

## Report on Neighbourhood Services

The recently produced staff satisfaction survey for the Directorate shows that satisfaction is improving across a range of indicators, and a welcome sign was the doubling in the participation rate by staff in completion of the survey.

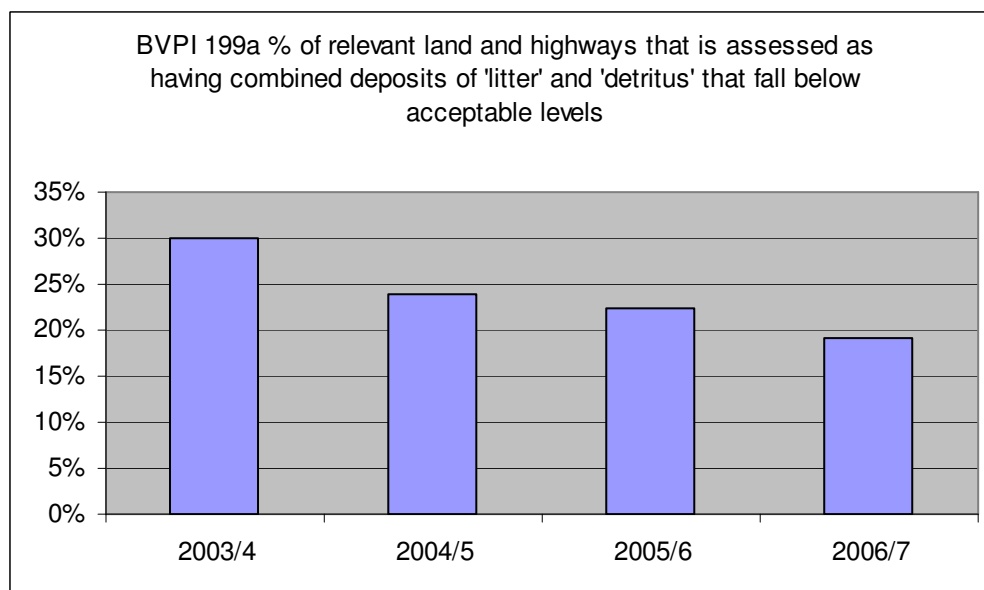
The last year has been very successful overall for the trading accounts of Neighbourhood Services making a surplus of £139k.

We have been working in partnership with Jewsons for a new contract for the supply of materials for building maintenance, which offers the scope for savings in costs, a greater emphasis on environmental sustainable sourcing of materials, and pro-active work to involve local small business in the supply of materials.

It is difficult to summarise the activities of such a diverse directorate and so below are some of the highlights of the work of the teams in Neighbourhood Services.

### Street Environment

York was included in finals of the British Cleaning Council Awards for Clean Cities in March 2007, and has recently been selected to become one of ten local authorities to work with ENCAMS (formerly 'Keep Britain Tidy') later this year on a campaign aimed at reducing fast food related rubbish, and in a separate campaign on tackling smoking litter.

