

Quality Living in South Kesteven

Looking after where we all live

Our progress September 2010



Your council working for you

Looking after where we all live

So far this year we have reported on our Customer First theme in September this second report, is looking at how we are progressing towards the actions that we set out in our Quality Living theme report.

The aim of our Quality Living theme is to create an attractive and sustainable environment for the community to enjoy, with a street scene that is green, clean, safe and well-maintained.

As well as planning for the future, it is important that we look at what already has been achieved. We constantly monitor our achievements which helps us to measure how well we are doing and strive to make a valued difference to lives of local people with the services we provide.

The following sets out our projects, successes and what we plan to do next. Many of the projects have been influenced by the comments and contributions we have received from our customers, which we always welcome.

The aims of our Quality Living priority theme are:

- Reduced Environmental impact of waste disposal
- Reduced level of carbon emissions in the community
- Protection of local communities from the adverse effects of severe weather events
- Stronger communities with clean and safe places to live
- Development of a range of housing to meet the needs of all residents
- Improved health and well-being and encouragement of healthy lifestyle choices



What we achieved April – September 2010

Reduced environmental impact of waste disposal – aim to achieve 55% recycling/composing of household waste by March 2011

We do this by being clear about the service standards we aspire to achieve in waste management and recycling and to promote and encourage householders to manage their waste in a more sustainable manner.

Project	Progress	What next
To deliver ongoing education campaigns to raise resident's awareness of waste minimization and the opportunities to re-use and recycle waste.	We are working with schools to explain to children the importance of recycling and how we use our black and silver bins. We have been actively promoting recycling through the delivery of community events as well as several features in SK Today.	We will continue to encourage people to use the service and direct even more waste away from landfill by working on "A Love food hate waste" campaign to help our residents to save approximately £50 per month by helping them to cut down their food waste which will result in diverting their waste from landfill. The Christmas issue of sktoday will feature an article on the "Love food hate waste" campaign.
Support the delivery of objectives detailed in the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Lincolnshire.	We are working to ensure that our policies are in line with our County wide partner groups and that we provide collection and disposal of waste in a cost effective way.	The collection rounds are currently being reviewed to improve efficiency and support the introduction of Lincolnshire County Councils energy from waste plan in 2013. We will continue to monitor the best ways of working in the future.

We're making a difference.....

- 54.2% of households waste has been recycled, reused or composted so far this year
- So far 44.6% of the district now have a green waste collection
- Our waste crews make 72,295 refuse/green collections per week

We're working on.....

- Encouraging people to throw less food waste away and save money
- Explore kerbside collection of batteries
- Improving the efficiency of our waste collection services
- Reviewing the use of on-street litter bins to encourage people to recycle even more waste.



Reduced level of carbon emissions in the community and protection of local communities from the adverse effects of severe weather events

We do this by working with our partners across the county to look at the increasing risks being placed on our daily lives and put in place a policy to ensure we can effectively adapt the way we live over the coming decades. We aim to do all we can to plan and prepare for severe weather events and protect and promote wildlife habitats in our area.

Project	Progress	What next
Work with our public sector partners to develop a Climate Change Strategy for Lincolnshire.	South Kesteven has prepared a draft local action plan highlighting actions that residents and businesses can do to reduce carbon emissions. We are also working with Lincolnshire County Council and other partners groups to develop a long term strategy for the whole County.	The aim of the strategy is to provide a joined up approach across the county to understand all of the major risks and more local issues as well.
Develop and implement a local climate change action plan to encourage our communities to reduce CO ₂ emissions.	To assess the present level of CO ₂ emissions, we have been gathering information from lots of different sources, for example, community road shows held over the last 6 months. This information has helped us to build an action plan for the future.	The action plan will provide residents and businesses with details on what guidance is available to help the environment and reduce energy costs. It will also sign post advice organisations such as the Energy Saving Trust.
Embed climate change adaptation into Council service plans and policies. Work with other Councils and partners to identify severe weather risks and responses to priority areas.	Adaptation is the planning process that is happening now to enable us to deal with the changes that are already happening to the climate. We are required to collect data and report progress to central Government, so it is important that it is a consideration in everything we do.	We are working with Lincolnshire County Council, other Councils and agencies to identify key risks for Lincolnshire and are planning for flood and heat wave events.
Identification and protection of existing habitats and potential new	To allow us to protect these special areas, we are currently seeking expertise that can provide this	Our aim is to survey existing and potential sites of interest across the district.

