

Annual Delivery Report

| 2023



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1. Introduction/Foreword

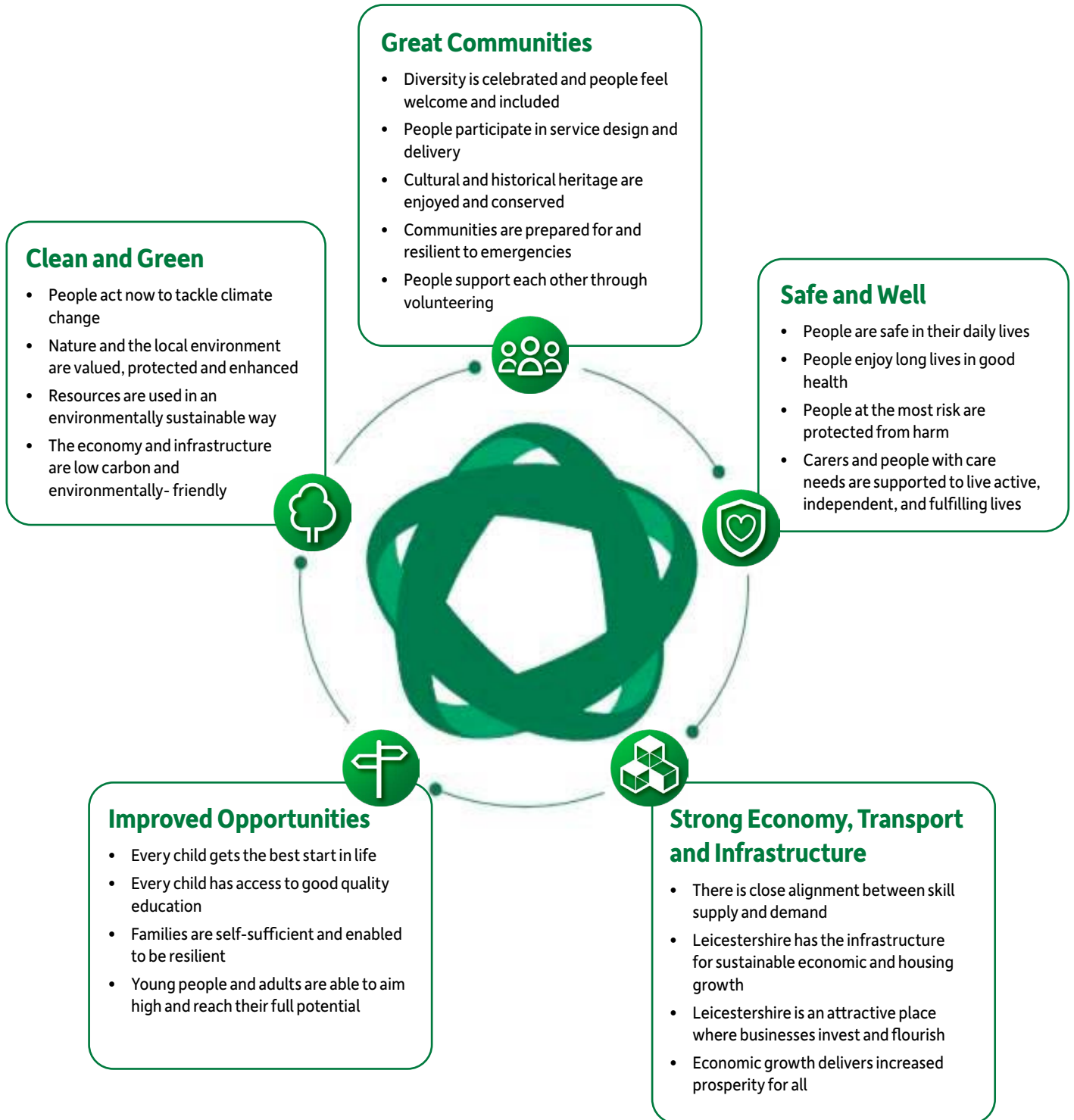
In May 2022 the County Council agreed a four-year Strategic Plan covering the period to 2026. The Plan focuses on the things that will make life better for people in Leicestershire and sets out our approach to meeting the many challenges emerging post Covid-19 and to support the wider levelling up agenda. Our aspirational vision and outcomes are set out in section 2 and this report summarises our key aims and some of the progress over the past year or so.

The Council is continuing to operate in an extremely challenging financial environment following over a decade of austerity and spending pressures, particularly from social care. This has been further exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Since the 2022-26 MTFS was produced, the financial situation facing the Council has become even worse, with rapidly rising inflation, growing infrastructure costs, and an unrelenting demand on services all contributing to a dire financial challenge. The funding gap could realistically exceed £100m by 2027/28 and balancing the books will be harder than ever.

The Council continues to be one of the lowest funded authorities and continues to campaign for a fair funding deal, leading the formation of the F20 group of low funded authorities. We continue with our efforts and lobbying of MPs and in the meantime, we are seeking to deliver as many of our Strategic Plan outcomes as possible, by focusing available resources on key priorities.



2. Our Vision for Leicestershire



3. Clean and Green

This outcome reflects the need to protect and enhance the environment and tackle climate change.

Sub-Outcome	Our Aims by 2026
People act now to tackle climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More residents actively involved in tackling climate change
Nature and the local environment are valued, protected and enhanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase in the percentage of county land which promotes diversity of habitat and species
Resources are used in an environmentally sustainable way	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase in the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting and reduction in the percentage landfilled
The economy and infrastructure are low carbon and environmentally friendly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Net-zero carbon emissions from the Council's own operations by 2030• Work with partners to ensure Leicestershire is on track to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2045

3.1 People act now to tackle climate change and protect the environment

To achieve net zero carbon emissions, we need people to take action to reduce their environmental impacts, such as by being more resource-efficient and travelling by sustainable modes.



Our aim by 2026

- More residents actively involved in tackling climate change.

Progress in 2022/23

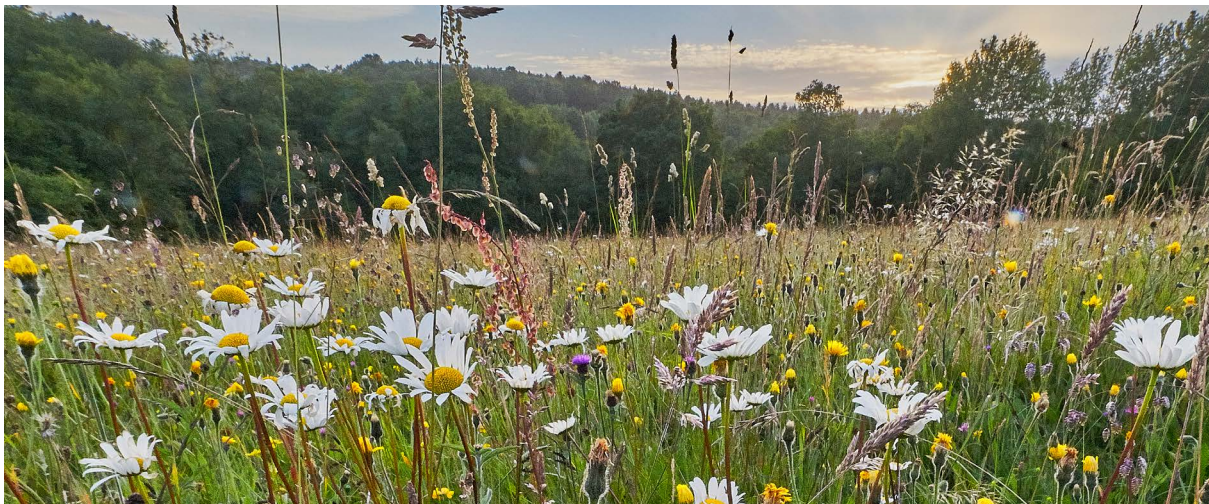
- In December 2022 the Council approved a new Net Zero Strategy with a goal to become a Net Zero county by 2045. This includes improving homes to make them more energy efficient, helping businesses reduce carbon emissions, generating more renewable energy and bringing organisations together to tackle climate change.
- In February 2023 we teamed up with partners to draw up ambitious principles to tackle climate change, nature decline and carbon reduction through a new Leicestershire Climate and Nature Pact. More than 40 organisations were at the launch with others being encouraged to sign the pact.
- The Council held a series of events across the county to encourage residents to take part in community action tackling climate change and protecting nature including a Net Zero Strategy and Action Plan launch campaign. This saw 6 weeks of activity based on the themes of the action plan delivered across the county.
- In June 2023 the Council supported the 'Great Big Green' week to encourage residents to take part in further community action to tackle climate change and protect nature.
- Following a successful joint bid with Midlands Connect and four other local authorities we are delivering 349 electric vehicle charging sockets across the Midlands, including up to 100 charging sockets across Leicestershire.
- We launched "Green Living Leicestershire" which supports vulnerable households and those in or at risk of fuel poverty to reduce their bills by installing cavity wall, loft insulation, solar panels, air source heat pumps and other energy efficiency measures.
- We also worked with Solar Together to provide residents with the opportunity to reduce their energy costs by investing in solar panels. Between March 2021/22 and March 2022/23 there was a 27% increase in the energy efficiency of existing homes in Leicestershire (those with an Energy Performance Certificate C+ rating).
- £63k funding was secured from Innovate UK as part of the Pathfinder Places fund to carry out a research project into how community energy could support the delivery of Net Zero across Leicestershire.
- The Net Zero Toolkit for Leicestershire Town/Parish Councils and Community groups was launched, in partnership with Green Living Leicestershire.
- We supported 'Clean Air Day' to encourage people to make changes to reduce air pollution, such as cycling and walking.



