



fascinating



memorable

HOW ARE WE DOING?

As an organisation we actively monitor our projects and key corporate performance measures. This report has been developed to outline the progress we have made towards delivering our priorities during the first half of 2013/14.

Autumn 2013



STAMFORD • GRANTHAM • BOURNE • THE DEEPINGS

Stamford Georgian Festival

Thousands attend Stamford Georgian Festival.

During the last weekend of September 2013 thousands of people attended Stamford's Georgian Festival over three days against the backdrop of wonderful sunshine.

Over 40 talks, recitals, shows, tours, rides, and a famous re-enactment of the bull run combined to make it a weekend to remember thanks to partnership working with Stamford Town Council, Burghley House, Shademakers, New College and Cummins Generator Technologies.

The festival's busiest day on Saturday saw thousands follow the wooden bull through the town to a spectacular ceremonial burning on the town's Meadows. Traders embraced the spirit of the event by dressing in costume of the period and volunteers made sure the weekend ran smoothly.

Sunday enjoyed the same perfect weather, attracting hundreds to watch a Georgian style cricket match, and other events including a Georgian tea dance.

"We were very encouraged by the numbers of people that both attended and supported the weekend".

Cllr Frances Cartwright

Cllr Frances Cartwright, SKDC's portfolio holder for Grow the Economy, said some traders experienced record profits.

"Our aim is to drive tourism to Stamford and South Kesteven and we feel this was another positive step towards that goal which has boosted business and also left people with some great memories".

"It's fantastic the town attracted such numbers. The feedback we've had from retailers, many of whom got into the spirit of the weekend and dressed up, certainly reflects it was a great weekend".

"We'd like to thank the residents of Stamford for their support on all three days and the visitors who made the effort to attend."

Facts:

- 22,182 recorded footfall on the Saturday this is 40% increase on a normal Saturday
- 2,509 tickets sold for ticketed shows and events
- Approximately 500 people watched the cricket match on the Sunday
- Stamford Town Hall saw more than 1,000 visitors wanting to view their ancient memorabilia this exceeded expectations
- 40 talks, recitals and shows took place over the 3 day event ■



The Mallard comes to Grantham

It was full steam ahead when residents, rail enthusiasts and the public in general turned out in their thousands for Mallard – the story of speed which for one weekend only, saw the world’s fastest steam locomotive return to Grantham.

Working in partnership with Lincolnshire County Council, Carrillion PLC, Pinza and local heritage voluntary groups, the weekend celebrated the 75th anniversary of the rail speed record broken by the A4 Class steam locomotive just south of the town.....a record which still stands today.

The festival, at the beginning of September, gave visitors the chance to get a close up of the steam icon as well as a Deltic locomotive – Mallard’s high speed diesel successor – plus streamlined racing cars of the 1930’s (which inspired the Mallard’s design) and examples of Grantham’s engineering heritage.

There were many other attractions including a replica of a 1930’s carriage interior, miniature train rides, vintage bus travel and local heritage society displays as well as children’s rides and food. The festival's spirit continued for much of September at The George Centre in the town when a pop up LNER shop showing exhibits and regalia of Grantham station's past.

Facts:

- Actual footfall in the town centre on the Saturday was 21,253
- Footfall increased by 20% on the Saturday compared to a normal trading Saturday
- 15,000 people over two days visited the Mallard at Grantham train station ■

Traders told us that they had a really good business day.



Shop Front Improvement Scheme Giving our towns a facelift

Shops across South Kesteven have been given much-needed makeovers thanks to SKDC's shop front regeneration scheme.

The aim of the scheme is to improve the overall appearance of our retail areas whilst at the same time retaining and enhancing the character of our town centres.

The grant, for up to a 75% of eligible costs, covers new shop fronts, repainting, repair and reinstatement of frontage especially original features. The remaining 25% is sourced by the applicant.

So far the scheme has been open to businesses in Bourne and Grantham but has now extended to include Stamford and Market Deeping. We have recently been successful in a bid to secure funding from English Heritage, which has enabled us to extend this further to businesses within Grantham town centre.

We have a full allocation of applications to be approved.

Facts:

Number of applications received and awaiting final approval for 2013/14 scheme

- Stamford: 3
- Market Deeping: 2
- English Heritage extension to Grantham town centre: 5



After

Before

Green Waste Service 2013

This is our second year providing a chargeable green waste service and despite the slow start due to the extreme cold weather, we have seen an increase of the number of customers who have chosen to rejoin the scheme.

