

Report To:	CABINET	Date:	19 JULY 2021
Heading:	THE BIG ASHFIELD SPRING CLEAN, 2021		
Portfolio Holder:	CLLR SAMANTHA DEAKIN, PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR PARKS, TOWN CENTRES AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES		
Ward/s:	ALL WARDS		
Key Decision:	YES		
Subject to Call-In:	YES		

Purpose of Report

To update the Cabinet on a full evaluation of the BIG Ashfield Spring Clean 2021, its success and our future plans to ensure that residents are supported in managing their waste correctly, helping to reduce fly tipping and littering in the District while also increasing our recycling levels.

Recommendation(s)

- 1 Cabinet notes the success of the BIG Ashfield Spring Clean in 2021;
- 2 Cabinet approves the creation of a more sustainable BIG Spring Clean 2022 and campaigns throughout the year to support residents in managing their waste.

Reasons for Recommendation(s)

The Council delivered its first Big Ashfield Spring Clean in 2018; and due to the success of this campaign it has now become an annual event.

Following a detailed review of previous campaigns along with an evaluation of our wider environmental performance, a refreshed approach as set out in the report will ensure that Ashfield District Council continues to support its residents in managing their waste in a sustainable way throughout the year, whilst also supporting and empowering communities to maintain and feel pride in where they live.

Alternative Options Considered

Not to run a BIG Ashfield Spring Clean campaign and carry on with the current bulky collection service. However, the campaign had previously achieved high levels of participation by the public and is universally popular. **Not recommended.**

To revert to the original Big Ashfield Spring Clean approach which utilises static skips. This provided less capacity than subsequent campaigns and was not popular with the public. **Not recommended.**

Detailed Information

Impact of COVID:

The BIG Ashfield Spring Clean 2021 was heavily impacted by COVID, placing restrictions not only on how it could take place but also in how it could be communicated to residents. In previous years the campaign has been promoted through leafleting, however this was prohibited. Therefore, promotion focused on social media and local published media.

Free bulky waste collections could be booked between 8th and 26th February 2021, restrictions at the time of the campaign required there being at least 72 hours between a request for collection and it then taking place, with bagged waste restricted to just one bag.

The Community Engagement team were not able to host any workshops or events and were not able to organise any volunteer litter pick groups.

A period of snow also impacted on the early stages of the campaign as well as employees being required to self-isolate due to positive COVID tests.

Waste Management Data:

The impact of COVID on the ability to promote the campaign and engage with residents is reflected in a reduction in the total number of items that were collected compared to 2020's campaign as per Table 1 below.

Table 1.

	2019	2020	2021
Number of items collected	6,070	9,186	8,108
Amount of Extra Tonnes Collected	302.38	249.1	296.08
Average number of days between a request being made and collection - General Bulky Waste	6.79 Days	7.21 Days	6.92 Days
Average number of days between a request being made and collection - Electrical items	12.47 Days	6.26 Days	8.18 Days
Number of requests over 14 Days	473	15	0

While the number of items collected reduced there was an increase in overall tonnes collected, with an additional 46.98 tonnes of waste when compared to the 2020 campaign. The following reasons help explain the increase in tonnage:

- There has been a 15% increase in kerbside collected tonnage across Residual, Recycling, Glass and Garden waste services due to the covid-19 pandemic. This has seen a lot of residents depositing additional waste in their kerbside collections rather than visiting Household Recycling Centres. Therefore, while residents were asked to only place one additional sack out for collection, in reality any sacks presented were collected.
- Due to previous extra waste campaigns like the 'Bag it!' and 'Skip into Summer' during the lockdown months, residents became used to placing additional waste alongside their normal kerbside collections. This reduces the incentive for residents to recycle.

A clear success this year was that all the bulky items were collected within the 14 day service agreement, the first time this has been achieved, an achievement that is also reflected in the average collection times being within 6 to 8 working days.

Customer Service Data:

The number of phone calls received during the event has seen a year on year reduction, and this is reflected in the caller waiting times, which has also reduced, see Table 2 below. While there was a reduction in phone calls of around 32% compared to 2020 the seconds to answer calls also more than halved.

Table 2.

