

Outstanding rating for our services

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Junior chef awards

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Driving transport for the future

From buses to bikes, we're making tracks – and designing a better, greener and more joined up transport network.

Over the next few months, we're encouraging you to get involved and help shape major plans including having your say on improving buses.

We're using £7.6m of Government funding to make bus travel more affordable, reliable, easy to use and green.

On top of this, bus operators have successfully bid for £8m of Government cash to help run emission-free buses on several routes.

Travel habits have changed - see page three to find out how to give your views.

Councillor Ozzy O'Shea, cabinet member for highways and transport, said: "We've got a long-term commitment to buses across our county, including market towns and rural areas.

"Huge economic challenges remain for the bus industry, but our improvement

plan has been written by people who understand because they've talked to bus users and others who can't access services.

"We can't run bus routes with only a handful of people using them so we're developing models which are attractive, convenient and earn their keep."

Leicestershire's population is growing at a faster rate than the national and East Midlands average – projected to rise from 713,000 to 830,000 by 2043 – so it's important we're planning for a future county.

That's why, this autumn, we also want to hear your views on our Local Transport Plan blueprint for the next decade, setting out our longer-term plan to cut carbon, boost health and strengthen our local economy.

We're working hard to keep you moving:

£19m
to maintain roads and fix potholes

£400k
extra to help us do more to tackle flooding

765,000sq m
of road resurfacing this summer - that's the size of more than 100 football pitches



Leicestershire Matters is sent to all residents in the county of Leicestershire.

It costs around 12p to print and deliver each copy. To help save money on the distribution, we work closely with Royal Mail. We're sorry if you receive Leicestershire Matters just over the border in a neighbouring county - but by using standard postal routes we actually save £750 per issue.

Contact us

leicestershire.gov.uk

Our website focuses on the most popular things that people want to do online. So next time you need to find or do something with the council, go online at leicestershire.gov.uk

Email

leics-matters@leics.gov.uk

X @LeicsCountyHall

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General enquiries

Mon - Thur: 8.30am - 5pm

Fri: 8.30am - 4.30pm

Telephone: 0116 232 3232

Post

Communications Team,
Room 400, County Hall,
Glenfield, Leicester, LE3 8RA

Welcome to Leicestershire Matters

Council leader, **Nick Rushton**, introduces our summer edition



We're a high performing, efficient council – and despite a very challenging time for local government budgets, we're faring well.

Detailed research we've carried out, using more than 250 different measures, shows that we remain one of the top performing county councils in the country, despite being the lowest funded. And by innovating and taking difficult decisions, we're redesigning services, bringing down costs and delivering the best we can for our Council Tax payers.

This includes keeping children safe. Supporting vulnerable children is one of the most important things we do. Through trailblazing partnerships, close work with families and partners and incredible efforts from our staff, we've worked hard to

improve outcomes for our young people and I'm pleased Ofsted has recognised this by rating us as 'outstanding'.

As you can see from the front page, Leicestershire is a fast-growing county. And by creating brand new schools, we're planning for the future. Building a greener, better connected transport network is also key. Securing Government money is helping us to boost buses and fill more potholes. We want you to help shape our transport plans so please look out for updates about how to get involved.

I hope you enjoy this edition.

Nicholas Rushton

Busy year for scrutiny

It's been a jam-packed year for our scrutiny leads who've put nearly 130 reports under the microscope. Through our scrutiny function, councillors make sure local services are on track, and budget pressures have been the dominant theme across all of the meetings over the last 12 months. At a glance:

Scrutiny Commission: Leads pressed for progress on fair funding for local government and supported discussions with Government, looked in detail at the performance of our commercial services and considered an update on how residents can contact us.

Adults and Communities: Leads discussed a forthcoming CQC inspection and asked for close oversight of information provided on our website, held a workshop to consider future options for storing archives and questioned funding availability for nursing care provision.

Children and Families: Our councillors asked questions about school place availability, sought assurance on the creation of new residential homes and raised concerns about the resource required to support unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

Highways and Transport: Leads echoed calls for national action to improve transport for

children and young people with SEND, pushed for more flood warnings on mobile phones and praised staff for their response to Storm Henk. They also sought reassurance about street light changes.

Environment and Climate Change:

The committee checked that country parks are included in a new biodiversity-boosting strategy, reviewed air quality and net zero progress and asked questions about our tree planting target.

Health: Councillors quizzed leads on elective care waiting lists, reviewed plans to manage winter pressures and raised concerns about the number of young people vaping.

Tackling sexual and criminal exploitation, electric vehicle charging plans and non-emergency patient transport are just three of the items on this year's agenda.

Find out more: leicestershire.gov.uk/scrutiny

Tune in to scrutiny on our YouTube channel: leicestershire.gov.uk/webcast



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Get on board with travel plans

This autumn we'll be out and about, talking about our plans to boost buses and greener travel.

Funded through the Government, we've drawn up a Bus Service Improvement Plan which proposes to make the local bus network more:

- **Reliable:** Quicker journey times, delivered more reliably and, where possible, more frequently.
- **Affordable:** Particularly for young people to get them to employment and education and training opportunities.
- **Easy to use:** Easier experience for customers with greater co-ordination between bus operators' timetables and in terms of getting information.
- **Attractive and greener:** Lower-emission vehicles and greater use of on-demand services, particularly in rural areas.