More than 13,000 existing green waste customers were contacted by email for the first time as part of our bid to encourage residents to rejoin their garden waste service for 2013/14. Online method of payment was also available to our customers.



Facts:

- 7.9% increase compared to 2012
- Charges held for 2013 at £25
- 26,087 customer bought into the service
- 578 new customers
- 1,444 new green bins purchased by customers
- Almost back to pre-charge membership of 27,000

Green Flag status in our Parks

Wyndham Park Grantham awarded Green Flag status second successive year



Following the annual assessment of Wyndham Park by Green Flag judges the park was awarded Green Flag status for the second successive year.

The council and its grounds maintenance partner had to demonstrate continuous improvement to retain the award, including making sure it is a welcoming place, healthy, safe and secure, clean and well maintained.

It also had to tick all the boxes on grounds of sustainability, community involvement, being marketed correctly and on its overall management.

“A Green Flag flying overhead is a sign to visitors that the space boasts the highest possible standards, is beautifully maintained and has excellent facilities and we’re proud Wyndham Park has these qualities.”

Round Optimisation

During May and June we carried out a review of our waste collection routes to help us meet the growing demand of the increasing households in the district.

These changes were designed to meet a number of improvements to operational arrangements including making the most efficient use of our vehicles and fuel but also to allow for past and future growth in the district.

This also allowed for changes to our disposal and recycling arrangements to be improved.

From July, 1,600 homes out of 61,000 in the district incurred a change in collection day, which also highlighted the need to increase our rounds from 12 to 14. We wrote to the households that were affected by these changes. No service issues were experienced.

We are now in a position that we can support residential growth across the district up to 2017.



Sustaining and improving our neighbourhoods

We took the opportunity to participate in a national project which was facilitated by the Chartered Institute of Housing and involved social housing providers to consider how best to secure a successful and sustainable future for our neighbourhoods.

The approach consisted of a number of simple concepts:

- understanding at the neighbourhood level the issues that impact on neighbourhood management
- resident satisfaction and to improve
- recognising the involvement in the neighbourhood by other agencies and residents
- understanding the resources available and how best they can be utilised to secure a thriving future to protect investment in the neighbourhood

The Earlesfield area in Grantham was used as a pilot neighbourhood the first 'neighbourhood improvement plan' is currently in development. Once finalised, it is intended that the plan will inform our actions and interventions to provide a methodology for us to use.

Taking part in the national project and working with other housing providers, has enabled us to share good practice and build a network of contacts. The key outcome of taking part will ensure a more rigorous and methodical approach to neighbourhood management and an improved communication with our residents with a view to being able to demonstrate improved performance and resident satisfaction.

The intention is that this approach will be rolled out across the district.

Housing Strategies and policies

We have undertaken a review of key housing strategies and policies; ensuring that we take account of all our statutory responsibilities and changes in legislation so that we can best serve the future housing needs of people living in our area.

A Housing Strategy was agreed following consultation it sets out our housing ambitions and priorities for the next five years. There are four strategic priorities within the strategy:

- High quality new affordable homes available to buy or rent
- Improved housing standards across the district and for all tenures
- Access to housing and wellbeing services
- Promotion of sustainable neighbourhoods and communities.

Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy

We talked to and listened to feedback from members, residents and stakeholders when putting together our Tenancy Strategy and Policy.

The Tenancy strategy provides information on tenure types, demand and affordability together with our expectations of what we expect to be taken into account when deciding the nature of tenancies to be granted. This strategic guidance is designed to ensure that best use is made of all available social housing in our area.

To support the strategy a Tenancy policy has been developed in response. The policy provides information on matters including:

- Tenancy types and duration
- Paying rent
- Tenancy reviews
- Succession rights
- Mutual Exchanges.



Subsequently a delivery plan has now been developed and is being monitored through our Housing Steering Board.

Our Allocations Policy has also been reviewed as part of the programme. This policy sets out the basis on which housing applications and transfer requests will be assessed and prioritised for the purpose of allocating available council housing and making nominations to other registered providers of social housing in our area. Based on need, the policy provides information on acceptance criteria, about the housing register (waiting list) and about the prioritisation of applications.

During the review we replaced the system of prioritisation based on 'points' with a system based on 'banding'; introducing an 'emergency' band and bands 1 – 4.

