

**apse direct**

Association for Public Service Excellence

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# Lighting up frontline services

Reporting back from the Annual Seminar  
and Annual Service Awards in Edinburgh



## **Service Awards Winners**

See the winners and finalists of  
the APSE Service Awards 2018

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## **Food Growing in Parks**

Gillian Morgan, Sustain

**p24**

## **Maintaining the Roads in Winter**

City of Bradford Metropolitan District  
Council

**p26**



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# Editorial



Paul O'Brien  
Chief Executive, APSE

## Making a new generation of council housing a reality

Prime Minister Theresa May, to be fair showing humour and self-depreciation, arrived on stage busting her moves (well not quite...) to Dancing Queen. Perhaps 'Our House' by Madness would have been a more fitting tune as she went on to make an announcement that was music to the ears of local government: the lifting of the HRA cap, allowing councils to borrow to build council houses.

The lifting of the HRA cap is something that APSE has long campaigned for amongst other housing organisations including the Town and Country Planning Association, and the Association of Retained Council Housing. It has long been recognised as the most viable way that we can leverage the sums needed to genuinely start to deliver on a new generation of council housing. However, we can't allow the needle to get stuck on this particular record announcement.

The HRA move is to be welcomed but it cannot be about jam (or should that be The Jam?) Local councils are still desperate to know the details: When will it come into play? What happens to those who no longer have an HRA but are still in need of new council housing?

And what happens to the Right to Buy? In Scotland, and Wales more recently, Right to Buy has been effectively abolished. This may not be universally popular amongst council tenants. The scheme has an enduring popularity amongst tenants; its aspirational qualities allow people to get onto the home ownership ladder. But, as a matter for public finance, Right to Buy strips out the most viable and highest value properties and the receipts do not deliver enough funds back to councils to replace the properties sold.

In short the Prime Minister has given us the headline 'A' side of the record but, like most of us children of the 80s know, it's the 'B' side that can become the classic that changes our perspective on a band. For local councils, the 'B' side to this HRA record announcement must be a fundamental rethink on Right to Buy. Anything less means we will be sending out an SOS to Mrs May...

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# Report Back

A round up of APSE advocacy and events



APSE's Mo Baines with Shadow Minister for Employment Mike Amesbury MP at the Labour Party Conference in Liverpool.

## All you need is APSE

APSE hosted a round-table discussion at the Labour Party conference to support its ongoing work on insourcing. Chaired by Cllr John Kerr Brown, our new national chair, this event explored the initial findings of the research due to be published later this year. A strategic forum was also held in Liverpool during the course of the conference to share the findings of APSE research on New Municipalism.

## In pictures: The winners of the Annual Service Awards 2018

APSE is delighted to present a gallery of the winners from the APSE Annual Service Awards 2018. The gallery can be accessed via the Annual Seminar hub on the APSE website. The gallery also contains links to video clips of the winners. These clips have been uploaded to the Annual Service Awards 2018 playlist on the APSE YouTube channel.

## Future Communities: Greener, Cleaner, Smarter

In a unique communications partnership, APSE and ITN Productions present a news and long-form current affairs-style programme highlighting APSE's vision to encourage healthy, environmentally friendly and smart solutions for local communities. The news-style piece is anchored by award-winning journalist and presenter Alice Beer, and combines key interviews and reports with sponsored editorial profiles from leading organisations. For more information go to page 22.

## Ewe won't be disappointed!

APSE, in collaboration with bbits, has recently launched its LAMS quality inspection system. For more information about this simple and effective performance measuring tool, and to view our short and easy-to-follow tutorial videos, visit the Performance Networks hub on the APSE website for more information.

## Congratulations!

APSE would like to say congratulations to APSE Principal Advisor Lorna Box who was recently married. Lorna can now be contacted on [lholland@apse.org.uk](mailto:lholland@apse.org.uk)



Cllr Giles McNeill chaired the strategic forum at the Conservative Party Conference in Birmingham on 2 October.

## Property Matters!

APSE hosted a fringe event at the Conservative Conference 2018 in Birmingham on Tuesday 2 October to discuss the value of property and assets investment in supporting local council income generation. Cllr Giles McNeill chaired this session for APSE. You can read more about our research with CIPFA property services by visiting the APSE website.

## Universal Infant Free School Meals Project

In collaboration with LACA, APSE is developing a State of the Nation report on the impact of Universal Free School Meals. There will be a Parliamentary launch of the report on 13 November 2018 and members will receive an invite to the event in due course.

## The Future of Funding

APSE Chief Executive Paul O'Brien chaired a major local government finance conference in London on 10 October. The conference offered a platform for delegates to assess how local authorities can enhance efficiency, commercialisation and financial sustainability across their services. Speakers included: Alex Skinner, Director of Local Government Finance at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government; Aileen Murphie, Director of DCLG and Local Government Value for Money at the National Audit Office (NAO); and Sarah Pickup, Deputy Chief Executive for the Local Government Association (LGA).

## Excellent response to the Parks Action Group survey

Thank you to all of those who participated in the recent PAG survey. The information collected will enable APSE and the wider PAG to develop suggestions for bridging gaps in training which

will be forwarded to government. A summary of the findings was presented at the APSE Refuse, Recycling, Street Scene, Grounds and Parks Seminar 2018. Delegates present were able to contribute to the findings further. For more information, please contact Wayne Priestley on [wpriestley@apse.org.uk](mailto:wpriestley@apse.org.uk).

## Making sense of devolution

APSE Chief Executive Paul O'Brien addressed a TUC Conference on devolution and combined authorities in London on 4 October.

## Scotland

### How to bridge the funding gap?

At the SNP Conference in Glasgow on Monday 8 October, APSE hosted a panel discussion which asked whether councils acting more commercially are able to help bridge the funding gap and deliver on big public policy outcomes. Chaired by Cllr Les Sharp, the panel included APSE Chief Executive Paul O'Brien, Ivan McKee MSP, Minister for Trade, Investment and Innovation, and Cllr Cecil Meiklejohn, Leader of Falkirk Council.

### SOLACE Conference

APSE Chief Executive Paul O'Brien was in Clydebank on 21 September to address the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers Scotland (SOLACE Scotland) Conference. Paul spoke to delegates about commercialisation in local government; providing examples of how councils are reinventing the way they deliver frontline services.

## Meet our new member of staff!

### Charlotte Banks, Energy Research and Project Officer



*What is your professional background?*

Before joining APSE I worked at the University of Manchester, in a student engagement role. My role involved designing, organising and promoting events for students such as sustainability and social justice workshops. Prior to that I obtained an undergraduate degree in Geography and a

masters in Environmental Governance.

*What is your role at APSE?*

My role at APSE is Energy Research and Project Office for APSE Energy. I am responsible for helping to boost the work of APSE Energy, expanding the membership and offering support to help councils move forward with the energy agenda.

*What is your favourite thing about your role?*

My favourite thing about my role is researching new developments and opportunities within the energy sector and relating this to local government. I enjoy learning about lots of incredible case study projects that are being conducted by local authorities and having the opportunity to facilitate ideas sharing between councils.

*Where can APSE members meet you?*

I will mainly be based in the APSE Manchester office, you can contact me by emailing [cbanks@apse.org.uk](mailto:cbanks@apse.org.uk) or phoning 0161 772 1810. I will also be attending APSE Energy events so I'm looking forward to seeing you there!



*A packed room hears from the panel at the SNP Conference fringe event hosted by APSE. The panel included Paul O'Brien, Minister for Trade, Investment and Innovation, Ivan McKee MSP, Leader of Falkirk Council Cllr Cecil Meiklejohn and APSE Scottish Chair Cllr Les Sharp.*

## Northern Ireland

### NILGA Conference 2018

APSE was once again delighted to sponsor the NILGA Conference 2018 and Local Government Awards Northern Ireland 2018 on 11 October in Armagh City. Delegates were invited to visit the APSE stand where Debbie Johns, Head of APSE's Performance Networks service, was on hand to share information and advice on getting the most from their data. APSE Chief Executive Paul O'Brien also addressed the Conference on excellence in service delivery. After the Conference was the Local Government Awards Northern Ireland 2018. The full list of winners can be viewed on the Northern Ireland section of the APSE website.



### Market Engagement Event: Underground Refuse Systems

A one day event at the Business Centre, City Chambers, Edinburgh  
Tuesday 13 November 2018



Business Centre, City Chambers, 253 High Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1YT

# On your marks, get set, go!

## The APSE Scotland Commercialisation Competition is now open!

Does your local authority/ department have a potential commercialisation idea you would like the opportunity to take to business case completion? Then this competition is for you!

Scottish local authorities are invited to take part by putting forward an A4 outline of a commercial idea - remember your authority can submit more than one. The winner will then receive 5 days of APSE Solutions support to help turn your business idea into a reality.

### Competition Process

Councils will have until the 31 October to provide their outline proposal before the competition is closed and the assessment process starts.

Local authorities can enter one or more idea for consideration. All entries will be assessed by an independent panel, the panel will be looking at the following criteria:

*How innovative is the idea?*

*Could this be scaled up to benefit all 32 local authorities?*

*How practical is the idea to implement?*

Once the winning idea has been agreed by the independent panel, the successful local authority will be contacted to begin the next steps.

### Competition Prize

APSE Solutions will provide five days of consultancy to put together a business case for the winning local authority. It should be noted that these five days will be a mixture of two on-site and 3 desk-based days. The winning local authority will be required to commit some time and resources to aid the consultancy team. This is so the winner can receive the maximum value from this consultancy and put their business idea into practice.

### How to Enter

This competition is FREE to enter. To register your interest and receive an application visit the APSE Scotland hub on the APSE website. Once you have registered your interest you will receive an application pack which should be completed and returned to Laura McNab on [Lmcnab@apse.org.uk](mailto:Lmcnab@apse.org.uk) by close of play on Wednesday 31 October 2018.