We're making a difference.....

- In a recent community mapping process carried out in partnership with the Environment Agency 70% of adults with in the district agreed with the statement "I personally can help to limit the effects of climate change"

We're working on.....

- Over the last year Stamford transition town movement has been slowly gathering pace. They are following the national template for the transitions town movement (<http://www.transitiontowns.org/> (definition: a town striving to develop a higher standard of living and an environmentally friendly future)). They have recently held their "grand unleashing" week long event at the Arts Centre in Stamford, which involved informing local residents all about the projects they are working on, recruiting more volunteers and gaining the backing of local businesses

Stronger communities with clean and safe places to live

Our aim is to build a strong, safe South Kesteven where everyone feels included. Through our efforts in the community safety teams, leisure and cultural services, housing services and other partners including the police and health services, we have been involved in different types of projects to promote to communities how to improve their neighbourhoods.

Project	Progress	What next
Work in partnership with parish and town councils to maximize levels of street cleanliness.	We are presently in touch with parish councils across the district, to assess demand for the introduction of 2 new ride path sweepers. We hope that developing these partnerships will enable parish Councils to enhance street cleaning in their neighbourhoods.	Once we have received all of the responses from parish councils the demand and resource will be analysed and the programme promoted locally.
Work with the police and other partners to raise awareness about activity being carried out to deal with crime and anti-social behavior across the district.	South Kesteven is actively working with Lincolnshire Police and the community to raise the profile of crime initiatives (CCTV, Neighbourhood watch, Shop watch, pub watch and street pastors). We feel it is important to have a unified approach with our partners, so that community confidence is raised. A recent success was the 'University Square' clear up, which helped to promote a clean and safe environment for the local community. We are planning post event meetings to work with local people to build on this success.	Our communication team is putting together a community questionnaire for use at community events. We will continue to work with our partners to raise community confidence by raising awareness of achievements.
Work with partners to provide a series of events showcasing cultural	Grantham has a changing population and through Community Cohesion projects we are building strong	We have planned to participate in several new projects from Autumn 2010 including:

traditions and providing opportunities for people from diverse groups to learn more about each other. This will include the delivery of a multi cultural event and a range of arts activities.

relationships and equality in our communities. Our creation of 'Flash dance' during the Grantham and Stamford carnivals proved to be a great success. This choreographed dance involving 200 people from local communities was recorded and made available on DVD. We also produced a DVD involving young people from diverse backgrounds; this has now been shown to many audiences and is very well received in schools. The Council is working with youth and community groups as well as national agencies which enable communities to improve their own neighbourhoods, for example, through community grant funding.

- "Keep Safe" a project which establishes safe zones for people with learning difficulties
- International family support group – this pilot is funded by SKDC
- Multi Cultural Network for the south of the district
- "First Contact" which supports the over 60's, helping them to live independently

We will continue to support community and youth projects through proactive contact with schools, Grantham College, partners and agencies.

We're making a difference.....

- To reduce the number of assaults with serious injuries. Current figures indicate that we have reduced this to 2.20 per 1,000 population this year compared to the same period last year when we reported 2.79 per 1,000 population
- In a recent "public confidence" survey carried out by the Lincolnshire Police 56.8% of residents in South Kesteven agreed that "the Police and local council are dealing with the anti social behavior and crime issues that matter to this area" compared to previous results of 52.2%

We're working on.....

- Making partnerships work more efficiently. For example the Community Safety and Licensing Team are conducting training courses on Disorder and Anti Social Behaviour which includes and involves our partners such as the Police
- Combining our efforts with other organisations to tackle anti-social behaviour (in all its forms) in your neighbourhoods – working together to get things done. We call this 'Hot Streets'.
- As the festive season approaches the community safety team will be using the drug testing equipment on entry to pubs and clubs, they will also be helping club owners by providing drug mapping and advice.



