

# matters

Spring 2025

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## ‘One Council’ plan to improve services



We’re seizing a big opportunity to save tens of millions of pounds, protect the services you value and reduce confusion over who does what.

The Government has made it clear it wants to move away from ‘two tier’ local government, so we’re drawing up common-sense plans to create one council for Leicestershire (excluding Rutland and Leicester City), forging stronger links with communities, reducing duplication and simplifying local government.

Councillor Deborah Taylor, acting leader of Leicestershire County Council, said: “It’s time for change, and creating one council for Leicestershire is the only sensible option.

“We have the chance to build one council fit for the 21st century, making life simpler for our residents and offering better value for our Council Tax payers.

“We want what’s best for our residents. But from our previous work, and experiences of other areas that were split, we don’t believe any other option adds up, financially, geographically or logically. Splitting the county into two, as some might suggest, is a non-starter creating more

pain than gain – fewer savings, more confusion and unhelpful competition for staff. Two sets of everything – from back-office staff to waste collection systems – and less choice about which libraries and waste sites our residents could use.”

Initial proposals need to be submitted by 21 March, with a more detailed plan completed by November. Reorganisation is needed before there can be any devolution of powers and responsibilities to the area from the Government.

Councillor Deborah Taylor added: “It’s well known that Leicestershire has been frustrated in trying to achieve any devolution of powers and responsibilities, a frustration which has been shared by MPs and district councils.

“This is a once in a generation chance to help us make the right decisions, so I encourage you to have your say.”


 Have  
your  
say

**What do you want from your council?** See page 3

### Bringing together eight councils into one single body would:

- **Save around £30m, every year** – through fewer managers, chief executives and councillors
- **Enable savings to be reinvested in front line services**
- **Make it easier to get support** – by giving you clear and simple access to all services, whether by phone, online, or through local area committees
- **Future-proof services** – protecting the support you depend on at a time when local government is facing spiralling costs
- **Improve support for vulnerable people** – by joining up health, social care and housing services
- **Give communities, parish and town councils a stronger voice** – local area committees would give you greater influence over decision-making
- **Boost accountability** – reducing confusion over who is responsible for what

Use

Your


 Vote

## County Council elections Thursday 1 May 2025

Sign up to get the latest updates: [leicestershire.gov.uk/sign-up](http://leicestershire.gov.uk/sign-up)



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](http://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](http://leicestershire.gov.uk)

### Email

[leics-matters@leics.gov.uk](mailto:leics-matters@leics.gov.uk)

X @LeicsCountyHall

Facebook LeicsCountyHall

Instagram LeicsCountyHall

TikTok @LeicsCountyCouncil

### 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

If you would like the information contained in this newsletter in an alternative version such as large print, Braille or tape, or help with understanding it in your language, please call 0116 305 6274 or email [leics-matters@leics.gov.uk](mailto:leics-matters@leics.gov.uk)

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When you have finished with this leaflet please recycle it

# Welcome

Acting council leader, **Deborah Taylor**, answers your questions about our 'One Council' proposal.



### Q) If councils are changing, why are your elections going ahead?

**A)** The Government turned down our request to postpone this spring's elections. It will be a few years before the new arrangements are in place so we need to keep delivering for residents until that point.

### Q) How does having one council save money?

**A)** By reducing senior management, support staff, councillors and elections. You also save money by having single services. At the moment, it makes no sense to have seven different waste collection systems with a different council then having to dispose of the waste. It's also ridiculous having eight chief executives, eight directors of this and that, all with their own staff.

### Q) I live miles from County Hall – wouldn't one council be more remote?

**A)** No – we already provide services in local areas 24/7, including social care in people's homes, and you can't get more local than that. Having

one council doesn't change where services are delivered from. More decisions would be delegated to local areas, particularly to new town councils in market towns.

### Q) Can I have my say?

**A)** Yes – please tell us what's important to you by completing our short survey online or using the handy tear-out sheet opposite. A bigger consultation is also planned later in the year.

### Q) Isn't having two unitary councils for Leicestershire a better option?

**A)** Objectively, it is difficult to see how. Creating one council generates the most savings by far. Other options don't add up. Two unitary councils with two sets of everything – from senior managers and waste collection systems to leisure centre memberships and social care set ups. This would be time consuming and disruptive to set up.

*D. Taylor*

# Budget tackles flood clean up

Supporting vulnerable people, fixing potholes and tackling flooding are at the heart of our newly-agreed budget.

Rapidly rising demand for services, and inflation, is driving up costs by £214m, compared to expected extra income and savings of £123m.

We've earmarked around £95m more to support vulnerable people and £28m extra to fix potholes and roads.

Following the devastating New Year floods, we're spending £1.5m more to help communities clean up and become flood-ready, taking the total to £18.4m.

Our £449m four-year capital pot will fund one-off costs

of building roads, social care accommodation, new school places and more.

Reserves will be used to manage a small budget gap next year – by 2027, this is forecast to increase to £38m and rise to £91m by 2029.