### Any Questions?

If you need more information contact the APSE Scotland office on 01698 459 051

## Good luck!

## New APSE Approved Partners: Welcome **Hoopers Genealogists!**

# Hoopers

The international probate genealogists  
Trusted for generations

Congratulations and a warm welcome to Hoopers Genealogists, who have been confirmed as APSE Approved Partners.

Since 1923, when Alfred Hooper founded the company that bears his name, Hoopers have set the benchmark with their professional approach to the complexities of probate genealogy. Their London-based team of researchers offer a collective wealth of expertise; gaining Hoopers Genealogists a reputation as a genealogy provider of choice for many local authorities.

Speaking of this new partnership, APSE Chief Executive Paul O'Brien, said, "Whether it is limiting the cost involved in dealing with a public funeral or ensuring next of kin are given an opportunity to attend a funeral, Hoopers Genealogists are specialists in offering fast, expert research assistance to local councils. I am in no doubt that, judging by their excellent record, they will offer enormous value to everyone connected to APSE."

Hoopers have a dedicated public sector research team that are experts in Section 46 of the Public Health Act - Funeral Administration. All of the work provided to the public sector is free of charge regardless of the estate value.

Kevin Edmondson, Chief Executive of Hoopers Genealogists, said of their new Approved Partner status, "We are really looking forward to working closely with APSE. With our long-established reputation we pride ourselves on our dedication to the task, and we are keen to develop relationships with local authorities and fellow partners for the benefit of everyone involved. These are sure to be very exciting times!"

For more information about the services Hoopers Genealogists provides, visit [www.hoopers.co.uk](http://www.hoopers.co.uk)



APSE National Secretary Anita Brown and APSE Chief Executive Paul O'Brien present Hooper's Chris Grogan and Johnathan Wright with the Approved Partner Certificate at the Annual Seminar.



# Taking housing to the max!

*Larissa Reid, Executive Director at Brighton and Hove City Council talks us through the steps her council is taking to maximise its existing housing stock and improve housing quality.*

Brighton & Hove is a popular place to live, work and visit. However, our city is a place of contrast, with areas of extreme affluence and areas of deprivation where residents can experience significant inequality compared to the rest of the city - in terms of access to suitable housing, employment, health and life expectancy. Pressures within the city include an increasing population, high property prices, a shortage of affordable homes in the city as well as limited opportunities for new development within the city's boundaries.

Against this backdrop the Council is landlord to 11,500 tenants and manages 3,000 leasehold properties. With a can-do attitude the Council is committed to increasing the stock of social housing for those who need it and for ensuring that residents live in quality homes delivered through a balanced investment programme.

Brighton & Hove has a strong track record of improving housing supply through using assets, borrowing and collaboration to enable housing investment. Examples of our initiatives include an in-house New Homes for Neighbourhoods programme

providing at least 500 new homes on council owned land and working in partnership with Hyde Housing on a living wage joint venture to deliver 1,000 lower cost homes to rent and buy. Maximising our existing assets is also key as seen through a Hidden Homes Programme which refurbishes and converts under used or unused spaces within our existing council stock into new homes. Recently the council has expanded its Home Purchase Policy to include the purchase of affordable housing units provided on new developments in the city (S106 sites) giving another route to providing affordable housing in the city.

Recent government announcements on raising the HRA borrowing gap provides the council with an opportunity to bid, with successful bids providing the chance to accelerate the council's new build programme. Outcomes from current government consultations on use of Right to Buy Receipts and rents for social housing also have the potential to offer more options and certainty, helping us to realise our ambitions.

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**Recent government announcements on raising the HRA borrowing gap provides the council with an opportunity to bid, with successful bids providing the chance to accelerate the council's new build programme.**

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Equally important is ensuring that the council invests in its homes and neighbourhoods to provide safe, good quality housing, with this at the heart of the Council's Housing Asset Management Strategy. We involved our residents in helping to shape this strategy and the service delivery priorities. Ongoing consultation with our tenants and leaseholders takes place through a large number of different forums and settings, with residents involved during procurement of key contracts, right through to the scrutiny of performance alongside us. An example where residents have directly influenced the quality of their homes can be seen when they prioritised

the city wide lift replacement programme helping to cut repair costs.

The Council has a strong framework to ensure continued improvement in compliance and safety in homes. We are proud to have achieved 100% gas safe certification across homes by working closely with residents and contractors over several years. Prior to, and since the Grenfell Tower tragedy, we have undertaken a large number of actions to address fire safety, working closely with East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service. So far sprinklers have been installed in one sheltered housing block with consultations to follow on other blocks.

All investment programmes include consideration of sustainability related issues with energy use and carbon reductions a key area. Energy costs have been an ongoing area of concern for residents, and this dovetails with our commitment to reduce carbon emissions from our stock. Our progress to date includes the installation of over 300 solar PV arrays on homes with building fabric energy efficiency improvements incorporated into all capital projects e.g. re-roofing, windows and rewires. The Council are also utilising new technology to carry out an Internet of Things pilot monitoring the performance of a building, focusing on humidity and temperature sensing – before and after proposed refurbishments.

Grenfell showed us that policy and investment commitments need to be able to respond to changing circumstances and that a medium and longer term proactive strategy is required to help plan for future capital programmes.

Moving forward the Council is developing its proposals for the future delivery of responsive repairs, empty properties, planning maintenance and major capital projects from April 2020. This provides the Council with a unique chance to do things differently; building on successes we've had to date, increasing social value and again listening to what residents tell us they want to see.

- *Brighton and Hove City Council's Head of Housing Strategy, Martin Reid, gave a presentation on maximising housing stock at the APSE Building Maintenance and Repairs Seminar 2018 in Stoke on 4 October. The presentation is available for download from the APSE website.*





## Simply does it: Demystifying the recycling process

Simon Ellin, Chief Executive of The Recycling Association, gives an overview of the UK's recycling practices and processes; where we are and where we need to get to if we are to achieve better outcomes.

We are in unprecedented recycling times. In all the years I've worked in the recycling sector, I have never seen people so determined to do the right thing. But then neither have I seen the processes, practices and policies employed under such stringent scrutiny either.

On the plus side, all parties in the supply chain are upping their games. From retailers and packaging producers to reprocessors and local authorities, everyone is looking for the new solution that will allow us to continue with our consumer lifestyles while simultaneously reducing negative environmental impacts.

Innovation is all around. But we need to tread carefully to ensure we don't just replace one problem with another further down the line.

At The Recycling Association, we believe that new solutions need to focus on simplifying the UK's recycling practices and processes, as opposed to just adding another strata of options. And local authorities are a key voice in calling for greater simplicity as they are on the recycling frontline, dealing with consumer

confusion, education, participation and inadvertent bin contamination.

I am in no doubt that complexity hampers the UK's post-consumer recycling. But changes are afoot.

Retailers, product manufacturers and packaging producers are now acutely aware that the materials they choose and the designs they agree can make or break recycling. They can be in no doubt that stream lining the number of materials used and cutting back on multi-material/composite designs will make it easier to achieve better outcomes. Especially in the face of the UK Plastics Pact which has targeted 2025 as the year when:

- all plastic will be reusable, recyclable or compostable;
- 70% of plastic packaging will be recycled or composted;
- single use plastics are eliminated;
- and plastic packaging will contain, on average, 30% recycled content.

In some instances, changes that bring us all closer to these goals are happening quickly. For example, some supermarkets have banished black plastic from their shelves while others have increased the quantity of loose fruit and veg available and ditched film-based bags in favour of paper alternatives.

Longer term, the impacts of preferred lists of materials, such as that issued by Tesco, signifies a move towards sustainable simplification. Here they commit to only using packaging materials that are recyclable, giving them a clear view of those items that need to be redesigned and replaced.

For local authorities, and their associated recycling partners, this should make life much, much easier. Less product variation will make it easier to give definitive answers to householders about whether something can or cannot be recycled.

But that's just the start. Less material variation should facilitate a pathway to a more unified collections approach whereby the same materials are collected regardless of location. If every local authority collected the same material consumer confusion and accidental contamination would be a thing of the past.

Furthermore, it would make it easier to provide clear, consistent and easy to understand labelling. Rather than telling the householder that a material is recyclable in some areas the label would have a simple

"recycle me" or "No I cannot be recycled" message. Quite apart from helping people to get the right bin, it would also influence shopper decisions. It would also provide the bedrock for a more reliable, home grown, material supply network.

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**Rather than telling the householder that a material is recyclable in some areas the label would have a simple "recycle me" or "No I cannot be recycled" message. Quite apart from helping people to get the right bin, it would also influence shopper decisions.**

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And this last point is critical as manufacturers' desire to incorporate recycled content into new products and packaging is growing at a remarkable pace, with demand (and kudos) for home-grown supplies.

It is our belief that local authorities can become the architects of a new, simpler and more unified collections system that provides this circular feedstock for UK manufacturers. There's a long journey ahead to get to this point, and I have no doubt that we'll head off down some blind alleys along the way.

We know that operationally, things have never been more difficult. Ten years of austerity have taken their toll. But the supply chain is now more on board than ever before. Perhaps local authorities can maximise some of that support and enthusiasm to drive through a simpler system from which we can all benefit.

- *Simon spoke at the APSE Refuse, Recycling, Street Scene, Grounds and Parks Seminar 2018 on 18 October. For more information about the seminar, please contact Wayne Priestley on [wpriestley@apse.org.uk](mailto:wpriestley@apse.org.uk)*





apse

# annual seminar

# 2018

## **Report back**

*A quick look at this year's excellent and innovative speakers*

## **Service Awards**

*Check out the winners and finalists of this year's prestigious APSE Service Awards, which celebrate excellence in local government*

## **Message from APSE's National Chair**

*A welcome message for members from the incoming National Chair, Councillor John Kerr-Brown*



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# Annual Seminar 2018 Report Back

Missed this year's annual seminar? We've put together a summary that captures the two-day programme of presentations, workshops and discussions on delivering greener, cleaner and smarter frontline services.