- We consulted on proposals to dim streetlights to both cut carbon emissions and to save over £500k over the next four years.
- We embedded work within adult learning programmes to raise awareness of sustainable living and promote the protection of our natural environment.

3.2 Nature and the local environment are valued, protected and enhanced

Biodiversity describes the enormous variety of life on Earth. Biodiversity and the eco-system clean our water, purify our air, regulate the climate and provide us with food and resources for medicines. Loss or damage of natural environments is among the biggest threats to wildlife. In Leicestershire, where more than 80% of the land is farmed, our wildlife continues to decline due to a lack of good habitats.



Our aim by 2026

- Increase in the percentage of county land which promotes diversity of habitats and species

Progress in 2022/23

- Shire Environment Grants worth £10,000 were awarded to local projects that will improve the biodiversity of Leicestershire.
- In November 2022 we announced that our ambitious plans to plant 700,000 trees across the county as part of the Leicestershire Tree Charter had been boosted by more than £200,000 in grant funding for two new tree projects.
- In May 2023 our tree planting project hit the c250,000-tree mark. During the year we were involved in a number of planting schemes including at Kegworth, Harborough and Ravenstone. We also supported actions to tackle the problem of Ash tree dieback.
- We launched plans to develop our own tree nursery, in partnership with the National Forest Company, aiming to supply 20,000 trees each year. The nursery will help safeguard against national shortages of key species such as Oak. The project will deliver a community focused nursery involving local groups and organisations to help collect seeds and grow new trees to plant across the county and National Forest.
- In December 2022 a record 34,000 trees were given away to landowners and farmers in a bid to encourage more tree planting across Leicestershire. More than 100 community groups, parish councils, schools and others collected trees, with each tree pack including 45 native trees.

- We delivered the Trent Rivers Trust/Airwick/WWF funded project to improve and restore grasslands along the River Soar in Watermead Park North and Broughton Astley.
- The Invasive Non-Native Species Local Action Group for Leicestershire was established and registered with Defra.
- Our partnership with local wildlife charity, Nature Spot, is helping to boost biodiversity and wildlife by leaving wildflowers on urban roadside verges across the County. Last year, over 500 species were recorded across the verges surveyed. The scheme now includes 70 verges across 61 parishes. The Wildlife Verge Scheme was also awarded the 2023 Bees Needs Champions of the year award in the Communities category.
- We were appointed as the ‘responsible authority’ for developing the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland. The strategy will identify the nature and wider environmental priorities for the area and what actions should be taken to deliver them.
- Ecological initiatives and preservation plans at Beacon Hill Country Park have seen improvements with a variety of birds with conservation status now spotted in the area.
- Residents continued to be encouraged and supported to enjoy the Leicestershire countryside. Upkeep of public rights of way involved maintaining 7,000 finger posts, 12,000+ yellow topped posts and nearly 40,000 way markers for approaching 2000 miles of public footpath.
- To increase awareness, library booklists on climate change, environmental awareness and living sustainably have been created and promoted on social media, via book displays and through website links.

3.3 Resources are used in an environmentally sustainable way

We are using the planet’s resources at a faster rate than they are being replenished and in a way which does not allow them to be reused. To address this, we need to move to a more efficient alternative to a traditional linear economy (make, use, dispose) where resources are used for as long as possible, then recovered, regenerated, or recycled.

Our aim by 2026

- Increase in the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting and reduction in the percentage landfilled.

Progress in 2022/23

- The Leicestershire Waste Partnership reviewed and adopted the Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy. The Strategy includes a range of initiatives to reduce waste sent to landfill and to promote waste prevention, reuse, and recycling.
- In the Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy, we are committed to reducing waste to landfill to less than 5% by 2025, well in advance of the national target of 10% by 2035. We have awarded a new contract for the treatment of residual waste, and it is anticipated that performance on this will continue to improve.
- An ongoing campaign to reduce contamination in recycling was delivered. This included adverts on TV and instore at supermarkets. We also promoted national Recycle Week 2022 with the theme of recycling the correct items.
- A new battery campaign was delivered which highlighted the need to recycle batteries correctly and included the problems associated with disposable vapes.

- Kibworth Household Waste and Recycling Site re-opened in March 2023, further to a complete redevelopment. The new site better promotes reuse and recycling and is safer and easier to use.
- We introduced collection points at the Loughborough and Whetstone Recycling and Household Waste Sites for community medical equipment, so it can be reused.
- Over 500 subsidised home composting bins were sold during 2022/23 to reduce the amount of waste sent for disposal. We also supported Compost Awareness Week to promote home composting.
- 60 two-hour theatre sessions were offered to all primary schools in the County to inspire future generations to adopt more sustainable behaviours by reducing, reusing and recycling.
- A series of classes were also offered to residents covering how to cook healthy meals from scratch and how to make the most from leftovers, as well as furniture restoration and textile reuse.
- We promoted campaigns to reduce food waste, such as “Love Food, Hate Waste”, a campaign devised by WRAP, a leading sustainability charity. This included Food Waste Action Week, which highlighted the link between food waste and climate change and offered the opportunity for residents to take part in a recipe competition by submitting recipes which used up leftover and commonly wasted foods.
- Six successful Shire Environment grant applications totalling £6,891 were awarded for local projects which supported waste prevention, repair, and reuse.
- The ‘Sew it, don’t throw it project’ is being helped by one of our grants to change behaviours around fast fashion and extend the life of items by encouraging reuse, repair and alterations, and repurposing of clothes to reduce household waste in North West Leicestershire.
- Our Adult learning service introduced Reuse and Mend programmes.

3.4 Economy and infrastructure are low carbon and environmentally friendly

Decarbonising the economy and infrastructure is one of the key solutions to addressing the climate emergency, as nearly 70% of Leicestershire’s emissions come from commercial, industrial and transport sources.