Councillor Lee Breckon, cabinet member for resources, said: "Our focus is managing what's in our gift and remaining financially resilient.

"We're lean, high-performing and low funded and doing the best we can with the money we have. No one wants to increase Council Tax but without it, we'd have to make £20m more savings next year, and consultation

feedback showed good support.

"We aren't at the crisis point many other councils face. But we've reached a stage where we need Government to tackle the big issues driving our costs – and the cost of providing services in a rural area – head on."

A 4.99 per cent Council Tax rise from April generates £20m – only covering the National Living Wage and National Insurance rises.

Savings of £33m – plus £52m to bring spend on special educational needs and disability support more in line with Government funding – are also factored in.

# One Council for Leicestershire

**Simple, sensible and money saving – this is what’s at the heart of our proposal for one council for Leicestershire. Here's what it would mean for you.**

- One set of rules for recycling - wherever you live or work.
- The right support in one place - no need to call a number of different councils.
- Road sign query? Get it sorted by calling one team - not the different councils responsible for different signs.
- Better support for vulnerable people - by joining up health, social care and housing services.
- A countywide leisure pass - offering access to centres across Leicestershire.
- One system for benefits and Council Tax collection.
- One 'local plan' - making sure development is in the right place and it easier to secure investment from housing developers to pay for roads, schools and other vital infrastructure.
- A joint trading standards and environmental health team - making it easier for businesses.
- Strong local voices - councillors championing your local community and battling for you on every issue, from planning to social care.



**Complete the survey below or online at: [leicestershire.gov.uk/onecouncil](http://leicestershire.gov.uk/onecouncil)**



## How important, if at all, are the following to you?

CUT OUT AND RETURN

Please tick one response for each question

	Very important	Fairly important	Not very important	Not at all important	Don't know
<b>Q1:</b> Joined up, easy to access council services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Q2:</b> Reduced duplication and cost of administration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Q3:</b> Better public services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Q4:</b> Strong local councillors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Q5:</b> A stronger say in local decisions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Q6:</b> Having one voice for Leicestershire	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Q7:</b> Being clear on who my councillor is and what they're responsible for	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Q8:</b> A sense of place and a recognised county	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Q9:</b> Opportunities to boost the economy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Return to (No stamp required):** One Council for Leicestershire, Room 400, Corporate Resources, Leicestershire County Council, Have Your Say, FREEPOST NAT18685, Leicester, LE3 8XR

# Be flood ready

With flooding becoming increasingly common, everyone needs to take action to be prepared ahead of any flooding emergency.

The New Year torrential rain and thawing snow, followed by storms Eowyn and Herminia, made January 2025 the wettest on record.

Many rivers saw record levels, causing flooding to over 700 Leicestershire homes.

During this major incident, we worked alongside the emergency services, councils, the Local Resilience Forum, flood wardens, flood action groups, voluntary organisations and other community members to keep people safe.

We want to say a big thank you to all those who helped, and to those who've provided information to enable us and other organisations to investigate the causes.

## What we're doing

We're investing £1.5m over the coming year to help with immediate clear up and further drainage work, as well as supporting communities become more flood ready - taking the total to £18.4m over the next four years.

Flooding is a growing issue and there is a limit to what we can do alone. So we're asking Government to carry out a national shake up, including help for people to make homes more flood resilient and support for businesses to get insurance.



## How to check your flood risk

Check the flood risk from rivers and surface water in your area at [gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk](http://gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk)



## Flooding plans scrutinised

Our councillors scrutinise local services to make sure they're as effective as possible - and this includes flooding.

From responding to your questions, accepting petitions and monitoring public bodies' performance, the role is varied.

Let's take a look at how our councillors take a fine-tooth comb to plans to tackle flooding.

Over the winter, residents put a wide range of questions to our highways and transport scrutiny committee. Residents were also able to attend meetings.

Shaping strategy is also a key focus. The same committee carefully considered our flood risk strategy over the winter and said that focus should be given to community engagement to ensure residents were better prepared for future flooding.

Councillors discussed our role as the 'lead local flood authority' - including carrying out investigations, bidding for funding for flood projects where we can, encouraging other

organisations to take action where needed and making landowners aware of their responsibilities - and highlighted the limited powers we have to enforce other responsible organisations to carry out improvements.

In June, the committee will look again at steps taken by the council and other authorities.

## We answer some of your questions below:

### Q: Why is 'scrutiny' important to me?

Ultimately, our scrutiny leads' role is to make sure decisions are taken for the benefit of our residents and that our services are delivering for you.

### Q: How can I get involved?

You can ask a question or submit a petition, attend a meeting in person or watch online.

Find out more at [leicestershire.gov.uk/scrutiny](http://leicestershire.gov.uk/scrutiny)

# Create your flood plan

...and keep it up to date



AWARE • PREPARED • ENGAGED

Date: .....