Ozzy O'Shea

Councillor Ozzy O'Shea, cabinet member for highways and transport, said: "Now there's more funding available, we're working flat out to review our overall strategy, and focusing on strengthening and stabilising the commercial network, reviewing our supported bus service network and looking at improving links for our more rural communities.

"This will include looking at new app-based and flexible transport solutions for areas with low use. This enables people to book smaller vehicles and can be a much more effective and flexible way of providing public transport in a rural community."

Find out more

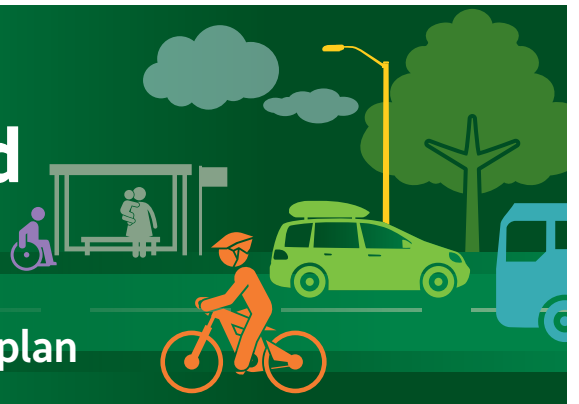
Come to a roadshow to hear more about our plans for your bus network - as well as information on walking and cycling routes and e-bike promotion. For event details, visit choosehowyoumove.co.uk or call: 0116 305 0002



Have your say

We're thinking about ways of getting around

Get involved this autumn and have your say. Keep up to date at leicestershire.gov.uk/local-transport-plan



FAMILY SUPPORT



Our children and family services team celebrate their 'Outstanding' achievement



Just over a year ago we opened our first-ever family hub in Coalville.

Now there are 37 dotted around the county in towns and villages including Melton Mowbray, Hinckley, Loughborough, Syston, Measham and Bagworth.

They have supported more than 7,000 families and hosted over 740 stay-and-play groups.



Our 37 hubs, include 21 family hub buildings and 16 libraries, as well as a new website which serves as a virtual space where people can access information all in one place.

Councillor Deborah Taylor, cabinet member for children and families, said: "It's only been just over a year, but the hubs are already a hive of activity and making a real difference to family's lives.

"This is just the beginning of what we hope will become a vital source of support for families and communities throughout Leicestershire."

Find out more by visiting familyhubsleicestershire.org.uk or scan the QR code.



Leicestershire children and family services are Outstanding

It's official - our children's services have been rated as outstanding by Ofsted.

Our work to build "strong and lasting relationships" with families which lead to many achieving "positive changes" in their lives was recognised by inspectors.

They also said a culture has been created which puts the "experiences and progress of children at the heart of social work practice".

Their report was published this month following an in-depth two-week visit in May which saw them assess several areas.

This includes our work to protect children and enable families to stay together, the experiences and progress of both children in care and care leavers and the impact of leaders on social work and practice.



Deborah Taylor

Councillor Deborah Taylor, cabinet member for children and family services, said: "We are absolutely delighted to have received an outstanding rating.

"This judgement is testament to the incredible efforts of staff, managers and partners who work tirelessly to improve outcomes for children and families here in Leicestershire.

"We are also grateful for the support and feedback families have given us which has

helped shape the way we do things.

"However, we are ambitious and aspirational to continue to develop practice and services, support our young people and build strong and lasting relationships with our families to help give them the best start in life."

Inspectors said that the majority of children in our care receive an outstanding service that results in their life experiences significantly improving. It also recognised the work to support care leavers through personal advisors and support staff.

Our foster carers feel well supported and an "overwhelming majority of staff" said they like working for us and value the investment and support from their managers.

They also said leaders are "outward looking and dynamic" in their approach to transform the quality of help and protection for vulnerable children in Leicestershire.

Recent improvements include the establishment of Family Hubs in the county and a new Family Safeguarding and Family Help service. Family Help brings together targeted early help and work with children classed as being in need.

FOSTERING

Three decades of fostering

With over 700 children and young people in care across Leicestershire, the need for foster carers has never been greater.



Wendy and William have been fostering for

three decades. In that time they have sterilised 40,000 bottles, changed more than 50,000 nappies, and owned over 15 pushchairs. Find out about how they make a difference to young people's lives.

How long have you been fostering for?

Thirty years in total. We have fostered 22 babies, adopted two young people and raised two birth children.

What's been your biggest achievement?

All the children we have cared for have been our biggest achievements. The fact that we have provided a home for these babies at the beginning of their journey in life is our biggest success, and our legacy.

What's the best thing about being a foster parent?

The true test of a foster parent is the ability to provide love, safety, and security to children. We feel privileged to have been in these children's lives - we have loved every one of them.

William and Wendy are now encouraging people interested in fostering to get in touch to find out more.

Councillor Deborah Taylor, cabinet member for children and families, said: "Wendy and William's achievement is extraordinary, and is an example of the great work that our foster carers do day in, day out.

"I would strongly encourage anybody in the county who may be interested in making a difference to our young people to get in touch with the team, or attend one of the information events to find out more about fostering."

Can you help us?