	2019	2020	2021
Number of Calls made to the Service	6,800	6,715 (-1.25%)	4,525 (-32.6%)
Percent of Calls Answered	73%	96%	98%
Seconds taken to Answer	181 Seconds	52 Seconds	22 Seconds

The number of visitors to the BIG spring clean webpage has remained high through the campaigns, though with a slight drop off in 2021, compared to 2020. This increase, along with a reduction in phone calls made to the service shows the move residents are making in the way that they chose to access the service with double the number of collection requests being made online this year compared to last. Mobile devices are now being used to book every 3 in 5 collections.

Table 3.

	2019	2020	2021
Number of Visitors to the BIG Spring Clean webpage	4,933	5,000	4,842
Bulky Waste Requests made Online	-	1,488	3,041
% of Customers visiting Webpage via Mobile Phone	65%	72%	75%
% Customers visiting Webpage via Desktop	20%	20%	18%
% Customers visiting Webpage via Tablet	15%	8%	7%

The Wider Impacts of the Spring Clean

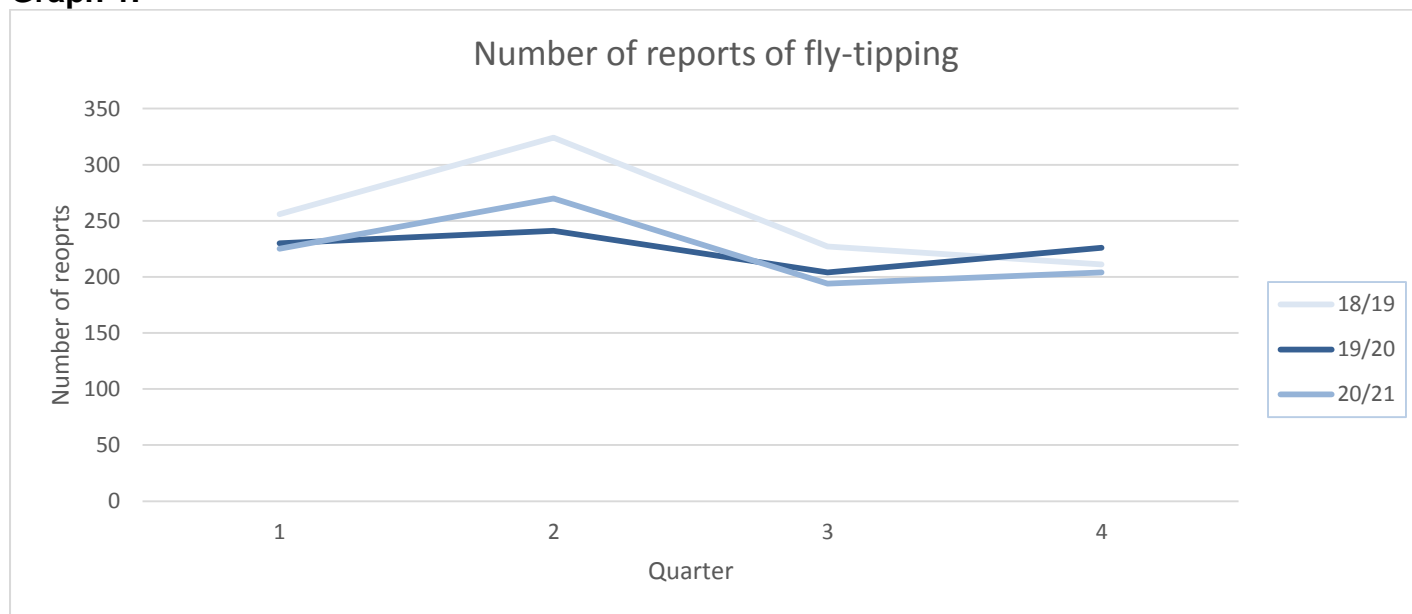
Whilst the campaign is an extremely busy period for the Neighbourhood and Environment Service, only about 7% of the properties within Ashfield take advantage of the free Bulky Waste Service, see Table 4 below. The number of return customers is also seeing a year on year increase, with a developing trend of a small cohort of properties that are primarily utilising the free bulky service, rather than it being used across the wider District.

Table 4.

