



GEDLING
PLAN
2020-2023

**Examples of Achievements and
Activities**

During

Quarter 1 - 2020/21

Cohesive, Diverse and Safe COMMUNITIES

Promote and encourage pride, good citizenship and participation

VE Day Commemoration - While plans to commemorate VE Day in the community had to be put on hold due to the Covid-19 restrictions, the Council promoted to residents how they might wish to mark the day at home on Friday 8 May 2020. This included:

- Circulating an online pack to help plan a party at home
- Sharing photos or videos of VE Day celebrations to the Countywide Inspire Picture Archive
- Signposting to Home learning packs for 7-14 year olds
- Itinerary of key milestones for remembering on the day
- Promoting activities and information on GBC Facebook, Twitter and Gedling Events webpage.

Giving For Gedling Volunteer Registration - In March, Council established a volunteer registration portal on its website. The response saw 520 volunteers registered, which has more than adequate for local needs. A thank you letter from the Leader and Deputy Leader has been sent to all those volunteers who have offered their support. The deployment of our volunteers has been kept under constant review.

After the first two weekends of the Food Hub being established, when Neighbourhood Wardens were used to do deliveries, all parcels have been delivered by a bank of volunteers. 25 volunteers have been actively engaged in the Richard Herrod Food Hub during quarter 1 working on deliveries to date. In addition 10 volunteers from the currently closed Phoenix Farm Gedling Foodbank have supported the Hub, working alongside Leisure staff to pack food parcels for distribution.

Individual volunteers have been contacted regularly being made aware of volunteering opportunities with local groups and wider charities.

Deploying volunteers required significant preparation work. A Volunteer Policy was completed and a new Volunteer Handbook and induction form implemented. New activity risk assessments, tool box talks and processes were rapidly developed and tested through dynamic risk assessments.

RESET - On-going Funding and Support for Local Groups - Contact with the local Gedling based groups offering assistance in the community during the Covid-19 outbreak started in May 2020 with a view to assess their on-going needs. This included continuing to signpost groups to the Nottinghamshire County Council Community Support Grant scheme. Officers have been circulating the Community and Voluntary e-Newsletter to all local groups on the Council's database. The May edition was a funding special signposting to a range of opportunities.

Local groups that have received funding from the Nottinghamshire County Council Coronavirus Community Support Grant scheme include:

Trussell Trust Arnold Food Bank	£5,000	Providing emergency food, essential toiletries and other household items to individuals and
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		families in need, to help prevent or relieve poverty
Sharewear Clothing Scheme	£1,250	Supplying clothing to families and vulnerable individuals, including 13 wards at Nottingham University Hospital and families supported by Adult Social Care and Children's services across the county.
WeRHere	£2,000	One to one counselling support by telephone, Skype or video calling. They also provide support for people who are suffering from anxiety and mental health issues stemming directly from the COVID-19 emergency.
Netherfield Forum	£5,000	Freshly cooked hot lunches, delivered by community volunteers to the surrounding area. They also provide emergency packs of food, toiletries and essentials to those in need.
Cornwater Evergreens Foundation Trust	£3,500	Supporting local older people, including those with early stage dementia by providing cooked meals, food shopping, collecting medication and through regular telephone contact.

Reduce poverty and inequality and provide support to the most vulnerable

Pest control service –The pest control service provided by Gedling Borough Council treats Rats, Mice, Bedbugs, Cockroaches and Fleas in domestic dwellings only for Gedling residents. Prior to April of this year, where a Gedling Borough Council owned leisure or community centre had a pest problem the manager of the centre would use a private company. It was a patchwork of different private contracts and not cost effective. The Gedling Borough Council Public Protection Service pest control service now treats all council owned facility's making a proposed saving of £5,000 per year. The team continued to provide a seamless pest control service throughout Covid to people who were distressed by Rats, Mice, Bedbugs, Cockroaches and Fleas.