We pay a minimum of £511 up to £765 a week, plus extra allowances, for our specialist carers. If you know someone who would suit the role, please spread the word. Could it even be you? Visit leicestershire.gov.uk/jobs or get in touch with our friendly team for an informal chat. Call 0116 305 0505 or email fostering@leics.gov.uk.

Find out more

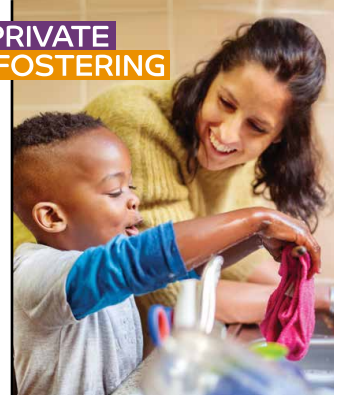
Virtual 'Find Out About Fostering'

events take place every three weeks on Microsoft Teams. To register for an upcoming event and find out more about fostering visit leicestershire.gov.uk/fostering or scan the QR code. You can also email fostering@leics.gov.uk



or call 0116 305 0505.

PRIVATE FOSTERING



Support for private foster carers

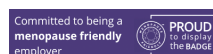
Did you know that if you're looking after a child that's not your own then you may be classed as a private foster carer?

If you're caring for a child or young person who is not a close relative, and this is a private arrangement made without the involvement of children's social care, please let us know. Once you have notified us of the arrangement, you will be able to access support and advice via a dedicated worker from the fostering service.

You have a legal responsibility to let us know if you are privately fostering.

For more information visit leicestershire.gov.uk/private-fostering

See more about working at the council at leicestershire.gov.uk/inclusiveworkplace



Major changes are bringing down costs

Innovation, reducing demand and tightening up financial controls are helping us weather the growing challenges facing local government.



Lee Breckon

Councillor Lee Breckon, cabinet member for resources, said: “We balanced our budget in 2023/24, and our controlled approach to managing our finances is why we’re not under water. Let’s be clear, the pressure on local government is not shifting and starkly illustrated by our social care budgets being pushed into the red through the demand on them.

“We have a strong track record of innovation and high performance and we can see that delivering services differently is bringing down costs.

“Robust finance controls are also playing a part in keeping us on track and enabling us to invest in key issues such as tackling flooding.

“We recognise that much of our funding is from our residents’ Council Tax and spend the money as effectively as possible. Our focus remains on protecting the core services that matter to people, whilst identifying savings as future challenges grow.”

Tough decisions are also playing a big part and helping to balance our books, in the face of £16m overspends in social care last year.

Spiralling demand is continuing to push these services over budget, with children and family services spending £12m more last year and although reducing, adult social care exceeded its envelope by £3m.

The average weekly cost for children’s social care residential place has gone up by 20 per cent or £1,000 – to £5,800. For children with complex needs, this rises to over £10,000 a week – or half-a-million-pounds a year.

But our work to re-design services is bringing down costs:

- **Teaming up with Barnardo’s to run children’s homes locally** - on track to save over £2m.
- **Delivering adult social care packages differently** - reducing spend by £3m.
- **Special educational needs and disabilities** - a new approach, balancing growing demand for support with getting children the right help, is reducing growing costs.
- **Recruiting more in-house foster carers** - due to save over £3m by 2025.
- **Tighter finance controls** - saving £8m on recruitment, £500k on travel and over £100k on training.

Barnardo’s project brings down costs

We have teamed up with Barnardo’s to open eight new children’s homes across Leicestershire. Owned by us and run by Barnardo’s, they support children in our care who are being exploited and children and young people with complex, emotional and developmental needs.

This includes a home specialising in support for young mums and their babies.

The innovative project reduces the need to buy placements from private companies which are often much more expensive.

Two homes have opened so far with a further six opening over the next year – and they’re on track to reduce costs by over £2m.



CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Apply now for free childcare funding

Parents with children from nine months can now apply for 15 hours of free childcare.

Eligible working parents will be entitled to the support from September. The deadline to apply for funding for the autumn period is 31 August, so if you're eligible we'd encourage you to apply as soon as possible.

Check your eligibility and next steps by visiting childcarechoices.gov.uk

Junior chefs go for glory

Eight primary school pupils from across the county came together in Loughborough for the final of the Junior Chef of the Year.

The competition was run by our school food team, which provides meals to 170 schools in the county, feeding thousands of children a day.

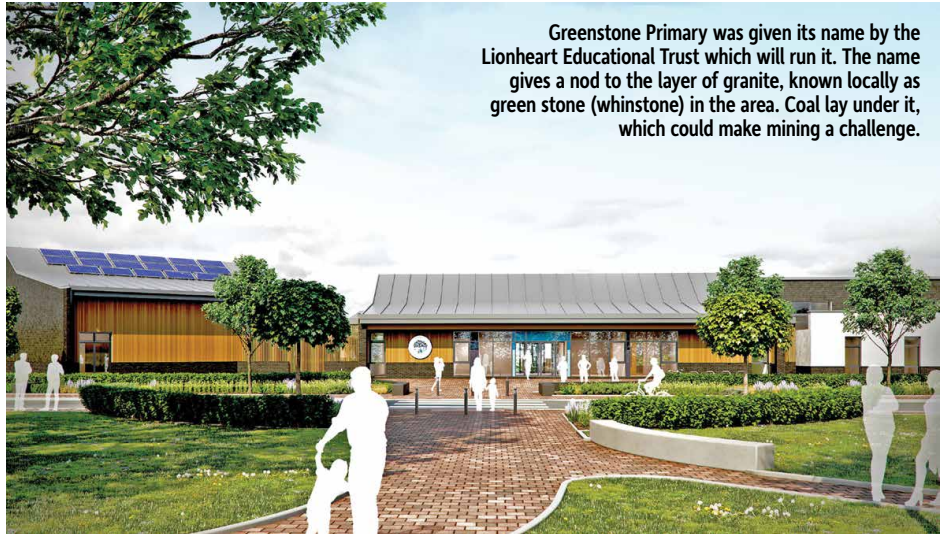
Great British Bake Off finalist Josh Smalley was one of the guest judges for the final.

