



EAST LIVINGSTON AND EAST CALDER LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

SERVICE UPDATE – NETS, LAND & COUNTRYSIDE

REPORT BY HEAD OF OPERATIONAL SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise members of the recent activity of the NET's, Land & Countryside Services teams for the period 1 August 2018 to 31 October 2018.

B. RECOMMENDATION

The Local Area Committee is asked to:

1. Note the work carried out by the service within the local area.
2. Advise on any areas that require further information or investigation

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs; making best use of our resources; working in partnership
II	Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	None
III	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None
IV	Impact on performance and performance Indicators	None
V	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	Relates to items 9 – We live our lives free from crime, disorder and danger & 12 – We value and enjoy our built environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations
VI	Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	In line with available revenue and capital budgets
VII	Consideration at PDSP	None
VIII	Other consultations	None

D1 Terms of Report

Report on activity for period 1 August 2018 to 31 October 2018.

D2 Grounds Maintenance Routine Works

There have been five grass cutting visits within the reporting period completing the grass cutting for the season. Herbicide application on shrub beds and channels/hard areas has also been completed for the year. Work has started on winter maintenance of hedge pruning and the work is about to start on shrub beds. Staff are also reacting to enquiries that come in.

The latest Land Audit Management score for the East area was 67, which is the target score

Grounds Maintenance Enquiries

In total 53 grounds maintenance related enquiries were received and dealt with during this reporting period in 2018.

	2018	2017
Ball Game Enquiries	1	1
Bonfire Enquiries	0	1
Complaint Grounds Maintenance	0	3
Drainage Flooding Grass Areas	1	1
Enforcement Officer Enquiries	7	5
Fencing Enquiries	0	2
Grass Cutting Enquiries	1	4
Grass Cutting Missed Not Cut	1	0
Grass Left on Paths or Roads	0	1
Ground Ownership Enquiries	5	3
Ground Property Vandalised	2	1
Hedge Cutting Enquiries	8	7
Neighbourhood Env Teams	2	0
Public Park Enquiries	3	5
School Grounds Enquiries	1	0
Shrub Bed Enquiries	3	6
Shrub Bed Overhanging Path	11	16
Shrub Beds Obscuring Sightline	0	1
Sports Facility Enquiries	1	1
Sports Pitch Marking Request	1	0
Weeds General Enquiries	3	1
Weeds on Paths or Roads	2	2
Total	53	61

D3 Garden Maintenance Routine Works

There have been five grass cutting cycles completed as well as completing the hedge cutting in the gardens in the ward during the reporting period. This work is carried out by a team of four operatives, who also cover 50% of the gardens included on the scheme across the whole of West Lothian. The Garden Maintenance works for the year have now finished and the seasonal contracts for the garden maintenance staff were ended on 3 November 2018.

Garden Maintenance Enquiries

In total ten garden maintenance related enquiries were received and dealt with during this reporting period in 2018.

	2018	2017
Garden Maintenance General Enquiries	5	7
Garden Maintenance Grass Not Cut	4	4
Garden Maintenance Hedge Cutting	0	1
Garden Maintenance Standard of Cut	1	0
Total	10	12

D4 Cleaner Communities Routine Works

The ward is covered by a mobile cleansing team consisting of five operatives and one compact sweeper. There is a backshift team of three operatives covering school routes, hot spot areas and enquiries throughout West Lothian. There is a reduced level of staff on at the weekend covering West Lothian. We also have two HGV sweepers that cover the whole of West Lothian.

Staff are continuing to deal with enquiries and carry out routine works to remove litter, fly tipping and debris on roads, footpaths and open spaces throughout the ward. Street Cleansing staff resources have now been directed towards leaf clearance throughout West Lothian. Leaves are lifted from footpaths and roadways and target known areas of concern and react to enquiries that come in from the public within available resources.

Cleaner Communities Enquiries

In total 150 cleaner communities related enquiries were received and dealt with during this reporting period in 2018.

