

**Welcome to Gedling Borough**



**GEDLING**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL**

*Healthy, Green; Safe and Clean*

**Outcomes achieved**

**during**

**Quarter 1 2011/12**

## Theme: A place of safe and strong communities

- **Achievements**

- **Reducing Benefit Fraud** - Our Benefit Liaison team identified more than £122,000 of fraudulently claimed Housing and Council Tax Benefits across the borough last year.

We successfully took action against 55 people who had failed to declare their true circumstances, such as not declaring they were working, receiving Tax Credits, or that their partner had moved in. Of these, as well as having to repay the overpaid benefit, 13 were successfully prosecuted and 42 were either cautioned or given an administrative penalty.

- **Arnold Carnival** The Carnival proved to be a great success this year with a jam packed programme of first class entertainment drawing in crowds of approximately 26,000. On 18th and 19th June visitors enjoyed big stage entertainment from local and professional entertainers including The Kinx tribute band, Bogus Brothers and 60s legends The Foundations, as well as performances from various local schools and community groups.

The Carnival also provided some great positive activities for young people and families including a range of entertainers, football and ice hockey, dance, a fun fair and BMX competitions. Local football team, Gedling Town, challenged football fanatics to a penalty shootout while Cadbury's Sports v Stripes tested visitor's moves in a dance mat challenge. We also had 121 dogs take part in the fun dog show, which raised £60.50 for the Mayor of Gedling's chosen charity - prostate cancer charity through Nottingham City Hospital.

The event also gave the chance for small local traders and charities to sell their wares and raise money as both the craft marquee and charity stalls were packed out over the weekend.

- **Improving infrastructure for local communities** - Gedling Borough Council has been named as one of the latest authorities to demonstrate how it would ensure the benefits of development within the borough would be shared with the community. We are one of 20 Local Authorities to be named as participants in the second wave of the Community Infrastructure Levy Front Runners project. The levy will give us more choice and flexibility in how we fund infrastructure that local communities need and want. It will make it clearer to prospective developers what contributions will be required from them to fund infrastructure and community schemes. This will result in greater certainty for developers as to what they will be expected to contribute and to communities as to what contributions they will receive.

Gedling Borough Council is also taking part in the first wave of 17 Neighbourhood Planning Front Runner scheme, announced in March.

- **Improved health and safety** - working with businesses to ensure safe practices are adhered to including ensuring correct use of tree felling equipment by a private firm in a public place, identifying a source of potential infection in food premises and identifying potentially harmful organisms at a private spa facility.'

## Theme: A place where we can take care of our environment

- **Achievements**

- **Environmentally friendly lawn mowers introduced** - Gedling is the first council in the UK to use an ecofriendly battery powered mower supplied by British designer and manufacturer, Allett, helping to reduce our carbon footprint. It will be used for the fine precision grass cutting on Arnot Hill Park's bowling green. The all-electric pedestrian greensmower is powered by a battery pack which gives up to two hours operation from fully-charged. It is very low noise, has minimal vibrations and produces very few emissions.

## Theme: A place where people can lead a healthy and active lifestyle

- **Achievements**

- **The Netherfield and Colwick healthy month** has returned for its third year between 20 June and 16 July, it again offered a range of free activities aimed at helping everyone to live a more healthy and active lifestyle. Around 1,000 people are expected to attend, with a choice of activities on offer ranging from a community walk around Netherfield Lagoons Nature Reserve, pampering evening, dance sessions and football. The street doctor will also return, this year focusing on children's health and oral hygiene.

Arts activities have been included for the first time in this year's Netherfield Healthy Month with sessions promoting positive physical and mental health taking place. Artists employed on the 'Arts on Prescription' programme provided an evening of printmaking and painting and drawing techniques for five local people at the St. Georges Centre. An evening of dance taster sessions also took place with Tap and Zumba classes on offer. Dance and visual arts participants have expressed an interest in continuing with these activities and have been signposted to local classes and organisations.

- **Gedling Play Day** - Several hundred visitors to Carlton Play Day on 1<sup>st</sup> June enjoyed a unique opportunity to take part in an all new musical experience by playing a set of six 3 metre high chimes that spread over an 18 metre space. The chimes were invented and designed by Nottingham-based Dragon's Den winner Michael Davis of the Bass Tone Slap Drumming Performance Group. Families were invited to join City Arts, who provided the chimes, to make music and create a truly amazing resonating wall of sound.

Other activities on offer included play activities provided by Gedling Play Forum, BMX grass karts, Crazy Golf and various sports taster sessions provided by Michael Johnson Football and Netherfield Boys & Girls Football Club. Also provided on the day was useful advice on how to play safe and eat healthily and games from the Road Safety Team.

