

ENVIRONMENTAL RANGERS

PROGRESS REPORT SEPTEMBER 2003



On the CASE: for a Cleaner, more Attractive, Safer Environment



Great Yarmouth
Borough Council



On the CASE:

for a Cleaner, more Attractive, Safer Environment.

Great Yarmouth Borough Council has long realised that its role must extend well beyond its statutory functions and services. The challenges of keeping Great Yarmouth clean and pleasant require clarity of vision, strength of purpose and leadership capable of mobilising all stakeholders and key providers across the community.

To this end a team of two Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) supported Environmental Rangers are currently in place. They act not only as the eyes and ears of the Council in relation to environmental problems, but also actively seek the improvement of local environments through education & guidance, and enforcement activities. Their current role identifies where Council environmental services need to concentrate their efforts to make a real visible difference.

Their role is not just relevant to the Borough Council, but in particular to the residents and stakeholders across the Borough. To the community at large, including schools, the police, voluntary groups and resident associations, the Environmental Rangers are the most visible frontline staff the Council currently have, an assertion borne out by the rocketing demand for their services since they were launched in 2002.

The Environmental Rangers patrol Great Yarmouth Borough daily, identifying environmental problems and responding to complaints from the public and carrying out statutory playground inspections. Additionally, the Environmental Rangers are monitoring persistent problem areas and issuing fixed penalty notices where appropriate evidence is gathered.

Promoting Local Ownership

Environmental Rangers have worked with community groups, voluntary bodies and the parishes, and have supported and organised a number of events around the Borough. The recent Jellicoe Bridge art project for example, has been particularly successful in promoting community ownership of the local environment. Jellicoe bridge provides the main footpath route to school in the North Denes area, and in partnership with Community Connections a scheme was devised inviting local children to design and paint murals which are now in place around the bridge creating an outdoor art gallery. An opening ceremony attended by the Mayor secured local media interest, and Environmental Rangers are now monitoring the area to assess the effectiveness of the scheme.

Community Clean-Ups

A number of clean-ups, in partnership with voluntary groups and local residents have also been undertaken and there has consequently been an improvement not only in the appearance of areas, but also in community involvement in their maintenance. More residents are informing Rangers of refuse and litter problems in residential areas, as a result of a regular and reliable presence in communities where environmental problems are persistent.

We have supported a large number of clean-ups in the Borough supplying advice, equipment and help where needed. Ormesby Parish Council held a very successful litter pick with a good turn out of residents. The Close in Gorleston also had a makeover involving local children with litter and overgrown hedging being the main targets.

Promotion and Marketing

The Environmental Rangers continue their commitment to providing a visible presence at major events in the Borough, endeavouring to talk and listen to the public. Carnivals, the Maritime Festival and the Fritton Dog Show have provided the Rangers with a large audience and the opportunity to target dog walkers and people littering. A successful stand in market gates during the Learning Festival provided similar opportunities. Several interviews with BBC Radio Norfolk and 'Look East' since the Rangers were launched have allowed the Rangers to further promote the 'On the C.A.S.E.' initiative.

Creative Solutions to Persistent Problems

In conjunction with car parks, Environmental Rangers have worked on an incentive aimed at tourists who park their mobile homes on the seafront overnight and also cause problems with dumping waste and litter from their vehicles.

The summer season also saw the Anglia and Britain In Bloom competitions, in which Rangers checked the routes prior to judging, ensuring that any recent litter, refuse or fly-posting was removed.

The Environmental Rangers have been instrumental in bringing back the free bulky waste collection on Saturdays, involving the provision of refuse lorries in problem areas around the Borough. This successful and very popular service has helped to reduce the quantity of flytips in persistent problem areas, and the associated time and resources taken to remove them. The Rangers have advertised this scheme through the local media and through mailing leaflets via letterbox drops to each resident in targeted areas. They are present at each collection to ensure the service is not abused with hazardous and trade wastes.

Liveability Fund

A crucial ingredient in Great Yarmouth Borough Council's recent application for Liveability Funding under the ODPM scheme for regenerating public open spaces, the Environmental Rangers will be instrumental in staging events and developing local communities into 'Environmental Champions' of local liveability issues, ensuring any grant monies received will be targeted and focused on community needs.



Enforcement

Covert mobile CCTV cameras now feature among the Environmental Rangers resources to reduce envirocrime in the Borough. The team are currently identifying locations where they can be used to their maximum potential. The Police Command Vehicle, which uses mobile CCTV and provides a further covert surveillance facility, is available to the Environmental Rangers and is soon to be employed in monitoring the Gorleston cliffs area, where a number of fixed posts have been erected on which the portable system can be deployed. These have been installed to combat the persistent problem of vandalism which the promenade has endured.