Giving for Gedling Portal - In March 2020, the Council swiftly launched its Giving for Gedling response and this has been updated and remains operational throughout quarter 1. The portal for this was a local dedicated [webpage](#) hosted on the Council's website, which offered information on:

- Good Neighbour Guide
- NHS Volunteer Responders
- Food shopping and deliveries
- Food bank fundraiser appeal
- Volunteer recruitment
- "I need support" links
- Community support groups
- Information on the Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) Support Hub

Giving for Gedling Humanitarian Team - By the end of March 2020, a rapidly established new Giving for Gedling service was in place in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The team included redeployed staff from Community Relations, Economic Growth, Public Protection and Leisure. This team was defined as a new critical function for the Council during the emergency response and this service led the way to:

- liaise and work with local foodbanks and Church Leaders
- recruit, train and induct volunteers, in line with a new Volunteer Policy
- support local community groups responding to the crisis
- receive and process requests for need
- establish and operate a food and household supply distribution centre
- represent the Council on numerous emergency response LRF planning groups.

Giving For Gedling Good Neighbour Guide - With Church partners the Council has developed a Good Neighbour Guide and circulated this to volunteers, while local churches and Foodbanks have distributed copies further within the community. The Guide offered advice on befriending, food deliveries, volunteering, NCC support phone number, Giving for Gedling website, as well as support for self-employed workers and local businesses.

Requests for Assistance - The Giving for Gedling portal offered an opportunity for local residents to request support from the Council. As of 23 June, there had been 842 requests for support to the Giving for Gedling service. Some of these individuals have been further contacted and offered follow up advice on a regular as a means of on-going support. 97% of all customers had been contacted within 2 days of the initial report for need. Most of these have identified themselves as vulnerable according to the Government definitions and the majority were customers were aged over 70. Analysis shows that the highest number of requests refer to shopping and medications delivery to residents' homes.

Richard Herrod Hub - The Richard Herrod Centre, normally an indoor bowls and conference centre, was turned into the main headquarters for the Council's humanitarian response to the coronavirus outbreak. The centre became a super food bank as part of the Giving for Gedling campaign.

A total of 940 parcels had been distributed to people in need in the borough by volunteers to date by the end of Quarter 1. The breakdown includes:

- 599 – Single parcels
- 216 – Couple parcels
- 90 – Small family parcels
- 37 – Large family parcels

Since the Hub opened in March 2020, it has provided food parcels for 620 residents by mid-June. GBC has been cited as good practice in terms of the preparation and establishment of the Hub and this is referred to later in the report.

The Hub managed by Leisure centre staff was quickly stocked up with food and other supplies using a £20,000 allocation from the Council. An initial supply chain was established by Economic Growth, Community Relations and Leisure staff working collaboratively and this has been managed on an on-going basis by staff at Richard Herrod Centre. By the start of June the total £20,000 allocation had been spent on food and other household supplies for people in need of support and a further £10,000 allocation made from the Giving for Gedling donation fund, agreed in consultation with local Foodbanks and Church Leaders.

As part of the food and household supply chain work, Armitage Pet Care donated £7,000 worth of pet food supplies to the Giving for Gedling Distribution Hub.

Following its mini launch, which coincided with the 'Clap For Carers' on Thursday 9 April, the hub has regularly despatched 40–60 parcels per week, additionally covering weekends and bank holidays.

On 14 April 2020, some great partnership support was received from Nottinghamshire Fire Rescue Service crews and Police colleagues who joined the Hub to pack food parcels. Stockhill Fire Station also delivered goods to the centre. Volunteers have since been deployed for both packing and deliveries.

Fresh food has been produced on-site by local caterer “Inn At The Bank” who offered their support during the crisis. They have been operating from the kitchen at Richard Herrod Centre, which was re-commissioned in March in preparation for action. The fresh food is being sent out with all food parcels. This required a risk assessment and tool box talk for the catering functions.

RESET - Analysis of Food Parcel deliveries - The Giving for Gedling team has analysed the volunteering effort and delivery of food parcels. This now includes mapping of food requests against our more deprived areas as defined by the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). The conclusion is that larger concentrations of requests were generally in the more deprived IMD areas. There was some demand in rural areas where a lack of local shops exist. This type of ongoing analysis will help inform our Resident and Communities Reset work moving forward.