Ten-year-old Annie Moss from Great Bowden Primary School in Market Harborough won after making teriyaki salmon and Japanese-style rice for her main, with a pear and blueberry galette as her dessert.

Councillor Lee Breckon, cabinet member for resources, said: "A huge congratulations to Annie! It's great to run this contest and show the amazing cooking skills young people in Leicestershire have."



Junior Chef winner Annie Moss and Josh Smalley



Greenstone Primary was given its name by the Lionheart Educational Trust which will run it. The name gives a nod to the layer of granite, known locally as green stone (whinstone) in the area. Coal lay under it, which could make mining a challenge.

New school places for growing county

With a growing population comes a growing need to provide more school places.

Lots of careful planning and work with partners, including developers, is done to make sure we are providing high-quality, accessible and environmentally friendly schools.

Wellington Place in Market Harborough, a 210-pupil primary and our second 'carbon neutral school', is set to open in the autumn.

In Shepshed, Bowman Academy, a specialist school for pupils aged 5-16 with social, emotional and mental health needs, is also due next term.

Greenstone Primary will be a forest school in Ellistown, offering education based on a Scandinavian idea which promotes learning through contact with nature.

And the Government has given the go-ahead to build a 90-place school for children with special educational needs and disabilities, in Farley Way in Quorn.

Redmoor Academy in Hinckley, Hastings High School in Burbage and Hugglescote Community Primary will be extending to provide more places.

Councillor Deborah Taylor, cabinet member for children and families, said: "Lots of work is done behind the scenes to plan pupil places. It's exciting to work on new projects and see new schools being completed and used.

Applications for first-time primary school places and primary to secondary school transfers for entry in 2025/26 open on 1 September at leicestershire.gov.uk/admissions

Childminding start-up grant

New childminders can apply for a start-up grant to help towards the cost of registration. Childminders who register with Ofsted on the Early Years or General Childcare Register from now until 31 March 2025 can apply for £600, while anyone registering with a childminding agency can apply for £1,200.

Visit gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-a-childminder-start-up-grant for more information and eligibility.



Apply for up to £1,200

Summer Fun

Things to see and do this summer in our country parks, heritage sites, museums and libraries.

leicestershire.gov.uk/whats-on



Book online at centurytheatre.co.uk or call the box office 01530 278444 centurytheatre.co.uk

[/CenturyTheatre](https://www.facebook.com/CenturyTheatre) [@century_theatre](https://www.instagram.com/century_theatre)



Coalville Voices Choir
Mon 19 August, 7pm, from £12

Performing a bright and uplifting collection of summer-themed arrangements.



Erased – The Ultimate Erasure Tribute
Fri 30 August, 7.30pm, from £14

New outfits and classic songs. This is not one to miss!



The D-Day Juniors Back Home
Sat 31 August, 7.30pm, from £12

Following in the footsteps of The D-Day Darlings, the Juniors keep the wartime spirit alive for a new generation.

Upcoming at Century Theatre:

13 September – Tina Live! The Tina Turner Experience

14 September – The Bootleg Shadows

19 October – The Ultimate 80s Party

26 & 27 October – The Little Mermaid



Ashby Road, Coalville, LE67 3LN

[/snibstoncollierypark](https://www.facebook.com/snibstoncollierypark)



The park's natural landscape is rooted in its mining heritage and has a rich ecology. It has Green Flag status and includes a 4km blue grade mountain bike trail and pump track. And it's also home to the Century Theatre and the historic Snibston Colliery where regular tours are given by former miners.

leicscountryparks.org.uk

Scan here to book



Free to join **YOUR LIBRARY**
KNOWLEDGE • DISCOVERY • ENTERTAINMENT

Summer Reading Challenge
6 July - 7 Sept



This year's Summer Reading Challenge 'Marvellous Makers' is all about reading for fun and sparking imagination. Children aged 4-12 years can read library books over the summer to collect rewards. Try lots of fun events and activities at your library from Bollywood dancing to comic book art. For more information visit leicestershire.gov.uk/summer-reading-challenge

Connect with nature

Explore the beautiful landscapes and natural spaces of Leicestershire

Discover all our parks and upcoming events at leicscountryparks.org.uk



Beaumanor Hall

A Victorian country house set in 34 acres of idyllic countryside, bursting with exciting events and things to do.

