

Autumn Leaf Clearance Programme 2018

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Veolia



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1. Introduction

Each year Veolia implement the annual autumn leaf clearance programme, which covers a 15 week period from early September until late December. This year leaves started falling during late August, with light accumulations that were easily cleared away during our routine cleansing activities, however during September, October and November the rate of fall steadily increased, therefore it was necessary to direct our operatives and mechanical equipment towards clearing away leaf accumulations.

During the peak period (Mid-October to late November), additional seasonal operatives were deployed to assist with the clearance effort. From late November to December a noticeable difference was seen on the ground, and by Christmas the vast majority of leaves had been cleared. Only remnant leaves still remained, which were cleared away by normal cleansing activities that resumed during late December.



Figure 1 Operative assisting mechanical broom driver

2. Method

Two large mechanical brooms were deployed, with one covering the Woodside and Cassiobury villages and the other Wigenhall village and Town Centre hamlet. During the peak period an operative worked with the driver to sweep/blow leaves into the channel to be mechanically swept up, thereby increasing speed and efficiency. Throughout the period the barrow beat operatives and three small mechanical brooms continued to operate as usual, but during heavy leaf fall it was not possible to sweep everywhere due to the volume of leaves, which slowed progress. Operatives focused on the worst areas and gradually worked through each area until all leaves were cleared. Up to 6 seasonal operatives were deployed during the peak period and were used

to cover existing staff while they were re-deployed to assist the mechanical broom drivers, and to sweep and load large quantities of leaves into vehicles.

All efforts were coordinated on a daily basis by our two Environmental Managers to ensure leaves were cleared as quickly and efficiently as possible. High leaf fall, flood prone and sensitive sites were identified in advance and given priority, however the situation on the ground constantly changed therefore resources were directed where they were needed next. Parks and open spaces drives and footpaths were cleared by parks operatives and where access allowed, mechanical sweepers were deployed on a periodic basis throughout the season.

3. Reflections on the leaf fall programme this year

Despite the Deep Clean, which took place during November the leaf clearance programme went very well this year, with over 40% less queries about autumn leaf clearing than last year.



Figure 2 Hired Scarab mechanical broom at work

4. How are staffing needs managed?

To ensure sufficient staff coverage additional agency staff were deployed to increase the number of heads overall by a maximum of 6.

5. The effectiveness of fleet management

This year three Scarab mechanical sweeper were hired in to replace the existing aging fleet of Johnston sweepers. One was hired from early October and a further two from 1st November to cover the peak leafing period.

6. What worked well this year?

Management were able to apply experience from previous years to ensure that priority locations were efficiently cleaned thereby reducing the number of queries.

The hired Scarab mechanical brooms made a real difference. They are robust machines that are able to produce a much higher quality clean than the existing aging fleet.

7. Are there any changes that Veolia would make to procedures in future?

In future every effort will be made to ensure the Deep Clean takes place earlier in the year as it placed extra demands on Management at an already busy time of the year. Planning is already underway for this year's Deep Clean with the aim of securing earlier dates.

8. Summary

Veolia have successfully implemented the annual autumn leaf clearance programme, with over 40% less queries than last year.

Additional seasonal staff were successfully deployed.

The three hired Scarab mechanical brooms made a real difference.

Earlier dates will be secured for the Deep Clean to ensure management can fully focus on the leaf clearance programme.