Giving for Gedling Food Bank Appeal - While working with the local foodbanks it was agreed that the Council would receive financial donations rather than the food donations to support local people. Subsequently, in order to support the local humanitarian effort, the Council launched the Giving for Gedling Food Bank Funding Appeal on 3 April 2020. A Spacehive fundraising webpage was established to receive donations - <https://www.spacehive.com/givingforgedling>. The cross-party agreement to donate the funds of £10,250 from councillors' pots kick-started the food bank appeal with the Mayor calling on residents to help match the councillors' donation and raise an additional £10,000. The original target of £20,000 was reached and surpassed in record time, raising £25,175 in total. This enabled us to close the appeal by 17 April.

A decision process to agree fund allocation was agreed that will incorporate consultation with the Churches and Foodbanks group. All donations will either be given directly to registered food banks who support residents across the borough or be used by the Council's Hub to purchase additional food and essential items for onward distribution to residents who are most in need.

In early April, the Council had been contacted by both Newark and Sherwood District Council and Kirklees Council who were keen to find out more about our local fundraising approach that was being promoted across the country by Spacehive. Of particular interest was the speed of its fundraising success and the local partnership with foodbanks.

The Council also received national recognition for this work. GovDelivery (Granicus) wrote a case study about the Council following our successful campaign to raise money for local food banks and the effective use of email - <https://uk.granicus.com/blog/this-councils-covid-19-email-campaign-raised-21k-for-local-food-banks/>. This positive feedback highlights the effective impact using the Council's communications channels.

The Local Government Association (LGA) made reference to the Council in their national COVID-19 good council practice case studies for the work done on the Giving for Gedling campaign. This is great national recognition for this local campaign. Two case studies can be viewed on the LGA website - <https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/coronavirus-information-councils/covid-19-good-council-practice>.

The New Local Government Network also included us in their national weekly roundup of Council responses to the COVID-19 outbreak. This was again national recognition for the work being done - <http://www.nlgn.org.uk/public/2020/councils-and-covid-19-the-response-5/#>.

In addition, East Midlands Councils' recognised the Council in one of its weekly Policy Briefs, as a COVID-19 good practice council, referencing our Giving for Gedling funding campaign. The brief can be viewed [here](#).

Supporting Vulnerable People Letter - A letter of support was sent to 11,000 elderly Gedling residents in April 2020 offering support and important information during the coronavirus outbreak. The letter asked if the recipient was in need of any support and included contact details for the NCC Community Support Hub and our own Giving for Gedling webpage. Once the NHS Volunteers scheme became live in early April the Giving for Gedling team started to refer requests for prescription collections to these volunteers. Council staff had been managing calls for service, doing collections and deliveries, as an interim measure.

RESET - Council Tax Hardship Fund - The Council has used government grant funding to establish a Council Tax Hardship Fund to assist residents who need support with their finances as a result of the Coronavirus outbreak. The Fund helps working age families who are in receipt of Council Tax support, meaning they could receive a reduction of up to £300 in their Council Tax. Qualifying households automatically receive the reduction and do not need to contact the council in order to get the discount. By the beginning of June, awards totalling £346,042.11 had been made to 1462 individual households.

An additional discretionary hardship scheme was also made available to anyone in receipt of council tax support who are experiencing financial difficulties. This is not an automatic award and an application form needs to be submitted. There is no automatic entitlement guarantee and awards are allocated depending on the individual circumstances of each claim received.

RESET - Overpayment recovery suspension - The Government announced that recovery of all overpayments should be suspended for a period of 3 months. As such, deductions for the recovery of Universal Credit and other legacy benefit overpayments, Social Fund loans and Tax Credit debts were paused. Although there was no Government guidance issued, Local Authorities could follow this example and stop recovery of outstanding overpayments from ongoing Housing Benefit. A decision was made to implement these measures and 310 existing Housing Benefit customers had a 3 month "holiday period" applied to their claims. For the period 20 April 2020 to the 20 July 2020 those 310 customers will receive their full entitlement to Housing Benefit with no deductions being made. From the 21 July, the original weekly recovery instalments plans will again be applied.