Steve Thomas, WLGA Chief Executive, takes to the podium for the opening symposium. Joining him on the panel are (L-R) Michael Payne of the LGA, Gail Macgregor of COSLA, Derek McCallan of NILGA and Paul O'Brien.

Held in the city that inspired Harry Potter, this year's APSE Annual Seminar proved a cauldron of ideas; offering delegates a unique opportunity to discuss the big issues and challenges in the local government sector.

The host venue for this year's seminar was the extraordinarily elegant Edinburgh Assembly Rooms. With its crystal chandeliers and giant gilt mirrors, this late 18th century building provided a spectacular backdrop to a seminar bubbling with examples of best practice and spellbinding advice on frontline service improvements.

## Opening Symposium: Meeting the challenges and developing solutions

Opening up the Seminar, Leader of Edinburgh City Council Cllr Adam McVey welcomed delegates to the city, and voiced his confidence that the event would bring out the very best in local government. Session one opened with a panel discussion exploring the challenges and opportunities for local government across the UK. First up was APSE Chief Executive Paul O'Brien, who opened by outlining the major financial and policy challenges facing local government. Up next was Cllr Michael Payne, Deputy Chair of the LGA, who expanded on the difficulties facing frontline services in England; calling for an end to 60 pence in every pound being taken from local councils.

After Michael, Cllr Gail Macgregor Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) Resources Spokesperson, made the case for a Transient Visitor Tax to help alleviate the pressure on council services in Scotland. Citing evidence of its effectiveness across a range of European countries, Gail highlighted that the TVT would not be a Scotland-wide tax, but a tax that could be introduced locally if the circumstances were right.

Gail was followed by Steve Thomas, Chief Executive of the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) who gave a tour of all things Cymraeg. Most notably, Steve spoke about the need for a social care levy in Wales as, according to figures released by the Health Foundation, local authority adult social care expenditure will need to increase by about 75% by 2030-31 to keep up with increasing demand.

The final speaker for this panel was Derek McCallan, Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA). In his presentation on the challenges confronting Northern Ireland's councils, Derek noted how authorities are raising around 66p in every pound to fund their services. Derek then stressed how the value of local services is increasingly significant given 600 days without a functioning Assembly.

## Future Neighbourhoods: Environmental challenges

Speakers in the second panel went on to explore the ways local government can help build a sustainable future through reinventing waste collection. First Stuart Murray, from Zero Waste Scotland, produced some interesting research results into deposit return schemes. These included the many operational efficiencies that occur from collecting less materials and emptying fewer litter bins. Delegates were then presented with various methods of better waste collection as Head of APSE Solutions Andy Mudd talked about rethinking waste from collection to disposal. Rounding off the session, Taliesen Maynard, Head of Waste and Infrastructure for the Welsh Government, gave an overview of Wales's recycling performance to date; the obstacles, the achievements and the ambitious plans for the future.

## Future Neighbourhoods: Housing and Public Realm

Continuing with the theme of building neighbourhoods fit for the future, Henry Smith of the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) shared some alarming survey results on housing need. However, on a more positive note, Henry observed that 66% of councils have a direct housing company or shared joint venture; highlighting how councils are being innovative when it comes to the chronic UK housing shortage.

Up next was Nick Grayson, Climate Change and Sustainability Manager at Birmingham City Council, who spoke eloquently about



Neil McInroy of CLES talks delegates through community wealth building, with particular focus on the Preston model.

the need to re-imagine our Victorian industrial heritage if public parks are to be safeguarded and the government's 25-year environmental plan is to be realised. Our final panellist of the day, Neil McInroy, Chief Executive of CLES, looked at how councils can build wealth into their communities. Citing the success of Preston City Council, Neil stressed the importance of anchor institutions – universities, schools, hospitals – in supporting local businesses that can then redistribute wealth in local economies.

Day one was capped off with a Workshop Session which involved five special operationally-focused hubs. These forums looked in detail at innovation, the latest industry developments and technologies; with a strong focus on how local authorities across the UK are improving their frontline services.

## New Municipalism: Leadership and a culture of action

The first session of day two – Session 4 – opened with Professor Steven Griggs providing an overview of his latest collaborative research with APSE: 'The New Municipalism: Taking back entrepreneurship'. Professor Griggs listed a number of examples of local authorities throughout the UK creating profit for a purpose; intervening in markets to deliver outcomes for residents that go beyond financial benefits.

Expanding on the theme of civic enterprise, delegates also heard from Laura Church, Corporate Director of Place and Infrastructure at Luton Council. From property investments to council-owned companies such as Foxhall Homes and London Luton airport, Laura spoke about the success of new municipalism in action and the importance of a commercial strategy.

Next in the session, Gavin Stevenson, Chief Executive of Dumfries and Galloway Council, discussed creating infrastructure for jobs, skills and business growth. Though the Borderlands Growth Deal was the primary focus of the presentation, Gavin also encouraged delegates to be far more vocal in making the case to Westminster and devolved assemblies for more powers and resources if the huge amount of economic potential latent in communities across the UK is to be fully realised.

## Commercially savvy but publicly minded

Our first speaker of this session was Debbie Sutton, Amenities Manager at the Highland Council, who explained why her council had made the decision to bring public conveniences and grass cutting services back in-house. Debbie then offered recommendations for other councils who are thinking of insourcing (you can read more about this on page 23).

Energy in local government was the topic of discussion for our next speaker, David Kilduff, of APSE Approved Partner Walker Morris LLP. David provided the legal perspective to a range of issues such as white labelling arrangements, tackling fuel poverty and how to make old stock energy efficient.

David Bentley, Head of Property at CIPFA, took delegates on a tour of property and assets investments; reminding those in attendance of the need to set parameters for effective governance and managing risk.

The final speakers of the session were Alistair Buchan and Darren Richardson, Chief Executive and Head of Infrastructure and Strategic Projects respectively at Orkney Islands Council, who explained how their council was overcoming austerity through innovation. Their presentation was a case study in how the Council have made the most of their USP: alternative fuel production and port fees for cruise ships.



(L-R) New National Chair John Kerr-Brown, Laura Church of Luton Council, Professor Steven Griggs of De Montfort University and Gavin Stevenson of Dumfries and Galloway Council debated the new municipalism in Session 4.

## The local government leadership forum

For the penultimate session, Neil Schneider, Chief Executive at Stockton-on-Tees Council, asked what local government can learn from Bruce Springsteen. With 1300 fewer council staff than ten years ago but a workload that has doubled, Neil spoke about how, in spite of this, the council had still achieved some amazing transformations. One particularly inspiring story involved the Council's remarkable work with Lanark Close care home; demonstrating local government's commitment to consistently delivering for the most vulnerable in society.

Echoing Neil's presentation, Elma Murray, Chief Executive of APSE Overall council of the Year 2017 North Ayrshire Council, spoke eloquently and enthusiastically about how true leadership involves delivering services with focus, passion and inspiration. Ultimately for Elma, effective leadership boils down to asking what your communities want and making sure it happens.

Rounding off session 6, delegates were taken on a trip to the clouds as we were joined by James Smith from Google Cloud Solutions. James explained why some councils – namely Manchester City Council – have decided to transition to Google platforms like G Suite and the AI capabilities of Google Cloud; taking full advantage of emerging technologies.

## Greener, Cleaner, Smarter

Our final session of this year's annual seminar ended on a sweet note as delegates were treated to a sneak preview of APSE and ITN's latest collaborative programme, Future Communities: Greener, Cleaner, Smarter, which delegates enjoyed with a pick'n mix in hand! To learn more about this collaboration, please turn to page 22.

If you would like to view any of the speakers' presentations, please visit the APSE website. Alternatively, email Vicky Starmer on [vstarmer@apse.org.uk](mailto:vstarmer@apse.org.uk)



Elma Murray, Chief Executive of North Ayrshire Council talks leadership in Session 6. Joining her on the panel is Paul O'Brien and Neil Schneider of Stockton-on-Tees Council.



**Cllr John Kerr-Brown**  
Warrington Borough  
Council

**The summer of 2019 will be the 20th anniversary of the relaunch of the association as APSE... I will be bringing forward ideas as to how we celebrate not only this important milestone, but the contribution APSE has made to local government over this period.**

## A message from APSE National Chair 2018-2019 Cllr John Kerr-Brown

It is a privilege to once again serve as APSE's national chair and to take over that role following the superb leadership shown by my predecessor Cllr Archie Dryburgh, who was supported by Ronnie Dempster of Dumfries and Galloway Council. I myself will be ably supported by Anita Brown of Stockton-on-Tees-Council who has kindly agreed to act as APSE's National Secretary.

There are huge pressures which continue to face local government but I believe that APSE is uniquely placed to support our local government family. From our expertise on frontline services, through to our prominent research programme on the issues facing local councils at a strategic level, the Association is going from strength to strength. It is however only fitting that I set out my vision for the coming year.

First of all as our member councils look to develop more sustainable models for the future, including innovative service delivery and a viable basis for local finances, APSE will continue to invest heavily in our research programme. Our work on the concept of 'New Municipalism' bringing together the public policy themes of housing, finance, neighbourhoods, environmental challenges, digitalisation, the workforce and of course the implications of Brexit will be the platform to link together these public policy issues and explore innovative solutions.

It is also my aim to ensure that our core APSE services of membership resources, performance networks, solutions, training and energy that are the bedrock of APSE continue to develop and expand. In line with APSE's business plan these services, all provided on a not-for-profit basis, offer local

councils an ethical and expert alternative in the confusing local government marketplace. Our services have never veered off the pathway of supporting local councils and remain highly valued across local government.

Continuing the theme of our support to local councils it is of course recognised across the sector that APSE has led the way over the past couple of decades on ideas around Commercialisation and Municipal Entrepreneurship. Whilst many other sector organisations are now focusing their attention to this area, we aim to continue to be at the forefront of what is a significant part of the solution to many of the problems local government faces. We will support this agenda with our commercialisation networks for our members, learning and sharing best practice, through our research programme, and of course through our ethical consultancy, APSE Solutions, which leads the market on income generation strategies, and its knowledge on trading and charging powers for local councils.