	2019	2020	2021
Properties using campaign compared to whole District	2864 (5%)	4298 (7.5%)	3724 (6.5%)
'Return Customers'	442 (15.4%)	1,362 (31.7%)	1,803 (48.4%)
% of Customers who have used the Campaign and Bulky Service across the year	13%	10%	13%

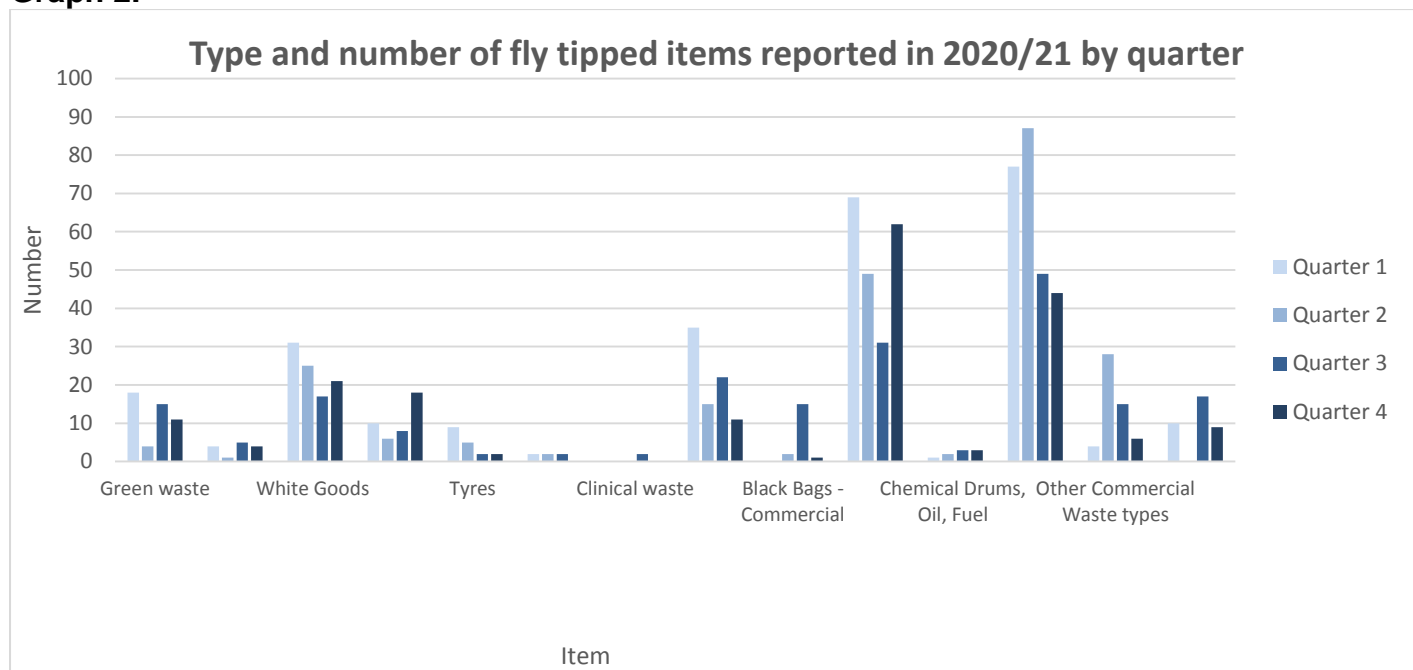
In relation to Fly tipping and the impact of repeated BIG Spring campaigns, 2019/20 saw the most improvement with an 11% reduction in reports. While there were more reports in Quarter 2 when compared to 2020, Quarter 4 saw the lowest number of fly tipping reports since the introduction of the yearly campaign, see Graph 1, below.

Graph 1.



However even with free bulky waste collections and bagged waste during the campaign, Quarter 4 in 2021 saw an increase in the number of fly tipping reports for these types of waste when compared to the previous quarters, see Graph 2 below.

Graph 2.



Even with the campaign, bulky items and white goods are still dominant in the top five categories for fly tipped waste and have been for the past 3 financial years across the District, please see Table 5 below.

Table 5.

Year	Prevalence of fly tipped waste
2020/21	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Black Bagged, Household Waste. 2. Bulky Household Waste (Sofas, mattresses, furniture). 3. White Goods. 4. Construction / Demolition. 5. Green Incidents (Cannabis Plant, tree cuttings etc).
2019/20	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bulky Household Waste (Sofas, mattresses, furniture). 2. Black Bagged, Household Waste. 3. White Goods. 4. Black Bags Commercial. 5. Construction / Demolition.
2018/19	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bulky Household Waste (Sofas, mattresses, furniture) 2. Black Bagged, Household Waste. 3. White Goods. 4. Construction / Demolition. 5. Other Commercial Waste Incidents.