Reduce anti-social behaviour, crime and the fear of crime

Sanctuary Installations project - The Community Safety Officer re-worked the Sanctuary installations project in response to anticipated and recorded increases in high-risk domestic abuse cases as a result of the lockdown. The response reduced the usual wait for security measures from 12 weeks average to 2 weeks acting on referrals from Police, MARAC and JUNO Women's Aid service. This has been very positively received by Nottinghamshire Police as such a response has not been seen anywhere else in Nottinghamshire.

Environmental Health support - Environmental Health Officers continued to provide a service to residents of the borough with regard to noise nuisance complaints and very early in lockdown they were able to respond to the significant number of bonfire related calls from residents as the good weather and closing of recycling centres brought about a huge rise in requests for service.

Neighbourhood warden support - Neighbourhood Wardens have maintained, throughout the lockdown period, a full presence in the local community responding to the usual wide range of requests for service. In addition they worked with colleagues collecting food for food parcels to

be made up and delivered. They have also been working with partners and the community safety team to address arising issues as lockdown was eased regarding ASB on parks and open spaces including use of alcohol and nitrous oxide and associated littering.

Gedling CCTV coverage and monitoring was maintained throughout the lockdown period. Systems were put in place for the safety of the operative whilst still providing evidence for policing of any incidents. In addition a new camera has been installed in Gedling Country Park.

The Anti-social Behaviour Officer has maintained a high level of response / service provision working with multi-agency partners including Gedling Homes and Police in response to issues around neighbour disputes in lockdown, aggressive street begging and the officer has supported her manager and the Community Safety Officer with regard to safeguarding issues and concerns.

Safeguarding Training - Working with Customer Services and Organisational Development, the Community Safety Officer adapted the current safeguarding training session for taxi drivers requiring refresher training into a workbook to ensure awareness was maintained in line with licensing requirements thereby ensuring license holders may maintain employment.

High Performing COUNCIL

Improve the customer experience of engaging with the Council

Calls and Social Media - in the first eight weeks of lockdown the Customer Services team handled 30,881 calls in the 8 weeks, which represents 8500 extra telephone calls above the normal average. Despite this the teams call answering performance improved from around 96% at the end of Q3 to 99%. On the 1 April 2020 the team hit 100% call answering. During the same period online form submissions increased by 10% and the team dealt with a 308% increase in social media messages direct to Customer Services and a 21% increase in emails.

RESET - Reinstatement of previously suspended services. Glass collection was reinstated with effect from 11 May and bulky waste service reinstated with effect from 20 May, initially one day a week prioritising the previously suspended bookings but returning to full service in June. Car parks associated with the Council's parks and open spaces were re-opened to members of the public with effect from 13 May. Restrictions on the operation of stalls at Arnold Market was lifted to enable normal market trading to resume from week commencing 1 June 2020. In addition, commercial tree services to domestic households recommenced from 1 June 2020. Approval was given by the Leader and plans have been put in place and screens fitted to the booths to enable re-opening of the main reception for pre-booked appointments with effect from 6 July 2020.

Provide efficient and effective services

Training - Although the Covid-19 pandemic has caused some difficulties in delivery of our training programmes our Training Officers have worked hard to produce on-line material both for our Level 5 Leadership Programme candidates (internal and external) and to employees on our internal apprenticeship programmes some of whom have now been put forward for end-point assessment.

Appointment to the post of Chief Executive - The Organisation Development Team recently supported the selection process for our new Chief Executive. The process was run against a very tight timescale and included meetings to conduct rigorous shortlisting and interview.