Finally, the summer of 2019 will be the 20th anniversary of the relaunch of the association as APSE. At that point in time we sought to implement our millennium charter and we started to build many of the services that our members use today. I will be bringing forward some ideas to National Council as to how we celebrate not only this important milestone but the contribution that APSE has made to local government over this period. As well as a time for celebration it will be poignant to reflect back on the journey of local government and the resilience we have shown as a sector in recent years. We would welcome your thoughts and reflections to help in our preparations.



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**2018**

**Celebrating the very best in frontline services**

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**YOTTA**  
FROM DATA TO DECISIONS

## Best Workforce Initiative

Kindly sponsored by UNISON



### CB&PS - Best Workforce Initiative

Recognising best practice is sometimes overlooked internally, even more so within a multi-layered organisation. Frequently we look outward for that illusive “silver bullet” to improve our ever evolving customer services. The City and County of Swansea Council aims to reverse this trend by replicating its best practice apprenticeship program and training

### Finalists

Birmingham City Council  
City and County of Swansea Council  
City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council  
Fife Council  
Harrogate Borough Council  
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council  
South Ayrshire Council

Winner: City and County of Swansea Council

approach for all existing employees across its service provision. In addition the Authority Wide approach to Apprenticeship & Traineeship Strategy will magnify the impact of future “fit for purpose” resourcing, offering equality and inclusion.

## Best Housing, Regeneration or New Build Initiative

Kindly sponsored by Jessup Brothers Ltd



### Infrastructure Housing: No-one Left Behind

Barking and Dagenham’s submission focuses on the development of a new, innovative and highly creative initiative by Barking and Dagenham Council to create an environment that brings housing opportunities for all income levels. This initiative goes beyond building new homes (we

### Finalists

Bolsover District Council / Robert Woodhead Ltd  
Caerphilly County Borough Council  
Cheshire West and Chester Council  
Flintshire County Council  
Hull City Council  
London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

Winner: London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

already have 60,000 homes planned) and beyond PRS development (we already have more PRS than all London Boroughs combined). This is a truly fundamental rethink of how councils in London support generation.

## Best Efficiency and Transformation Initiative

Kindly sponsored by Toltec



### Smart Catering System (Evolve)

The partnership developed a Smart Catering System designed for use by the public sector. The web based system used in Infant, Junior and Primary schools, ensures children receive the pre-ordered meal of their choice, within lunch service time scales. The systems’ technology reduces queues, engages pupils and assists meal uptake, whilst increasing debt

### Finalists

Cheshire West & Chester Council  
Kirklees Council  
Lancaster City Council  
South Hams District Council and West Devon Borough Council  
Suffolk Coastal District Council and Waveney District Council  
Telford & Wrekin Council  
Trafford Council / Wigan Council

Winner: Trafford Council / Wigan Council

control and efficiency, and reducing waste. There is added reassurance to parents, school/ kitchen as dietary and allergen needs trigger warning alerts at key points in the process.

## Best Health and Well-being Initiative (incl. Social Care)

Kindly sponsored by UNISON



### Refurbishment to Sheltered Accommodation at Holloway Court and Margaret Vine Court

The project transformed 92 'flats' for older, vulnerable people across 2 sheltered schemes, both in desperate need of major investment, with obsolete, inadequate layouts. Through successful delivery with effective programming, innovation, consultation and partnership working the

### Finalists

- Cheshire West and Chester Council
- Derbyshire County Council
- Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
- East Riding of Yorkshire Council
- Exeter City Council
- Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
- Telford & Wrekin Council
- Warrington Borough Council

Winner: Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

remodelling; provided 100 larger, modern, affordable new homes; breathed new life into the community; retained valuable local assets; delivered national and local priorities; and provided needed homes cheaper than new build.

## Best Public/Private Partnership Working Initiative

Kindly sponsored by Walker Morris



### Team North Ayrshire

The Team North Ayrshire Approach has revolutionised how business support is delivered. The move away from historic grant led transactional approaches to a demand led relationship based approach has shown to be the way forward. The approach brings together all partners to deliver

### Finalists

- Flintshire County Council
- Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service
- Lancaster City Council
- North Ayrshire Council
- Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
- Warrington Borough Council

Winner: North Ayrshire Council

the best support in Scotland and breaks down the barriers of national vs local and builds a model of co-creation.

## Best Collaborative Working Initiative (with other public sector or third sector)

Kindly sponsored by Invotra



### The Telford Land Deal

Through the collaboration of Telford and Wrekin Council, Homes England (HE) and the Marches LEP, the Telford Land Deal has transformed the local investment market establishing a new model for reinvestment of public land receipts to accelerate delivery of new homes and jobs and support local regeneration. After 18 months the initiative has delivered £23m of

### Finalists

- Durham County Council
- Liverpool City Council
- North Lanarkshire Council
- Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
- St Helens Council
- Suffolk Coastal District Council and Waveney District Council
- Telford & Wrekin Council

Winner: Telford & Wrekin Council

land sales, attracted £236m of private sector investment, created 1000 jobs and 600 new homes.

## Best Commercialisation and Entrepreneurship Initiative

Kindly sponsored by Licence Check



### Hull Old Town Grant Scheme: Breathing new life into Hull's Historic Heart

Hull's historic Old Town has long suffered from a lack of investment in its commercial premises, a situation compounded by changing retail patterns and the listed status of its buildings. These challenges are being overcome through a grant scheme funded by Hull City Council and the

### Finalists

Aylesbury Vale District Council  
Birmingham City Council  
Hull City Council  
London Borough of Barking and Dagenham  
North Tyneside Council  
Warrington Borough Council

### Winner: Hull City Council

Humber LEP that is providing business start-up/ growth and property improvement grants that are transforming the city's historic core into a bustling visitor destination.

## Best Community and Neighbourhood Initiative (incl. Community Safety)

Kindly sponsored by Woodhead Group



### Made in North Tyneside (MINT)

Made in North Tyneside is a comprehensive programme of enterprise support which addresses the historic low levels of business start-up within the locality and introduces innovative delivery methods to inspire entrepreneurial activity. The project has supported over 5,000 potential

### Finalists

City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council  
City of Cardiff Council  
East Ayrshire Council  
North Tyneside Council  
South Tyneside Council  
Wolverhampton City Council

### Winner: North Tyneside Council

entrepreneurs in the community and increased the number of self-employed residents by over 70% in 5 years.

## Best Innovation or Demand Management Initiative

Kindly sponsored by Contenur



### Innovation or Demand Management - Edge of Care Service

Cheshire West and Chester Council has seen a rise in children entering care in recent years that is more acute than for many other local authorities. Within this context, our Edge of Care Team was launched to support families at significant risk of breakdown where other interventions were not making an impact. Three quarters of the children

### Finalists

Aylesbury Vale District Council  
Cheshire West and Chester Council  
City and County of Swansea Council  
East Ayrshire Council  
Glasgow City Council  
Milton Keynes Council

### Winner: Cheshire West and Chester Council

involved in this service avoided becoming Looked After Children and the Edge of Care Team contributed approximately £1m towards the Council's cost reduction programme.

## Best Renewable Energy or Energy Efficiency Initiative

Kindly sponsored by Salix Finance



### Nottingham City Council Greener Buildings' Strategy

Nottingham City Council's Energy Services adopted a holistic approach to tackle the council's and the city's energy demand in a sustainable way. Buildings owned by the city council account for a significant amount of the energy consumed within the city and the associated carbon

### Finalists

- Aberdeenshire Council
- Durham County Council
- Milton Keynes Council
- Nottingham City Council
- South Gloucestershire Council
- Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
- Suffolk County Council
- Wealden District Council

### Winner: Nottingham City Council

emissions. With a proactive approach to addressing under-performing buildings in terms of energy efficiency, we have had a positive impact on the city's direct and indirect carbon emissions.

## Best Service Team of the Year: Construction and Building Service

Kindly sponsored by Cemetery Development Services



### Building and Facilities Maintenance

Durham County Council's Building & Facilities Maintenance Team is an innovative and award winning service, providing Construction Services, Repairs & Maintenance and Compliance Management. We maintain over 900 buildings for the Council, Schools and External Customers. In

### Finalists

- Caerphilly County Borough Council
- Cambridge City Council
- City and County of Swansea Council
- Durham County Council
- South Tyneside Homes
- Telford & Wrekin Council

### Winner: Durham County Council

addition we provide lift maintenance services across the North East to over 3,000 homes and businesses. By realigning interdependent teams as part of a service wide review, we have implemented service and customer improvements, delivered savings and enhanced our commercial approach.

## Best Service Team of the Year: Catering Service

Kindly sponsored by Premier Foods



### Improve and Grow

In recognition of APSE wins in 2016 and 17 reflecting substantial service transformation and children-centred philosophies, Cityserve has continued to develop at significant pace despite increasing competition and cost-pressure. To supplement a class-leading interactive Development Kitchen, our brand-new state of the art

### Finalists

- Birmingham City Council
- East Ayrshire Council
- Gateshead Council
- Nottingham City Council
- Plymouth City Council/CATERed Ltd
- Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

### Winner: Birmingham City Council

Ofqual accredited Learning & Development Centre substantially invests in colleagues and service, whilst our strategy of commercial growth through a focused provision, unique contract development products, innovation, technology and food service diversification ensures that we continuously improve and grow.

## Best Service Team of the Year: Facilities Management and Building Cleaning Service

Kindly sponsored by Assist Facilities Management



### Not just a cleaning service

Powys Cleaning Service has transformed over the past 18 months with a fresh portfolio of services largely replacing the traditional roles of the team. We are all now working to one goal to sustain our business, with the ethos of "If it needs doing, why can't we do it?" We firmly believe we

### Finalists

Aberdeen City Council  
Dumfries and Galloway Council  
Gateshead Council  
Liverpool City Council  
Powys County Council  
South Tyneside Council

Winner: Powys County Council

are a good news story, working in the best interests of the Authority and its residents.