	2018	2017
Complaint Street Cleansing	3	0
Dead Animals	5	8
Dog Fouled Grass Open Space	1	4
Dog Fouling on Paths/Roads	12	15
Dog Waste Bin New Request	0	2
Dog Waste Bin Overflowing	1	7
Glass on Paths or Open Spaces	4	3
Graffiti Racist or Offensive	2	0
Illegal Fly Posting	2	0
Illegal Fly Tipping Dumping	56	54
Litter Bin Full/Overflowing	4	3
Litter Bin New Request for Bin	0	1
Litter General Enquiries	5	1
Litter in Grass Open Space	0	2
Litter on Paths Roads Verges	14	9
Needles Syringes Abandoned	0	1
Street Sweeping Enquiries	17	13
Trolleys Abandoned/Dumped	1	0
Trolleys Dumped in Livingston	4	3
Vehicle Abandoned	19	10
Total	150	136

Enforcement Community Action

The team consists of two Senior Enforcement Officers, two Education Engagement Officers and eight Enforcement Officers. They are split into two teams of six officers to cover seven days a week on shifts with one team on shift at a time.

There has been one Fixed Penalty Notice issued for a Fly Tipping Offence and there has been one report submitted to the Procurator Fiscal for non-payment of a dog fouling Fixed Penalty Notice.

Enforcement Officers have attended to all enquiries in relation to various environmental issues within the area, with compliance gained with a number of enquiries with tenants, owners or landowners removing fly tipping following visits by them. Officers have also engaged in partnership working with Almond Housing in relation to Fly Tipping issues within Don Drive, Craigshill. Visits to residents giving verbal warnings and warning letters issued in relation to fly tipping in order to change behaviours following complaints from neighbours.

Abandoned/nuisance vehicles have been dealt with and removed from streets by gaining compliance following negotiation, verbal warnings, warning letters, official notices served or West Lothian Council contractor removal.

Officers have carried out Audits on School Transport Buses and Taxis on behalf of Transport Department and assisted colleagues in Community Learning & Development Youth Services through the positive destinations programme. Officers have also been carrying out neighbour checks, site notice checks and delivering urgent correspondence for the Licencing Department.

Enforcement Team and Education Officers participated in:

- 'Give Your Litter a Lift' national campaign being conducted by Keep Scotland Beautiful.
- Supported Craigshill Neighbourhood Network community clean up
- Education & Engagement Officers have attended community group meetings.
- Dog fouling stencilling and signage done in a number of locations around Mid Calder Primary School
- Took part during September with the Chewing gum action group in a campaign where posters were displayed in local shops and five temporary signs were erected at the roadside throughout West Lothian in relation to disposing of your gum in the bin

D5 Parks and Woodland

In total 59 Parks and Woodland related enquiries were received during this reporting period. 31 Enquiries were inspected with 26 inspections generating no works. 5 Enquiries generated works instructions to programme and 13 Works instructions were completed.

	2018	2017
Tree works completed for period	13	n/a
Tree works outstanding for LAC area	29	n/a
Tree Enquiries not generating works orders	26	n/a
Tree Advice or Consultations	0	1
Tree Affecting Public Utility	0	1
Tree Blocking Light	0	1
Tree Branches Overhanging	15	21
Tree Broken Damaged or Dead	3	0
Tree Conservation Areas	0	1
Tree Dangerous or Unsafe	14	5
Tree Enquiries General	17	14
Tree Leaves Causing Problems	9	1
Tree Roots Causing Problems	1	0
Tree Preservation Orders	0	2
Total	59	47

Tree Preservation Orders (TPO)

Trees and Woodlands contribute to local amenity and the quality of the natural and historic environment. Tree Preservation Orders protect the most important trees in West Lothian from felling, or from works which might damage them.

Trees can form significant local landmarks and provide food and shelter for wildlife. They add to biodiversity and have an important role in mitigating the effects of climate change. They can be protected in a number of ways.

The council can make, manage and enforce Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) under powers set out in section 160 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 and in the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation Order and Trees in Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Regulations 2010 (the 2010 Regulations). Scottish Government Circular 1/2011 Tree Preservation Orders also applies.

In addition to TPOs, trees can be protected by conditions attached to planning approvals.