The development of a range of housing to meet the needs of all residents

We are all more conscious, these days, of the need to make savings and of the technology that is available to build and heat homes. We aim to support our community housing needs by helping residents adapt their homes to maintain their independence and to make homes decent.

Project	Progress	What next
Engage with developer and registered social landlords to deliver a minimum of 150 affordable homes in the district and ensure that we have policies in place to allow us to deliver more in the future.	134 new affordable housing units have been delivered to date and the anticipated delivery schedule of several affordable housing schemes across the District should ensure that the target of 150 new affordable homes this year will be met.	Through our proactive relationships with housing providers and parish council, we will continue to undertake housing needs surveys to assess the level of need in the area. We also assess the supply and location of potential sites for affordable housing for our communities.
Review how we can assist householders on improving energy efficiency of their homes.	Our research is now completed and a draft report has been produced to identify areas of focus. In September 2010 we also adopted the Lincolnshire Affordable Warmth Strategy.	Through a targeted campaign which outlines availability of free or low cost energy efficiency improvements, free energy advice and possible financial assistance to improve properties. We will be using mail shots, website, radio adverts, presentations to groups and stands in local shopping centres to engage with our local communities.
Provide advice and where appropriate, grant assistance to improve the condition or fuel efficiency of at least 260 privately owned homes each year.	176 households have received assistance in the first 6 months of the financial year.	We will be continuing with the Council's Better, Warmer Homes campaign offering free property surveys and possible grants to improve homes and to reduce such things as excess cold.
Deliver a programme of	We are in the process of delivering a number of	We will continue to deliver improvements to heating, kitchens and

improvement work to SKDC 's own housing stock to ensure they meet the Decent Home Standard and improve the average SAP rating of the council-owned housing stock from 5 to 66.	improvement programmes working towards raising property standards for residents. The improvements also include insulation improvements which save energy costs for tenants and help the environment. We are also trialing under floor insulation in 2 properties. The SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure) is a figure for valuing the energy efficiency of a dwelling. The Council have currently installed loft insulation into 608 properties, carried out 284 boiler replacements and installed 9 ground source heat pumps, which have been completed in order to increase the SAP rating.	bathrooms through the remainder of the financial year.
Pilot renewable energy technology initiatives in Council owned housing stock to inform our future investment programmes.	Our aim is to install ground source and air source heat pumps into 16 of our properties this year. We have also installed energy efficient boilers in some of our Bourne properties and are about to commence installation at some Stamford properties. This will benefit tenants in terms of reliability and energy costs.	We are planning to install Solar heating panels to a sheltered housing scheme early in 2011 as part of a trial for future improvements to our properties. This installation is for 4 solar panels to be fitted to the roof at a sheltered housing scheme, which will serve 9 homes including communal facilities. These panels will provide year round hot water with boiler back up as and when required. We will continue to look at ways in which we can make improvements to our properties.
Adapt a minimum of 700 homes to enable disabled or older people to live independently each year by March 2012.	We have adapted 160 council owned properties so far this year, which has enabled older people to live more independently in their own homes. In addition to this we have completed 39 private sector disabled facilities grants and approved 30 others. This is helping people to adapt their home to suit their individual needs.	We have an ongoing commitment to assist disabled residents live independently in their own homes. Our aim is to continue to work with the occupational therapy service and the Lincolnshire Home Improvement Agency to deliver adaptations for eligible households via mandatory disabled facilities grants within our district.

We're making a difference.....

- We have, so far, adapted 199 homes across the district to enable disabled or older people to live independently.
- 287 additional new homes have been completed so far this year within the district of which 134 are affordable homes.
- We joined the Home Energy Lincolnshire Partnership (HELP) scheme at the beginning of September; so far we have made 82 direct referrals to the scheme in addition to those that have been given the freephone telephone number. We have already completed 40 installations of cavity wall and/ or loft insulation since the scheme began.

We're working on.....