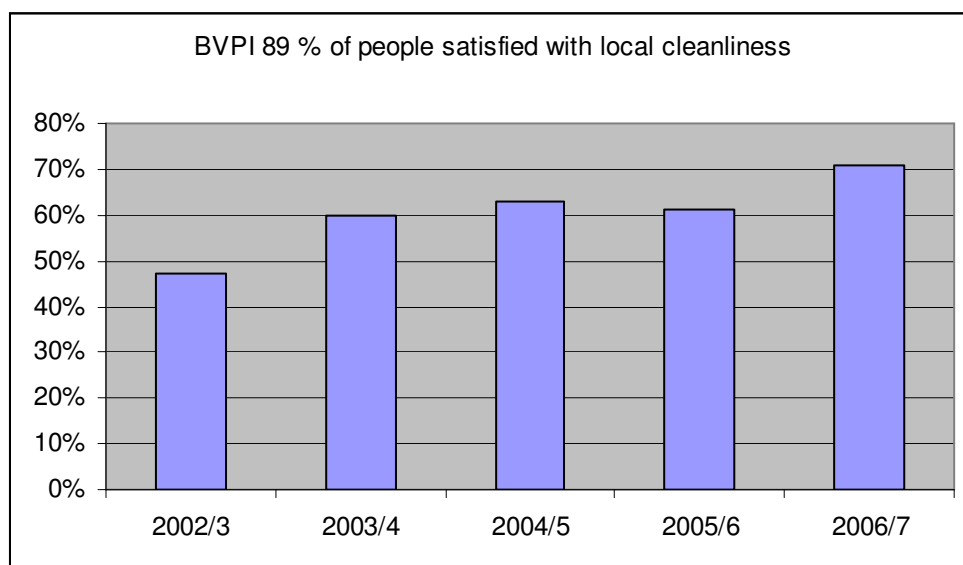


The Best Value indicator BVPI 199 shows continued improvement. The successful pilot of barrow sweeping in the West of York commencing in December 2006 has been rolled out across most parts of the city this Spring and this is already showing further significant improvements in street cleanliness.

A trial of street sweeping in the city centre has been running to ensure that cleaning and litter picking take place until 9pm. This move follows a recent review of the

council's Streetscene service and is utilising staff and equipment at times when the streets are not as busy as they are during the daytime peaks.

It would be remiss in any report regarding street cleaning not to mention the recent MBE that has been bestowed by the Queen on Paul Willey our very own enthusiastic city centre Streetscene Supervisor.



The Street Environment Team also continued to achieve targets in the speed in the removal of graffiti on council owned land and in the removal of fly tips. During the year 95% of abandoned cars were removed within 24 hours of the point at which the council could legally remove them.

### YorkPride campaigns

The public engaged with the York Pride “Spring Clean Campaign” in February and March . May saw the “Red Card for Dog Fouling Campaign”

Over the summer the Neighbourhood Services team will run a “Litters Out” campaign which will build on work in schools with young people to stress the damage caused to the environment by litter, graffiti, and fly posting.

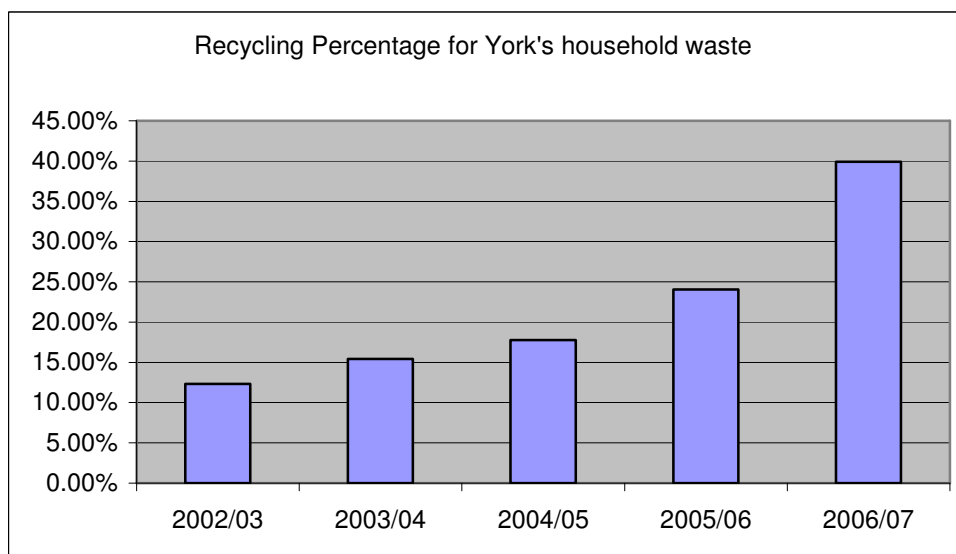
In June and July the Blooming City Campaign will build on the city’s application for Yorkshire in Bloom Competition. Following this will be a campaign to focus on the city centre which receives the heaviest footfall during the peak tourist season to keep the area clean for visitors and residents alike.