Trees within conservation areas are not protected in the same way as by a TPO, but if you live in a conservation area and want to carry out works to a tree you will need to inform the council before you do. The council then has six weeks to decide whether to seek any form of protection for the tree.

To clarify the situation, any enquiries regarding trees that are within Conservation Areas or covered by a Tree Preservation Order shall be passed to our colleagues in Planning Services for them to provide any advice.

It is an offence to cut down, lop, top, uproot or wilfully destroy any trees that are protected by a Tree Preservation Order. The maximum penalty for illegal works on a protected tree is £20,000 or twice the amenity value of the tree, whichever is greater.

Any applications to carry out works should be submitted to the Planning Department in the first instance and permission must be received in writing before any work can be undertaken.

For more information please refer to the West Lothian Council web site under Tree Preservation Orders ; - <https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/4247/Tree-Preservation-Orders-TPO>

Ranger Service Update

No. Rights Of Way / Core Path / Patrols carried out (hours)	7
No. Conservation Surveys / Tasks	13
No. Volunteer hours	202
No. Ranger Events	4
No. attendees at Ranger Events	109

'Friends of Almondell' met at Calderwood to cut back some overhanging vegetation, scythe and litter-pick. The group has also been working in Almondell to clear overhanging vegetation and maintain the garden. As well as further sessions in Calderwood Fen to improve SSSI (sites of special scientific interest) condition with SNH (Scottish National Heritage) advice.

Edinburgh Interlopers held a successful public orienteering event in Almondell and Dog's Trust held a day of free micro-chipping.

Local artist Katrina Stewart led a summer holiday craft session making delightful sunny sunflowers. The Ranger Service led a popular 'Bat Walk' to celebrate European Bat Weekend.

Ranger Service facilitated RBS volunteer project – volunteers were very keen to offer morning of help with meadow and woodland management prior to an afternoon of team-building in Almondell.

River Life 'River Rubbish' project working with volunteers to gather resources for planned art works.

Almondell Country Park

Amendments to the grant applications and the felling licence application have been submitted to Forestry Commission Scotland for proposed woodland and public access work proposed for the park. Marking of trees for thinning / felling as part of this work is due to commence.

D6 Open Space and Cemeteries

Cemeteries Routine Works

Autumn routine works which include grass cutting, weed control, leaf lifting, grave reinstatement works, pruning and burial duties ongoing across the cemetery estates.

Cemeteries Enquiries

In total there were six cemeteries related enquiries received and dealt with during this reporting period in 2018.

	2018	2017
Cemeteries General Enquiries	2	5
Complaint Cemeteries & Burials	0	1
Lair Enquiries	3	1
Lair Sunken or Uneven	1	1
Total	6	8

Summer routine works which include grass cutting, weed control, leaf lifting, grave reinstatement works, pruning and burial duties ongoing across the cemetery estates.

Open Space Routine Works

Open Space Capital Programme

Craigspark, Craigshill – The bike track is complete, including signage. The landscaping is yet to bed in – further seeding will take place in spring. Unfortunately there has been some firesetting and a piece of the track has been damaged. We are waiting to hear from the asphalt company how best to repair this.

East Calder Park – The 3G pitch designer has been appointed. They will draw up detailed plans for further community consultation and the Planning Application.

Fraser Park, Pumpherston – Bike track consultations took place on 9th/10th Oct with the Primary School and wider community, with the pump track designer/builder showing designs, answering questions and taking feedback. Construction will be in the New Year.

Marrfield Park, Uphall Station – Outstanding drainage works will now be scheduled for Spring 2019. Recent vehicle damage to the entrance gate and associated tarmac has now been repaired.

Open Space Enquiries

In total there was one open space related enquiries received and dealt with during this reporting period in 2018.

	2018	2017
Play Area Property Vandalised	1	1
Total	1	1

E. CONCLUSION

Work has started on the winter maintenance of hedge pruning and work is about to start on shrub beds.

Enforcement Officers have attended to all enquiries in relation to various environmental issues within the area.

The Open Space Capital Programme is progressing as scheduled.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None

Appendices/Attachments: None

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