Giving for Gedling success - The campaign to obtain funding for the Giving for Gedling fund has been named in the Local Government Associations Communications good practice case studies, from councils nationwide, in the response to Covid-19. This was also mentioned in this week's East Midlands Councils Policy Briefing. Details can be found here;

<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/coronavirus-information-councils/covid-19-good-council-practice>

Transport and Waste - Transport and Waste teams have managed to continue operationally with adjustments to working methods to maintain vehicle servicing, repairs and pre Mot checks, continue with taxi inspections, maintain refuse, recycling, garden waste collections and reintroduce glass and bulky waste collections with the additional help from leisure staff/management, agency workers/ drivers, PASC operatives/ drivers to back fill for staff self-isolating.

The office and management staff in Transport, Waste especially the temporary waste supervisor (now permanent), PASC and the Health Safety and Emergency Planning Officer have worked

tirelessly and additional hours above and beyond normal expectations of their role with reduced experienced staff to maintain services.

Additional help from customer services, organisational development and the corporate director has also helped with high volumes of workload placed on the teams.

In addition the refuse, recycling, garden waste and glass collections crews have been collecting increased tonnages in quarter 1.

RESET – Reset Strategy. Cabinet approved the Reset Strategy on 18 June 2020. The Strategy will be delivered through five work streams which have been grouped into three overarching aspects: Business, Residents & Communities and Council (Frontline services, Support Services and Finance). Each work stream is being led by a member of Senior Leadership Team overseen by the Chief Executive:

RESET – Remote meetings introduced. Council, Cabinet and Committee meetings were reinstated with effect from 1 June 2020 and have been successfully held remotely using the Teams platform since then.

RESET – Marketing. The Marketing Officer returned to her substantive role on 1 June 2020 after assisting with the Council's Response communications activity. A Communications and Marketing Plan of activity has been drafted to ensure there is a structured plan in place with clear priorities will enable resources to be directed to maximising income generation. This will help to inform the Communications Strategy.

Maintain a positive and supportive working environment and strong employee morale

RESET – Covid secure office environment. 50% of Covid secure risk assessments were carried out during quarter 1 and a draft action plan prepared to ensure appropriate safe systems of work are in place when staff being to return to the office. Signage and additional instructions have also been issued to ensure the safety of staff who have continued to work in the office during lockdown.

RESET - Continued support for remote working. Supporting continued remote working has not stopped during quarter 1 with the roll out of Microsoft Teams for video conferencing for staff and Members completed. Additional headsets have been distributed and webcams ordered. Senior Leadership Team has also agreed a wider roll out of soft phones to replace fixed handsets and this commenced in quarter 1. Our broadband bandwidth has also been increased to support the increased remote working.

RESET – Survey of Service Managers. Consultation with senior managers to understand the impact of Covid-19 has taken place to capture key data including the dependencies to resuming 'normal' services, lessons learned and opportunities for service transformation. The data collected has also been used to inform the review of the Gedling Plan 202-23 which will be reported to Cabinet in August 2020.

RESET – Staff Survey about working during Covid-19 lockdown. A staff survey on working during the Covid-19 outbreak was launched on 22 June. The survey aimed to find out what effect the changed ways of working have had on staff from a welfare perspective and asked if there is more that we can do to support staff. It also asks about thoughts on agile working; whether is it something we should be doing more of and if so, what lessons we can learn. The feedback will help inform our future plans for agile and flexible working.

RESET – Review of the Constitution. Further sections of the Constitution have been reviewed and redrafted and have been programmed into the Forward Plan to be considered by Senior Leadership Team from 6 July.

Improve use of digital technologies

RESET - Ensure staff have the right technology. A lot of work has continued to provide more staff with facilities to work from home, this has included new telephony solutions. The IT team has worked with the lead, Alec Dubberley, on facilitating remote Council meetings. The facility to hold virtual conversations and meetings is being rolled out to staff. Thanks to Alec are due as Alec has led on this and very much been the pivotal force behind the roll out.

Vibrant ECONOMY

Drive business growth, workforce development and job opportunities

Business engagement - 23 businesses were engaged with over this quarter on general business enquiries. Officers also spoke to at least 120 businesses on Covid19 matters (and 500 high street businesses).