## Be aware - Things to check and do ✓

- Sign up to Environment Agency flood alerts and warnings and understand what they mean
- Check your home insurance covers flooding
- Investigate Property Flood Resilience (PFR) options (e.g. door barriers, air brick covers)
- Put important documents in a safe place, out of flood risk (e.g. passports, insurance documents, birth certificates)
- Clear any drains, gutters or watercourses of obstructions within your land

## Be prepared - get a flood kit ready for use ✓

- Torch (check batteries) or wind up torch
- Non-perishable food and drinking water supplies
- Medication and first aid kit
- Toys for children and pet supplies
- Rubber gloves and wellington boots
- Mobile phone and phone chargers
- Battery-operated radio
- Insurance documents
- Spare keys (e.g. house, car)
- Cash and cards

## Who are your contacts in an emergency?

Environment Agency Floodline *0345 988 1188*

Electricity Helpline

National Grid *0800 6783 105*

Water Company

District/Borough Council

Leicestershire County Council *0116 232 3232*

Insurance Company

## Locate these in your home

Electricity cut-off:

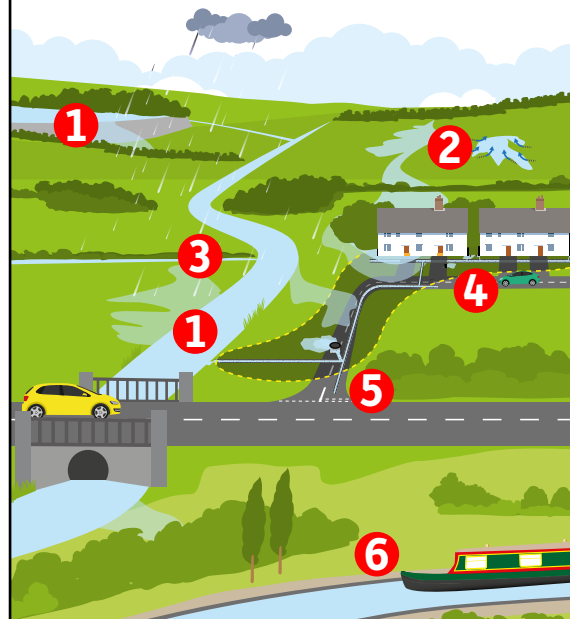
Water cut-off:

Gas cut-off:

Flood kit:

## Who to contact during a flood:

- 1 Reservoirs and main rivers**
  - Environment Agency 0800 80 70 60 (24 hr)
  - Floodline 0345 988 1188
- 2 Surface water and groundwater**
  - [leicestershire.gov.uk/report-a-flood](http://leicestershire.gov.uk/report-a-flood) or 0116 305 0001 (Office hours)
- 3 Small streams and ditches**
  - [leicestershire.gov.uk/report-a-flood](http://leicestershire.gov.uk/report-a-flood) or 0116 305 0001 (Office hours)
- 4 Mains sewer and wastewater sewer**
  - Severn Trent 0800 782 4444 (24 hr)
  - Anglian Water 03457 145 145 (24 hr)
- 5 Public highway**
  - [leicestershire.gov.uk/report-a-road-problem](http://leicestershire.gov.uk/report-a-road-problem)
- 6 Canal**
  - Canal and River Trust:
    - 0303 040 40 40 (Office hours)
    - 0800 479 9947 (24 hr)



In an emergency call 999

[leicestershire.gov.uk/flooding](http://leicestershire.gov.uk/flooding)

CUT OUT AND KEEP SAFE







# County open for business

**We're creating space for businesses to grow - helping the local economy to thrive.**

Across Leicestershire, we have a number of industrial units and more than 3,000 hectares of farm estate.

Our sites not only help individual companies, but also create new jobs, boost our communities and generate income for vital council services.

One site currently expanding is Airfield Business Park in Market Harborough. It first opened in 2019. It's been fully let at every stage and has proved popular, with every unit currently occupied and 11 tenants trading from the site. There's a wide range of businesses, too, including a publisher, pre-loved clothing reseller and campervan conversions.

The final phase is currently under construction with a drive-thru Costa Coffee and other businesses preparing to move into the completed units from November 2025.

This includes fine foods manufacturer and distributor Bramble Foods, which

offers a wide range of goods for the independent retail and gift market.

Bramble Foods is taking its second unit on the site when the build has finished – a move which secures the company in Leicestershire for the long term.



**Lee Breckon**

Councillor Lee Breckon, cabinet member for resources, said: "Places like Airfield Business Park show how we're being sensible and innovative to help the local economy. We're also making sure this is a sustainable development by installing solar panels and electric car charging points."

If your business is interested in a site at Airfield Business Park, or to look at our other sites for let in the county, visit [leicestershire.gov.uk/property](http://leicestershire.gov.uk/property) or scan the QR code.