Our aims by 2026

- Net zero carbon emissions from the Council’s own operations by 2030
- Work with partners to ensure Leicestershire is on track to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2045

Progress in 2022/23

- We continue to deliver our 2030 Net Zero Council Action Plan to tackle emissions across our operations. To date we have reduced our own emissions by over 70% since 2008-09.
- Planning permission has been approved for our new solar farm that will generate enough electricity each year to power all our properties and thousands of streetlights. The solar farm is to be built on a 55-acre farmland site, north of the A6 near Quorn. Approximately £600,000 income p.a. is expected to be generated.
- In October 2022 we commenced measures to modernise our headquarters and other properties to make them more environmentally friendly and reduce carbon emissions by 380 tonnes a year. Wide ranging work included a thermal storage tank, additional solar panels, and air source heat pumps at Beaumanor Hall.
- Our Energy Team successfully bid for £200,000 to identify the best route to decarbonise our property estate. The plan will produce a pipeline of capital projects to help progress towards net zero.
- Shire Environment Grants worth £9,000 were awarded to local projects that help to reduce carbon emissions in the community.
- The Normandy Way development in Hinckley includes our first zero-carbon primary school. Holly Croft Primary School run by OWLs trust opened August 2023. It has been designed in line with the Council's Net Zero Carbon policy which achieved an excellent external rating for the sustainable built environment.
- Museum Development East Midlands delivered a Carbon Literacy training programme for regional museums to develop action plans, establish environmental baselines, and adopt methodology for tracking improvements and efficiencies. It also promoted Environmentally Responsible Museum Collections through a Collections Symposium and its collections training programme.
- The Green BELLE project has provided grants of up to £10,000 as match-funding to 205 local small and medium-sized companies to help fund low carbon, energy-efficient improvements to their premises. Over its six years, the project has supported the installation of measures worth almost £3million. This has helped achieve carbon savings of around 1,500tCO₂e – equivalent to the total carbon footprint of around 450 typical homes.
- A Leicestershire visitor economy intervention with UK Shared Prosperity Funding has been developed to promote sustainable tourism with a focus on improving the green credentials of businesses and celebrating our natural capital as a tourism and leisure asset. A sustainable tourism plan is also being developed to align with that currently being developed by the National Forest Company.

4. Great Communities

This outcome aims for Leicestershire to have active and inclusive communities in which people support each other and participate in service design and delivery. Communities also need to be resilient; able to avoid, prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies.

Sub-Outcome	Our Aims by 2026
Diversity is celebrated and people feel welcome and included	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to increase community cohesion and tackle hate crime • Council services are more accessible and inclusive
People participate in service design and delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the percentage of residents who feel that they can influence Council decisions
Cultural and historical heritage are enjoyed and conserved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the number of residents and visitors engaging in cultural and heritage activities
Communities are prepared for and resilient to emergencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the number of active Community Response Plans
People support each other through volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wide variety of volunteering opportunities and activity across Council services • VCSE organisations remain financially viable and maintain their service delivery

4.1 Diversity is celebrated, and people feel welcome and included

We are committed to equality and diversity because we believe that everyone deserves to be treated fairly and to feel that they can be themselves without fear of discrimination or inequality.

Our aims by 2026

- Work with partners to increase community cohesion and tackle hate crime
- Council services are more accessible and inclusive

Progress in 2022/23

- A new Equality Impact Assessment process was launched to ensure that equalities issues are considered as part of all service changes.
- Over 500 households were supported to open their homes to nearly 1000 guests, including 350 children, to provide a safe and welcoming environment for Ukrainians fleeing the Russian invasion. We also provided home to school transport for 62 displaced Ukrainian students by initiating policy exceptions.
- Harborough Museum launched 'We are Harborough', a community led exhibition celebrating what makes the area special. Ukrainians and host families, our Gypsy and Traveller communities, young people, adult learners, families, heritage volunteers and over 500 local community members shared stories, memories and connections.

- Our Library and Heritage Service also delivered a wide diversity of cultural community projects including: The Re-building Lives exhibition at Charnwood Museum commemorating the 50th anniversary of the expulsion of Asian people from Uganda; work with Gypsy and Irish Traveller women to co-curate a groundbreaking temporary exhibition at Foxton Canal Museum; and community consultation and engagement at various locations.
- Leicestershire's Library service responded to community need by evaluating 'Other Than English Language OTEL' stock to most recently include new Ukrainian book collections and created a new collection of OTEL stock on Borrowbox, our e-book library, which has opened up access to a much wider audience.
- The Museum service delivered the New Narratives Conference for museums wanting to develop their collections to tell new and sometimes challenging stories to relate to communities they serve with a renewed focus on understanding collections.
- Our Registration Service held 17 Citizenship ceremonies to welcome 457 new British citizens. The Service also undertook some private ceremonies.
- The Lord-Lieutenant ran the "Platinum Jubilee Community and Business Award" to recognise a total of 70 charities, schools or businesses who made a strong contribution to community cohesion.
- Our Adult Learning Service has continued to support community integration through the delivery of a curriculum that appeals to people from different backgrounds. Courses designed to support the development of English skills for speakers of other languages, have enabled individuals settling in the county to find work, become independent and contribute to the communities that they live. 219 Ukraine learners, many of whom initially attended a summer school, progressed to mainstream English courses.
- Our Leicestershire Equalities Challenge Group is an influential equalities group, instrumental in considering the equity of services. Plans and proposals that have been assessed have included the Joint Carers Strategy, the Net Zero Carbon Strategy and the Leicestershire Road Safety Strategy.
- "Big Conversation" staff events have focussed on equalities issues such as Gypsy, Roma and Travellers, Neurodiversity, Trans and Anti-Semitism. The focus has been on raising awareness and promoting service improvements.
- We had a strong presence at the Leicester Pride Event, with a banner and stalls encouraging people to consider fostering and adoption, and a career with the Council.
- A new 'Trans & Non-binary Policy' for people who use our services was developed to be used alongside the Council's Staff Trans Equality Policy.
- In February 2023 it was announced that we had again been placed in Stonewall's list of the 100 top LGBTQ+ friendly employers in the UK. The award recognises the Council's excellence in providing an inclusive and welcoming environment.
- We issued new guidance for managers to respond effectively to incidents of racist abuse of staff, part of our commitment to "zero-tolerance" of racism.
- We also promoted a number of positive action measures including representative interview panels and specific support for recruitment to senior positions, to ensure that the best people for the job are selected. Also, robust and thriving staff networks for protected characteristics groups.
- Our 'CFS We Care' Strategy is in year 3 of implementation and is a reflection of the voice of the Race Champions and BAME Staff and sets out a drive to see change in four priority areas.
- A new Senior Policy Officer – Anti-Racism – is developing an Anti-Racism Strategy and Vision which will focus on internal work and how we work with communities.

4.2 People participate in service design and delivery

Residents should feel that they can get involved in decisions about public services and policies which affect their lives. County Councillors have a key role in representing the needs and interests of residents, however the Council aims to improve how it engages residents in service design and delivery so that more residents feel they can influence Council decisions.



Our aim by 2026

- Increase in the percentage of residents who feel they can influence Council decisions.

Progress in 2022/23

- There is full public consultation on all proposed service changes. This includes on-line and paper-based surveys, public meetings and focus groups. A new on-line engagement platform, Social Pinpoint, is being piloted.
- We celebrated the refurbishment of Syston Library which was co-designed by local children and families through workshops, surveys and focus groups. Using developer contributions, we created an attractive new children's space to meet local needs.
- Our Libraries and Heritage Service delivered 31 co-created projects with local communities.
- There has been continued commitment from all services through the Voice Strategy and Service Delivery Plans, to ensure the voice and experiences of all children and families are heard and responded to during the delivery of services and in planning and delivering the best services.
- A contract delivering the Healthwatch service in Leicestershire allows people to share their views on Health and Care services. The continued gathering of community feedback on services is used to report on and drive change by Health and Care commissioners and providers. We also provide an advocacy service for individuals and independent advocacy services relating to NHS complaints and mental health.
- The introduction of the Out in Care group and Care Leaver Council recognises the wealth of experience and knowledge that care experienced children bring to service planning and evaluation.

- Expansion of the role and membership of the Adults and Communities Engagement Panel, representing those accessing services, has resulted in greater involvement of the Panel to develop information provision, strategy and policy.
- SEN transport eligible users have the option to choose a Personal Transport Budget instead of commissioned transport and decide on their own transport preferences.
- Waste Initiatives Community Engagement events, talks and roadshows were held across 2023. Also, classes run by Adult Education on food waste reduction, textile and wood reuse, and furniture repair.
- The Shire Environment Grant Scheme provided grants for community organisations to create and run projects on waste prevention, reducing carbon and improving biodiversity.
- A wide range of public questions were considered at our overview and scrutiny committee meetings.

