



## Grounds Maintenance Scrutiny Group

### Background

Four customers from Cumbria met at Stafford Courts, Older Peoples Service in Whitehaven on 30<sup>th</sup> November with Ruth Walsh (Landscape Coordinator) and Colette Small (Involvement Advisor)

### Landscape Co-ordinators Update

The standard of work is quite good and the contractor needs to concentrate on the frequency of works.

Stuart Henderson has taken over from Alex as the Area Manager for Tivoli and will be invited to the first meeting in the New Year.

Programme of winter works and are ongoing, the contractor is currently maintaining hard landscaping areas and pruning winter shrub / hedges. They are making a tidy job from what we've seen and have been told these works need to be completed by the end of February before grass cutting is required again in March.

Trees will be inspected at Beck Green due to the age and type of the trees.

### Customer Feedback on Service Delivery

#### Neighbourhoods

Customers provided updates on service delivery performance for the following areas:

- **Aspatria** – grass and communal areas are a lot tidier. The contractor has cut the private land again which they shouldn't have. Ruth agreed to highlight this
- **Beck Green** – as far as grass cutting goes they haven't been too bad really. Shrub beds are well maintained and some trees have been removed which was needed
- **Broughton** – grass would benefit from being cut more frequently as it was long and consequently when the contractor cut the grass, lots of grass clumps were left
- **Thursby** – (feedback provide by text) the 12<sup>th</sup> cut was on 19<sup>th</sup> October and 4 cuts are outstanding to the end of the year. Unfortunately cars are still parking on the verges

The Richmond area will be monitored in future by Pam and she was provided with all the information required to monitor performance.

### Supported Services

Customers and colleagues provided updates on service delivery performance for eight Older Peoples services across Cumbria:

- **Walkmill Gardens** – the gardens look good because some customers maintain the flower beds. The shrub beds near the bin yard need cut back. The land next to the

scheme will be cut every month over the summer months. Some of the trees would benefit from being thinned out

- Feedback from 7 Older Peoples Services across the Cumbria region include:
  - grass cutting is adequate but there certainly hasn't been 16 cuts
  - shrub maintenance with the exception of Duddon Mews, is shocking however when we report back in February it may be a different picture
  - no shrub / weed treatment in any of the schemes
- Customers from 2 schemes are asking for a service charge refund due to the poor service received this year
- Tivoli are monitoring performance at some schemes and are asking for works to be signed off during the visits. It was agreed this needs to be replicated at all schemes

Customers recommend Ruth shares the performance updates with the contractor

### Achievements in 2018

Customers and colleagues shared their views on being involved with the scrutiny group and highlighted the following:

- Clear who point of contact is to address issues and a marvellous grounds maintenance co-ordinator
- Nice having the contact and feedback from customers which you know is genuine and saves time
- Educating the group about standards
- Some damage has been caused this year but it's been sorted out almost immediately
- Seeing changes taking effect. It's so lovely that customers want to make a difference, they are patient and stay positive throughout
- It's learning for me but not only that being kept up to date. The area I live in and the communication of it all makes me feel valued
- Giving customers the opportunity to voice any issues / concerns. Especially when a new contractor is delivering the service.
- We can share any information we have and we get a response straight away
- It's rewarding when you've achieved something to help someone else
- Personal contact with Home Group which makes a difference
- Working with customers throughout the region who are actively interested in what service is being delivered and knowing that Home Group will respond
- I wish the County Council would do as well as Home Group
- Improving the maps and areas which need maintained to make sure everyone gets the service they deserve
- After 6 years the vacant allotments have finally been cut which is brilliant and wouldn't have been sorted out without the scrutiny group

### Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> February 11.00am at Burnside Older Peoples Service, Wigton

Total Cost: £23.40 customer refreshments and travel expenses claimed