(l-r) Nick Shepherd, Managing Director of building contractors Britcon, Declan Keegan, Leicestershire County Council Director of Corporate Resources, Tony Foster, Managing Director of Bramble Foods

## Supporting growth

**Tony Foster is the Managing Director of Bramble Foods, which will soon be moving into a second unit at Airfield Business Park.**

**Q: How long has Bramble Foods been going in Leicestershire?**

**TONY:** "We launched Bramble Foods in 2008 in Harborough with a team of six people. Now, we employ over 140 people from the local area."

**Q: How important was the expansion of Airfield Business Park to you?**

**TONY:** "Many of our staff live in the town, so it was very important to us that we kept the local tie. Had the new site at Airfield Business Park not become available, we would have needed to move away from Leicestershire."

**Q: How do you expect this to impact the local area?**

**TONY:** "Harborough is growing so quickly and it is essential that projects like this continue to help create local jobs and bolster the local economy. This is an important part of our continued growth."



# New buses hit the road

## New and improved buses are helping people get to work, shops and health appointments.

Melton is the first area to benefit from Government cash which has enabled us to review bus routes and boost services.

Councillor Ozzy O'Shea, cabinet member for transport, said: "Our county-wide network review is already driving positive change for public transport across Leicestershire.

"We're using this cash wisely and for the benefit of our communities by identifying how our bus network can better serve Leicestershire."

Five bus routes in Melton have already been improved with the money, and are available seven days a week with a focus on serving schools, colleges and new developments.

A key addition in Melton is the introduction of our second bus called Fox Connect, which already serves South Leicestershire and can be booked online or by telephone.

A number of roadshows were held in Melton for a chance to find out more about the improvements before being introduced. Similar events have already taken place in Charnwood and Harborough with more planned, as well as across North West Leicestershire.

Find out more about our plans and the latest dates of roadshows by visiting **choosehowyoumove.co.uk/bus-service-improvements** or scan the QR code.



## What's happening when?

- **Melton** - Already underway.
- **Charnwood, Harborough and North West Leicestershire** - Roadshows and changes in spring 2025.
- **Hinckley** - Roadshows in spring 2025, changes introduced in summer 2025.
- **Blaby, Oadby and Wigston** - Working with bus operators to promote commercial services and improve connectivity.

# Fox Connect: what is it?

Fox Connect helps residents to travel between villages in Leicestershire. It's an on-demand and a flexible service where you can choose where to be picked up and dropped off within the area covered.

The service was introduced across South Leicestershire in 2022, connecting villages including Dunton Bassett, Elmesthorpe, Littlethorpe and Thurlaston.

Two new zones are now available in Melton, covering Bottesford, Ab Kettleby, South Croxton and Somerby.

Work is underway to see if this type of transport will work in other areas of the county.

## Getting started

- Fox Connect is available to book Monday to Saturday, 6am-7.30pm.
- Book a journey by calling 0116 216 7756. Lines are open Monday to Friday, 8.30am-4.30pm, or use our app.
- Download the Leicestershire FoxConnect app from the Google Play Store or Apple App Store. A step-by-step guide is available at [choosehowyoumove.co.uk/app](http://choosehowyoumove.co.uk/app)



If you have any questions, or need help booking a trip, call our team on 0116 216 5555 or visit **choosehowyoumove.co.uk/melton-fox-connect**





# Spring events

Things to see and do this spring in our country parks, heritage sites, museums and libraries.  
[leicestershire.gov.uk/whats-on](http://leicestershire.gov.uk/whats-on)



## Beaumanor Hall

Woodhouse, Leicestershire, LE12 8TX  
[beaumanorhall.co.uk](http://beaumanorhall.co.uk)  
 Tel: 01509 890119  
 X @beaumanorhall

## CT CENTURY THEATRE at Snibston Colliery Park

Book online at [centurytheatre.co.uk](http://centurytheatre.co.uk) or call the box office 01530 278444  
[centurytheatre.co.uk](http://centurytheatre.co.uk)  
 f/CenturyTheatre @century\_theatre



## Snibston COLLIERY PARK

Ashby Road, Coalville, LE67 3LN  
 f/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](http://Leicscountryparks.org.uk)



### Jesus Christ Superstar

Thu 20 March – Sat 22 March, 7.30pm, from £14

Vocal Zone Voice Studio presents this story of love, betrayal and redemption with breathtaking music and a production that will leave you spellbound. Starring the West End's Adam Hepkin as Jesus, Kirby Frost from ITV's The Voice as Mary, and Bradley Hambleton as Judas.



### Shrek the Musical

Thu 27 March – Sat 29 March, 7.30pm & 2.30pm (Sat only), from £16.50

Five Star Theatre presents this family-friendly production that will transport you to a world where fairytale misfits and magic come together.



### Improv Comedy from Box of Frogs

Sun 4 May, 7.30pm, from £10

Birmingham's award-winning Improv Group presents a fabulous night of improvised comedy with spur of the moment songs, sketches and scenes, all based on suggestions from the audience.