- **Youth Dance Classes** - Youth dance classes organised by Arts Development continue to be popular with girls and boys in the Borough. Sessions in Arnold and Gedling provide street dance classes for around 60 children per week, no matter what their level of dance experience. Most recently all six classes performed at the Arnold Carnival with further shows arranged across the Borough and County for the rest of the year. 'The Force' boys breakdance group have also recently been involved in selecting a new permanent instructor following the departure of their previous regular teacher.
- **Reduction in level of odours from Dorket Head** -Odour complaints have reduced significantly due to improved site practices and firm regulation from the Environment Agency.
- **Air Quality Management Area declared in Daybrook** - This is the first stage in the process attempting to reduce the levels of traffic related NO2 in the Mansfield Road Area.
- **First multi-agency vulnerable adults case conference held and adopted Vulnerable Person process** - This is the start of a new process to help protect some of the most vulnerable adults in our community from the effects of ASB and hate crime. This will ensure that there will be no repeat of the events highlighted in the Pilkington Enquiry in Gedling.

## Theme: A place where people are treated fairly and have an opportunity to get involved

- **Achievements**

- **Easter Holiday Mosaic Workshops** The Arts Development and the Park Ranger team worked together to organise a series of workshops for families over the Easter holidays with a local mosaic artist, Julie Vernon. Over the course of two days Julie worked with around 40 families who produced a series of mosaics inspired by the park's wildlife. A parent whose child took part in the workshops commented: *"We had a fantastic time and the Mosaic's look really good, we can't wait to see them in the park."* The pieces have now been installed in the sensory garden and will contribute towards an arts trail around the park planned for later this year. Further creative sessions for families will be taking place during the summer holidays.
- **Borough Council elections and alternative vote referendum** – A highly complex election, with two electoral events happening on the same day, was successfully managed in May. The referendum was the first national referendum since 1975, and was delivered against a backdrop of highly detailed Electoral Commission guidance and scrutiny. New techniques were introduced for both elections, some inspired by Electoral Commission guidance, others drawing on other good practice, and publicity was improved.

Turnout increased from 40.4% in 2007 to 45.3 % in 2011. All sides complemented the Returning Officer and his team on the smooth running of the election.

The Borough Council election resulted in an unprecedented number of newly elected members. All are in the process of being successfully inducted, through a programme designed by members themselves as part of the previous Council's member development programme.

## Theme: A place that contributes to a vibrant and prosperous Greater Nottingham

- **Achievements**

- **Apprenticeships** - The council is creating two Customer Service posts, which will be based within Revenues/Housing Benefits and Customer Services. Another Businesses Administration post will be based in other areas of the council. The apprenticeships will take two years to complete, depending on the person's existing qualifications and ability, and once finished they will

be awarded an NVQ Level 3. The apprentices will be employed via an Apprenticeship Training Agency. They will be given the opportunity to learn new skills, which will give them valuable experience and could help secure jobs for the future.

- **Biz Ex Launched** - The first Gedling Biz Ex event was held on 24<sup>th</sup> May at the Richard Herrod Leisure Centre. Over 170 delegates attended the large scale exhibition and some were also treated to a talk from Rob Brown, a leading authority on networking and referrals. Feedback from the event was overwhelmingly positive and work is already underway to plan the next event, which will take place in October at the Gateway hotel. The event is the second in a series being delivered in partnership with Broxtowe Borough Council and Nottinghamshire Business Venture (NBV).
- **Free advice to businesses** - In June, we hosted a series of free Shop Doctor workshops for our retailers. Over 20 traders benefitted from the expertise of retail professional Diane Jackson, who gave out low-cost and achievable tips for attracting and keeping new customers.
- **Improving our shopping centres** - The Shop Front Grant scheme was launched at the beginning of Quarter 1 and attracted huge interest from our businesses. The scheme, which is funded through the Public Realm Works programme, attracted over 75 expressions of interest and nearly 20 full applications have now been received for projects ranging from simple redecoration through to full replacement shop fronts. Businesses can apply for 50% towards the costs of their project, up to a maximum of £2,000.

## Theme: Operational vision and strategy: Gedling as a top performing Council

- **Achievements**
  - **Improving how we communicate with residents** - There are now more ways to keep up-to-date with news, events and activities taking place across the borough. As well as the Contacts magazine and website [www.gedling.gov.uk](http://www.gedling.gov.uk) the latest information is now also available on Facebook and Twitter. We have also started using QR codes – these codes work in a similar way to a bar code, but allow you to access information straight from a smartphone.
  - **Effective financial management** - Financial Services have successfully completed the Council's Statement of Accounts within the statutory deadline of 30 June. The draft accounts will now be subject to external audit and following that will be submitted to committee for final approval in September