Business Grants – The revenues team (with help from other service areas) have successfully managed the full administration and payment of over 1300 Small Business Grants / Retail and Hospitality and Leisure Grants as well as providing continued support for businesses facing financial difficulty during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Create thriving and vibrant town and local centres

RESET - Re-opening the high streets safely – as part of the re-opening the high street safely launch programme, officers attended all eight town/local centres and engaged with 500 high street businesses.

Sustainable ENVIRONMENT

Provide an attractive and sustainable local environment that local people can enjoy

RESET - Gedling Country Park – Viewing Platforms Following the successful £138,000 funding bid, work on the viewing platforms at Gedling Country Park began in February and has continued throughout quarter 1. The Beacon View platform is now complete and in lockdown is being enjoyed by visitors to the park taking daily exercise. Work to complete the Lincoln View platform commenced in May and this along with the new geographic point of interest interpretation panels is now complete.

Conway Rec Play Area – Following extensive consultation, work to construct a new children’s play area at Conway Road Recreation Ground has started. Work on the new junior play park began in February and was due to be completed by the end of March but was delayed due to the virus outbreak. Work is now approaching completion and an official opening for this new play facility is planned for later in the year after lockdown sanctions have been lifted.

RESET - Activities/Sports in our Parks & Open Spaces - Following the Covid-19 epidemic, public toilets have now re-opened to the public.

HEALTHY lifestyles

Improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities

RESET - Promoting Well-being -The Council has been regularly circulating the Health and Wellbeing e-newsletter offering advice during the Coronavirus crisis. This has included information on:

- Giving for Gedling
- NHS online services
- Nottinghamshire Healthcare Trust (NHT) Mental Health Helpline
- Free leisure online workouts
- Harmless support for those at risk of harm
- Change4Life advice
- Advice on staying fit and healthy during lockdown, including for children and the over 65s
- Health for Kids and Health for Teens websites
- The Warm Homes Hub
- Mental Health Awareness Week 18-24 May, including Every Mind Matters, Harmless, MIND and NHS advice
- Guide for overcoming anxiety for children 9+
- Bereavement support
- Supporting people with dementia
- Advice on managing long-term conditions.

Reduce levels of loneliness and isolation

South Nottinghamshire Befriending Project - The Council has led in supporting a bid by Rushcliffe CVS to the Nottinghamshire County Council Coronavirus Community Fund for a collaborative Humanitarian response across Gedling, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe. This approach includes the initiation of a bespoke Volunteer Telephone Befriending Service in Gedling led by Rushcliffe CVS, to run for up to a year, focusing on the most vulnerable in our community. Initial 3 months funding has been secured with a view to enabling additional resource to cover a 12 month period to align better with the existing community development work we have already been leading on, linking with NHS Link Workers. The befriending service will also provide further opportunities for the volunteers the Council has recruited.

Maintaining Social Prescribing Support - The Council has been funded by the South Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Partnership to develop Community Development work and managed to continue to engage with community groups interested in working with NHS Link Workers to support social prescribing. Existing and emerging Facebook groups and a list of community groups that offer support to vulnerable people have been compiled and shared with the Link Workers.

Food Banks and Church Leaders - As part of the Covid-19 Humanitarian Response, the Council continued to work closely with local Foodbanks, establishing a local coordination role with them and local Church Leaders. They have guided the Council throughout and provided advice on the systems used at the Richard Herrod Hub helping us consider the most appropriate approach to food parcelling, volunteers and distribution. Likewise the two

foodbanks in Netherfield and Carlton have been supported with additional food and items provided from the Hub.

Arnold Food Bank has offered great support by providing parcels to the Hub in the first couple of weekends. Since then there have been swaps of items between the Hub & Arnold Food Bank whenever stocks have run low.

The Council received a grant allocation of £54,182 from Government. It used a proportion of this to allocate a grant to local foodbanks in the Borough. Arnold, Carlton, Netherfield and Gedling foodbanks all received £2,000 each. A further £2,000 grant was also issued to Sharewear and St. George's Centre in Netherfield to support their local Humanitarian effort, offering supplies and hot food to those most in need.