### Upcoming at Century Theatre:

- 11 May – Old Time Sailors
- 20 May – 20 Golden Years (1955 – 1975)
- 31 May – Quill featuring Bev Bevan

## Spring Fair

Sat 10 & Sun 11 May  
 10am-4pm  
 £3 entry (free parking)

Special event

Boasting an array of stalls from local makers, artisans and crafters. As a hub of inspiration for gifts, foodie treats and items for the home, this fair offers a great day of shopping in beautiful historic surroundings. For stall enquiries, email [Beaumanorevents@leics.gov.uk](mailto:Beaumanorevents@leics.gov.uk) or call 01509 890119.

## EASTER Outdoor Activities at Beaumanor

KIDS' EVENTS

Join Beaumanor's holiday activity club this Easter 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](http://beaumanorhall.co.uk/outdoor-activities)



### At the Leicestershire Promotions Tourism and Hospitality Awards, our venues won awards:

- Bosworth Battlefield was recognised as a popular small attraction.
- 1620s House and Garden secured Best Tea.
- Bosworth Medieval Festival and Beaumanor Hall's Festive Gift Fair were noted as top events.



Scan to read more





# 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

📍 @bosworthbattlefield

Open daily Nov to March, 10am-4pm and April to October, 10am-5pm. Cafe open 10.30am-3pm Sat- Sun, 10am-3pm Sun.

## Remembering Richard's Return

**Sat 22 & Sun 23 March, 10am-4pm**

Commemorate the 10-year anniversary of King Richard III's return to Bosworth Battlefield prior to his reinterment at Leicester Cathedral. Events include a special ceremony on 22 March, re-enactments, living history camps, a new exhibition about the return of the King and family crafts.



Scan to book your tickets to Bosworth.

**SAVE THE DATE**



**New for 2025**

## Bosworth Dragon Festival

**16 & 17 August**

## THE 1620s HOUSE & GARDEN at Donington le Heath



**Historic house owned by the Digby family house with links to the Gunpowder Plot.**

Manor Rd, Donington le Heath, LE67 2FW  
📍 1620shouse.org.uk Tel: 01455 290429  
Open from Thursday 3 April, 2025. Thurs to Sun and Bank Holidays 10.30am-4.30pm.

## MELTON CARNEGIE MUSEUM



**See what's behind the red house door, discover animal history and uncover the past times of this market town.**

Thorpe End, Melton Mowbray, LE13 1RB  
meltonmuseum.org Tel: 0116 305 3860  
Open: Tues to Sat, 10am-4.30pm. FREE.



**Villiers Revealed – Darling of the Stuart Court**  
Open until June 2025

George Villiers, 1st Duke of Buckingham, was one of the most famous figures of early 17th century Europe. Born at Brooksby Hall in Leicestershire, he became the 'favourite' of King James I. Villiers' story is a reminder that LGBTQ+ life and love isn't a side story in history, but it shapes history.



Scan the QR code to view the online exhibition

## Harborough Museum



**Discover the mysteries of the Hallaton Treasure, pioneers of fashion and local history.**

The Symington Building, Adam and Eve St, Market Harborough, LE16 7LT  
harboroughmuseum.org.uk  
Tel: 0116 305 3627  
Open: Tues to Fri, 10am-6pm and Sat, 10am-4pm. FREE ENTRY.



**The Record Office for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland**

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

A range of resources for researching local history and culture. Extensive collections, dating from early 1100s.

## charnwood museum



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

Granby St, Loughborough, LE11 3DU  
charnwoodmuseum.co.uk  
Tel: 01509 233754  
Open Weds to Sat, 10am-3pm. FREE ENTRY.



**My Jewellery, My Story**  
On display until 15 June 2025

Explore the meanings, memories and connections behind historic jewellery and the jewellery we treasure. Inspired by the remarkable discovery of the 3,500-year-old Bronze Age necklace found locally in Cossington, the new exhibition bridges together the past and present, showcasing artefacts alongside creative displays and stories from Leicestershire's communities.



**Bringing the joy of art, heritage and culture to your door**

If you find it difficult to visit our heritage sites, then Culture to You might be for you! Piloting in Oadby and Wigston, this is a FREE new offer that provides access to our unique art, museum collections and interactive activities to people in their own homes.

**If you're interested:**  
Email culturetoyou@leics.gov.uk  
Phone 0116 305 1221  
cultureleicestershire.co.uk



## Free to join YOUR LiBR@RY

KNOWLEDGE • DISCOVERY • ENTERTAINMENT

## Step into spring at your local library

With free WiFi, Leicestershire libraries are great places to work, study, meet with friends or take the kids after school. From Wriggly Readers to author workshops, there are plenty of activities to get involved with. Visit facebook.com/yourlibrary for the latest.



# Pioneering health research on the way

We've been awarded a grant alongside partners to help improve the health of people in Leicestershire.

The new project aims to increase your quality of life and will make sure health priorities in the county are properly targeted.

We're working with local universities on the Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC) project – a five-year scheme backed with £5.25m of government funding from the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR).

The money from NIHR comes from the Department of Health and Social Care.