## Best Service Team of the Year: Highways, Winter Maintenance and Street Lighting Service

Kindly sponsored by WJ Group



### Dundee Roads Maintenance Partnership

The Dundee Road Maintenance Partnership was established in 2009 to provide a client /contractor integrated operating model for road services in the city. Since inception the Partnership has achieved all of the core service plan objectives and has demonstrated through market

### Finalists

Borough of Poole  
Durham County Council  
East Riding of Yorkshire Council  
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council  
Suffolk County Council  
Tayside Contracts / Dundee City Council

Winner: Tayside Contracts / Dundee City Council

comparison benchmarking the Partnership is the optimum best value delivery vehicle for the service. Of particular note, the Partnership has improved the road condition steadily year on year against a background of diminishing budgets.

## Best Service Team of the Year: Transport and Fleet Maintenance Service

Kindly sponsored by Nexus Vehicle Rental



### Changing Face of Fleet Management and Maintenance

Fife Council is Scotland's third largest Council. We employ approximately 17,000 employees and provide 900 different services to over 365,000 people. Fleet is an expensive element in delivering local authority front line services. Fleet Operations challenge historic practices in endeavours to modernise the delivery of fleet management and maintenance.

### Finalists

East Riding of Yorkshire Council  
Falkirk Council  
Fife Council  
Knowsley Council  
Leeds City Council  
Oxford City Council  
Wakefield Council

Winner: Fife Council

Priorities include maximising vehicle utilisation, reducing the fleet size, fuel consumption and carbon foot print while continuing to introduce more low carbon vehicles making the Council fleet sustainable into the future.

## Best Service Team of the Year: Cemetery and Crematorium Service

Kindly sponsored by Hoopers Genealogists



### Freefall Cremators and the Benefits they Bring

The introduction of the requirement to abate mercury emissions by at least 50% required the replacement of Landican Crematorium's four flatbed cremators. A presentation of a Freefall Cremator system which claimed to be able to reduce energy costs whilst maintaining our

### Finalists

City of Cardiff Council  
 East Ayrshire Council  
 North West Leicestershire District Council  
 Nottingham City Council  
 Oxford City Council  
 Wirral Council

Winner: Wirral Council

capacity to cremate in excess of 3000 per year provided a new option to us; however they had not been installed within the UK before and the systems compliance to operate in accordance with UK operating requirements was unknown.

## Best Service Team of the Year: Waste Management and Recycling Service

Kindly sponsored by Bartec Auto ID



### Team Waste and Recycling

The forward thinking, positive approach, hard work and dedication of staff across a waste and recycling led to a successful borough wide (123,000 households) engagement and behaviour change programme to exchange the 240 litre domestic waste bins for slimmer 140 litre bins

### Finalists

Bolton Council  
 East Renfrewshire Council  
 East Riding of Yorkshire Council  
 Mid and East Antrim Borough Council  
 Oxford City Council  
 Rochdale Council

Winner: Bolton Council

being introduced. The aim was to divert waste from the residual bins into recycling saving £1.25m in disposal costs per year. By the end of March we had avoided waste disposal costs of over £4 million.

## Best Service Team of the Year: Street Cleansing and Streetscene Service (Public Realm)

Kindly sponsored by bbits



### Transforming Street Scene Services in Eastleigh

Eastleigh Borough Council's Street Scene team is committed to a culture of continuous improvement, following a major review of its structure and operations, focused on how a previously disjointed service should be delivered in the future. The aim was to maximise efficiencies and re-

### Finalists

City of Cardiff Council  
 Durham County Council  
 Eastleigh Borough Council  
 Gedling Borough Council  
 Knowsley Council  
 Nottingham City Council  
 Royal Borough of Greenwich

Winner: Eastleigh Borough Council

establish the team's commitment "to ... deliver a real improvement in the quality of the environment." Effective scheduling, resident engagement, staff development and giving individual employees ownership of their area led to significant gains in productivity and quality.

## Best Service Team of the Year: Parks, Grounds and Horticultural Service

Kindly sponsored by Amazone Ltd



### "Rotovate to Innovate"

Local authorities have experienced some tough times in the last decade with constant change and cuts to budgets, impacting what we can deliver to residents. That's now a fact of life and one which we can't shy away from; rather than continue to plead the harshness of these

### Finalists

Birmingham City Council  
Bracknell Forest Council  
Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council  
Mid & East Antrim Borough Council  
Nottingham City Council  
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council  
West Lothian Council

### Winner: Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

challenges, Stockton has moved on with relish and taken this as an opportunity to innovate through delivering things differently to give residents something to smile about. Come with us on the journey of change and innovation.

## Best Service Team of the Year: Sports, Leisure and Cultural Service

Kindly sponsored by Alliance Leisure



### East Riding Leisure – Making a difference

The East Riding Leisure Team (ERL) has generated national and international recognition for their innovative processes. Being close to our customers, customer and continually going beyond what they

### Finalists

Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council  
Cheshire West and Chester Council  
East Riding of Yorkshire Council  
Gateshead Council  
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council  
Telford & Wrekin Council

### Winner: East Riding of Yorkshire Council

expect has substantially reduced the cost of the ERL service whilst increasing income, customers, patients and helping to address social needs.

## Best Service Team of the Year: Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Regulatory Service

Kindly sponsored by De Montfort University



### Asbestos Remediation on the Former Courtaulds Factory Site

Wolverhampton City Council's Environmental Protection has recently completed the final phase of a 13-year project addressing industrial contamination on a local housing estate. This included the first full scale residential asbestos-in-soils investigation in the country. The scale and

### Finalists

City and County of Swansea Council  
Kettering Borough Council  
Telford and Wrekin Council  
Thurrock Council  
Wigan Council  
Wolverhampton City Council

### Winner: Wolverhampton City Council

complexity of this project necessitated impeccable teamwork with other services, partnership working with public and private sector organisations, and engagement with residents who were in a distressing situation.

# Overall Council of the Year in Service Delivery

Kindly sponsored by Yotta



Winner:

## Cheshire West and Chester Council

Finalists

- Birmingham City Council
- Cheshire West and Chester Council
- City and County of Swansea Council
- Durham County Council
- East Riding of Yorkshire Council
- London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
- Nottingham City Council
- Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
- Telford and Wrekin Council

APSE would like to thank all sponsors of the Service Awards 2018 for their support



allianceleisure



# Future Communities: Greener, Cleaner, Smarter

In a unique communications partnership, APSE and ITN Productions present a news and long-form current affairs-style programme highlighting APSE's vision to encourage healthy, environmentally friendly and smart solutions for local communities.

The programme reveals how making a positive change can bring multi-faceted and potentially long reaching effects at local and even national level. 'Through the news items and participant films, 'Future Communities: Greener, Cleaner, Smarter' gives recognition to local councils and businesses who are taking innovative approaches with a focus on health, well-being and economic growth, despite the current economic climate.

Drawing upon ITN's 60 year heritage and expertise in storytelling, the news-style piece is anchored by award-winning journalist and presenter Alice Beer, and combines key interviews and reports with sponsored editorial profiles from leading organisations.

The programme launched at the APSE Annual Seminar 2018 in Edinburgh and forms part of an extensive communications campaign featuring APSE members and professional partners, as well as relevant journalists, bloggers and government departments.

Paul O'Brien, APSE Chief Executive, said, "Local government is facing



Award-winning presenter Alice Beer hosts the 45 minute programme

cuts that are the worst in over 70 years. Reduced budgets, combined with an increasing demand for services, means that councils are having to radically rethink the way they deliver frontline services. Unfortunately, the fact that local authorities are spearheading innovation in service delivery often goes unreported. This programme provides an excellent opportunity to remedy this. From housing to transport to energy, 'Future Communities: Greener, Cleaner, Smarter', allows councils across the UK to showcase their bold and transformative products and initiatives; heightening awareness among policy-makers, politicians and the wider sector."

The ITN team were also on hand at the Annual Seminar to speak to delegates about the initiatives and emerging practices of municipal entrepreneurialism. This additional four minute episode explores genuinely innovative ways of working to demonstrate how local authorities are intervening in markets to deliver outcomes that go beyond financial benefits.

- The episodes are now available to watch from the APSE website.

## New APSE Approved Partners: Welcome **Bartec Auto ID (Systems)**



Congratulations and a warm welcome to Bartec Auto ID - Systems Division, who have now been confirmed as APSE Approved Partners.

Bartec Systems is one of the leading suppliers of environmental and service management software to UK local authorities. Bartec's market-leading software - Collective - is designed for all municipal waste collectors to control their whole service in one place using comprehensive planning, finance and operational features. Collective is proven throughout UK local government to improve customer service and deliver real cost reductions. Whether you have a single user or hundreds, Collective can be further expanded with a growing suite of optional modules for commercial and clinical waste, street cleaning, grounds maintenance, gritting and safety inspections.

Bartec were the first to offer a securely hosted 'Software as a Service' system when the system was launched in 2006. Today Collective is trusted by more than 75 UK local authorities and Joint Waste Partnerships to help them deliver safe, flexible and efficient services to millions of households every day of the year. It tightly integrates with the LLPG to ensure your service always has up-to-date rounds and collection point data.

As well as being a hub for all operational data, Collective is a communications tool to ensure that information is shared between front-line staff, with their supervisors, with the customer contact

team and with service managers. Collective includes in-cab fixed and mobile terminals, tablets and smartphones, plus a citizens app for bin collection information.

APSE Chief Executive Paul O'Brien said, "APSE is delighted to welcome Bartec as an Approved Partner; thereby formalising a long-standing association with our organisation. Bartec embodies many of the aims of APSE and will be a welcome addition to our work in helping local councils deliver frontline services in the most cost-effective and environmentally sustainable manner."

Tim Hobbs, Director of Bartec Auto ID said, "APSE is essentially a network of expertise, ideas and experience. Our partnership with APSE is playing a vital role in ensuring that Bartec's next generation of products meet the needs of UK local authorities and service providers, keeping us at the forefront of best practice in front-line services."

