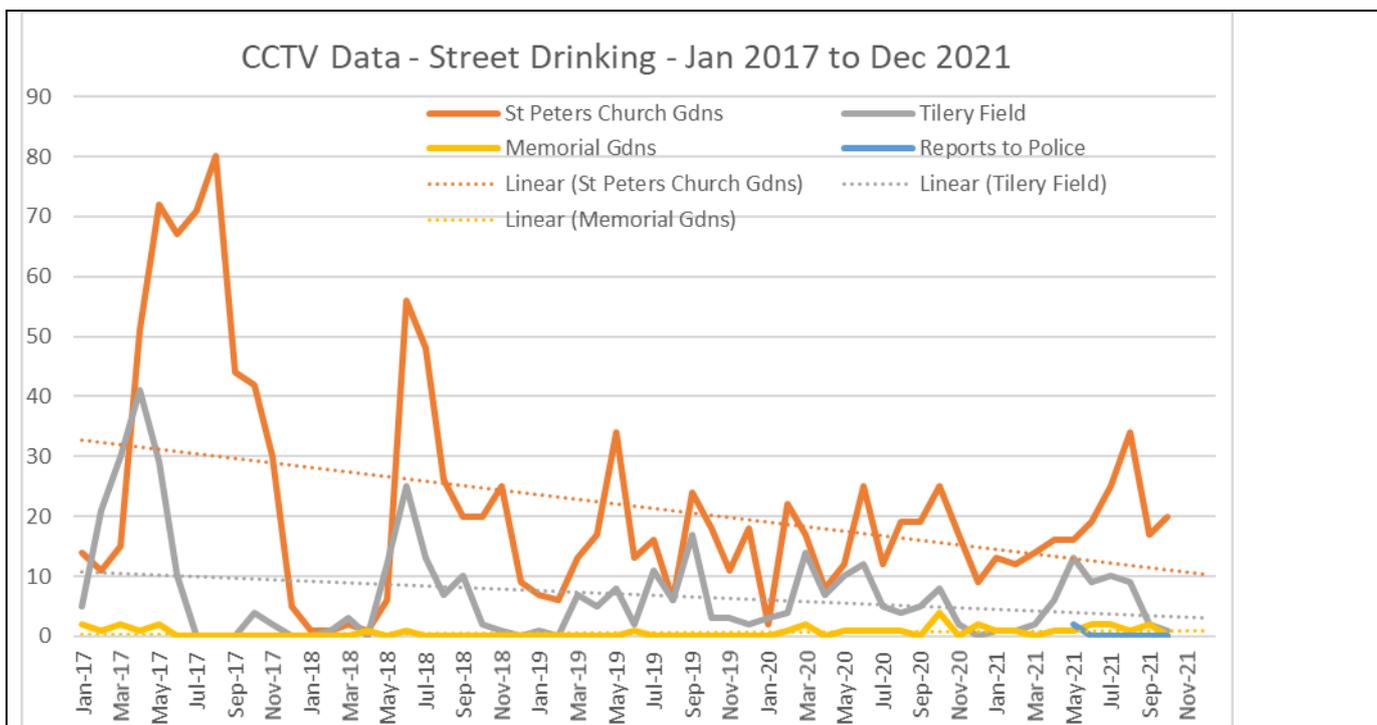
This is reflected in the continued downward trend of monitored CCTV incidents and recorded police incidents. (see charts below) As well as feedback from Street Scene and Street Cleansing teams.

There has also been a lack of community comment on social media channels which provides anecdotal evidence of an improved situation.

Our CCTV service now provides more detailed performance figures which include, frequency of occurrences by time and by day, and how often their observed suspected street drinking involves poor behaviour which requires the police to be notified.

The street drinking action plan has been incorporated within the licensing action plan as elements of work share the same objective. Further improvement has been made by combining the Relevant Authority Officers meeting with the Street Drinking Partnership meeting.





There have been two priority partnership interventions required in 2021 linked to alcohol related nuisance. Although both have had limited impact on the wider community the interventions were appropriate to ensure there wasn't an escalation of alcohol related nuisance.

The first was an unlawful encampment on private land which also attracted daytime visitors and became a meeting place. The impact of the occupation of the land had an adverse impact upon nearby organisations ability to operate and annoyance to residents. This included concerns relating to alcohol related crime, disorder, noise, and environmental concerns. Working with partners, those using the land were offered advice and guidance on support mechanisms available to them for both housing and substance abuse. In addition, the landowner and key stakeholders were encouraged to take action to remove those unlawfully occupying the land and secure the land from subsequent re-occupation.

Following the movement of those mentioned in the previous paragraph there was displacement of the people moved to other parts of the town. Up to three people set up camp in Carlisle Gardens and as with the above example they attracted daytime visitors. The occupation of the gardens and the daytime gatherings did begin to cause some reported community nuisance in addition to a wider environmental impact from litter, urination, and defecation. Again, with the support of partners from housing and substance abuse teams, support was offered, and guidance given. Staff from streetscene and environmental services monitored the location and encouraged the proper disposal of litter. Providing refuse sacks at the same time. Not all of those using

the location to sleep were willing to work with support agencies and their continued occupation meant much needed maintenance work had to be postponed. Subsequently the location became unoccupied which allowed for the site to be secured in advance of the maintenance work. At the same time a court order was obtained preventing re-occupation of the land by specified persons.

**Key PIs:**

Key PI	Description	Baseline	Target 21/22	Cumulative Performance	Variance (RAG)
CELP8	Rapid or Village Response requests actioned the same or next day	95%	90%	96%	
CELP9	% of inspected streets meeting our cleansing standards (including graffiti and flyposting)	99%	93%	99%	
CELP10	% of household waste recycled through the blue bin service (1 month in arrears)	28%	28%	27.3%	
CELP11	Customer satisfaction with refuse and recycling services (quarterly)	99%	90%	TBC	
CELP12	Customer satisfaction with our garden waste service (quarterly)	94%	85%	97%	
CELP13	Number of Street Pride, Green Dog Walkers, and Friends Of community environmental events supported	204	204	126	
CELP14	% of those asked who are satisfied with FDC's events (May, July, October, January)	96%	96%	97%	

Key:	
	Within 5% of target
	5-10% below target
	10% or more below target

Comments
CELP10 is confirmed figures to November 21, provisional for December
CELP13 The figure represents small litter picks / work parties held by groups when government restrictions were that up to 6 people could meet outside (April) and up to 30 (May). We saw, in line with the lifting of group limits in July, the number of

events increase. Many groups are still not meeting up as a large group with many volunteers opting to undertake solo litter picking across the district, this is not captured in the figures. Despite the pandemic, many groups have attracted new members.