Woodhouse, Leicestershire, LE12 8TX
beaumanorhall.co.uk
Tel: 01509 890119
[@beaumanorhall](https://www.facebook.com/beaumanorhall) [@beaumanorhall](https://www.instagram.com/beaumanorhall)

Summer Fair

Sat 31 August & Sun 1 September
10am - 4pm,
£3 entry (free parking)

Special event

You'll find an array of stalls from local makers alongside tasty treats and cooling refreshments at Beaumanor's Summer Fair. With crafts, items for the home and foodie treats, this fair offers a great day of unique shopping in beautiful historic surroundings. Free entry for 12s and under.

HOLIDAY Outdoor Activities

at Beaumanor

KIDS' EVENT

Join Beaumanor's holiday activity club this summer for exciting outdoors activities for children aged 7-14. From high ropes and canoeing to mountain biking and climbing, there's something for every adventurer to enjoy. From £45 per child, per day. Childcare vouchers also accepted. Search 'Beaumanor' on Eventbrite to book or call 01509 890119.

beaumanorhall.co.uk/outdoor-activities



BOSWORTH

BATTLEFIELD HERITAGE CENTRE
AND COUNTRY PARK



Explore the stories behind the Battle of Bosworth in 1485 and the death of Richard III.

Sutton Cheney, Leicestershire, CV13 0AD
bosworthbattlefield.org.uk

Tel: 01455 290429

Open daily April to October 10am-5pm and Nov to March 10am-4pm. Admission: Adult £8.95, Child (3-15) £5.95, under 3s free. Student, senior and family discounts available. Pay once, ticket valid for a year.

Special event

Bosworth Medieval Festival



Sat 17 & Sun 18 August, 10am-4pm. Adult £22, Child £11, other ticket options available.

The Bosworth Medieval Festival returns for a celebration like no other. The two-day family-friendly event features battle re-enactments – including a 20-minute recreation of the Battle of Bosworth on both days. With archery, cannon fire demonstrations, medieval falconry displays, musicians, guided tours, author talks, a medieval market, children's Knight School, hands-on games for children, as well as entry to the award-winning exhibition.

Scan the QR code to buy tickets



Great for tracing your family history

The Record Office for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

Long St, Wigston Magna, LE18 2AH
recordoffice.org.uk Tel: 0116 257 1080

Resources for researching local history and culture. Extensive collections, dating from early 1100s.



charnwood museum



Exhibitions of the archaeology, geology, history and industries of Charnwood and the local area.

Granby St, Loughborough, LE11 3DU
charnwoodmuseum.co.uk

Tel: 01509 233754

Open Wed to Sat, 10am-3pm.

Closed Sun, Mon and Tues. FREE ENTRY

Free EXHIBITION

Well-Loved Bears:

A celebration of bears, teddies and Ladybird Books
Open until 2 November 2024

Charnwood Museum is celebrating its 25th birthday by gathering together adorable teddy bears from Leicestershire's Museum Collections. At the heart of the exhibition are three bears from the Ladybird Books version of Goldilocks and the Three Bears. Original illustrations by Eric Winter for the book published in 1971 are on show. There are also many other popular bears from stories, stage and screen.



THE 1620s

HOUSE & GARDEN
at Donington le Heath

A medieval manor house with links to the Gunpowder Plot.

Manor Road, Donington le Heath, LE67 2FW
1620shouse.org.uk Tel: 01455 290429

Open Thurs to Sun and Bank Holidays,
10.30am-4.30pm (last entry 3.30pm).

Special event

The Hound of the Baskervilles

Weds 14 August, 7.30pm – 9pm

Adult £20, Child £12 (under 3s free), Concession £16 (seniors, students), family (two adults, two children) £55. Pre-booking essential.

The original and greatest literary detective of them all, Sherlock Holmes, and his assistant Doctor Watson, tackle the most baffling case of their careers in this faithful, cheeky but chilling adaptation of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's classic. Adapted by Oliver Gray and performed in the great outdoors by Illyria, prepare for an unforgettable evening of mystery, intrigue and things that go 'grrrr' in the night!



Traces the history of Melton, with exhibitions on the world-renowned Stilton cheese and pork pie industries, and the history of fox hunting.

Thorpe End, Melton Mowbray, LE13 1RB
meltonmuseum.org

Tel: 0116 305 3860

Open Tues to Sat, 10am-4.30pm.

Closed Mon and Sun. FREE ENTRY.

Free EXHIBITION

Well-Loved Tales: Stories from a Ladybird Childhood
Open until 14 September 2024

Come along to see the exhibition about the famous series produced by Ladybird Books. See the books, trip trap over the troll's bridge and ask the mirror "who is the fairest of them all?".



Harborough Museum

Explore the historic and recent communities who have shaped the story of the Market Harborough area.

The Symington Building, Adam and Eve St,
Market Harborough, LE16 7LT

harboroughmuseum.org.uk

Tel: 0116 305 3627

Open Tues to Fri, 10am-6pm &

Sat 10am-4pm. Closed Sun. FREE ENTRY.

Free EXHIBITION

Harborough at Work: Earning a Living in a Ladybird World

Open until 1 February 2025

A family-friendly exhibition looking at the Ladybird Books series 'People at Work'. This exhibition considers how occupations and attitudes have changed since the publication of the first title over 60 years ago. Original illustrations and museum objects will be joined by local community portrait photos and stories. A creative response to the exhibition co-curated with the local community will also be displayed from September.

