

Planning Enforcement Update

The retirement of the Enforcement Team Leader in March 2017, along with the retirement of two of the three other officers in the team shortly afterwards, left the service severely under resourced.

In the months that followed the officer posts were successfully recruited to - with Carlyn and Katie joining Ian Kidd, but the team leader post proved very difficult to fill. We went out on three separate occasions but failed to secure the right candidate. As an interim measure Carol Humphrey, then Development Manager, took on line management responsibility for the team, but a more appropriate structure was required.

Much of the Enforcement work is investigatory, with planning judgement being applied by other (planning) officers. As such, to streamline the process, Enforcement Officers were integrated into the two Area Development Management Teams earlier this year. This is proving very successful with Enforcement taking on a more central role, and earlier consideration and intervention taking place.

We now provide an Enforcement weekly list to Members so there is greater awareness of the investigations taking place, and a further monthly list will be produced to show Members progress on each case.

The last 18 months have also seen considerably more notices served, successful prosecutions and injunctions. We have served 4 S215 Amenity notices resulting in 1 site being tidied (details below, 57 Bower Rd, Hextable is the 1 site), 44 Enforcement and Breach of Condition Notices and have successfully secured 2 injunctions, including at Oak View Stud Farm and Land west of 1 Wood St Swanley.

In addition, the Enforcement team have been responsible for securing unpaid CIL and S106 monies, which to date has brought in the region of £3m owed by developers (based on CIL income since Jan 2018 when Carlyn took over CIL compliance and chasing money owed).

Contact details of the Officers are on the weekly list, and the relevant line Manager is the same as for Planning Applications - Alison for the North of the District, and Aaron for the South.