Some areas of the county have an average living age of up to six years lower compared to others. While we know this is influenced by things like education, employment, housing and air quality, the HDRC work will help us research this wider than we've ever been able to before.

## Some of the work includes:

- Researching local health topics to see how they impact residents.
- Invest money to talk to residents and local groups about health issues.

- Ensure that our decisions impacting people's health are based on evidence.
- Enable research with communities and universities to inform key projects.

## Who are we working with?

- University of Leicester
- De Montfort University
- Loughborough University
- University of Nottingham



Louise Richardson

Councillor Louise Richardson, cabinet member for health, said: "We'll be able to unlock the untapped research and detail that will make it easier for us to identify health needs across Leicestershire.

"Not all areas have the same need, so this programme lets us spot what's needed where in the county and make lasting change."

Find out more at [resources.leicestershire.gov.uk/hdrc-leicestershire](https://resources.leicestershire.gov.uk/hdrc-leicestershire)



# Teaming up to tackle mental health

We're working with Leicestershire and Rutland County Football Association (FA) to give mental health support to local football teams.

Our innovative pilot scheme is supporting grassroots clubs to provide a safe and inclusive space for men experiencing mental health problems or challenges.

Teams who sign up will receive free Mental Health First Aid Awareness and Suicide Prevention Training.

Clubs will run 'My Space, My Game' sessions to encourage men to use football as a way to stay active and give a judgement-free space to unwind and de-stress.

We're delivering the programme as part of a partnership project covering Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

Councillor Louise Richardson said: "We're really pleased to be bringing this pilot and the local FA's support means we can try and reach more men, who are three times more likely to die by suicide than women."

Clubs already signed up include Ellistown FC, Harborough Town, Lutterworth Athletic and Sibley Juniors.

Any football clubs interested in being part of the initiative can email [mhfp@leics.gov.uk](mailto:mhfp@leics.gov.uk) for more information.



Help us plant 700,000 trees

# Tiny forests make a big difference

Our quest to plant 700,000 trees in the county – one for every person in Leicestershire – has been given a cash boost.

The Forestry Commission has given us £445,000 to help with planting projects including a number of tiny forests.

Funding comes from the Forestry Commission’s Local Authority Treescapes initiative, and we’ve worked with a number of districts, including Melton, Charnwood and Harborough.

## What is a tiny forest?

Tiny forests are dense woodlands planted in a small area. They are made up of a few hundred trees and help support the natural habitat and biodiversity of the area.

The trees in a tiny forest are native species and planted close together to encourage growth. Once they have been established, they help to absorb carbon and provide a home for wildlife.

Environmental charity Earthwatch UK will help make the tiny forests a reality.



Blake Pain

Councillor Blake Pain, cabinet member for environment, said: “This funding is great news and means we can continue our ambitious goal of planting 700,000

trees. Trees have been planted all across Leicestershire and we’re excited to take advantage of this money and get planting.”

The money will also be used to boost other sites across the county, including replacing trees on verges and in parks and green spaces.

Find out more about our tree for every person, and log any trees you plant on our interactive map at [leicestershire.gov.uk/trees](http://leicestershire.gov.uk/trees).



# Recycling done right

Spring is the perfect time for a clear out. Here are our top tips to minimise your waste.

## • Get scrunchy



Your Easter egg foil can be recycled – just scrunch all the pieces together into a tennis ball size and put them in your recycling bin.

## • Old electricals

Remember to take your old, unusable electrical items to your local recycling and household waste site, or check [recycleyourelectricals.org.uk](http://recycleyourelectricals.org.uk)



## • Donate, don't ditch



Your clean and dry unwanted clothes can be donated to charity shops, or consider selling or giving them away online.

## • Stay reusable

Better weather means more time outdoors. If you're out and about don't forget your reusable cups and bottles – they help reduce single use items that'll end up straight in the bin.



Find more tips and information about waste at [lesswaste.org.uk](http://lesswaste.org.uk), or scan the QR code.





# Supporting you to leave hospital



If you're a carer, you can claim money to help cover extra costs.

Money is again available for unpaid carers who need to support someone who has recently left hospital.

A grant is available to help people in Leicestershire who need a carer for support, and have incurred extra costs since leaving hospital.

People need to apply to Voluntary Action South Leicestershire (VASL) Support for Carers which runs the scheme on our behalf.



Christine Radford

Councillor Christine Radford, cabinet member for adults, said: "It's great to be able to continue offering this support for carers. We know from previous rounds it's much needed."

"We also offer ongoing help and support to anyone who is identified as a carer. If you're not sure, please get in touch with VASL."

Find out more and apply online by visiting [supportforcarers.org/hospital-discharge-grant](https://supportforcarers.org/hospital-discharge-grant). You can also call VASL on 01858 468543 or email [maureen@supportforcarers.org](mailto:maureen@supportforcarers.org) and the team will complete the application for you.

If the person you care for is in Leicester, email [carers@ageukleics.org.uk](mailto:carers@ageukleics.org.uk) to apply for the grant, or call 0116 222 0556.

