

Portfolio Holder update 23rd January 2024

Happy New Year to one and all. This year was a first for me, as I decided to have a New Year's resolution. From 1st January, I was going to cut down on the quantity of cigarettes I smoke.

All of this was going tremendously well and then on the 2nd, Storm Henk decided to pay our illustrious borough an unwanted visit. Henk rocking up was then shortly followed by the British American Tobacco share price increasing as we braced ourselves for a very busy week, clearing up Henk's damage which made Bromley look like the morning after a concert by The Who.

Given that I provided daily updates in the aftermath of the storm, I won't go into too much detail relating to this particular item. I can however update you on the situation as it currently stands:

- Glendale are currently working through the backlog.
- Our systems (Confirm) has a log of 259 'tree emergency call outs' across both Highways and Parks service areas over the reporting period 26/12/23 – 19/1/24.
- At the time of reporting (19/1/24) there are 112 open emergency call outs. We are awaiting further data from Glendale as to the status of these cases however, it is anticipated that a significant proportion 'made safe & need reattendance' or are 'duplicates'.
- Work is underway to collate the associated costs and the breakdown between publicly owned and private trees. Once complete we will seek compensation from the tree owners for costs incurred by the Council during the clear up.

Tremendous

Many of you may have seen the video of me planting a Common Hawthorn in Mottingham back in November. Unlike my presenting skills in front of a camera, the Hawthorn, and all of the trees we have planted this year and previous years really are a thing of beauty! Please find below some facts relating to this year's progress:

- 1510 trees are being planted in total. Of which 1250 are tremendous trees, 25 are sponsored trees and 39 are replacement trees from those planted in 22/23 with the remainder accounting for replacement trees for those felled in 22/23.
- Trees planted to date are 920 with monthly targets for November and December met. January tree planting is firmly on track to exceed target.

Month	Trees to plant per month	Actual number planted in the month

Nov-23	302	302
Dec-23	302	312
Jan-24	302	
Week 1	75.5	101
Week 2	75.5	103
Week 3	75.5	102
Week 4	75.5	
Feb-24	302	
Mar-24	302	

- Tree planting season runs from November to March.
- The monthly planting target is 302.
- Tree planting has been split into 9 batches.
- Batch five is nearing completion.
- Batch 6 trees have been delivered.
- Batch 7&8 trees will be delivered February.
- 568 tree planting requests received to date in 2023.
- A review of tremendous trees planted since winter 21/22 will be undertaken in early spring 2024. Upon completion a report will be produced detailing mortality rates and as necessary outlining the strategy to ensure the target number of 5000 new trees is met by 2025.
- QR code tags are operational on IOS with Android scheduled to go live later this winter.
- Bromley 'please water me' tags have been produced and will be installed on the first round of watering in 2024.

If you would like a tree to be planted, please report it on Fix my Street.

Jubilee Projects

Once again, I would like to express by heartfelt gratitude to all the Friends Groups and Residents Associations, amongst many others, who have submitted applications for funding across the borough. To date we have had 43 jubilee projects approved with a total awarded value of £600,680.00.

Of the 43 successful projects, 14 have been completed, 2 have had the first phase delivered, 5 have had orders raised and 5 are in progress at the moment. The remaining are either in design phase, continuing fundraising, in planning or require further scoping.

Since the last update:

- Playground improvements have been completed at Whitehall Recreation Ground.
- Playground improvements have been completed at Kings Meadow.
- Playground improvements have been completed at Ravensbourne Open Space.

The orchard projects at Richmal Crompton and Jubilee Country Park were due to be completed this week, however they have been postponed slightly due to the frozen ground conditions.

The damage that was caused by the ASB at Brook Park (St Paul's Wood Recreation Ground) is being rectified this month via the insurance claim and the extra area of surfacing being completed by the contractor by way of compensation is being completed this week.

