



Gedling Plan Annual Report

2024-2025

Serving people **Improving Lives**



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Gedling
Borough Council



Introduction

I am proud to present the Council's Annual Review for 2024 – 2025. This document highlights not only the progress that we have made, but the collaborative approach that has been taken to achieving these outcomes together with our partners and our communities, an approach that has ensured resilience in the face of continued economic pressures and rising demand for services.

In a year shaped by opportunity and challenge, we have remained committed to delivering on priorities that matter most to local people, including upgrading our green spaces, shaping our places for the future and supporting our most vulnerable residents.

We are proud to have again achieved Green Flag status for four of the Borough's parks, and to have invested in upgrading key sports and play facilities, including improving accessibility.

1,370 New Trees and a Wildflower Meadow have been planted for the Green Lung Project at Digby Park in Mapperley, marking our continued commitment to enhancing green spaces and tackling climate change.

Our teams have worked to enable public spaces to be brought to life through community led projects such as the large mosaic mural to welcome visitors to Netherfield and the re-development of the Carlton Hill Sensory Garden.

We've also made significant strides in housing, and are performing above national and regional averages in reducing the number of long-term empty homes across the borough, as well as developing plans that best meet Gedling's housing needs for the future while encouraging greater biodiversity and protecting the things that make our Borough special.

Within the Council, this year we have placed a heavy focus on making changes to how we do things to make every pound we spend go further. Our teams have worked hard on developing new ICT systems that will support improvements to our waste and streets services, and we have

introduced new technology that is helping us to be more efficient so our employees can spend their time where it makes the biggest difference rather than on administrative tasks.

We have also successfully attracted and made use of external funding, working closely with national and regional funders to contribute to our ambitions.

In Spring, our Leisure service achieved its highest ever membership numbers, exceeding its annual target and supporting improved health and wellbeing borough wide.

Among our many achievements this year I am particularly proud of the way that we've engaged with our communities on the things that matter most to future generations, including shaping the future vision for Arnold Town Centre and considering the future of our leisure services. We are listening carefully to what people have told us, so that we shape our future services and our places to meet local needs.

Finally, I want to mention the Pride of Gedling Awards – now in its 9th year and a testament to the dedication and service of volunteers, carers, community groups, businesses and individuals across the borough. It is always a pleasure to see who's been nominated and the fantastic work that is taking place.

The year ahead will see further challenge and opportunity for Gedling including the finalisation of options for Local Government Re-organisation which will reshape a new council, or councils, across our area.

Despite the uncertainty of what might lie ahead and the continued pressures that the Council faces, I am proud that we remain ambitious, future focused and can take pride in continuing to deliver the services that most matter to the people we serve.

Finally, and most importantly, I would like to thank our employees, fellow councillors, partners, our voluntary sector and communities for their ongoing support.

Together we continue to serve people, improve lives and make a difference to the place we call home.

Councillor John Clarke
Leader of the Council

Key achievements: Economy

To encourage and support healthy businesses in our local centres, improving skills and employment opportunities and promoting an economy that attracts visitors throughout the day and supports leisure activity.

- This year, more than 650 stakeholders across the borough contributed to shaping the Ambition Arnold Visionary Masterplan. The plan, which has now been approved, sets a future vision to revitalise Arnold town centre and addresses its long-term sustainability. It ensures that the Council is ready to make the most of future funding opportunities as they arise.

- Significant progress was made this year on skills development using funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund including:

- 30 residents taking part in HGV driver training programme, with 18 so far securing work.
- 38 residents taking part in forklift truck driver training with 18 participants so far in work.
- 110 socially excluded residents taking part in the 'Transform Your Future' Programme, with 86 people supported to access basic skills and 107 supported to engage in job searching.
- More than 100 people accessing Digital Skills training.
- More than 40 people accessing ESOL training to improve their 'Everyday English' skills.



- In partnership with the Department for Work and Pensions, we have also held four well-attended jobs fairs.
- Business support also remains strong including:
 - 110 businesses being engaged in five Business Support Network events delivered across the year.
 - Ongoing access to Business Advice Surgeries hosted by East Midlands Chamber.
 - High interest from Gedling businesses in the Business Start Up/Growth grants managed by Nottinghamshire County Council, with 24 applications brought to panel and approved.
- Additionally, solid progress was made (and is now completed) on Hillcrest Park business units in Calverton which will further enable space for local business growth.
- Our focus on high street improvement has also continued. High Street Events Grant activity has involved volunteers removing graffiti, weeding and planting in local areas. The High Street Hero week held in February attracted 168 children from across the borough, increasing footfall to the high street.
- Finally, in Quarter 3 we received positive news from the Government, honouring the £20m commitment to a revised programme that builds on the work done to create a 3 year investment plan and ten-year vision as part of the Carlton Long Term Plan for Towns.

Key achievements: Community

To enable a resilient, empowered, connected, inclusive and healthy community.

- Our Leisure service achieved its highest ever membership numbers, with more than 5000 members registered as at Spring 2025, making a significant contribution to health and wellbeing across the borough.
- A multitude of successful events were held across the borough, delivered or enabled by the Council, including:
 - The Arnold Christmas lights switch on, attracting more than 2500 people to watch festive performances from local schools and choirs.
 - The 9th Pride of Gedling Awards, with more than 120 nominations received.
 - The Arnold Summer Fair, bringing communities together with a focus on heritage and history.
 - A schools celebration event bringing together young people from across the borough.
 - Arnold Remembrance Event with a record attendance of 2500 – 3000 people, with advisory support provided for Gedling and Mapperley events.
 - Multiple civic events, a parish conference, leisure gala days, litter picking events ... and more!