Differences in Areas: Property Requests

While the number of properties using the BIG Spring clean in 2021 reduced across the District by under 16% when compared to the previous year's campaign, the demand from the Hucknall area almost remained unaffected, see Table 6 below.

Table 6.

	2019	2020	2021
Sutton	1,412	1,744	1,565
Kirkby	757	1,057	853
Hucknall	470	966	960
Rurals	303	523	326
Totals	2,942	4,290 (31.42%)	3,704 (-13.66%)

The number of properties accessing the free bulky waste collections during the campaign has been broken down by Ward to show the demand per community, see Table 7 below. The greatest demand in 2021 being the Leamington Ward in Sutton in Ashfield.

Table 7.

Area	Ward	% of BIG Spring Clean Users
Sutton in Ashfield	Leamington	10.59%
Kirkby in Ashfield	Abbey Hill	9.47%
Sutton in Ashfield	Carsic	8.88%
Sutton in Ashfield	Stanton Hill & Teversal	7.47%
Kirkby in Ashfield	Summit	6.75%
Rurals	Jacksdale	6.73%
Hucknall	Hucknall West	6.58%
Sutton in Ashfield	Skegby	6.56%
Sutton in Ashfield	Central and New Cross	6.51%
Sutton in Ashfield	Sutton Junction & Harlow Wood	6.45%
Kirkby in Ashfield	Larwood	6.10%
Sutton in Ashfield	Huthwaite & Brierley	5.98%
Hucknall	Hucknall South	5.95%
Sutton in Ashfield	Ashfields	5.38%
Kirkby in Ashfield	Annesley and Kirkby Woodhouse	5.34%
Rurals	Selston	5.24%
Hucknall	Hucknall North	5.21%
Hucknall	Hucknall Central	4.69%
Sutton in Ashfield	St Marys	4.66%
Rurals	Underwood	4.38%
Sutton in Ashfield	The Dales	4.34%
Kirkby in Ashfield	Kirkby Cross & Portland	4.12%
Kirkby in Ashfield	Kingsway	2.67%

The type of housing that took advantage of the campaign is listed below, nearly half of the requests coming from semi-detached housing: -

48% of requests originate from semi-detached housing.

26% of requests originate from terraced housing.

21% of requests originate from detached housing.

5% of requests originate from flats.

1% originates from care homes and other dwellings

Number of items collected per property

The number of items collected per property during the campaign in 2021 can be seen in Table 8. below. It shows that the largest number of requests received was for 1 item, with residents restricted to just 3 items for collection and 1 request through the campaign. However as the table below illustrates, some properties accessed the free collections more than once, with some having up to 7 items collected.

Table 8.

Number of items collected	Number of properties	% of those using the service
1	1764	45%
2	1361	35%
3	686	18%
4	73	2%
5	21	1%
6	13	0%
7	2	0%

Ashfield's overall Recycling performance

While COVID has created extra household waste due to school closures and home working, Ashfield's recycling figure was well below its 45% figure that was reached in 2016/17, see Table 9. below. While the figure rose slightly in 2020/21 compared to the previous two years, it does appear to have plateaued out.

Table 9.

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Total tonnage	46,636	45,418	43,673	43,463	50,349
% of Waste Recycled	45.32%	40.96%	36.35%	37.75%	37.87%

New Cross Day of Action

On the 25th March 2021 a day of action took place across the New Cross area of Sutton in Ashfield. The highly visible operation included staff from across Ashfield District Council who came together to improve the local environment following concerns from local residents.

The day focused on education, enforcement and improving the physical environment of the area, including an unadopted lane to the rear of Outram Street. While the lane is unadopted, the Council receives a large number of complaints about anti-social behaviour, dog fouling and fly tipping in respect of this location. Local residents have become increasingly frustrated with the perceived lack of action being taken by the Council.

The Council could have chosen to focus on taking action against those who are responsible for maintaining the lane, however this would have involved a significant amount of administration and time, which likely would not have addressed the complaints or delivered a long term improvement. Therefore a decision was taken to improve the lane, removing fly tipped material and levelling of the surface of the lane itself. Visits were also made to the businesses on the lane to ensure they were also managing their land and waste correctly. Work continues to take place to ensure that there is a lasting, long term improvement to the lane and neighbouring area.

BIG Spring Clean 2022 and proposals for future campaigns

While the offer of providing free bulky collections during the campaign is well received increasing numbers of households are now relying on the campaign to help manage their waste. In some cases, householders are hoarding items on their property in readiness for the next BIG spring clean.