A first attempt at prosecution for dog fouling, itself a result of photographic evidence captured by the Environmental Rangers, is currently underway. Environmental Rangers have been involved in the EnCams flytip campaign which ran through June. This highlighted the problems caused by flytipping, especially in rural areas.

Rangers are investigating the possibility of putting fixed notices into Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs), clarifying the refuse byelaw and the possible fines for non-compliance. HMOs create a major problem for us as they are prone to a high turn over of tenants who are often unaware of the byelaw or their refuse collection day. It is intended that fixed notices in these properties will reduce the number of early deposits and remove the possibility of residents claiming ignorance by way of excuse for flytipping. Environmental Rangers have been working alongside the new Community Police Support Officers, communication with whom will be of paramount importance in furthering the aims and objectives of the Regent Ward Policing Priority Area.



PROGRESS:

The Environmental Rangers have been involved in the following events and initiatives since their launch in February 2002

- In-house environmental group
- Street scene
- Clip
- Gorleston in gear-beach clean
- Riverside triangle-dog fouling awareness day
- Chaucer road clean up
- Duty of care checks-regent road
- Encams Dog Fouling Campaign
- School talk -400 children-environmental awareness
- Anglia TV Interview
- Gt Yarmouth Carnival
- Radio Norfolk Interview - Litter Reduction Plan
- Environmental Forum Meetings
- Great Yarmouth Learning Festival
- Cliff Park High School - eco day
- Lorry shedding leaflets -10,000 - organised clearance
- Public Awareness Seals & Bovine distemper
- Maritime Fayre
- Young Citizens Guild: Environment Awards
- College Court Litterpick
- ODPM Best Practice Guide: Management of Public Open Spaces
- Free Weekend Bulky Waste Collections
- Peterhouse Dog Watch
- Yellow Pages Recycling Incentive
- Duty of Care Check-broad row
- Christmas Tree Recycling incentive
- Encams Flytipping Campaign
- BBC Look East - Dog Fouling Programme
- Jellicoe Bridge project
- Ormesby Parish Council clean up
- Encams - People and Places Programme
- Yarmouth in Bloom
- Britain in Bloom
- Community Dog Warden Scheme
- Radio Norfolk Interview
- Gt Yarmouth Community Litter Reduction Plan

An Efficient, Highly Visible Service: Meeting Community Needs.

Number of binbags collected 8100

The number of binbags collected includes bags removed for searching for fixed penalty notice evidence where early deposits re-occur, one off complaints, missed collections and bags left at unrecognised collection points.

Number of binbags searched 5400

Bags are searched to identify possible offenders. Enforcement taken may be verbal by way of fixed penalty notice. The quantity searched is lower than the quantity collected due to some bags being missed collections or where bags contain items whose owner cannot be identified: rubble, garden waste etc.

Number of flytips-reported/visited 1048

Number of flytip related investigations 538

Number of flytips removed 312

Flytips are either identified by the general public or on the rangers patrols, dependant on the location and nature of the flytip, which dictates whether further enquires are made. They include black sacks, bulky items and other wastes which are accounted separately in the Environmental Rangers Activity logs. Obviously a dumped fridge in a non-residential area does not provide any leads or visible clues to follow up on. If the size of the flytip is small, Rangers will endeavour to remove it themselves.

Number of streetlights reported 539

Unlit Street lights are reported to Operational Services, Norfolk County Council or to the county liaison. Problems reported include individual light failure, group failure, missing casing and damage.

Number of damaged items reported 676

Items that are reported damaged are mainly due to vandalism or general wear. These include items such as litter bins, bus shelters, seating, fencing, toilets, trees and bollards. These are reported to the relevant body for replacement or removal.

Number of abandoned vehicles reported 220

Abandoned vehicles are reported to the engineers. If they pose an immediate threat to public safety or are causing access problems, they will also be passed onto the Police. The Rangers make follow up visits to reported cars, checking whether any further vandalism to the vehicle has caused a safety concern, and to update concerned residents on progress.

Number of playgrounds inspected 322 every six weeks

The Rangers check the Council's 90 playgrounds, skateboard parks and multi-use games equipment for damage, general wear, vandalism, littering, graffiti and any other relevant issue e.g grass cutting/full bins.

The regularity the playgrounds are inspected on, is based on risk analysis which takes into account the age of the equipment, useage, previous vandalism, size of the playground, number of pieces of equipment and how well the site complies with safety guidelines. The checks run over a six week cycle in which time 322 playgrounds visits are made, plus follow up checks where problems are found.

These checks are a statutory and insurance requirement.