- For more on Bartec Auto ID, visit [www.bartecsystems.com](http://www.bartecsystems.com).



APSE Chief Executive Paul O'Brien and outgoing APSE National Chair Cllr Archie Dryburgh present Bartec's Business Development Manager Melanie Murphy with the Approved Partner Certificate at the Annual Seminar in Edinburgh.

# Insourcing for success



In 2017 Highland Council insourced their public conveniences and grass cutting services.

Debbie Sutton, Amenities Manager at the Council, explains the decision to bring these services back in house and the lessons learned from the process.

Highland Council is the largest Council in the UK by area. It covers 11.4% of the UK's land mass. It has a population of 234,770, which continues to grow, and serves some of the UK's most remote communities

Tourism and Hospitality are the largest private sector employers in the area, and the Highlands has seen a huge increase (up to 20% year on year) in visitor numbers in the last few years due to the popularity of areas such as Skye and the North Coast 500. The Council's front line services make a significant contribution to tourism, and the increasing strain on services and infrastructure is being widely debated both locally and nationally. The Council continues to face challenges in delivering services to massively diverse communities, and the financial climate has led the Council to re-examining the way it delivers services.

Within this context, the Council has insourced two key frontline services worth a combined £3.3 million. These experiences have demonstrated the value that they have to local communities, and the ability of councils to be flexible and innovative in responding to changing circumstances. There is more work to do, and by the end of the process we aim to improve the sustainability of services as well as their quality and performance

The Council's grass cutting service was outsourced in 2011. In late 2016, at the end of the contract term, the Council decided to bring it back in house. The justification for this decision included a need to improve performance and quality, improve control, remove our reliance on and exposure to the limited private sector market in the Highlands, as well as keeping the money in the local economy. 2 months were spent carrying out a full options appraisal, and a five month lead in period followed this. The decision benefitted from cross party support throughout the process, which has been enormously helpful in building relationships with elected

members and addressing some of the operational problems that were encountered at the start of the new service.

During the lead in period, arrangements were made for:

- New management and operational structures to be established;
- Recruitment of a new seasonal workforce;
- A number of contractor's staff to be transferred into the Council though TUPE;
- Contract hire of 120 items of grass cutting machinery;
- The development of new specifications and performance monitoring arrangements, and
- A reduction in budget of £117,000 (5%).

Due to the tight timescales that the service was working to, there were some delays in starting the new service at the beginning of April 2017. Despite this, the commitment of staff, elected members and suppliers has delivered improved quality and lower costs over the last 2 years. The number of complaints we have received has reduced significantly and over 90% of the areas that we maintain are in an acceptable condition.

## The number of complaints we have received has reduced significantly, and over 90% of the areas that we maintain are in an acceptable condition.

In contrast to the grass cutting service, the insourcing of public conveniences was completed in much shorter timescales at much shorter notice. The service had been outsourced since 2007, and in April 2017 the Council received 2 months' notice from our service provider that they would be taking up the option to terminate their contract with the Council. They had identified that the contract was no longer economically viable, and that they would require an uplift of 31% (£466,000) to continue to deliver the service. The Council could not accept this proposal, and an operational decision was made to bring the service back in house.

The insourcing of the PC's included the TUPE transfer back into the Council of 86 employees, and the Council taking back responsibility for operating and managing 96 facilities. The TUPE transfer proved to be particularly problematic, especially the lack of Employee Liability Information provided by the service provider. Issues included information on start dates, length of service, hours worked, pension details and whether staff were employed on a seasonal or permanent contract. This has caused difficulties in providing reassurance for staff, and in developing accurate financial information to inform future service delivery. It has taken almost a year to address these

challenges, and unfortunately issues are still emerging.

Another major difficulty with this process was that the value of these facilities to the Council, users and communities had been underestimated. This needed to be addressed urgently, and a review has been conducted to provide a more strategic approach to support service delivery, contribute to the Council's overall aims and reduce costs by £700k.

Despite the different approaches that were developed to insource these services, there are a number of common themes that emerged. These include:

- The need to take a corporate, multi disciplinary approach;
- Key stakeholders need to be engaged as early as possible to ensure their commitment to the process;
- The short timescales involved in both exercises meant there was a clear focus on what to achieve;
- The development of new structures within the service has improved team working;
- Making the most of opportunities to introduce new technology and new ways of working;
- Cross party political support;
- The involvement of the Trades Unions and front line workforce in the decision making process and in identifying areas for future savings.

We have learnt a number of valuable lessons from this process. One was for the need to improve our recruitment processes. Like many local authorities, we need to have processes that allow us to develop a more flexible and agile workforce, and we are about to conduct a LEAN review into the recruitment of seasonal employees.

Another valuable lesson we learnt was the need to develop expertise in TUPE. Insourcing services is still relatively uncommon, and where councils are considering this they need to ensure that they have sufficient knowledge to address the complexities of TUPE transfers

We now appreciate the importance of avoiding significant service changes at the time of elections, being prepared for increased scrutiny and challenge through social media, and engaging and involving trade unions at every stage of the process

Most importantly consult with employees, consult with Elected Members, consult with the public, consult with anyone willing to be involved and assist with the process

What's next for Highland? We are currently using the lessons learned to assess the viability of creating an in house Arbor team, and developing a more commercial approach to competing for external contracts in grounds maintenance for public sector partners such as the NHS and University of the Highlands and Islands, as well as private sector customers. •

## More beans for your buck: Adding value to parks



Sustain, the alliance for better food and farming, has been talking to community food growers to see how councils are managing parks to tackle today's battles of social isolation, poor health and childhood obesity, whilst also raising horticultural standards and amenity value for recreation. Here, Gillian Morgan of Sustain, discusses the value of food growing in parks ahead of their new joint publication with Shared Assets.

Mention food growing in parks and the image of the dig for victory campaign with public parks being transformed into allotments springs to mind.

Community food growing, in local through to metropolitan parks, is ticking a number of councils' priority boxes. Whilst this is often being delivered with minimal council involvement, great benefits can be achieved with cross departmental cooperation. Key messages to managing parks for the common good are:

- Parks are a common good and like all council assets should be actively managed to address local priorities and valued for their contribution eg to public health;
- Parks are a community resource, where food growing projects can engage citizens in their local environment;
- Parks are accessible to all and can be non-threatening environments to promote messages about health, food and diet;
- Community food growing projects contribute to visitor experience and bring to parks: horticultural interest, a diversity of recreational facilities, additional resources;
- A strategic approach to park management will ensure food growing projects contribute to the overall management plan, that managers build trust with park users and there is clarity of expectations on both sides and
- There is no single model for a community food growing space in a park; it will depend on the type of park and its catchment.

It feels the time is right for councils to use their public assets to meet a wider agenda about where food comes from. Public parks are valued not just for their horticultural and amenity value, but as multi-purpose public assets that can enable local authorities to meet their objectives around economic resilience, social wellbeing and environmental sustainability. The messages and conversations this can create are critical to not only people's personal diet, but to understand

and support farmers managing the rural landscape productively. Community food growing in parks makes the food message accessible. What's more, it builds community engagement with their local environment where they can be park managers' best allies.

Recent research by Fields in Trust found that few public services have such a wide-ranging, positive impact on local communities as parks and green spaces. Despite this, parks tend to be valued according to their maintenance costs rather than their true dividend to local communities.

Indeed, community food growing initiatives in parks can provide cost-effective opportunities for local authorities to work together with local communities to increase the social, economic, environmental, recreational and horticultural value of parks. Food growing provides spaces for social interaction, exercise, education in good nutrition and healthy eating, leading to improvements in residents' physical and mental wellbeing and personal resilience. It provides opportunities where people can develop new skills and can be used as a pathway to help people get active or take up employment. Areas dedicated for food growing bring new uses and users to previously derelict or neglected areas.

But, food growing in parks is not a one size fits all solution. There are many different ways of setting up and running including traditional council led approaches, as well as partnerships or in some cases community leadership.

### Councils in the lead

A council run project is clearly the most intensive. These projects fit a service model, where volunteer sessions are run as a class dependent on the capacity of the staff leader and the abilities of the service users. Participants are referred to as service users; some may be walk-up volunteers, many will have been referred from social or health services. This is an option for large multifunctional parks where there is limited local "ownership".

Duthie Park is a fine example of a late Victorian public park in Aberdeen city centre. It has benefitted from major investment by the Heritage Lottery Fund who wanted to see volunteer involvement. The Duthie Park Ranger Service organises the Park Force Volunteers who are likely to have been referred by local health services. The garden is highly visible, open access, decorative as well as productive, reflecting the high standard of the park. With herbs, fruit, vegetable plots and an area to demonstrate farming to school children, the Rangers are responsible for programming school visits, care of the volunteers as well as the garden.

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**Public parks are valued not just for their horticultural and amenity value, but as multi-purpose public assets that can enable local authorities to meet their objectives around economic resilience, social wellbeing and environmental sustainability.**

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### Facilitated projects

In the facilitating model the council works in partnership with a third sector partner with a degree of formality relating to tenure, responsibilities, or programming. These projects are more appropriate for an established organisation or social enterprise, who require a firmer commitment than a local residents group, especially if they are taking on responsibility for a secure site such as a disused nursery.

A partnership run growing space in Albert Park in Middlesbrough has brought into use the former council plant nursery. The food growing project improves the physical and mental health of new and emerging communities through community based activities, which has resulted in public health funding. Middlesbrough Environment City (MEC) have an informal agreement with the council and support fundraising



Clockwise from left:  
Examples of  
community food  
growing in Brighton;  
Community food  
growers in action in  
Duthie Park, Aberdeen.



as well as provide training for the growers. Partner organisation, Investing in People and Culture (IPC), employ a part time staff member to manage the site and many of the users are refugees, who live nearby, and who benefit from the social contact, free healthy food and social interaction.

### Communities in control

The third model is where the community take the lead, often approaching the council to request use of an area. A surprising number of councils have no formal agreements with food growing groups. These councils welcome residents' involvement in the care of the park. This is particularly true for small local parks. Groups may receive advice from the council about health and safety procedures, insurance, and safeguarding measures.