New supporting literature has been produced; guidance and staff training undertaken. Further related communications was also delivered using key messages to applicants and the various other stakeholders.

Unlocking our potential

We believe SKDC is a great place to work and with the Unlocking our Potential programme we have seen many improvements for both our customers and staff. Now we want to be a top employer and the best council in the country.

We are ambitious and have a strong delivery on our priorities. We want everyone to be part of this so we have produced our People Strategy to make sure we offer the best support to all staff, opportunities to develop and be involved and activities to look after well being.

The Unlocking our Potential brand is widely recognised by staff throughout the council and has been a catalyst for change. We now have an embedded set of values through the introduction of the Behavioural Framework so that everyone understands what is expected of them and in turn how they are supported.

We have almost completed our Customer Access Strategy which explains how we should interact and communicate with customers and how customers in turn access our services.

Through the performance appraisal process we monitor and support the performance of all individual members of staff through personal development reviews (PDR's), 1 to 1's and regular team meetings. This is clearly linked to the council's priorities and values and staff have access to support and development.

We are also committed to ensuring our staff have the right skills so that they can achieve our priority aspirations. By means of the Learning and Development programme as well as on the job skills development and coaching, all staff will be equipped and developed as the business demands.

The brand remains strong and has successfully permeated into the SK culture through the implementation of the People Strategy to support a high performing workforce.



We are ambitious and have a strong focus on delivering our priorities.

We want everyone to be a part of this.

ICT base Review

Earlier in the year a review was undertaken of our key customer facing applications to enable senior managers to have informed and clear strategic discussions around future ICT system requirements of services and the council as a whole.

This report was based on a simple Red, Amber or Green status taking into account various factors. This provided us with a health check for each of our key operating systems.

Some development and efficiency opportunities have been highlighted and aligned with our emerging Customer Access Strategy and Agile Working approach to give us a clearer picture of the future.

This document is also being used as part of the updated ICT Strategy which is being developed. We have factual information on licences and contracts of varying description, a greater understanding of our systems and what is available in the market place and opportunities to simplify and update our system portfolio.



Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE)

During September 2012 the council adopted the South Kesteven District Council Civil Enforcement Off-Street Parking Places Order 2012 as a result of changes to legislation.

We joined forces with seven authorities and Lincolnshire County Council to deliver on and off street enforcement in a consistent way. Illegal parking is now a civil offence not a criminal offence. This applies equally to on and off

street parking. A contractor now administers the enforcement of parking fines in SK off street car parks on our behalf.

We also considered how local residents felt about the changes and listened to their views. Members recognised the need to address these in the Car parking Strategy under resident parking schemes. Working groups were set up to look at parking in each of our main towns and extensive consultation took place. A permanent residents parking permit is currently being developed.

There has also been a change in parking behaviour as a result of the new enforcement arrangements which has resulted in changes in income levels to the council. We continue to listen and monitor customer feedback as a result of the changes along with building on the lessons learned during the transitional arrangements.

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How do we measure success?

As well as our projects which you have read about in the first part of this report, we also monitor a set of performance measures that help us to determine whether we are on target to deliver our priority outcomes.


Performance overall up to the end of September has remained steady.

Grow the Economy

Performance has seen improvements across all the measures for this priority especially footfall in our key towns and the percentage of planning applications approved. We have introduced two new measures that monitor our car park usage.




	Code & PI Description	Quarter 1 2013 April -June		Quarter 2 2013 July - Sept		Annual Target 2013/14	Have we improved	Performance Summary
		Results	Target	Results	Target			
	SK 433 Percentage of planning applications approved	92.5		93.1		Data only measure/s - target/s have not been set	Y	The percentage of applications where planning permission was granted has remained unchanged at between about 91% and 93% for the last 6 months. Historically, this authority approves more than the national average, which was 89% granted over this period.
	SK 482 Percentage of retail units in town centres that are occupied	91%		93.2%			Y	The occupancy of retail units in our four main towns has overall improved by 2.2%. •Grantham occupancy increased to 88.3% •Stamford is 98.2% •Bourne has increased to 92.7% •Market Deeping is 92.4%
	SK 485 Total footfall within key shopping areas	61,050		66,935			Y	This measure is a snapshot of footfall within our key shopping areas. Overall we have seen an 8.8% increase compared April 2013; •Grantham was down by 2.6% •Bourne saw an increase of 22.5% •Stamford saw an increase of 14.8% •The Deepings saw an increase of 29.2%
	SK 624 Number of car park tickets sold : duration of under 2 hours	24,388		30,645				Since the introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement in December 2012. We have been closely monitoring the income levels in our off street car parks. There has been a noticeable change of parking behaviour particularly in Stamford. One and two hour parking bays are now freely available on street at no cost and therefore we have introduced these two new indicators to track the pattern of behaviour between the under and over 2 hour ticket sales.