4.3 Cultural and historical heritage are enjoyed and conserved

Culture is our past, present, and future. It's what we have inherited, what we are experiencing now and what we would like to see remembered. We want to preserve and make accessible our local cultural and historic heritage to enhance the wellbeing of residents.



Our aim by 2026

- Increased number of residents and visitors engaging in cultural and heritage activities

Progress in 2022/23

- From April 2023 our Library and Heritage Services started to receive £760k+ funding from Arts Council England to support access to culture through collections, stories and expertise across the county, with a targeted programme of activities to March 2026.
- During the year 680,000 people visited the Council's 16 Libraries and 6 Heritage sites.
- All our heritage sites were rated excellent by Visit England and 3 sites received special accolades due to the high quality of the offer.

- In May 2023 a new exhibition chartered and brought to life the history of Melton Mowbray and how it has changed over time. A team of 6 research volunteers assisted Melton Carnegie Museum staff with the project.
- In September 2023 a new display of archaeological finds from Rothley - dating back almost 5,000 years – could be seen at Charnwood Museum in Loughborough.
- The 1620s House and Garden run by the Council was shortlisted to the finals of the Leicestershire Promotions Tourism awards in the Places to Visit category.
- In October 2022 two of the Council's attractions won national accolades from Visit England. Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre was awarded the Best Told Story accolade and Melton Carnegie Museum the Hidden Gem award.
- In December 2022 Melton Carnegie Museum was nominated for Visit England's prestigious gold award, with various improvements noted. Harborough Museum also saw its overall quality rating rise to 80%.
- There was a 41% increase in new Library members with 29,000 new joiners in 2022/23.
- Bosworth Medieval Festival welcomed 4,500 visitors from across the country to this nationally recognised re-enactment event.
- Bosworth Battlefield, Snibston Colliery Park, the Century Theatre and the 1620s House and Garden were all featured in Visit Leicester's successful Uncover the Story campaign. Six new walking and driving trails were developed as part of the campaign in 2022, featuring these and other attractions, to encourage greater exploration of the county's tourism offer.
- Over 300 hours of museum learning and art workshops, 940 museum artefacts and 240 original works of art went into schools to support an understanding and appreciation of heritage across the curriculum.
- We received a Green flag award for Watermead Country Park (North) and retained Green Flags for Beacon Hill and Snibston Colliery Park, involving conservation volunteer groups
- We supported new 'parkruns' through two of our country parks – Market Bosworth and Beacon Hill – joining Watermead as our other country park parkrun venue.
- We supported coronation weekend celebrations with free road closure applications for street parties. 151 applications were approved, comprising 120 road closures and a further 31 for permission to hold events on highway land.
- On September 8th, 2022, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II passed away. The Lord-Lieutenancy Office oversaw the official wreath laying and the City and County's official proclamation of the King. In addition, the Lord-Lieutenancy liaised with various bodies and allocated Deputy Lieutenants to attend local proclamations. A service of thanksgiving was organised in conjunction with Leicester Cathedral and Leicester City Council.
- In October 2022 we announced the planting of five trees in Leicestershire from the Platinum Jubilee Tree of Trees sculpture in honour of the Queen.
- In June 2023 events were held to honour members of the armed forces community for the huge contribution they have made. A parade of around 250 local veterans, cadets and reservists as well as serving members of the armed forces also took place.
- We continue to hold a prestigious gold award for our support and advocacy of the armed forces community and also re-signed The Armed Forces Covenant.

4.4 Communities are prepared for and resilient to emergencies

Covid-19 has highlighted the importance of communities being able to respond to, withstand and recover from adverse situations. Developing a Community Response Plan enables a community to identify the skills, knowledge and resources in their local area which can be mobilised during a crisis.

Our aim by 2026

- Increase in the number of active Community Response Plans

Progress in 2022/23

- We commenced engagement on an updated local Flood Risk Management Strategy to identify flood risk and actions to be taken to prevent flooding and repeat occurrences.
- We are working with a new Local Resilience Forum Community Resilience Officer whose role is to work directly with communities, the voluntary and community sector and partners to identify opportunities for community resilience development in Leicestershire.
- We participated in national exercises including Flood Ex 2022 (November 2022) and Exercise Mighty Oak (March 2023) which helped identify how we could engage with communities about flooding and power outages.
- We continue to have 59 active Community Response Plan holders across LLR.
- We contributed to three flood warden training events which were hosted with partner agencies across the county to promote flood resilience.

4.5 People support each other through volunteering

Volunteers perform a key role in supporting local communities and delivering our vision for Leicestershire. We want to support volunteering opportunities and activity as volunteers provide wide community benefit beyond the Council's direct service provision.



Our aims by 2026

- To offer a wide variety of volunteering opportunities and activity across Council services
- VCSE organisations remain financially viable and maintain their service delivery

Progress in 2022/23

- 35 community-managed libraries continue to be run by various volunteer and community-interest groups and Parish Councils for the benefit of local communities.
- Our Library and Heritage Service supported more than 500 volunteers, who contributed over 16,000 hours of time to the service in a range of roles and activities.
- Our Children and Family's Department was awarded the Investing in Volunteers Award, the quality standard for good practice in volunteer management. All 147 volunteers were invited to an event where the award and volunteers' contributions were celebrated.
- The Independent Visitor Scheme (IVS) provides positive volunteer role models for children and young people in care. The IVS has 68 volunteers supporting 73 young people.
- In 2022/23, our community fridges which are hosted in 4 of our Family Hubs, had 42,000kg of waste food donated and redistributed to 11,452 visitors.
- A new development provided by volunteers are Wellbeing Cafes which are offered to support parents who may have difficulties with their mental health and/or children with additional needs.
- A commitment has been made to develop a pathway for young people engaged with the Council to have opportunities to volunteer and participate through the CYCLE (County Youth Council of Leicestershire). Young people have supported recruitment of staff within the Youth and Justice Service, provided insight on key strategies and helped shape service delivery.
- We supported three Members of Youth Parliament to deliver on a manifesto focused on improving the emotional wellbeing of young people across Leicestershire. This involved working with stakeholders across Health to develop workshops and session plans that can be delivered in schools.
- Over 200 volunteers from the cultural sector came together to celebrate achievements and share experiences at the Volunteer Sharing Day held at County Hall.
- Volunteering in Leicestershire continues to be supported and promoted through an infrastructure services contract with Voluntary Action Leicestershire. People are supported to volunteer and organisations are supported to recruit, manage, train and develop volunteers through hands on advice and guidance.
- A Policy Officer for volunteering has been established to support volunteering within the Council through development and co-ordination of best practice. Achievements include a communications campaign and specific promotion of harder to recruit and retain roles.
- Managed by volunteer managers across diverse subjects and geographical areas, more than 900 volunteers have dedicated over 10,000 hours in 2022/23
- Our volunteer Flood Wardens scheme has over 100 active wardens across Leicestershire
- Our Adult Learning Service engages volunteers to support ESOL learners many of whom are refugees.

5. Improved Opportunities

This outcome aims to ensure that all children and young people get the best start for life and have the opportunities they need to fulfil their potential, regardless of their circumstances. We believe children are best supported to grow within their own families and as such the outcome reflects our aspiration for families to be self-sufficient. It also aims to ensure that disadvantaged adults, such as those with learning disabilities and/or mental health conditions, can aim high and achieve their aspirations.

Sub-Outcome	Our Aims by 2026
Every child gets the best start for life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More children achieving the expected level of development at age 2-2.5yrs • More children achieving a good level of development at foundation stage
Every child has access to good quality education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient, high quality school places and specialist SEND provision • Improved educational attainment amongst disadvantaged pupils
Families are self-sufficient and enabled to be resilient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families are able to deal with issues as they arise, and the Council achieves its targets for the number of families achieving progress through the Supporting Families Programme
Young people and adults are able to aim high and reach their full potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best 25% of counties for the rate of young people aged 16-17 who are NEET • Best 25% of counties for the percentage of adults (learning disability) who are in employment/living independently • Percentage of adults (mental health) who are in employment/living independently is above national average

5.1 Every child gets the best start in life

The first 1,001 days from pregnancy to age two set the foundations for cognitive, emotional and physical development. We want to improve how we support families during these 1,001 days.