Transforming lives *with a personal touch*



Personal assistants (PAs) help more than 600 people across Leicestershire. Karen employs two PAs, Tasha and Nisha, using her 'personal budget' - we spoke to them about the rewarding role.

What personal assistants say about the role:

"I finish work every day with a sense of achievement that I've not had in any other job."

Why did you employ PAs?



Karen: I wanted a normal life which other services didn't cater for. I wanted the freedom to go out into the community, maybe do an art class with everybody else. Tasha and Nisha help me have a nice environment at home and give me stimulation and company.

How did you become PAs?



Tasha: I was a hairdresser at the beginning of Covid. I needed to find work and saw the job to be a PA and thought I'd be good so applied for it.



Nisha: I used to work in a showroom for kitchens and bathrooms. But I've always wanted to be in care, so when I saw the PA job Karen was advertising I thought that's the job for me.

What do PAs do?

Karen: We go for walks, we go shopping, do activities, go to the pictures and go to my art class. They also help in the house with chores. It's more than just hoovering and cooking, it's also mental wellbeing.

Tasha: And sometimes it's not about doing things, it's about just sitting there and chatting, sorting the world out.

What's important about being a PA?

Tasha: You've got to have empathy. You've got to understand what that person wants and it's all about good communication.

What difference do PAs make?

Karen: Tasha and Nisha keep me stimulated. If I didn't have them coming in and helping with those sorts of things, my environment wouldn't be clean or tidy. And that's important to me, to have a nice environment. The company and chit chat, they keep me connected. It's like a community and what's going on outside of the little bubble I'm in.

What would you say to anyone looking at a PA role?

Tasha: Don't hold back, don't think like I did, "Oh, I can't do it, I can't do it." Just go and do it and enjoy it.

Nisha: Go for it. You'll never look back. I finish work every day with a sense of achievement that I've not had in any other job.

Councillor Christine Radford, cabinet member



Christine Radford

for adults, said: "Karen, Nisha and Tasha have a really strong bond, and their story highlights how important personal assistants are. If you're a caring person and want to consider becoming a PA, please do apply."

Scan the QR code or visit leicestershire.gov.uk/jobs to find out more about Personal Assistant roles



BOSWORTH
BATTLEFIELD HERITAGE CENTRE
AND COUNTRY PARK

THE
1620s
HOUSE & GARDENS
at Donington le Heath

Free entry for unpaid carers



If you're an unpaid carer, you can get all-year-round free entry to Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre and 1620s House and Gardens for anyone with a valid Carers Passport.

Tickets will be valid for 12 months from the date of issue and will also be eligible for a free tea or coffee (and cake at 1620s House) on their first visit.

The offer is open to people who have a current adult Carers Passport when visiting either of the attractions, and free tickets need to be claimed by 31 August.

Apply for a carers passport by calling Support for Carers on 01858 468543, email maureen@supportforcarers.org. Quote FREEPASS 2024 when making an application. More information is available at supportforcarers.org

Thank you to all carers



Flood-hit home support

Residents and businesses across the county who experienced flooding during Storm Babet or Storm Henk can apply for up to £5,000 of Government grant funding. You can also apply retrospectively for work you've funded yourself.

Councillor Ozzy O'Shea, cabinet member for flooding said: "We know that people were hit incredibly hard by these storms. I urge you to apply for the financial help available if you think you're eligible."

Find out more details at: leicestershire.gov.uk/flood-repair-grant or scan the QR code.



Wardens on the up!

Flooding can happen at any time and wardens play an important part in preparing and responding. We have more than 105 flood wardens across Leicestershire and more have volunteered following Storm Babet and Storm Henk.

If you're interested in becoming a flood warden, come to our training event in Market Harborough on 8 August 6-8pm in the Symington Building. Email emergency.management@leics.gov.uk to sign up.

To get more information, call 0116 305 6101, visit llrprepared.org.uk/flood-warden or scan the QR code.



Safe and sound homes for swifts

We've been working to help protect swifts across Leicestershire with free nesting boxes.

Thanks to a £77,000 grant from Natural England, over 100 boxes have been installed, and hundreds of people have registered their interest to see if their property is suitable for a swift box.

We've seen a 53 per cent decline in swift numbers over 20 years, due to loss of breeding sites and a reduction in flying insects.

Swifts are very special birds:

- Fastest bird in level flight (Peregrines only get their faster speed in a dive).
- Once fledged, young birds will not land for up to two years.
- Adults sleep, feed and breed entirely on the wing only landing to nest.
- Live entirely on insects caught on the wing and will catch up to 20,000 per day and fly 200,000km a year.

The boxes are purpose-built and equipped with 'callers' to help encourage swifts to find the boxes.



Boxes under the roofline

Councillor Blake Pain, said: "We've installed 130 boxes so far which are a simple and effective way to help the population to thrive. We've been amazed by the number of requests for swift boxes!

"This has been a fantastic partnership with Leicestershire & Rutland Ornithological Society and Natural England and it's been great to see such huge interest in protecting these amazing birds."



Going solar together

If you're thinking about getting solar panels on your home or business, Solar Together could be your best bet.

The community scheme is back for 2024 and helps people across the county get a better price and battery storage.

Simply put, the more people who register, the better price for everyone, and nearly 7,000 solar

panels in the county have been installed thanks to the scheme.

Solar Together is a simple, no obligation process. If you sign up but decide not to continue, there's no penalty.