Work has gone into preparing the “Feeling safe and being safe in York” and “It’s in your hands, don’t drop it” anti litter campaign and high profile penalty enforcement campaigns which will be run from July to October. Ward committees in July will be offering bike marking to help cut cycle thefts, personal alarms, and property marking

pens. Also thanks to the Energy Efficiency Advice Centre they will be handing out packs of energy efficient lightbulbs at Ward Committee Meetings.

### Improvements in the Recycling rates

The roll out of kerbside cardboard collections to all 60,000 properties on the Alternate Weekly Collection service was completed by March and this has contributed to lifting the annual recycling figure to 39.93%. Thanks to the active support of residents and council staff we are keeping within the landfill tonnage targets set by Government, and avoiding the £150 per tonne fines so far.



Hazel Court Household Waste Recycling Centre continues to perform well, and has recently reached levels of diverting from landfill 71% of waste taken to the site. Satisfaction with the city's three Household Waste Recycling Centres has risen from 67% in 2005/6 to 86% in 2006/07 which shows that the contract with Yorwaste running the sites is running well.

Officers are working with Yorwaste and other companies to assist businesses in the city to recycle more of their waste in a cost effective and operationally efficient manner. The success of the recycling element of the contract with York University has provided useful experience which can be shared with other commercial contracts to provide incentives for recycling which benefit both parties. We are working with the Green Business Club to explore all areas of opportunity for recycling and re-use of waste.

Funding has been agreed by the council to continue to the work of the recycling services provided by the Friends of St Nicholas Field now that some of their grant funding has run out. This had been anticipated as they had approached the council to make us aware of their plans, and possible future liabilities if they were unable to find continued funding.

We are looking at new vehicle technology which facilitates the collection and disposal of kitchen organic waste from the domestic and commercial waste streams.

New vehicles for the green and grey bin collections have arrived, and I am pleased to say that these have Euro-IV engines which will reduce emissions within the city of nitrogen dioxide. One of these (see below) was branded up with the “Recycle Now” design thanks to funding from WRAP and will be a distinctive addition to the fleet.



The department is working on a council wide recycling scheme based on the model in place at the eco-Depot. This is going to start in the Guildhall and Mansion House.

Between 2005/6 and 2006/7 the number of households served by a kerbside recycling collection increased from 71,113 to 76,522 (equal to 92.5% of the total number of household). The proportion of York households getting a collection of two or more recyclables increased from 81.7% to 87.5% in the same period. Work is being developed to increase the coverage still higher.

### Smoke Free Legislation

Due to the impending changes in regulations governing smoking in enclosed public spaces (starting on 1<sup>st</sup> July) the government has provided funding for two temporary “Smoke-Free Officers” to assist with education advice and enforcement of the new legislation. Many businesses and residents have taken up the offer of free advice on the changes and it is hoped that the transition to the new regime will be smooth in York.

### Noise Patrol

The Noise Patrol service continues to be in demand from residents having secured convictions against three residents who had been causing a noise nuisance to their neighbours. In all cases they had received a Noise Abatement Notice before the final

action was taken. Equipment and music collections were seized to demonstrate that the council takes complaints about noise very seriously.

### Neighbourhood Team

Officers are busy developing with ward members Neighbourhood Action Plans to cover all wards in the city . A different approach to residents associations has been started with a large ‘stock taking’ exercise, and the establishment of ‘cluster meetings’ of neighbouring associations.

### Trading Standards and Food Inspection Team

The Trading Standards Team have been very busy in playing their part in “Safe City” and in particular have been tackling rogue traders who prey upon the most vulnerable members of society in York. Many York businesses received a “Responsible Retailer Award” in March to show that they were keen to take on board their responsibilities not to sell alcohol to those under the legal age.

The Food and Safety team have recently been taking the food safety message out to the public as part of the national Food Safety Week, and advising residents how they can avoid food poisoning in the warm weather we hope to have this summer.

### Carbon Management

As the sponsor of the Carbon Management Programme I look forward to working with members to progress the council’s plans to reduce our own carbon emissions right across the authority.

### Air Quality

Progress is being made on a new air quality website which will give the public direct access to local air quality data. This is due to be launched in the autumn.

Cllr Andrew Waller  
Executive Member for Neighbourhoods , June 2007