Scrutiny Committee Report

	Code & PI Description	Quarter 1 2013 April -June		Quarter 2 2013 July - Sept		Annual Target 2013/14	Have we improved	Performance Summary
		Results	Target	Results	Target			
	SK 625 Number of car park tickets sold : duration of over 2 hours	21,105		26,491		Data only measure/s - target/s have not been set		As above


Support good housing for all

Overall performance of this priority is mixed both measures relating to new homes are experiencing results below expectation these are unfortunately dependant on housing developers building new homes. We have introduced a new measure around households on our housing register that are being assessed as having a housing need.

	Code & PI Description	Quarter 1 2013 April -June		Quarter 2 2013 July - Sept		Annual Target 2013/14	Have we improved	Performance Summary
		Results	Target	Results	Target			
	NI 155 Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)	18	25	31	50	100	Y	During the last quarter an additional 13 affordable homes have been completed (10 rent;3 shared equity). This is in line with the development programmes for those affordable housing schemes currently on site.
	NI 154 Number net additional homes provided	151		251		Data only measure/s - target/s have not been set	N	The number of completions recorded in September (28) was below the monthly apportioned target figure (57). Overall the cumulative total of completions is 27% below target figure expected for this point in the year.
	SK 623 Number of households on the councils housing register assessed as having a housing need.			936				This new measure was introduced at the end of quarter two. 44% of housing applicants were classed as requiring housing need. This is determined by the guidance given in our Allocations Policy.


Keep SK clean, green and healthy

Performance measures are showing a good results versus target.

	Code & PI Description	Quarter 1 2013 April - June		Quarter 2 2013 July - Sept		Annual Target 2013/14	Have we improved	Performance Summary
		Results	Target	Results	Target			
	NI 192 Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	52.4%	50%	50.8%	50%	50%	N	To improve performance we have launched an education campaign to target high contamination areas across the district. We have started by distributing leaflets reminding our residents of what can and cannot be placed in each of our bins, billboard advertisements have also been used to deliver our key messages on “together we can be a recycling champion”. We will continue to target all areas until contamination is at a minimum level.





Promote leisure, arts and culture

Performance is continuing to improve with high numbers of people visiting our leisure centres.

	Code & PI Description	Quarter 1 2013 April - June		Quarter 2 2013 July - Sept		Annual Target 2013/14	Have we improved	Performance Summary
		Results	Target	Results	Target			
	SK 453 Number of visits through our leisure centres	209,547	187,500	425,085	375,000	750,000	Y	Leisure Connection has increased their emphasis on sales and marketing and this is driving up footfall across the centres. Their sales and promotional offers particularly the £19.99 monthly membership fees have been particularly successful and the figures reflect this.

Well run council

Performance overall for this priority has been mixed. Our abandoned call rate being over target we have reviewed and improved our process. Working days lost to sickness has shown signs that performance is beginning to worsen we are working with services that are experiencing these issues to prevent further decline.

	Code & PI Description	Quarter 1 2013 April - June		Quarter 2 2013 July - Sept		Annual Target 2013/14		Performance Summary
		Results	Target	Results	Target			
	SK 610 Percentage of calls that are abandoned within all core customer contact centre's	5%	5%	7%	5%	5%	N	Overall performance of all our core customer contact centre's abandoned calls are currently 2% above target of 5%. Further investigation found that each contact centre had different processes. This has now been resolved and all calls received are held in a queue and given the same options at the same point in all of our contact centres.
	SK 144 Projected number of Working Days Lost Due to Sickness Absence	8.43	10.00	9.44	10.00	10.00	N	During the first half of the year we have seen a steady increase in the number of working days lost due to sickness. Services that have the highest level sickness have been proactively managing the issues using: •Management tools •Health checks •Sharing performance data within team
	SK 534 Number of Complaints received	29		22		Data only measure/s - target/s have not been set	Y	During the first half of the year we have seen a steady flow of feedback which we monitor closely. All feedback received is dealt with in accordance to our customer feedback procedures.
	SK 582 Number of compliments received	21		30			Y	



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