Our aims by 2026

- More children achieving the expected level of development at age 2-2.5yrs
- More children achieving a good level of development at foundation stage.

Progress in 2022/23

- We continue to proactively promote the importance of 1001 Critical Days with parents and our workforce. In March 2023, we held events for families in our localities to promote support available and the best approaches to support babies brain development.
- Bi-monthly social media posts are a key part of our 1001 Days campaign and on average reach upwards of 25,000 people via a variety of platforms, with messages peaking at 37,000.
- In September 2022 our bid for funding to the national Family Hubs Transformation fund was successful. This funding is supporting a focus on Best Start for Life and universal access to good quality information for all parents and carers.
- In March 2023 we launched the start of a Maternity and Early Years Strategy and Action Plan including key priorities to 2026. We also launched an e-learning module on 1001 days for staff.
- A pathway of support has been put in place for those children identified as not meeting their milestones at the age of two after their two-year health review.
- Our Early Years Inclusion and Childcare Service hosted a series of training events including on supporting young children's communication and language.
- A video promoting the take up of funded childcare was produced and shared across social media. It is now available on our website so that parents are aware of the benefits of early education.
- Our Communities and Wellbeing Service developed services for educators and families to use, including to support local childminding professionals through dedicated activities and the development of targeted activity packs.
- Story Explorer bags, designed for different ages, from babies to young adults, are available at libraries across the county, to encourage reading for pleasure. They include a selection of books, materials, toys, puzzles and activities.
- Our Leicestershire Libraries continue to support the book-gifting programme 'Bookstart'. This partnership enabled 4,950 babies to receive a free pack of books at their 6-week health check. A number of libraries also worked with early years settings to gift over 2,200 'Bookstart Preschooler' packs to 3-4 years olds and 900 'Bookstart Toddler' packs to children aged 1-2 years.
- In Leicestershire, the proportion of four- to five-year-olds who achieved a good level of development at the end of Reception in 2022/23 was 69.1%, an increase of 1.5%, above the national average of 67.3 % and East Midlands 66.8%. 96% of preschool providers are also now judged as 'good' or better by Ofsted.

5.2 Every child has access to good quality education

Education has the potential to drive social mobility and improve outcomes for the next generation. It is therefore important that children have access to good quality education. Further, we believe that most children with SEND should have their needs met in a mainstream school to promote inclusion and better outcomes.



Our aims by 2026

- Sufficient, high quality school places and specialist SEND provision
- Improved educational attainment amongst disadvantaged pupils

Progress in 2022/23

- Leicestershire has been invited into the Department of Education's (DfE) Delivering Better Value (DBV) in SEND programme. Leicestershire has received £1m to support the transformation of the SEND system. The Transforming SEND and Inclusion in Leicestershire (TSIL) programme is mobilised and is supported by an external strategic partner, Newton Europe. This programme and the DBV programme will be closely aligned.
- In 2023/23 we delivered a total of 2,179 additional pupil places; Primary – 829, Secondary - 1,245 and SEND – 105.
- LLR Social Care Authorities and the ICB have been selected in the East Midlands region to pilot a range of changes, set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Improvement Plan. The SEND AP Improvement Plan Sets out the Government's plans to change the SEND and AP system in England. There are nine change programme partnerships across the country that will be piloting and testing the reforms.
- We have developed an Accelerated Progress Plan on the quality of Education, Health and Care plans. A partnership plan across the SEND system. Actions are in place and areas of work have been implemented, such as the SENA service re-modelling, work on the backlog of EHC needs assessments and amending Annual Reviews. Schools have recognised that change is taking place and welcomed this, but there is still further to go to have a greater impact on schools.

- As part of the Transforming SEND and Inclusion Programme (TSIL) school improvement has supported the development of an Inclusion Toolkit, setting specific conversations and whole school SEND review in partnership with Whole School SEND.
- The Leicestershire Education Excellence Partnership as part of school improvement has influenced implementing strategies and activities to maximise outcomes, wellbeing and life chances. To ensure that “every child gets the best possible start in life” it has facilitated activities to develop the quality of teaching, learning and pupil support, particularly enabling identified under performing groups to narrow the attainment gap. This has included work with the Education Endowment Fund (EEF) a project spanning 2 years for disadvantaged pupils.
- Collaborative school groups have focussed on locality-based school improvement issues, as a result training and support around curriculum and the provision for SEND has been provided with a focus on improving outcomes and provision.
- There has been a developing model of high-quality peer reviews within the groups as part of school improvement for 2022/2023. Trials have been effective with schools with those groups all getting a ‘good’ grading when inspected last year, including shifts from requires improvement to good. 95 schools were inspected in 2022/2023. 80 retained a good or outstanding judgement.
- A total of 289 training opportunities have been provided for schools across Leicestershire as part of school improvement
- Provisional data for KS2 outcomes shows above national performance for combined Reading Writing and Maths (RWM) 62% and disadvantaged outcomes are in line with national ones at 42%.
- Provisional data for KS1 outcomes shows above national performance for combined Reading, Writing and Maths (RWM) at 57%. Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils were slightly below at 34%
- Also, all Primary and Secondary schools have had access to the Violence Reduction Network partnership training including trauma informed practice.
- 6,000 children joined the Summer Reading Challenge in Leicestershire Libraries in 2022, with over 3,500 reading at least six books and completing the challenge.
- Over 50 looked after children worked with Library and Heritage Services to choose a book that had an inspirational impact on them and were supported by professional artists to create a piece of art which expressed that. This co-created project culminated in an hugely successful ‘My Books/My Story’ exhibition at the Highcross Shopping Centre. It won the National Reading for Pleasure teacher award and has been shortlisted for the national Engaging People Awards.
- Our Creative Learning Services delivered 77,650 books; 900 project collections; 400 hours of pupil reading and literacy workshops to over 68,000 students; and 120 hours of library advice and professional development into schools and academies.
- Local STEM ambassadors delivered events across five libraries to engage and inspire children with science and technology-based activities.
- The new ‘Reading Well for Teen’ book collection was made available in all our libraries. The new collections were officially launched at Coalville Library by local author, Tamsin Winter. The collection includes a range of excellent titles to help teens manage their emotions and cope with difficult and challenging times.

5.3 Families are self-sufficient and enabled to be resilient

Many families have complex needs which require support to enable their children to achieve good outcomes in life. We need to identify issues early and work directly with families in collaboration with other services.

Our aim by 2026

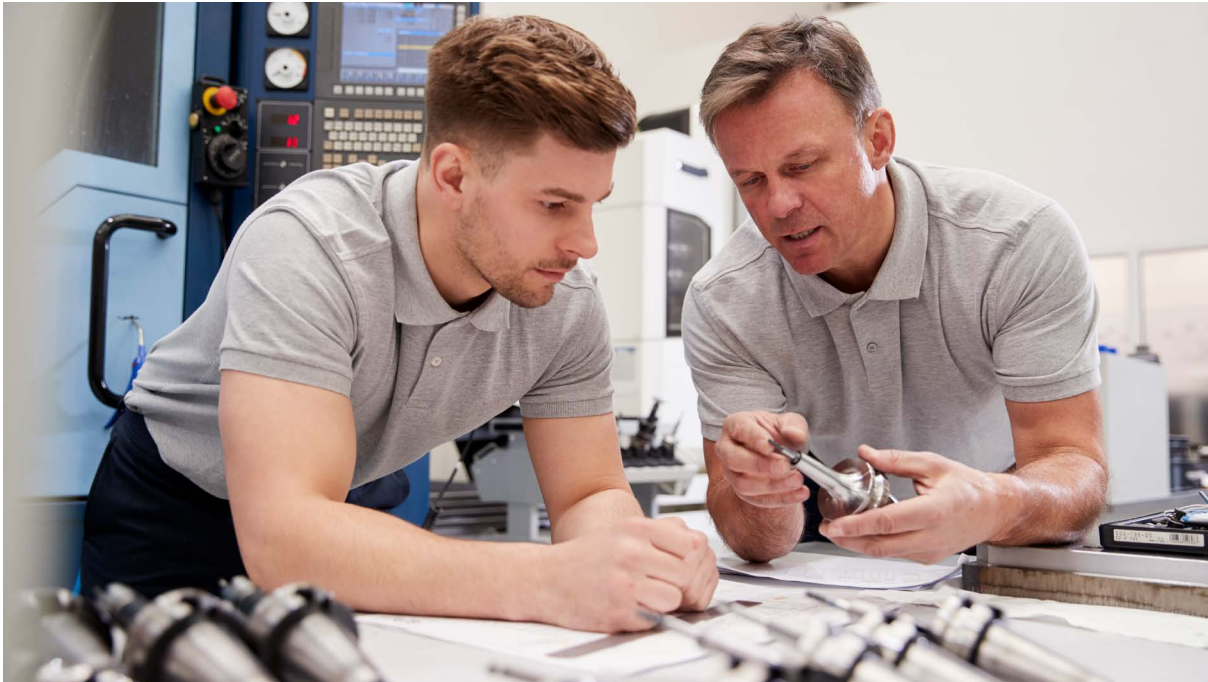
- Families are able to deal with issues as they arise, and the Council achieves its targets for the number of families achieving progress through the Supporting Families Programme.