If you've received a grant from the previous round of funding you can apply again if you meet the eligibility criteria.

## How to qualify?

If you are aged 18+ and look after, help, or support an adult who wouldn't be able to manage everyday life without your help, and you're not employed to do it, then you are an unpaid carer.

If you answer 'YES' to all of the following questions, you may be entitled to a contribution towards the additional costs for carers when someone is discharged from hospital.

- Does the cared-for person live in Leicestershire or Leicester?
- Have they been discharged from hospital in the last two weeks?
- Have you incurred any additional costs linked to their discharge from hospital? For example - cleaning, housework, short-term sitting service, carer's loss of income due to time off work.

Please note this is a one-off grant for carers looking after residents in Leicestershire or Leicester and is only applicable to discharges from 3 February 2025 until there is no longer any more funding.

Scan the QR code to find out more.



## Celia's story

Kibworth-based Celia was caring for her husband, who was discharged from hospital after a fall but was restricted to being in a bed.

With the bed needing to be placed downstairs, Celia cleared the living room and bought all the necessary bedding and clothing.

Celia applied for a Hospital Discharge Grant and was awarded money to help towards the bedding, a cleaner and a handyman. She also received a carers assessment and follow-up support.

Celia said: "It's fantastic to have this grant available and the money allocated so quickly, but even more fantastic that the Support for Carers team are so helpful and supportive and completed the claim on my behalf - one less thing for me to do!"

# JOIN OUR TEAM

## Your career can go far



There's a huge variety of jobs with us, including in Children and Family Services - with plenty of opportunities to progress your career.

**Jane Moore, Director of Children and Family Services, has been here**

**for more than 20 years and shares her career journey.**

### Q: How did you start at the council?

**JANE:** "My first job involved running youth clubs and working with young people at risk of exclusion from school. I knew I had more to give but my love of supporting young people most definitely started here.

"I joined the council in 2003, as part of the Youth Offending Services and have had a number of different roles across children and family services and became director in October 2018. All of my roles have been so interesting and varied and involve supporting children and young people across Leicestershire."

### Q: What training and support was in place?

**JANE:** "Lots! I've taken advantage of a huge amount of training and mentoring, alongside bringing up my young family. I even went back to university,

completing my masters in leadership and management at Warwick.

"Alongside the rewarding work, a supportive environment with a good work-life balance ensures that everyone is welcome and able to give their best here at the county council."

### Q: What's the best thing about working for the council?

**JANE:** "It's a privilege to be the director of children and family services and to lead a whole range of important services which have a real impact on children's lives across Leicestershire.

"There are a wide variety of roles across the department including social workers, youth workers, supporting children with special educational needs, business support and early years, to name but a few! Ofsted's 'outstanding' rating of our department last year was the icing on the cake and highlights the hard work and dedication of teams across the department that you could join."

### Q: What would you say to anyone thinking of joining the council?

**JANE:** "I'd encourage anyone interested to apply and take your next, or first,

step in local government. I love my job and there's always something new and exciting to learn alongside delivering services to communities across Leicestershire. My journey really does prove that opportunities to progress are there, and we'll support you to get to where you want to be."



Pam Posnett

Councillor Pam Posnett, cabinet member for staff relations, said: "Working at the council offers a fantastic opportunity to make a real difference to people's lives every day."

## JOIN OUR TEAM

**Could you start a career which makes a real difference in your community too? View our latest vacancies online and join our 'outstanding' team: [leicestershire.gov.uk/jobs](https://leicestershire.gov.uk/jobs)**



See more about working at the council at [leicestershire.gov.uk/inclusiveworkplace](https://leicestershire.gov.uk/inclusiveworkplace)





## Primary school place offers

In April, families with children starting primary school will find out if they have got one of their preferred options.

Nearly 8,000 will get the news about where they're going to primary school in September. Here's a quick look at some key points to help you on the day.

### • Getting your email

On Wednesday, 16 April, we'll be issuing parents with information about their child's school place. Your email will be with you by 10am that morning.

### • Get ahead

Check your passwords and logins on the Parent Portal to avoid any delays ([leicestershire.gov.uk/parent-portal](http://leicestershire.gov.uk/parent-portal)).

### • Happy? All good!

If you're happy with your choice, you don't need to contact us. We'll consider the place accepted unless you say otherwise.

### • Preferences will be used

If you haven't been given your first preference, we will, if possible, use one of the

other four preferences you selected when applying.

### • Want to appeal?

If you want to appeal for a school place that you have been refused you can do, but keep hold of the place you've been given until you know the appeal was successful, otherwise you could end up without a school.

Councillor Deborah Taylor, cabinet member for families, said: "Starting school for the first time is a big milestone for families. We're ready for offer day and have lots of information on our website to support you."

If you're as excited as your child to start school, you can find out more information about helping your child become ready for school at [leicestershire.gov.uk/school-readiness](http://leicestershire.gov.uk/school-readiness) or scan the QR code.