Installers are vetted and all installations are backed by a 10-year insurance guarantee.

Councillor Blake Pain, cabinet member for the environment, said: "This



Blake Pain

is a great scheme and I encourage you to visit the website and sign up. You've

nothing to lose and could save a lot of money."

Register your interest by visiting solartogether.co.uk or scan the QR code.



Helping more people stub out smoking

Our QuitReady service has already helped more than 11,000 people stop smoking, and we're bolstering support, thanks to Government funding.

Plans include dedicated help for pregnant women who will get home visits as standard from their stop smoking advisor.

We've also recruited more advisors to give extra support to young people, and helping schools tackle youth smoking and vaping.



Louise Richardson

Councillor Louise Richardson, cabinet member for health, said: "By recruiting more advisors and specialist support,

we can step up this important work."

To get in touch with Quit Ready, call 0345 646 66 66, visit quitready.co.uk or scan the QR code.



.....
9.6%

Leicestershire has the lowest smoking rate in the East Midlands

.....
1,270

people quit smoking last year with the help of QuitReady



Super **HERO** grants keeping homes warm



Our Home Energy Retrofit Offer (HERO) is Government cash to help people at risk of ill health due to cold, inefficient or damp homes.

If you're eligible you could get your home checked by an expert to give you advice on how to make it more energy efficient.

Advisors will help people access funding and apply for grants to help make homes more energy efficient.

Councillor Louise Richardson, cabinet member for health, said: "This is another valuable scheme which will help residents with the cost of living by cutting fuel bills, cut carbon emissions and improve health."

To find out if you're eligible, visit leicestershire.gov.uk/retrofit or scan the QR code



Innovative health research on horizon

A major research funding investment to help change local services and improve the county's health is set to start soon.

Many things we do, or influence, make a difference to our health. We've been awarded £5.25m of Government money to help build a team to research these factors, including housing, employment, access to green space and the way we travel.

The team's work will be known as the Health Determinants Research Collaboration and will last for up to five years – and we want you to be involved. Keep a lookout on leicestershire.gov.uk to find out how you can make a difference.

Planning for the future

No one really wants to think about future health issues that may impact our independence. But when things do happen, we can be prepared and in a better position to deal with them if we've planned ahead.

This could include needing support to live independently, making decisions about your future care and support, being a carer or thinking about equipment and technology for your home that can improve your life and help you remain independent.

We want every person in Leicestershire to live in the place they call home with the people and things they love.

Need advice and support? Use our **First Contact Plus** service at firstcontactplus.org.uk. You can also find our information and support directory at leicestershire.gov.uk/lisd, which lists a range of community groups, services and organisations to help you.



Don't get stepped on

Advice to avoid falling victim to £3m county scam.

Over the last 12 months, more than 200 people in the county have been ripped off by an average of £13,000 by dodgy traders selling from the doorstep.

They typically offer services such as roofing, chimney work or driveway repairs, and Leicestershire Trading Standards are urging you to decline such services if they're offered at your front door.

Rogue traders often knock on doors unannounced and claim they have noticed damage, before offering to have a look for free as they have just finished a job nearby and have all their equipment with them.

Despite any incentives or discounts the trader may offer, the work may be unnecessary and quoted low initially, only then to raise the price drastically once work has started.

Councillor Deborah Taylor, cabinet member for regulatory services, said: "We will investigate where there is substantial loss to consumers. We're talking about large sums of money here, so it's our responsibility to do what we can to stop rip-off traders."

What we've been told

Our Trading Standards Team has been told about scammers going into lofts and pretending to have taken a photo showing gaps in tiles to scare

consumers into believing they need roofs replacing. In fact, the photo was not of their roof.

A county resident was also told by their neighbour that a worker went onto the roof and sat smoking a cigarette. They then charged the homeowner a large sum of money without having carried out any work.

SCAM ALERT Stay safe from doorstep scams

- **Shut the door** - If a trader starts to get 'pushy' or pressures, shut the door and call the police on 101 or 999 if an emergency.
- **Neighbourliness** - If your neighbour looks uncomfortable with traders, telephone the police to get them checked out.
- **Quote, quote, quote** - Get at least three independent quotes and never agree to anything on the doorstep.
- **Research** - Do your research and get reviews before you agree to any work.
- **Go cashless** - Pay by card or cheque rather than cash.

If you want to report a doorstep scammer, or want more information about buying and trading at car boot sales, visit leicestershire.gov.uk/trading-standards



Booting up for summer

Lots of people enjoy the bargains at a car boot sale. Here are Trading Standards' top tips to get the best value for your money.

• Don't get shocked

Try to avoid electric heaters, electric blankets, irons and power tools at boot sales. It can be hard to confirm how safe they are and can cause significant damage if they're faulty.

• Avoid being played

If you're selling at a boot sale, check toys to make sure there are no sharp points or small parts that can be pulled off. Look for a CE mark or any signs of damage.

• Clothes

Think before selling or buying nightwear as it may not meet flammability requirements that apply to nightwear sold by traders.

• Baby aware

Think carefully about purchasing items second-hand prams, cots and playpens as these have their own safety standards and need to be thoroughly checked for safety. We advise against buying used car seats as damage that affects safety may be impossible to detect.