- We have identified the most fuel poor areas in the District for the HELP scheme so that assessors can visit residents on a street by street basis. This means that insulation is offered to those households most in need, at either reduced prices or for free where eligible.
- We are continuing to approach community groups and parish councils to promote energy efficiency and the HELP scheme, as well as Decent Homes grants.
- Providing guidance to local communities, developers and affordable housing providers on our approach to the affordable housing delivery throughout the production of the Supplementary Planning Document

Improved health and well-being and encouragement of healthy lifestyle choices

As a Council, we are striving to support residents and businesses in their lifestyle choices and provide information or give details of other agencies that can help improve the quality of our day to day lives.

Project	Progress	What next
Deliver on behalf of the Primary Care Trust (and other partners) a range of initiatives to tackle health and obesity	We have supported walks in three priority wards in Grantham and have more than 100 patient referrals as well as working with partners in the SKDC Fit Kids campaign.	We are planning an expansion of the exercise on the referral scheme and working on a range of community based projects to improve diet and nutrition: • Continuation of “Fit Kids” aimed at young children • Working on a project funded by “County Health and Well Being” to create 2 community gardens in Grantham to encourage residents to grow fruit & vegetables
Deliver targeted advice to food business with one star or less	We are taking a proactive approach and helping businesses to improve standards. This action has resulted in improved standards when re-scoring has taken place.	We are continuing a programme of accelerated revisits to premises scoring poorly so that advice, guidance and where necessary speedy enforcement and improvement of standards can be effected. In addition we continue to offer rescoring of businesses for a fee and at their request before the next due date for rescoring would normally occur. Such rescoring visits are unannounced and enable businesses to improve their rating.
Promote the opportunities for residents to take part in leisure activities provided in the Council’s leisure centres and cultural facilities and develop a county wide Cultural Strategy.	We work closely with schools and regularly review funding opportunities. The securing of funding for some activity types has enhanced the range of facilities that we have been able to offer. As a result more residents have benefitted, for example, an Inclusive Fitness Initiative which has provided	We are in continued discussions with West Grantham Federation with a view to ongoing weekday use of facilities Whilst the Government’s free swimming initiative has now ceased, we are working in partnership with Leisure Connection to continue to support residents who requested membership to the scheme. We

additional facilities at Stamford and Grantham Leisure Centres via Grant Funding obtained in conjunction with Lincolnshire Sports Partnership.

As a Council, we have been working with Lincolnshire County Council to agree a County wide Cultural Strategy.

are continuing to explore all funding opportunities for the benefit of our local communities.

We're making a difference.....

- We have reduced the number of food businesses with 1 star rating or less by 51%
- 75% of all food businesses in the district have received a 4 star rating or above
- Since April the facilities in our Leisure Centres have been used 292,000 times
- By providing a season of 5 concerts entitled "Music in Quiet Places" which were held in village churches. We also part fund the Lincolnshire Rural Touring scheme which enabled 12 theatre companies to put on performances in village halls across the district

We're working on.....

- A project funded by the "County Health and Well Being" fund to promote the growing of fruit and vegetables in community gardens, homes and schools. Also providing advice on diet and nutrition
- Providing training online for people working in local food businesses



