



Council Briefing Note –

NEIGHBOURHOOD OPERATIONS

The New Neighbourhood Operations Directorate is working on several projects and initiatives.

1. Neighbourhood Management

1.1 Green Flag Award and Anglia in Bloom

We have retained our long-standing five Green Flag Awards for Bunkers Park, Canal Fields, Chipperfield Common, Tring Memorial Garden and Jellicoe Water Gardens, and are pleased to have added Gadebridge Park to this list, meaning we now have six Green Flag Awards in the borough. For the first time, we participated to Anglia in Bloom awards and we achieved Gold for Gadebridge Park and Jellicoe Water Garden, and Silver Gilt for Tring Memorial Garden.

1.2 Playground Refurbishment Programme

The programme continues and playgrounds have now been refurbished at Apsley Lock, Croft Meadow, Flaunden, Tower Hill and Woodhall Farm – these have been well received by locally. Work has also commenced on the playground at Durrants Lane. Of the two sites where we had to go back to market, Miswell Lane and Warners End Upper Valley, both have now been approved for award and are working through the Council governance processes. Work at these sites is anticipated commencing in October.

1.3 Trees and Woodlands

Following a procurement process, the council's DBCs new tree work contractors are Gristwood & Toms Ltd and John O'Connor Ltd.

Both contractors will be carrying out works on DBC land within urban areas, with John O'Connor also completing works in DBC woodlands. Gristwood & Toms will be progressing our tree planting programme. Both companies are highly regarded within the industry, both based with Hertfordshire, and can provide a range of additional services, such as pest control and grounds maintenance operations, should these be required.

The first batches of urban works were issued in August and will then be issued monthly thereafter. Woodland works and tree planting will be progressed over the autumn/winter period. Work continues on an Ash Dieback strategy for the borough, and this will be progressed through Autumn and Winter.

1.4 River Gade restoration

The Environment Agency have now moved the River Gade restoration project into the delivery stage. A project start-up meeting took place on 22 August. The latest update from the Environment Agency regarding the programme of works scheduled for September includes vegetation clearance, tree works and the digging of a new channel.

The project is expected to progress during autumn and winter, with completion expected in spring.

2. Waste and Recycling

2.1 The percentage of household waste recycled (including composting) is a national indicator which the community recognise as a measurement of success and one which continues to feature heavily in national statistics when it comes to judging the efficacy of local, regional and national waste management strategies. Dacorum Borough Council continues to be performing well in relation to

recycling rate, it has increased its recycling rate from 50.5% to 51.6% and it is one of the top 5 authorities in Hertfordshire in that respect.

2.2 As well as working with residents, Dacorum provides several opportunities for schools and youth organisations across the borough to learn more about waste reduction, recycling and composting which promotes the value of recycling and encourage residents to re-use and recycle.

3. Environmental Health

3.1 Air Quality Action Plan

The Air Quality Action Plan is being drafted with the Air Quality Lead at Hertfordshire County Council and will be presented at Scrutiny in the Autumn.

3.2 Fly tipping

The team continues to be very effective in environmental crime enforcement. A company has been successfully prosecuted following a fly-tipping offence in Dodds Lane, Hemel Hempstead in September 2023. Eco Clear Waste Management Ltd of Hunton Bridge, Kings Langley pleaded guilty to the unauthorised deposit of controlled waste and was ordered to pay over £13,000.

Dacorum Borough Council is part of the Hertfordshire Fly Tipping Group (HFTG). This is a multi-agency taskforce including the borough, district and county councils as well as Hertfordshire Constabulary, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Herts Fire and Rescue, the Environment Agency and the National Farmers' Union.

These organisations have come together to improve how Hertfordshire responds to fly-tipping. The HFTG is delivering improvements in enforcement capability across the county, as well as rolling out new technology to assist in identifying and prosecuting fly-tippers.