Progress in 2022/23

- Children and Family Wellbeing Service continues to provide targeted early help to families experiencing more complex needs. During 2022-23 the service expanded support for families experiencing domestic abuse through grant funding from the Home Office.
- We have opened 9 out of our 25 Family Hubs across Leicestershire. The Leicestershire Family Hub offer is both wide and extensive, offering a 'one stop shop' for parents and carers with 0- to 19-year-olds or up to 25 for young people with special educational needs and disabilities. The Family Hubs are a mixture of physical and virtual spaces, where people have easy access to a range of family advice, support services and guidance on issues such as social care, education, and mental and physical health.
- Family Hubs are working closely with library services to ensure that 'Hubs in Libraries' can be developed so that families can access useful information, signposting, and resources from their local library.
- We continue to respond to the national 'Supporting Families' programme providing intensive keyworker support to families with more complex needs. We were able to claim 100% of funding through the national payment by results programme by meeting targets to change the lives of 450 families. We have worked closely with partners through the Early Help Partnership to explore through a strategic plan how we can develop skills, competencies, data sharing, etc across the early help system.
- Our services continue to champion strength-based and relationship-based practice that seeks to maintain children within their birth families and communities.
- The Reducing Parental Conflict programme has gained momentum during 2022-23 with over 400 practitioners from across social care, early help, health, police, and the voluntary sector having received training in the Practitioners Toolkit.
- Our Household Support Fund scheme has supported care experienced young people with fuel and cost of living costs.
- Our Care Leaver Service provides dedicated resources to ensure young people receive the right financial, accommodation and emotional wellbeing advice when needed.
- We introduced new ways of working with and supported foster carers and connected carers which achieved permanence through Special Guardianship Orders for 50 children, previously looked after.
- Our local Holiday Activity Fund (HAF) programme has targeting school age children in receipt of benefits related free school meals (FSM) and offers access to free holiday club places, including a healthy meal and opportunities to participate in a range of activities. 4,330 children and young people accessed HAF provision in 2022-23, including 383 secondary age young people.

5.4 Young people and adults are able to aim high and reach their full potential

To fulfil their potential, young people need access to relevant, good quality post-16 education, training and employment opportunities. It is also critical that adults who may be disadvantaged due to learning disabilities and/or mental health issues are able to live as independently as possible and access suitable employment.



Our aims by 2026

- Best 25% of counties for the rate of young people aged 16-17 who are NEET
- Best 25% of counties for the percentage of adults (learning disability) who are in employment/living independently
- Percentage of adults (mental health) who are in employment/living independently is above national average

Progress in 2022/23

Post 16/NEET

- Through the Education, Employment and Training Strategy we have invested in targeted careers advice and guidance for 16- to 18-year-olds. This year we are focusing particularly on vulnerable groups including Care Leavers.
- The use of Pupil Premium Plus has been allocated to support children in care's education and aspirations. This past academic year we have had 90% of PEPs completed which ensures our children in care's education is considered with high importance.
- The work of our Virtual School has been extended to support our post 16 cohort in education, employment and training. A new post has been created to focus on this cohort. Funding is also being used to develop our support and offer in apprenticeships, working in partnership with other stakeholders and supporting young people further to take up these opportunities.

- The Virtual School and Care to Dance have partnered together and been selected onto the Blue Cabin Artful Alliance research programme. This will focus on the impact the Arts has on children in care, highlighting their voice and aspirations. The partnership has provided opportunities for young people to engage in the arts and become ambassadors and leaders within the programme.
- Participation in Adult Learning programmes increased (+ 5%) over the academic year to 5930 enrolments with 97% learners stating that they achieved their goals. The provision is wide ranging from pre-entry qualifications through to Level 3 and includes a range of courses delivered in 71 community venues across the county.
- Over 1500 adults attended English, Maths and Digital skills programmes. In addition to subject skills, these courses have helped individuals to develop those attributes highly valued by employers including communication skills, team working and positive behaviours, such as timekeeping and reliability.
- A barrier to productivity, poor digital skills also limit individuals' ability to access services. Our Essential Digital Skills courses have continued to provide opportunities for adults to gain confidence and become more independent.

Disadvantaged Adults

- The Transforming Care Partnership has worked to ensure services for those with Learning Disabilities (inc. Autism) provided by local organisations join up. The work won an award for good working practices which improve systems across organisations.
- In partnership with district councils, Leicestershire Partnership Trust and the Integrated Care Board, we established a Complex Needs Accommodation Board to work together to support people with a primary mental health need. This is helping to identify homes in the community and maintain existing tenancies.
- Working with the NHS and City and Rutland we relaunched a Mental Health Wellbeing and Recovery Support Service. The service sees £1m a year invested over five years to provide advice, guidance, and support for people's emotional and mental health. The service will provide a first point of access for those who need support.
- We are running pilot projects in 3 neighbourhoods which aim to look at how we can build upon strengths within the individual with Mental Health issues and how their local community can help meet their needs.

6. Strong Economy, Transport and Infrastructure

This outcome reflects our aim to use innovation and skills to build a productive, inclusive and sustainable economy at the cutting edge of science, technology and engineering. We also need our transport, housing and digital infrastructure to support a growing population and economy.

Sub-Outcome	Council Aims by 2026
There is close alignment between skill supply and demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fewer employers reporting skills shortages or gaps Increased opportunities in the labour market for young people
Leicestershire has the infrastructure, including transport, for sustainable economic and housing growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrastructure capacity and capability supports growth and net zero carbon emissions
Leicestershire is an attractive place where businesses flourish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased investment in Research and Development Increase in the number of businesses and business survival rates
Economic growth delivers increased prosperity for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth in Gross Value Added (GVA) in the local economy corresponds with a reduction in deprivation

6.1 There is close alignment between skill supply and demand

It is important to ensure that education and skills are aligned to employers' needs as this will drive economic growth and ensure people can get good jobs and make progress in their careers.