DIY Waste reforms

The day I was appointed to my role of Portfolio Holder, HM Government decided to be very helpful and announce the new regulations regarding DIY waste.

As there is a report at the PDS setting out in detail what this means for Bromley, I won't repeat what you will have all already read in great careful detail. What I would like to add though, is where this new legislation impacts all Local Authorities, Bromley was already compliant with the new legislation before it was introduced (we would allow reasonable household DIY Waste to be disposed of for free unless you were trade). All the new legislation does is help recognise the government's attempts to move us to a standardised, nationwide policy for local authorities to receive DIY waste and address the scourge of fly-tipping. Bromley is doing the right thing in all aspects of making it easier for householders to dispose and recycle their waste whilst importantly tackling waste crime, and is therefore minimally impacted by these legislative changes. This, rather conveniently, brings me smoothly and effortlessly to the next chapter of this week's light reading.....

Fly Tipping

One of the areas I am very keen for us to specifically focus our efforts is on fly tipping and enviro crime. Following on from the successes of last year in prosecuting the rodents who feel it's acceptable practice to ruin our natural habitats and wider communities, I'm please to say we have continued the good form. In the past few months, they have:

- Seized 1 vehicle linked to fly tipping in Chislehurst (the total number of seized vehicles is now 11)
- Secured 6 successful prosecutions at court, 2 resulted in cautions and one case resulted in the first Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO) being secured by LBB, with the forfeiture of the offender's vehicle.
- 7 cases presented to court are currently awaiting hearing.
- 1 case with legal for review prior to summons being issued.
- 9 cases being compiled for consideration to report to court for summons.

Fixed penalty notices and CPW

I have also included some information regarding some FPN's and CPW's for leisurely reading. Once done, please dispose of the paper responsibly so you don't add yourself to a statistic below!

- Littering - 33 issued.
- Fly tip – 16 issued.
- DOC – 15 issued (Duty of Care breach of sec 34 EPA – commercial waste)
- CPW – 26 issued (Community Protection Warning notice)

The team have also arranged for CCTV surveillance at 4 hot spots which have assisted the team secure vital evidence (location confidential at this stage).

In the past month the team have highlighted a hotspot location in the Hayes & Coney Hall ward. These fly tips have occurred on unlit single lane country roads, causing great risk to the environment and highway users. Evidence was located within the waste and the team are hot on the trails of a waste operator who will be invited to attend council offices in the coming days to explain how waste they'd removed ended up in Bromley.

On 29th January 2024 the team welcome the addition of three Neighbourhood Enforcement Officers as part of the contract held with APCOA. This is an extension of the contract held by parking services, who already provide an excellent service enforcing parking concerns within the Borough. The three new officers will assist the enforcement team dealing with low level enviro crime concerns such as littering, dog fouling and also supplement enforcement of highway concerns such as unlicensed building materials on the highway and unlit skips.

In light of the excellent efforts undertaken by Dean and his team, I feel he deserves everyone's upmost gratitude and a jolly good round of applause! Well done Dean!

Visits

Since assuming stewardship of the portfolio, I have met with Veolia, attempted to drive both an RCV and road sweeper (sensibly, keys weren't provided for such an experience... but I was allowed to risk a by-election in Mottingham and hold a bird of prey!) and had meetings with Idverde. I have also visited the following wards:

- Plaistow
- St Pauls Cray
- St Mary Cray
- Chislehurst

I have also visited Walter Leonard and the friends group at Betts Park, Anerley, as well as having a visit in the diary for Clock House and Darwin wards. The invitation of a visit to a Ward or Friends Group is open to everyone so please contact me.

As I'm sure that many of you will be getting a tad bored of yours truly lecturing you on what a busy chap I've been, I've decided to add the partial photo album of my 'Grand Afternoon out at the Depot' for you to enjoy.







DISCLAIMER: No animals or camera lenses were harmed in the taking of this picture – although I think he was glad to see the back of me!