## Could you offer support to young people?



Can you provide a stable, welcoming environment and a room for 16-21-year-olds? Hosting a young person is a rewarding experience that helps support their independence.

### Real life

Since May 2024, Karen has been making a positive impact

by hosting a young person, finding the experience both rewarding and meaningful. Here, she shares her story.

### Q: What's supporting a young person like?

**KAREN:** "Our everyday living is pretty standard – it's a completely normal household, to be honest. My young person goes to college part-time and now she's turned 18 I have no restrictions on her because she's an adult. All I ask her to do is let me know where she is and what time she'll roughly be home, just so I know she's safe."

### Q: What skills are needed?

**KAREN:** "You need excellent communication skills and the ability to stay calm in situations that could easily get out of control. You need to be able to show empathy when it's needed and be their confidante. A sense of humour is also a must."

### Q: What support do you get?

**KAREN:** "You're never, ever

on your own if you need some advice, because you and your young person will both have your own social workers. I can contact my social worker at any time and I'm also in a WhatsApp group with other carers for advice and support."

### Q: What advice do you have for anyone thinking of applying?

**KAREN:** "I would say that there is a lot of support available, including plenty of training, both online or in-person. It's just really worthwhile. With the council's support and your own skills, any difficulties can be overcome. It's so rewarding."

**Hosts are paid an allowance of £306.20 per week, per young person while they stay with you.**

**Find out more about becoming a Supported Lodgings host by visiting [leicestershire.gov.uk/supported-lodgings](http://leicestershire.gov.uk/supported-lodgings) or scan the QR code. You**

**can also call 0116 305 0505 or text WEAREFAMILY to 60777.**





## CONSUMER SAFETY

Our **Trading Standards** team helps protect consumers from illegal trading and supports businesses to comply with consumer protection legislation.

Supporting  
business

# Register for success

All food and feed businesses and keepers of farmed animals are required to register with Trading Standards. Registration is free. This helps to protect the food chain and keep customers safe. Keeping compliant with legal requirements ensures a level playing field and can help businesses to succeed.

Over the last year our food officers saw more than 1,000 new food businesses registered with us, each is contacted and given advice based around their business requirements. To find out more about setting up a food business [gov.uk/guidance/food-business-registration](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/food-business-registration).

Our animal health officers had more

than 100 registrations of those becoming new keepers of farmed animals. There were also around 900 registrations of those becoming keepers of poultry of other birds which is now a requirement and needs to be done within 30 days.

Our officers carry out inspections and can provide advice and guidance to ensure that a business can continue to comply with the law.

Councillor Deborah Taylor said: "It's great to see so many people being compliant and to see so many registrations – it's an important step and our Trading Standards team are here to help with guidance and support if you need it."

## Importance of accuracy

When we order a drink in a pub, put fuel in our car or buy a loaf of bread, we all expect to get what we pay for.

Did you know we're responsible for making sure measurements and weights are accurate? The law requires the majority of food, drink and other goods sold to the public to have their quantities indicated for the customer.

Last year we tested or inspected 785 pieces of weights and measures equipment to check their legality and accuracy, including scales in places like supermarkets and butchers,



checkweighers at manufacturers, petrol pumps and measures in pubs.

If you think you might have got less than you paid for, contact our team at [leicestershire.gov.uk/trading-standards](https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/trading-standards), or scan the QR code.



## Keep your furry friends safe?

We know that pet owners love to give the occasional treat to their pets. Our Animal Feed officers deal with numerous enquires from people wishing to set up a business making and supplying pet treats.

If you are in the county and make or sell pet treats even in small quantities, whether online or at local events, you need to register with us as a feed business. To register your business see below. For further advice on making and supplying pet treats visit [businesscompanion.info](https://www.businesscompanion.info).

**Make a report,  
register your business  
or find out more at**

**[leicestershire.gov.uk/  
trading-standards](https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/trading-standards)**

# Quit now

and you could start saving  
for a brighter future

Get free help to STOP smoking  
Call **0345 646 66 66**  
Or text 'ready' to 66777



[www.quitready.co.uk](http://www.quitready.co.uk)



SMOKING CAN SERIOUSLY  
DAMAGE YOUR HEALTH  
AND BANK BALANCE

20 Cigarettes

**Did you  
know?**



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



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

# Family Hubs

Leicestershire

Advice, information and resources to help  
families in every stage of life; from pregnancy,  
through your child's early years, childhood and  
into young adulthood.

[familyhubsleicestershire.org.uk](http://familyhubsleicestershire.org.uk)



## Book your child's HAF holiday club place this Easter!



**FREE holiday sessions  
at venues across Leicestershire  
for children aged 5 – 16  
receiving benefits related  
free school meals.**

Sessions offer a variety of activities  
including sports, art and crafts,  
music, drama and more, PLUS a  
nutritious meal.

Secure your  
child's place now!



Watch out for your  
vouchers arriving  
in early March!