Our aims by 2026

- Fewer employers reporting skills shortages or gaps
- Increased opportunities in the labour market for young people

Progress in 2022/23

- We continued to work with the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) to forecast future skills needs, including considering new and growth sectors. We are investigating funding for Skills Bootcamps that provide short, intensive training courses as a means of upskilling the workforce.
- In 2022, universities and councils across Leicester and Leicestershire signed an historic agreement to work together to drive economic growth and tackle social challenges across the region.
- We have been awarded £3m to improve adult basic numeracy skills through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Multiply Programme which involves delivery of hundreds of free courses over three years. Courses have already been delivered in understanding household income and expenditure, cook, meet and eat, computer gaming etc. Multiply webpages had 22,511 hits in year one. So far 755 people have engaged with the programme with 550 receiving 2 hours+ of support.
- The Kickstart Scheme offers work placements to 16–24-year-olds receiving universal credit and at risk of becoming long-term unemployed. 61 Employers from Leicester and Leicestershire applied for the KSES scheme. Of those that were accepted, 32 employers had taken on 37 individuals who lived in Leicestershire.
- Our Work and Skills Leicestershire project offers support, advice and information to anyone actively seeking paid employment, training or volunteering. It has supported over 1,179 local people looking for employment, through a personalised work plan, with over 195 subsequently in employment. The website has received over 50,000 hits.
- We provided hundreds of part-time, evening and weekend courses through GoLearn Leicestershire and our Adult Learning Service. GoLearn also offers a range of free courses to help people who are seeking work and looking to gain basic skills.
- Our Children and Family Service now offer social work apprenticeships through an offer in place with Warwick University.
- A traineeship for care leavers is being created which will help build the skills needed by a young person to be more work ready for an apprenticeship, aiming to improve the completion rates, leading to more apprenticeships with the Council.
- The Council continues to support apprentices employed directly by the Council as well as apprentices with other local employers via our Adult Learning Service.
- Studying with our Adult Learning Service, 23 candidates completed apprenticeships across a range of subject areas including - payroll, teaching, business administration and management. This year also saw the introduction of the Care Certificate, designed to provide career progression, and attract more people into the sector.

6.2 Infrastructure for sustainable economic and housing growth

We need our housing, transport and digital infrastructure to support economic and population growth, whilst helping to deliver net zero carbon emissions.



Our aim by 2026

- Infrastructure capacity and capability supports growth and net zero carbon emissions

Progress in 2022/23

- In February 2023 we approved plans to create more than 120 new jobs by unlocking land at Leaders Farm, Lutterworth. The site will feature more than 50 car parking spaces and include electric vehicle charging points.
- We are continuing to progress plans relating to the delivery of up to 2,750 homes, 2 primary schools, a local community hub, local retail centre and 1m sq. ft. of commercial space east of Lutterworth.
- Our Investing in Leicestershire Programme is making a positive contribution to outcomes through measures including the generation of renewable energy, improving the energy efficiency of buildings, maximising opportunities to decarbonise the estate, facilitating the delivery of affordable and quality homes and generating economic growth. We are investing c£43m in the period 2023-27 to support the programme. The capital value of the fund increased by £26.7m during 2022/23 and generated income of £5.8m to support Council services.

Major Highways Schemes and Road Maintenance

- Major construction work commenced on the north and east Melton Mowbray distributor road to reduce congestion and support new homes and employment growth in the town. The new road – part of a £115.2m investment - is expected to open in summer 2025. The scheme unlocks the development of the Melton North Sustainable Neighbourhood with a minimum of 1,700 homes by 2036, alongside retail/office and/or community facilities.

- In January 2023 we approved plans to deliver major road improvements to 8 junctions on the A511 between Ashby and Coalville. Integral to the plan is a link road to connect with housing developments which will deliver 3,500 new homes. Work to start in Summer 2024.
- We agreed a package of road improvements in Hinckley which will mean smoother and more efficient journeys for motorists. The scheme is focused around Rugby Road, which suffers from significant congestion at peak times.
- In 2022/23 a total £19.3m was invested in Highways Asset Maintenance including £14.2m on carriageways, £2m on footways and rights of way, £0.7m on bridges, £1.6m on street lighting, £0.2m on flood alleviation and £0.6m on traffic signal renewal.
- In May 2023 we agreed an extra £3m for fixing and maintaining roads, cycle paths and pavements. The money is the equivalent of 30,000 repairs or 75,000 square metres of damaged road and is targeting improvement areas across the county.
- A significant surface dressing programme over the summer treated more than 600,000 square metres of road to prevent potholes forming.
- 20 drivers worked through the night on a rota basis to treat 17 gritting routes which cover 48% of the highway network.
- We were amongst the highest rated counties for satisfaction with condition of highways in the most recent National Highways and Transport Network (NHT) Public Satisfaction Survey.
- Leicestershire has an excellent record for road conditions and continues to have some of the best maintained roads in the country. The Percentage of the principal A class roads within the network where structural maintenance should be considered remained at 2% in 2022/23. The indicator remains in the top quartile when compared to other English county councils.

Public Transport

- In June 2023 we were awarded £1.78m to help support public transport, particularly in rural areas. The money will help better shape the transport offer in rural areas, including greater connectivity for communities.
- We have delivered on a commitment to create an Enhanced Partnership with local bus operators to improve services and passenger experience.
- Our Fox Connect 3-year trial minibus scheme launched in October 2022, covering 18 villages in south-west Leicestershire, and serving key destinations, it has seen a positive start with 10,837 passenger journeys during 2022/23.
- We have welcomed and supported work to electrify the Midland Main Line through Leicestershire and worked to mitigate the impact on the road network.

Walking and Cycling

- We have worked with Active Travel England to further our commitment to Active Travel in Leicestershire, with associated walking and cycling facilities.
- In October 2022 residents were invited to suggest ways to improving cycling and walking in two areas of the county as part of the North of Leicester and Melton Mowbray Cycling and Walking Infrastructure engagement. The Loughborough and South of Leicester Plan engagement was also held earlier in the year.
- In July 2023 we launched engagement on plans for local cycling and walking infrastructure in the Oadby area. The improvements being considered include separate protected spaces for cycling, walking, and wheeling, with improved junctions and crossings that prioritise active travel.
- Training sessions were offered to county residents who wanted to learn more about e-bikes, with residents receiving a £300 voucher off an e-bike as part of a government scheme.

Digital

- Through Project Gigahubs we are working with Building Digital UK to bring gigabit-capable broadband to 43 rural public sector sites across Leicestershire, including schools, libraries and recycling centres, by March 2024. Gigabit broadband is the fastest connection currently available and the project will enhance public services and provide a reliable digital network to our communities, and also provide the incentive for commercial providers to connect surrounding homes and businesses.
- The Government's £5 billion Project Gigabit Programme aims to accelerate the rollout of gigabit broadband, to help achieve the aim of 85% gigabit coverage nationwide by 2025 and 99% by 2030. It targets homes and businesses that are not included in commercial providers' plans due to their rurality. Leicestershire has over 25,000 premises included in the indicative scope of the Programme between 7 'Lots', with just under 24,000 of those being in Lot 11 (Leicestershire and Warwickshire). It is anticipated that the final intervention areas will be agreed in Spring/Summer 2024.
- We are working closely with Openreach to help them gain community pledges from approximately 25 rural Leicestershire villages in order to obtain Government funds to build full-fibre broadband infrastructure, through a number of Fibre Community Partnerships. If enough pledges are received, Openreach can bring full-fibre connectivity to those villages which otherwise would have not received it commercially.

6.3 Leicestershire is an attractive place where businesses flourish

To support a flourishing economy, we need higher productivity rates facilitated by increased investment in research and development (R&D). There are also opportunities to capitalise on our prime location for international business.



Our aims by 2026

- Increased investment in Research and Development
- Increase in the number of businesses and business survival rates

- We continue to be a key partner in the Enterprise Zone Programme which supports Research and Development businesses on 3 sites in the County - Loughborough University Science and Enterprise Park, Charnwood Campus and MIRA near Hinckley.
- Through its business networks the Place Marketing Team continues to promote key sites across Leicestershire to encourage businesses to invest. The Place Marketing Team has secured £185,000 of funding to support place marketing activities.
- We continued to support businesses including through the Business Hub, which offers advice and guidance and providing space for innovative businesses to locate and expand in the County.
- We are also working with partners and the LLEP to support the local economy's recovery from Covid-19. The Council employed 1.4 FTE Business Advisers utilising ERDF funding to support businesses in the County. 70 businesses received £1.2 million grant funding from a total pot of £1.8 million and 1112 County businesses registered on the Growth Hub website for support.
- The latest STEAM tourism economic impact report indicated that 30.53 million visitors, generated £2.07billion for the local economy and supported 21,038 jobs across Leicester and Leicestershire. The economic impact of the sector has now surpassed 2019 levels.
- A Group Travel Guide was developed featuring almost 60 local tourism businesses. The Guide was taken to two national trade shows, engaging over 200 trade buyers. Leicestershire also featured in a range of national travel trade publications and has been nominated as Best UK Destination for Groups in the 2023 Group Leisure and Travel Awards
- We have provided support to adult social care businesses through staff expertise, public health and infection prevention and control advice, financial support passported from government, and the Inspired to Care recruitment and retention initiative.
- We have also carried out a fair cost of care exercise and market sustainability plan for adult social care services and published a market position statement to present business opportunities in adult social care services in the county.
- Creative Leicestershire is a partner in the East Midlands Creative Consortium having successfully applied for DCMS Create Growth funding which brings £1.3m into the region to increase the capacity of creative business to access investment providing them with necessary skills, knowledge and resources to attract investors. The programme was launched in November 2022 and will enable 4 cohorts to take part from 2023 – 2025.
- Creative businesses will also benefit from the opportunity to apply for further funding from the £7m Innovate UK fund ring-fenced for successful Create Growth regions. The funding has the potential to transform ambitious creative sector businesses to help them to scale up.

