

Interim report from Chair of Cleaner Greener and Safer Scrutiny Committee

Note: a survey of subways conducted by members of the above committee is underway; the survey sheet is attached to this report

Subways in Newcastle..and some roundabout structures

The issues;

- Joint responsibility for a poor quality public domain. The County Council takes total responsibility for these structures. The Borough Council sweeps the ground surface of subways solely
- Lack of money (or dedicated budget) to get standards up

Specifics

1. Risk to reputation of the Borough Council due to poor experience in subways and near roundabouts..battered and missing crash barriers
2. Increased risk to pedestrians from storm water flowing into subways and not getting away down drains
3. Impact of increasing graffiti..subways seen as places to avoid
4. High cost of continuing need to clean off graffiti
5. Lack of engagement with Councillors and members of the public about the issues

What's been done /positives

1. Joint meetings NBC/SCC: barrel roofs repainted white, new brighter LED lights with sacrificial covers (against graffiti)
2. Forthcoming improvement safety works to Grosvenor Roundabout. BUT has it swallowed up budget for the coming year acc.to officers at County
3. Newcastle's BID commissioned and found funding for a number of artworks..these are enjoyed and appear to be respected ..ie not scribbled over

List of problems and ways forward

1. Drains need more frequent suction
2. Joint volunteer approach NBC to set dates and provide materials and call for volunteers among Councillor base and known volunteer groups to clean sections over a number of months decide whether to give publicity
3. Explore idea of 'sponsor a sub' fund seeking from businesses (BID/NBC)
4. SCC to support ideas with County wide approaches to issue.and/ or where is it done better in UK?
5. Build on the popular 'Art in Subways' detail needed on how SCC/NBC/BID can work on joint approaches to gain substantial funds for approaches : eg The Big Draw The Astley Project
6. Recruit Community Payback teams without delay to start on a publicly visible and ongoing approach to cleaning off graffiti
7. Some subways could be closed entirely..start the process of identification

Wenslie Naylor *Chair Cleaner Greener Safer Scrutiny Committee NULBC*