- In Netherfield, the Council supported the development of a community mosaic designed by local artist Anna Dixon in liaison with local residents. This was installed in Jackie Bells Field along with the addition of a new tree to improve the green space.
- Carlton Hill Sensory Garden was re-developed, including replanting the garden and adding additional sensory elements along with replacement benches and enhanced signage.
- The Gedling Social Mobility Commission was mobilised with the intention of tackling inequality across the borough.
- A partnership 'Day of Action' at Burton Road Jubilee Park brought partners together including Red Snapper Immediate Justice, the police, Deputy Police Crime Commissioner, Rivendell View Care Home and Council staff to carry out improvements on the park.
- A week long Keep Britain Tidy 'Spring Clean' involved several community litter picks across parks in the borough. Volunteers from The Friends of Bestwood Country Park, Gedling Parks Community Group were amongst those taking part.

Key achievements: Place

To promote and drive sustainable growth across the borough to meet current and future needs.

- Four of our parks have again achieved Green Flag status, including Arnot Hill Park for the 18th year running, Burton Road Jubilee Park and Gedling Country Park (for the 9th year running) and Breck Hill Park (for the 3rd year running).
- Our housing team has succeeded in reducing long-term vacant homes to 0.79%, an achievement that exceeds the East Midlands (1.1%) and national (1.03%) averages.
- We completed the planting of more than 1,370 new trees and established a wildflower meadow for the Green Lung project at Digby Park, strengthening local biodiversity and climate change.
- We funded improvements to our parks, playgrounds and community facilities by attracting external funding and local grant funding to deliver improvements including:
 - The Queen's Canopy memorial at Gedling Country Park,
 - An upgraded playground at Valley Road in Carlton including a zip line, wheelchair accessible see saw, swings, trampolines and more.
 - Four new art sculptures at Arnot Hill Park showing the history of Arnold and its surroundings.
 - A new willow sculpture at Gedling Country Park.
 - Improvements at Conway Road tennis courts, investment in flood lights at Mellish Rugby Club and Pavoirs Rugby Club, and a new 3G pitch at Calverton Miners Welfare Football Club.
- Investments have also been made in retrofitting homes in partnership with Eon Energy, maximising external funding to enable home energy efficiency measures. Solar panels and external wall insulation were installed in 29 homes. 28 homes were improved to an Energy Performance Certificate rating of band C or above.
- Other housing improvements have also been made, with the re-launch of our Selective Licensing scheme in Netherfield, giving us powers to make privately rented homes better for people to live in. The scheme makes it mandatory for landlords in certain areas to have licences for each of their private rented properties and currently covers Netherfield, Colwick, Carlton Hill, Daybrook and Newstead Village.
- The Council's carbon footprint has also reduced significantly in the past year with directly controlled emissions and emissions from energy use reducing by 45% (753 tonnes) since 2019.
- Environmental improvements to air quality have also been achieved this year, with the removal of the Air Quality Management Area along the A60 following a continued significant reduction in emissions thanks to actions taken by the Council in partnership with Nottinghamshire County Council and Nottingham City Council,
- The Council's Cabinet agreed to the progression of a feasibility study to consider the potential for a new Carlton Leisure and Community Wellbeing Centre. Work is underway, which will result in a set of detailed design proposals and a full business case.
- Finally, we took the challenging decision to withdraw from the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan in response to new housing targets set by the Government to radically boost the supply of housing. By doing this, we can reduce the risk of unsustainable speculative and uncontrolled development and ensure that the borough grows with critical infrastructure. Consultation on the Plan will continue into the new Financial Year and we are committed to listening carefully to all views before any final decisions are reached.



Key achievements: The Council

To be a highly performing, efficient and effective Council.

- Despite the ongoing financial and demand pressures that the Council faces, significant work has been done this year to ensure that the Council remains financially stable and can balance its budgets providing planned efficiency targets are achieved. Teams across the Council have worked hard to cut costs, make better use of ICT, to amalgamate managerial roles to ensure value for money and to consider alternative ways of delivering services within financial constraints. Financial prudence will continue to be a core focus for the Council to ensure that our wider objectives can be achieved.
- As part of the Council's efficiency drive, we are also encouraging people to make better use of online services where they are able to do so. This year 8500 e-bills were issued, an increase of more than 1000 on last year's figures, resulting in significant savings on postage and printing costs.
- In our waste and streets services, new technology has been developed that, in the new Financial Year (2025/26) will better enable us to deliver services efficiently and will support our teams, and residents, to know exactly where service requests are up to.
- Similarly, within Customer Services, we are introducing new technology to help residents get through to the person they need to speak to more quickly and to enable our teams to resolve more enquiries at first point of contact, improving service for our residents and enabling more efficient ways of working within our teams.
- Internally, improvements have also been made to our procurement function, with a new service model in place to ensure greater responsiveness and to achieve greater value over time. Training has also taken place on the new Procurement Act which came into force in February 2025.
- A new Risk Management Framework has also been introduced to strengthen how we manage risk, supported by a new Corporate Risk Board with regular reporting to the Senior Leadership team, Audit Committee and Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- We have also expanded our Trade Waste Service. This generates a small amount of income for the Council and ensures we are ready for the Government's Simpler Recycling programme which started to be rolled out this year and will continue into 2025/26.
- Funding was also awarded to us for successful completion of the Government's Cyber Assessment Framework pilot, giving residents assurance that we are doing everything we can to keep their data safe.
- And we are updating our asset plans based on a strategic review of our overall assets within the financial year so that we spend limited public funding in the best possible way.



Thank you

As we conclude this report and note the incredible amount we've achieved alongside the 'day job' of running core services, it is important to note that none of our achievements are possible without the support of our employees, communities and partners. It is fitting to end on a thank you to all concerned and to look forward to a positive year ahead.