Fly tipping is reducing in Ashfield, even during COVID when other Local Authorities have seen huge increases, showing the recent campaigns are working. Therefore, the approach taken in supporting residents in managing and disposing of bulky waste is having a positive effect, but the plateauing of our recycling performance indicates that a new approach is needed.

It is therefore proposed that the BIG Spring Clean 2022 is refocused on Communities and the Environment, using the campaign to tackle known grot spots and those areas that need some care and attention. The core message being on empowering Communities through education to maintain and feel pride in their local area, building on the day of action in New Cross. The innovative would be led by the Council's Community engagement team and supported by Neighbourhoods and Environment Service. Consultation would take place in Autumn to identify those areas that would be concentrated on, with the Council incorporating the work, over a 4 week period, into its planned programme of works, supporting volunteers with equipment and resources as well with items donated by third parties.

In addition, it is proposed that the following activities would take place:-

1. Collection of bagged waste (up to three sacks) during the campaign.
2. Flying skips taking place through targeted campaigns, in 2021 in late summer and autumn. A further review will take place on bulky collections that will allow residents to access free collections throughout the year rather than just being through the BIG Spring Clean campaign.
3. Education through littering picking, supporting every School in the District during the event and throughout the year, including on 'Ashfield Environment days'. These days will focus on engaging and inspiring both residents and business, using a mixture of education and

enforcement to create awareness on how their actions impact our environment, both locally and globally.

4. Wormeries to infant and junior schools to start engagement on food waste as we move to implementing food waste collections. Working to offer discounted composting bins and wormers to all residents.
5. The seeding of our first Bee Superhighway along the Teversal trail

The Bee Superhighway will create 'stepping-stones' and linkages between existing habitats through the creation of new Wildflower areas, improved pollinator friendly planting.

6. The seeding of our new wildflower beds throughout the District

To reduce our impact on the environment through mowing, residents would be consulted on where these should be planted in Autumn, with volunteers and schools offered the opportunity to help create them during the BIG Spring Clean 2022.

Implications

Corporate Plan:

The BIG Ashfield Spring Clean has proved to be an effective way of helping residents dispose of their additional waste and engage in supporting the clean-up effort in their communities. It has enabled businesses to participate in civic events and promoted good environmental behaviours. This along with tackling environmental crime has been established as an ongoing priority in the Council's Corporate Plan in the Cleaner and Greener and Safer and Stronger priority themes.

The proposals put forward in this report continue to support residents in disposing of their waste correctly and supporting communities in improving their local areas. The proposals also facilitate a greater engagement with community groups post Covid to promote neighbourhood self help.

Legal:

There are no legal issues identified in the report.

Finance:

Budget Area	Implication
General Fund – Revenue Budget	The revised BIG Spring Clean will be trailed in 2022 and it is anticipated that the cost will be contained within the existing budget. If there are any significant finance implications following the review of bulky waste collections a further paper will be brought to Cabinet.
General Fund – Capital Programme	n/a
Housing Revenue Account – Revenue Budget	n/a
Housing Revenue Account – Capital Programme	n/a

Risk:

Risk	Mitigation
The loss of income from bulky collections cannot be recovered	A review of how bulky waste is collected will be taking place to ensure that resources are used efficiently. While not part of the paper, this review is expected to identify ways of reducing the cost of the service, while improving the quality of service to residents by reducing the time it takes to collect items once a request as been made.
No or an insufficient number of areas are identified that need action	Areas will be identified by officers to ensure that work takes place over the 4 weeks and the campaign is a success
Too many areas are identified as needing action	Depending on the level of demand, areas will be prioritised based on number of requests and discussions with local Councillor's and the Executive. However, wherever possible, support would be offered outside the 4 weeks. Any areas not taken forward in 2022 could be planned for subsequent years.
Lack of volunteers	The Waste and Environment team will plan their work around the 4 weeks of the BIG Spring Clean 2022 to ensure that works can take place and the objectives of the campaign are met.

Human Resources:

There are no implications for this report.

Equalities:

An Equalities Impact Assessment Screening Form has been completed. There are no significant equality related issues identified.

Other Implications:

n/a

Reason(s) for Urgency

N/A

Reason(s) for Exemption

N/A

Background Papers

Cabinet Report 15th September 2020 - BIG Ashfield Spring Clean 2020 – Performance Report

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