The food growing space in Scotch Quarry Park in Lancaster was created from open grass parkland. A management plan originally agreed by Transition City Lancaster and the City Council is being implemented by local residents through a new trust. There is no formal lease. Any changes to the management plan are discussed with the designated council officer and then incorporated into the management plan via the Council's legal team. The area is fully open to the public. Residents walk through the area and sit and enjoy the gardens now it is more interesting. Public benefits are improved park maintenance; improved perception of safety, increased amenity and biodiversity. The garden also raises the profile of food and gardening.

So, we want to dispel the dig for victory image; this is more about winning the battle for healthier urban citizens. Food growing in parks should be for the benefit of the local community, not for specific individuals. As Brighton and Hove Food Partnership say, "Community gardens are not about creating allotments in public spaces – they are about bringing people together and providing opportunities for learning and trying new things."

- *Food growing in Parks: A guide for councils was published by Sustain and Shared Assets and released as part of their presentation at the APSE Refuse, Recycling, Street Scene, Grounds and Parks Seminar on 19 October. You can download the publication from the Sustain website.*



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# Winter is coming...

For road-users, the winter nights can be dark and full of terrors. David Mazurke, Group Manager of Highways, Street Lighting, Gullies and Winter Maintenance for the City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council, talks us through the arduous task of maintaining Bradford's roads in arctic conditions.

Bradford lies in the middle of the United Kingdom just to the east of the Pennines with a population of 530,000. One of the lowest points of Bradford is the City Hall which is 300 feet above sea level. This is why Bradford is quite unique when compared with winter maintenance operations of other major cities in Northern England.

The geography and topography of the district makes the winter maintenance operation challenging, most notably because of the large number of settlements which are located above 500 feet altitude; large residential areas are built on these hillsides. One of the highest densely populated areas is Queensbury. It has a growing population of 20,000 that live 1,000 feet above sea level, basically on a mountain. The town or village has two main arterial roads going through it. Even though the winter of 2017/18 was the worst for several years, the Pennines side of Bradford - where over 100,000 residents live - experiences snow conditions every year. However, if you reside further east of the city in the historic tourist area of Ilkley you did not see snow for several years until January 2018, such is the diversity and severity of the weather patterns in Bradford.

These differences of altitude mean that on the highest ground temperatures can be 2 to 4 degrees lower which makes a big difference in winter decision making. A meteorologist who lives in the area recorded 57 snow days over the winter period. Indeed, Living on the Pennines side of Bradford, you'd sometimes be mistaken for living in Winterfell, capital of the North in television epic Game of Thrones.

The Highways teams treat over 700 miles, this accounts for 62% of the network on their priority 1 network from October to the end of April operating from four depots with 24 gritters. During the harsh winter of 2017/18, teams treated the network over 22 weeks out of the 27 weeks on standby. The total of salt used was close

to 20,000 tonnes for the period. The priority 1 network was treated on 92 occasions.

Leeds is only 10 miles from Bradford and grits 43% of their highways network with a population of 700,000. However, most of the area is, on average, between 200 and 300 feet above sea level, Though it has high altitude areas, these do not have significantly high populations.

Calderdale, another area that borders Bradford, has similar terrain to Bradford with a smaller population of 209,000 and grits over 60% of their network. Kirklees, also similar in geography, grits 53% with a population of 434,000 and Sheffield grits 70% with a population of 645,000. Wakefield grits 40% with a population of 332,000.

With car ownership increasing, some residential areas now average two cars per household. Combined with major financial cutbacks in highways services and winter gritting, these developments are putting serious pressure on all authorities.

Over the last three years, Bradford, Calderdale and Sheffield faced budget reductions in their winter maintenance pot and the consequences were dire. As a result, roads removed from existing routes were swiftly re-instated.

During the severe weather Bradford Council used its website, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, media releases and email updates to share timely information about service disruptions, planned gritting, advice on how to help vulnerable people, and photos of staff and local people working hard to help others. This brought a friendly touch to the messages, which no doubt had a positive impact on the public's patience in these challenging times.

It is sometimes impossible in severe weather events for all managers in winter operations to cope with the demand from the public to grit every road and even cul-de-sacs. It is not only the public demanding but elected members and senior officers, who start to exert pressure on the command centres of the gritting teams.

An initiative through the Bradford MDC area was carried out on creating greater community resistance during the summer of 2017 and 2018. The Bradford area is surrounded by 19 Parish/Town Councils. The majority of these councils lie in the urban areas. Over the last 20 years their areas have seen major residential development with thousands of houses built on hillsides of high altitudes and above snow lines. Their demand for more gritting services cannot be met. To mitigate these problem meetings were held with Parish/Town councils in an evening with a PowerPoint presentation of the highways gritting operation. Plans showing routes were also displayed. All the sessions were well received and good local feedback was used in our planning strategy for future route planning.

The main theme of each presentation was to encourage the councils to look at setting up their own community teams to manage and purchase grit bins in their difficult areas. The councils were

**It is sometimes impossible in severe weather events for all managers in winter operations to cope with the demand from the public to grit every road and even cul-de-sacs.**



offered grit bins to buy at £100 each and any subsequent refills required were charged at £50. The Parish/Town Councils surveyed their own areas and decided on the location of the grit bins which are then verified with the highways team.

The scheme has proved to be very successful with over 30 grit bins ordered for the winter season of 2018/19. The management of these grit bins is essential for this type of project and this has also been undertaken by the Parish/Town Councils. Bradford Council has over 550 grit bins. These were on the network and most of the this salt goes on the drives of houses.

Did the harsh winter of 2017/18 with the “Beast from the East” bring any new challenges to the Highways Operation teams across the County? The answer may be no because, since 2010, all authorities/agencies involved in gritting have spent time on improving plans of action and investment in plant and equipment.

However, the power of social media has in my opinion led to a frenzy when the white stuff falls from the sky. This alarm on Twitter and Facebook has only added to the challenges that already existed for the beleaguered gritting teams. The public expectation has increased with the proliferation of social media. The challenges of gritting and keeping the highways and footways clear have certainly intensified over the last 25 years.

Since the mid 1990's there are more cars on the road, rush hours start earlier and finish

later. More school children are taken to school by car. An aging population need to get to health centres and hospitals. Medication in large amounts is delivered to the older population. There has been a huge increase in the number of different recycling bins that now clutter streets which need clearing quickly by refuse lorries. The sharp increase in online shopping has seen the number of white van deliveries increase massively.

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**The power of social media has in my opinion led to a frenzy when the white stuff falls from the sky. The alarm on Twitter and Facebook has only added to the challenges that already existed.**

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Despite these extra challenges there has been some really positive developments in winter maintenance over the last 20 years.

The main improvement has been the weather forecasting. More accurate altitude information is crucial to us in Bradford with the topography and geography of the area. Wind direction, snow fall height, air temperatures and road surface temperatures with the hourly updates from the weather provider Meteogroup, give the winter managers more variables to consider for the gritting operation.

That said, there has been some confusing messages and differences in the severe weather patterns from last winter.

During December 2017 the Met Office held seasonal outlook weather forecast forums for the forthcoming months of January, February and March 2018. The Met Office looked in detail at their primary movers of weather which is the North Atlantic Oscillation, Teleconnections (El Niño, severe weather elsewhere for example in the Pacific and the levels of Arctic Sea Ice). All this data was then put through various computer models which predicted there was nothing untoward on the horizon. The actual weather over these 3 months was rather different with most of the UK suffering with heaviest snowfalls for years and several weeks of the “beast from the East” dominating the weather and media outlets.

As the Highways teams across the country carefully plan for another winter, we all need to be aware of one major issue. And that is public expectations are going to be even higher for us in ensuring the roads are passable.

Good luck fellow Winter Highway warriors. The White Walkers are coming.

- *David gave a presentation on Bradford's winter gritting strategy at the APSE Winter Maintenance Forum in Bradford on. You can download the presentation from the APSE website.*

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# Growing energy



As austerity continues to bite, Edward Gurney, Solar PV Manager at Nottingham City Council, takes us through the Council's innovative and ambitious energy projects that are helping to generate vital revenue streams and create jobs.

In the current economic climate, with pressure on budgets and resources scarce, councils need to find ways to generate their own income as well as cutting costs. Renewable Energy is a great opportunity to do this, generating a sustainable and reliable source of energy, making use of government incentives from innovative projects that generate revenue streams and creating jobs with the delivery and the maintenance of the schemes.

The Solar Team in the Energy Services Department at Nottingham City Council has, (over the past 3 years) installed over 14MW of Solar PV, including systems on nearly 4,200 homes as well as over 60 of our commercial/operational sites. Included in this are the two largest publicly owned solar canopies at two of our leisure centres, Harvey Hadden Sports Village and Ken Martin Leisure Centre.

We are now generating significant income from these projects and this is fed straight back into protecting frontline services. This helps us to plug the gap from austerity, and utilise a more innovative, commercial and forward thinking business model. Our domestic portfolio is performing brilliantly and generating FIT and export payments. As well as this, the reduction in bills helps those who are most in need and in the fight against fuel poverty.

There have even been occasions this year where some of our buildings have been running on 100% of the energy produced from the solar panels on our roofs, including our Harvey Hadden Sports village, the largest of our leisure sites which has 267kWp of solar installed. We have big ambitions and don't want to stop there, we are just getting started.

Nottingham has an ambitious energy strategy, and we are incredibly proud of the fact that we met our 25% carbon reduction target by 2020 (compared to 2005 levels) four years early. Our current focus is on our next target, which is a 50% carbon reduction by 2030, and we hope to hit that target early as well. We plan to do this with more energy reduction projects and thus creating further savings, as well as generating more clean energy with the continuation of our solar rollout for more income generation. The projects I have spoken about, and the ones that we have in the pipeline, will contribute to our UK100 pledge, which commits us to 100% green energy in the city by 2050. I believe all cities should be aiming for this. Unfortunately there aren't enough councils that are doing it, and that's because it's not easy and requires a high level of commitment as well as constant attention and expertise. We believe that if Nottingham can continue to lead the way then others will follow, and we want to help all councils to be able to do this.