• Food dates

A "use by" date indicates a food item is highly perishable and likely to become dangerous to eat within a short time. Best before dates are used to show food will be at its best and should be safe to eat before a certain point or date.

If you buy goods or make them especially to resell, you are likely to be classed as a business even if boot sales are not a major source of income. Businesses can be prosecuted for selling unsafe or misdescribed goods, and could even be sued if goods they sell cause harm.

digital Leicestershire



Communities get supercharged rural broadband.

Dozens of schools, libraries and other public buildings in rural Leicestershire have been upgraded to lightning-fast broadband, as part of Project Gigabit, boosting countryside connectivity and improving services for local communities.

Forty-three public sector buildings in the county have been upgraded to gigabit-capable broadband under the GigaHubs programme.

Delivered in partnership with ourselves, the sites are in hard-to-reach areas which wouldn't have received an upgrade commercially due to their rural location.

The pioneering £1.5 million Leicestershire project aims to open up digital resources for pupils and enable libraries to offer more activities, as well as make the area more attractive for potential future investment from commercial broadband suppliers.



Pam Posnett

Councillor Pam Posnett, cabinet member for broadband, said "This is a real feather in our cap and great news for our rural areas. I'm delighted we have completed the roll out, which means more children can benefit from cutting-edge digital

resources, creates new opportunities to bring communities together and encourages commercial suppliers to bring the fastest speeds to more places.

"In 2024, access to gigabit-capable broadband is essential and we'll be working with communities to make sure they're maximising the new opportunities."

The completion of the project follows the award of a £71 million Project Gigabit contract in Leicestershire and Warwickshire, connecting 38,000 hard-to-reach homes and businesses in the area.

The Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) GigaHubs programme is part of Project Gigabit, a Government £5 billion programme to deliver lightning-fast, reliable broadband in hard-to-reach areas of the UK.

The hubs will see properties in the surrounding area be more commercially attractive to broadband suppliers, making it easier for residents to switch to gigabit broadband and giving them speeds of up to 1,000mbps - the fastest connectivity currently available.

For more information, please visit digital-leicestershire.org.uk

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if you book before 7pm,
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Discover what lifelong learning means to you with GoLearn!

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FREEphone
0800 988 0308

or visit us online at
GoLearnLeicestershire.ac.uk





Local network helps community groups thrive

From Burbage to Bottesford and Castle Donington to Cotesbach, our local communities make a massive difference across Leicestershire.

Our Leicestershire Communities team runs a network that brings together residents, local volunteers groups, parish councils and areas that aren't represented by a parish council

The one thing in common is their hard work and determination to support individuals and organisations within their local areas. Joining the Communities

Network means they can tackle issues and topics together and work towards solutions that benefit not just their local area, but all of Leicestershire.

Sessions take place both online and in person, with the opportunity to hear inspirational stories from community groups, as well as signing up to a quarterly newsletter.

Councillor Pam Posnett, cabinet member for communities, said: "There are so many groups across Leicestershire and we recognise the extraordinary efforts they make every day. We've

seen that by joining the Communities Network a problem shared can be a problem solved. If you're a group, parish or organisation who wants to join I'd encourage you to get in touch and take part."

Find out more about Leicestershire Communities, and join our network by visiting leicestershirecommunities.org.uk or scan the QR code.



New 'community fridge' opens in Lutterworth

Based in the town's Family Hub, the community fridge is filled with donated food, which members of the community can take for free.

It's the fifth community fridge we've opened – others are based in Family Hubs in Coalville, South Wigston, Hinckley and Loughborough (Shelthorpe).

In the past year they were used by more than 11,000 people across the county and saved a whopping 42 tonnes of waste going to landfill.

Our fridges are run thanks to a partnership with the environmental charity Hubbub UK.

They're stocked with donations from local residents, projects and supermarkets.

Volunteers, including drivers to pick up food, are needed to support the new community fridge which is open from 10-11.30am Mondays and Wednesdays and 1-2pm on Thursdays.



Sign up for holiday club sessions



Funded holiday clubs are back again this summer! If your child receives benefits-related free school meals, don't forget to sign-up for sessions now.

Around 100 venues will be offering activities ranging from arts and crafts to sports, dance, games and music, alongside a nutritious meal.

We coordinate the Leicestershire Holidays

Together scheme along with Active Together as part of the government's Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme.

Eligible families will receive an e-voucher from Hello@holidayactivities.com. You can then visit leicestershire.gov.uk/HAF to view the activities and book a place.

Quit your way to a brighter, smokefree future...

...and a holiday won't be all you can afford!

Smoking 20 cigarettes a day can cost £5,040* over 12 months, more than enough for a family holiday.

*Based on a 20 pack of cigarettes costing £14.00. Holiday and cigarette prices can vary. Information and prices correct at time of printing.

Why Quit?



After **20 minutes** your pulse returns to normal



After **24 hours** carbon monoxide is eliminated from your body



After **3 days** your energy levels increase and you enjoy breathing more



Within **9 months** you'll have 10% more lung capacity

Did you know, you are three times more likely to stop smoking if you have support from an advisor, alongside stop smoking medications?

Our team of friendly advisors deliver a free and confidential 12-week programme to help you become and stay smoke free. They will be by your side to offer support and advice on your quit journey.

Get help to **Quit** smoking

Call **0345 646 66 66**

