

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

HOUSING, NEIGHBOURHOODS AND LEISURE COMMITTEE 6 JULY 2023

QUESTION NO. 1

Edd Street to ask the Chair of the Housing, Neighbourhoods & Leisure Committee:

Traveller Access to Cintra Park

Regarding Cintra Park, why has there not been any attempt to prevent access at the car park gate to travellers by placing obstructions to limit size of clearance similar to John Rabson and Waterloo meadow?

REPLY by Councillor G Dennis:

I invite Councillor Rowland, the Lead Councillor for Environmental Services and Community Safety to make the response on my behalf.

REPLY by the Lead Councillor for Environmental Services and Community Safety:

I'd like to thank Mr Street for his question.

The provision of restriction barriers and target hardening to prevent unauthorised encampments (UEs) at Council run parks and open spaces was assessed earlier this fiscal year and subsequent measures taken at numerous sites throughout the Borough.

Cintra Park was included in that wider project and a number of improvements were made to the Park access points, including a substantial improvement with the installation of a bund parallel to Cintra Avenue. The bollard reinforcement at that gate was already in situ and has proved to be a good deterrent.

Every entrance requires a bespoke response and therefore, specifically, the Car Park entrance at Northumberland Avenue has both the existing height barrier at the road intersection and the additional low- rise gate at the far end of the car park. Those two barriers have been considered appropriate and create a 2 x security measure to allow access into the Park. There are 2 x points of access limitations for maintenance vehicles at Cintra Park, Northumberland Avenue and Cintra Avenue. The access point at Northumberland Avenue is regularly restricted by parked vehicles and therefore the access point in Cintra Avenue is used as an alternative. That is also the only access point where the tractor and mowing machinery can gain access.



Access points to our Parks and Open Spaces to allow our own machinery and vehicles in to maintain the park, are always going to be the most vulnerable locations as they create the highest risk for access. Every effort is taken to protect the gates with enhanced security such as concealed lock boxes and hinge protectors. You will find these have been used at the Northumberland Avenue car park entrance.

It has to be understood and accepted that any measure can be cut through by determined individuals and therefore access points are regularly inspected by our teams who maintain these areas. Spare padlocks are a standard stock item within the Streetscene Team and immediately upon notification of a defective lock, a replacement would be installed on a priority basis. As we cannot be everywhere at all times, local residents or park users can assist greatly, and they can and should report any broken access points as a matter of immediate priority to the Council on Love Clean Reading or to our call centre number at 0118 937 37 87- which out of regular business hours, reverts to our emergency call centre cover.

As part of our follow-up assessments on that wider body of work that were taken this spring, two further enhanced security measures have been identified for Cintra Park on top of the already robust, bespoke systems we have in place. These identified enhancements will provide further 2x or 3x security to the park to gain access to the grounds. These enhancements are currently in the pipeline to be installed, but for obvious reasons, as this is a public meeting, I will not detail those in this forum, although I am more than happy to discuss those directly with you if you reach out to me via my email address at karen.rowland@reading.gov.uk.

QUESTION NO. 2

Edd Street to ask the Chair of the Housing, Neighbourhoods & Leisure Committee:

Glass Recycling Points

Could the notices on Glass recycling be improved by including a local map showing other glass recycling points? Instead of large text words the notice could state: "IF FULL refer to map for nearest glass recycling".

REPLY by Councillor G Dennis:

I invite Councillor Rowland, the Lead Councillor for Environmental Services and Community Safety to make the response on my behalf.

REPLY by the Lead Councillor for Environmental Services and Community Safety:

To address the issue of overflowing banks, re3 implemented mixed glass bank collections starting in November 2021. These changes have significantly reduced the number of overflows across the re3 Councils (Bracknell Forest, Reading, and Wokingham Boroughs).

We have observed a 90% reduction in reported overflows, with 373 overflows reported between January and October 2021 (colour separated glass collection), compared to only 36 overflows reported between January and October 2022 (mixed glass collections). Specifically for Reading Borough, there have been only 7 reports of overflows so far this year, and the majority of these incidents are typically related to the seasonal increase in tonnages that usually occur after Christmas in January.

To promote the locations of the glass banks in the area, we have created a digital map that displays available glass recycling locations. This map is accessible on the re3 website, re3 app, and the Recycle Now - Recycling Locator search. Additionally, QR code stickers that lead directly to information on glass recycling (including advice in multiple languages and a map) have been placed on the glass banks.

We understand that accessing maps using a smartphone may not be feasible for everyone and where problems of over full bottle banks have been experienced throughout the Borough, a notice has been fixed to the bank or nearby post, by Neighbourhood Services, advising residents where their next nearest bottle bank is located.

These Notices are printed in-house by the Council's recycling team and do not currently have a map, as they are usually an A4 laminated sheet.

The current signs use large font to be clearly visible but where it is considered necessary, a map could be included, however the text size would need to be reduced and map would be relatively small scale.

Full or overflowing bottle banks can be reported to the Council using the Love Clean Reading app, where the recycling team will liaise with RE3 about additional glass collections or bringing the next scheduled collection forward.

Residents can also use the RE3yclopedia search tool to find their nearest glass recycling location in Reading, pinpointed on a map.

**If this bottle bank is full, please
visit your next nearest site at
Cintra Park.**

Thank you for your cooperation.