# Energy as a source of income



(Above) Solar panels installed on the roof of Eastcroft Depot, one of the Council's operational buildings, where all of the Council's fleet vehicles operate from.

(Left) Solar panels installed at the largest of the Council's leisure sites - Harvey Hadden Sports Village.

What has helped us achieve our goals so far, is that we have developed our own internal teams, from feasibility and delivery, to maintenance and monitoring, we do the majority of works in house. Over time, our teams have become market leaders, competing with private sector organisations. From solar viability studies and project management, to EPC's and energy efficiency audits which support our PV projects. This gives us the flexibility and competitive edge to be able to deliver our schemes effectively and efficiently, without having to go out to market all of the time.

**From solar viability studies and project management, to EPC's and energy efficiency audits which support our PV projects. This gives us the flexibility and competitive edge to be able to deliver our schemes effectively and efficiently, without having to go out to market all of the time.**

Critical to being able to achieve our aims going forward, we have developed our own products that we can provide to all sectors, such as our Power Purchase Agreement (PPA). This is where we install solar for free on commercial premises, so that the tenants and business owners get the benefit of cheaper energy compared to paying their energy company. This increases profitability for our clients, whilst also hitting our and their corporate goals of greenhouse gas reduction.

The Solar PV Framework we have developed also provides us with great access to market at competitive prices and this can provide all councils across the UK that same access if needed. In total there are six 'lots' that can cover all scenarios, from supply and install, supply or install only to specialist design, the flexibility of the framework has been developed purposefully to support all types of projects.

In conjunction with APSE Energy, we can now offer our services to all public sector bodies looking to reduce their energy consumption as well as their annual cost for importing from the grid. So as well as reducing our own costs, we have used this as an opportunity to further commercialise our activities. We can help our clients reduce their energy costs by around 30%, without any capital outlay from their often constrained budgets. A PPA offers a great opportunity to cut bills immediately and we have been working hard to put together an attractive PPA offer so that not only Nottingham can benefit from the opportunities that PV presents but all councils in the country can. APSE Energy and Nottingham welcome any local authority getting in touch to explore these benefits further.

With technical innovations happening all the time and coming to the market, such as organic solar, solar roads and the continual reduction in prices for battery storage, managing energy will continue to be a critical area for generating income. More and more projects that were previously out of reach are now achievable.

APSE Energy and Nottingham City Council's Energy Services Team complement each other to provide advice and support to help those council looking to generate income, reduce reliance on fossil fuels and avoid fluctuating energy prices. Please feel free to get in touch – we would be more than happy to help in any way that we can.

- *Edward Gurney gave a presentation on growing energy as a source of income at the APSE Central Region Seminar on 19 July. The presentation is free to download from the Central Region hub on the APSE website.*

# Taking action on pollinators

Dr Annabel King of Dorset County Council spoke to APSE Direct about the Council's Pollinator Action Plan, and how it is helping to protect wildlife in Dorset as well as reduce verge maintenance costs.

Insect pollinators, including bees, moths, flies, hoverflies, butterflies and beetles, are critical to the UK's rich biodiversity and natural beauty, but they also play an essential role in providing pollination services for many commercial crops (such as tomatoes, oilseed rape, apples and strawberries) and wild plant species, with an estimated value to the UK economy of between £430 million and £690 million annually.

However, the UK State of Nature Report, 2013, showed that more than half of the bee, butterfly and moth species studied had declined in the last 50 years and it is thought that this can be attributed to a variety of pressures such as habitat loss and degradation, use of pesticides, climate change and pests and diseases. In particular, the use of neonicotinoids has been shown to reduce the ability of bees to forage and navigate properly, meaning that colonies are less likely to survive, especially if other factors are already causing them to struggle.

Dorset County Council want to do all we can to improve this situation, and it became clear that habitat loss and use of pesticides were two factors which could be directly influenced through our working practices. Addressing these issues also contributes to the Council fulfilling its legal duty, under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006, to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in exercising its functions.

With this in mind, the County Council adopted and implemented a Pollinator Action Plan in 2016, and are now only one of a handful of LPAs to have such a document in place. The Pollinator Action Plan proposes a range of positive principles which can be applied to the management of County Council assets, projects and decision-making processes. It also prohibits the use of



Neonicotinoids on all land over which we have direct control. These principles include:

- Managing all verges by cutting and collecting arisings, leading to a reduction in fertility and an increase in wildflowers;
- Incorporating wildflower planting in the management plans of all our green assets;
- Planting spring flowering native trees and shrubs where opportunities arise through planning and asset management;
- Cutting hedges less frequently to allow longer flowering periods for nectar rich species.

One project which directly benefited from this approach was the construction of the Weymouth Relief Road. We applied the principles of the Pollinator Action Plan by creating new road verges with no topsoil and seeding them with locally sourced wildflower seed, particularly bird's foot trefoil, ox-eye daisy and kidney vetch, all species known to provide good sources of nectar and also to function as food sources for several species of butterfly. Since completion the verges have been monitored by Butterfly Conservation and are now known to support 30 species of butterfly, including rarities like the Chalkhill blue.

An additional benefit of managing road verges in this way is that it costs much less

to manage them because there is far less top-growth needing regular cutting. The Weymouth Relief Road verge management costs are down to @£500 per year from an initial estimate of £2700 per year. And across Dorset we save around £93k a year by only cutting rural road verges when needed, allowing wildflowers and grasses to flower and set seed.

Dorset County Council continue to integrate the Pollinator Action Plan into our every-day work and strategic outcomes. We want to make sure that our work forms part of the wider conservation plans for Dorset, and therefore support and work closely with the Dorset Local Nature Partnership. We also work to ensure that the financial savings achieved from working with nature are fully understood by key partners like the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership.

• *Dr King will be speaking about Dorset County Council's pollinator strategy at the APSE Parks Seminar in March 2019. For more information on this event, please contact Wayne Priestley on [wpriestley@apse.org.uk](mailto:wpriestley@apse.org.uk).*





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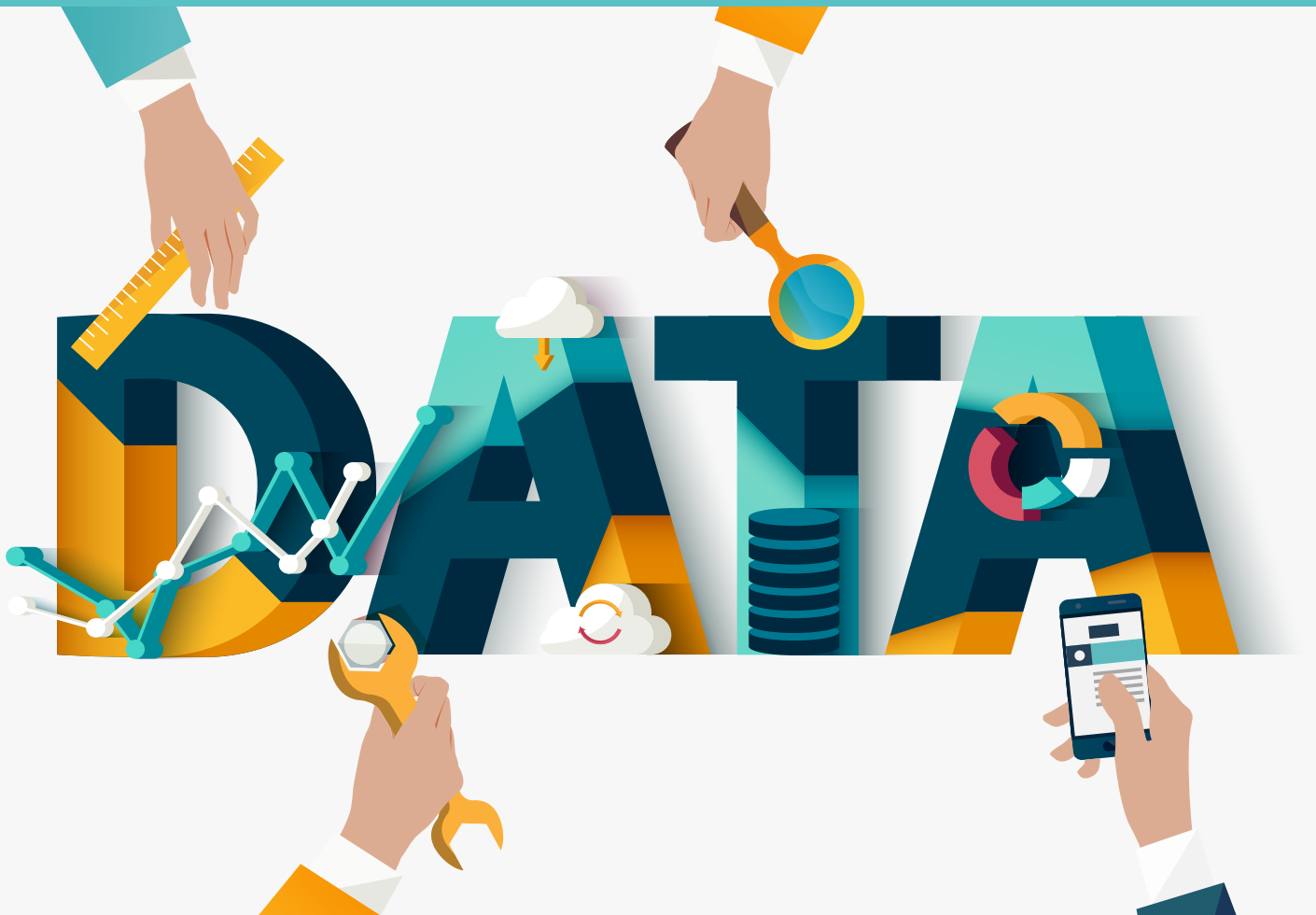
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