Number of visits to cemeteries 6 per week

Local cemeteries are on the regular patrol route of the Rangers, who report any problems or vandalism, enforce the local bye-law which bans dogs from these sites and check for any signs of issues such as drug usage which these areas often attract.

Fixed Penalty Notices Issued 137

Cautions Issued 587

Enforcement is one of the most important functions of the Environmental Ranger team. Since they were launched in February 2002, considerable effort has been expended towards enforcing acceptable behaviour with a view to environmental improvement.

ENVIRONMENTAL RANGERS Activity Since Launch

Activity	Complaints	Interviews	Visits	Revisits	Resolved
Abandoned vehicles	220	13	220	18	220
Rubbish					
- flytips	380	160	322	135	380
- black sacks	399	170	366	108	399
- bulky items	236	51	202	16	236
- needles	83	2	83	-	83
- glass	28	2	28	-	28
Refuse collection problems					
- early deposits	409	243	403	199	409
- information	71	58	71	7	71
- letters distributed	4700				
Street scene issues					
- streetlights	539	19	539	3	539
- litter bins	72	16	72	4	72
- damage	65	6	64	1	65
- sweeping	149	33	147	8	149
- other	124	28	116	9	124
Dogs					
- fouling public areas	211	164	201	53	211
- owner behaviour	45	27	42	10	45
- bylaw signage	110	4	110	-	110
- dog bans					
- beach Etpay areas	39	46	39	-	39
- strays	31	7	30	-	31
- letters distributed	2310				
Public meetings					
- parishes	-	-	22	-	-
- community groups	-	-	46	-	-
- other	-	-	64	-	-



MARKETING:

The Environmental Rangers have enforcement powers exercised under the following Legislation / Byelaws and Obligations:

- Gt Yarmouth Refuse Byelaw 2000
- Dogs (Fouling Of Land) Order 1997
- Dogs (Fouling Of Land) Act 1996
- The Data Protection Act
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Public Health Act 1875, 1936, 1961
- Open Spaces Act 1906
- Dogs On Lead Request
- Prohibited Areas For Dogs
- Local Governments Act 1972
- The Environmental Protection (Duty Of Care) Regulations 1991
- Health And Safety At Work Act 1974
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Refuse Disposal (Amenity) Act 1978

Promoting Active Community Involvement.

Further enhancing visibility to the community at large, the Environmental Rangers are regularly advertised in Council, community and local media publications, ensuring a strong presence and constant message. A sustained media presence has resulted in increased reporting of incidents to the Environmental Rangers, illustrated by the increasing demand for their services.

Tired of Flytipping?

Environmental Health
HotLine
01493 846478

Fly-tippers:
Once we know WHO they are..

.. It's going to **COST THEM.**
£50
Minimum Fine

The Environmental Rangers issue fixed penalty tickets to offenders caught flytipping.

Report Offenders on **846478**

The **environmental rangers**

ON THE C.A.S.E.
For a Cleaner. More Attractive. Safer. Environment.

Seen fly tipping or dog fouling?
Call **01493 846478**

Targeting Envirocrime.

“We know the problems and how to deal with them - what we need is the commitment to take the steps that are necessary.”

DAVID ATTENBOROUGH - 2000



ENVIRONMENTAL RANGER



TAKING CARE TO PROTECT AND IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT.

If you would like to know more about Great Yarmouth's Environmental Rangers,
Contact Paul Shucksmith on 01493 846478

Environmental Rangers
c/o The Environmental Health Helpline
Tel: (01493) 846478
Fax: (01493) 846415

Magdalen Neighbourhood Wardens
c/o Magdalen Estate Office
Tel: (01493) 443004

Town Centre Rangers
c/o Town Centre Partnership
Tel: (01493) 745828

Playground Safety
Environmental Rangers
Tel: (01493) 846478
Fax: (01493) 846415

Norfolk County Council Highways
Tel: (01493) 846150

Weekly Rubbish Collection
(missed sacks)
Tel: (01493) 857500

Street Sweeping / Litter
Tel: (01493) 857500

Bulky Item Collection
Tel: (01493) 857500

Abandoned Vehicles
Tel: (01493) 846473

Dog Fouling
Tel: (01493) 846478

Broken Street Lights
Tel: (01493) 857500

Tree Preservation Orders
Tel: (01493) 846422

Listed Buildings
Tel: (01493) 846421

Stray Dogs
Tel: (01493) 846478

Dangerous Structures
Tel: (01493) 846494

Great Yarmouth Public Emergencies
(Out of Hours)
Tel: (01493) 330369

Norfolk Police
Tel: (01953) 424242

Anglia CrimeStoppers
Tel: 0800 555 111

Environment Agency
Tel: (01473) 727712

Voluntary Sector Partnership
Tel: (01493) 650356
Fax: (01493) 650875



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