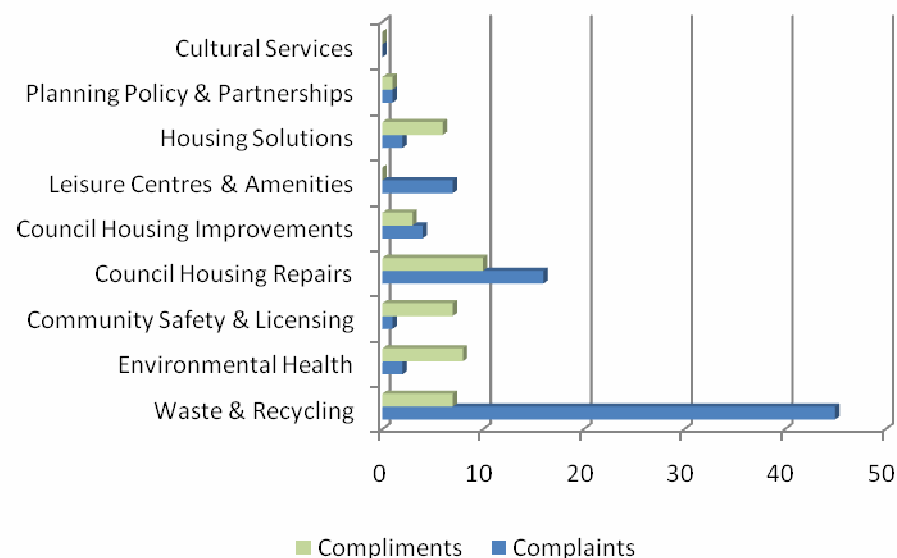
Customer Feedback

Listening to our customers is at the heart of what we do. We always try to get things right first time. However, we appreciate this doesn't always happen. We welcome comments from our residents so we address the things that are most important to them.

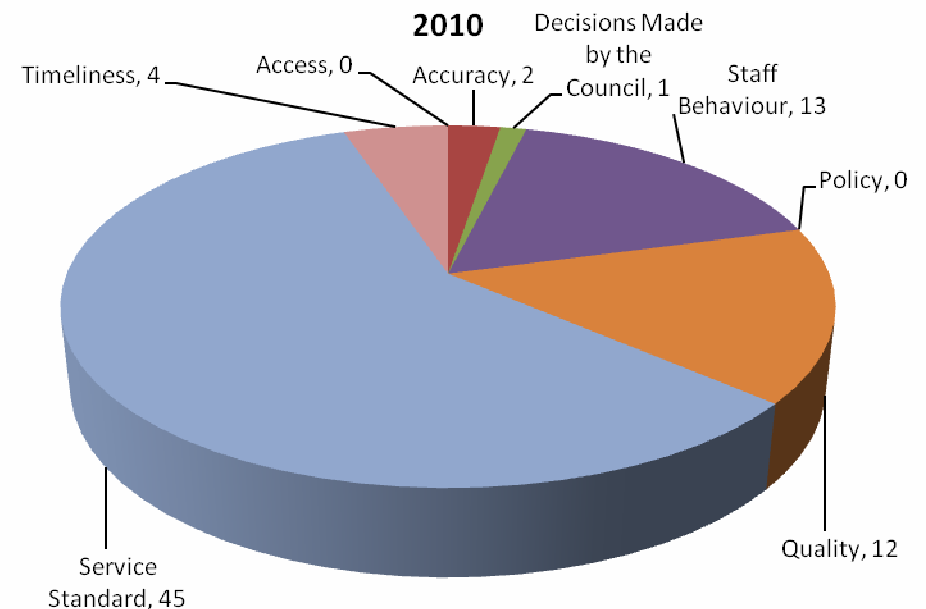
During the 3 months from July to September we received 78 customer complaints and 42 compliments in our services that work towards Quality Living. We will use your comments to try and improve our services.

The actual numbers of complaints received by our Waste and Recycling team appear higher than the average received by other service teams. However, when analysed the majority of complaints received relate to "missed bins" this is 0.03% of the 72,295 collections that take place every week across the district.

Complaints & Compliments received from July to September 2010



Complaints by type received from July to September



Customers told us:

- About the lack of advice and information available on what to do on the death of a council tenant. We have tackled this by working with the customer to produce an advice leaflet that is appropriate and understandable, this is now available.
- One of our customers told us how we had provided a "professional, efficient and courteous service" when resolving a drainage issue.
- "I would like to say a grateful thank you. The grounds maintenance workmen did a good job. I have lived here for 17 years and have always found our council very kind and helpful."
- "The support and help I received from all areas of SKDC has been absolutely outstanding and I would like to sincerely thank everybody. Wonderful, caring and sympathetic staff who helped me through a very difficult situation with the utmost of ease."

Priorities, actions and performance

This is our second report of the year focusing on our Quality Living theme, the next report which will be due February/March 2011 will look at the progress we have made on our Good for Business priority theme.