6.4 Economic growth delivers increased prosperity for all

Inclusive economic growth does not just contribute to Gross Value Added in the local economy; it improves living standards by reducing levels of deprivation and creating opportunities for everyone.

Our aim by 2026

- Growth in Gross Value Added (GVA) in the local economy corresponds with a reduction in deprivation

Progress in 2022/23

- In March 2023 the new East Midlands Freeport (EMF) was formally launched. Space Park Leicester became the customs site operator for EMF, supporting the Freeport's focus on driving innovation and skills. With 533 hectares of prime strategic development land at 3 sites the EMF will create thousands of high-quality new jobs in the region and boost the East Midlands economy by £8.4bn.
- The EMF is also driving the low carbon and renewable energy and advanced manufacturing and logistics sectors.
- The EMF approval released £25m of funding to deliver infrastructure and investment projects and a Hydrogen Skills Academy.
- A total of £22m of support from the Government's Household Support Fund has been made available to help ease cost of living pressures. This has included emergency food and fuel support and to ensure children have free school meal vouchers during the holidays.
- In addition, free holiday clubs, gym passes and coaching sessions were offered for summer 2023 for those families and young people requiring extra support. This is our biggest ever offering of free holiday clubs.
- Working alongside district councils, we have ensured the County doesn't miss out on Government funding allocated to district councils to install energy efficiency measures in those homes most in need of support. As a result, over the next year, more than £3m will be spent making Leicestershire's homes warmer and tackling the crucial issue of rising energy prices.
- We continue to work to raise awareness of Free School Meals with eligible families.



7. Safe and Well

This outcome aims to ensure that people are safe and protected from harm, live in a healthy environment and have the opportunities and support they need to live active, independent and fulfilling lives.

Sub-Outcome	Council Aims by 2026
People are safe in their daily lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More residents feel safe in their local area • Fewer children and young people involved in and impacted by criminal behaviour
People at the most risk are protected from harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerable children and adults are identified and protected from harm and abuse
People enjoy long lives in good health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved healthy life expectancy and reduced health inequalities • Increased proportion of residents with a healthy weight • Improved mental wellbeing and reduced prevalence of mental ill health
Carers and people with care needs are supported to live active, independent and fulfilling lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More people find it easy to access information and advice about Adult Care services • Improvements in the experiences of those who receive adult social care and support • Carers feel more recognised, valued and supported to undertake their caring role

7.1 People are safe in their daily lives

We aim to keep people safe by working with partners such as district councils, NHS, Police and Fire and Rescue services to raise awareness of and prevent crime.

Our aims by 2026

- More residents feel safe in their local area
- Fewer children and young people involved in and impacted by criminal behaviour

Progress in 2022/23

- We have agreed a new Community Safety Strategy to 2026 to tackle a range of crime and disorder priorities including antisocial behaviour, cybercrime and bullying, domestic abuse and hate incidents.
- Anti-Social Behaviour work is focusing on the partnership across LLR, reviewing processes and procedures to ensure perpetrators are managed and vulnerable victims are supported.
- Work is progressing to ensure compliance with statutory duties around Prevent (Counter Terrorism) such as the new venue hire policy “Martyn’s Law”.
- Our LLR Hate Reduction Strategy Statement has been updated and adopted by district’s/boroughs and the police to ensure vulnerable victims are supported

- 2022 saw the launch of a new Domestic Abuse Team which offers early help to families and adults causing harm and to families affected by domestic abuse.
- We agreed a new Youth Justice Plan to 2026, which includes developing Child First practice, responding to the Serious Violence duty and embedding new performance indicators.
- Our Trading Standards service continues to ensure that food and product safety is a top priority through advising business on compliance with a variety of legislation. We also take action where necessary to prevent businesses who do not comply with the law from doing harm to customers. The service delivered a range of interventions to protect the local food chain, including inspections of food manufacturers and undertaking over 600 visits to premises in response to the Leicestershire avian influenza outbreak.
- Our Trading Standards Service also dealt with over 1350 complaints alleging unfair trading practices and 170 referrals to provide support to victims of scams, requiring officers to intervene on 50 cases to prevent further financial loss. The service has brought criminal proceedings which has resulting in rogue traders receiving custodial sentences.
- The Trading Standards Service also prevented 275,500 unsafe or non-compliant products from entering UK via East Midlands Airport.
- Our libraries continue to participate in the Home Safety Group, to ensure Libraries are recognised as a 'safe place'.
- In November 2022 we supported an exhibition inspired by survivors of domestic abuse. The art project uses art to reflect, heal and empower by raising awareness and telling stories of hope and recovery.
- In June 2023 our pioneering scheme to create safer streets and improve air quality began new trials at two Leicestershire schools. The School Streets initiative sees a pedestrian and cycle zone in action during school opening and closing times, creating a safe space for children to walk, cycle or park and walk to school.
- We provided an extra £100,000 to continue rolling out community speed cameras and through the Leicestershire Road Safety Partnership delivered a programme of road safety initiatives.
- We delivered Bikeability cycle training to 2,751 primary school children, driver education courses to 26,436 people and community speed watch boards covering 16 parishes.
- We also managed our circa 70 school crossing patrols across the county to ensure safer crossings for school children and parents during the school run.
- Comparative data shows that Leicestershire performs in the top quartile for road casualty performance, amongst the best out of all English County Councils.



7.2 People at the most risk are protected from harm

There is a long-term upward trend in demand for child safeguarding, and we have a duty to work with partners to identify and protect vulnerable people.



Our aim by 2026

- Vulnerable children and adults are identified and protected from harm and abuse

Progress in 2022/23

- We have good and robust arrangements in place with both the Police and Health partners to respond to Child Protection referrals and sufficient experience within our workforce to provide expertise in leading child protection responses.
- Ofsted praised our Children's Services following a recent 'focused visit' inspection, for support for children in their care. The report found that social work practice with children in care, including those with a disability, is consistently child-focused and impacts positively on their life experiences and their physical and emotional well-being.
- Our Defining Children and Family Services for the Future programme is working to deliver outcomes alongside the Social Care Investment Programme (SCIP) working in partnership with Barnardo's. This will have a positive impact through the creation of additional residential capacity for under 16's, over 16's and parent and children placements. We have been successful in obtaining additional capital grant funding to enable investment in nine properties and up to 27 placements, with several units planned to become operational over the course of this financial year.
- Our evaluation of service provision in response to the national review into the murders of Star and Arthur confirmed that we have established pathways for families to be directed to early help and have built stronger responses to family and anonymous calls, which had been highlighted as improvement areas.
- We strengthened our support to foster carers and kinship carers. Enhanced support from our newly established Special Guardian support team captures our recognition of how important a lasting family carer can be for children.

- Our Safeguarding Children Partnership continues to work to respond to emerging risks, such as safeguarding babies. For example, early in 2022/23, ICON was launched across the local Safeguarding Children Partnerships. ICON is an evidenced-based programme focused on reducing abusive head trauma triggered by crying. We also continued work around Child Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing and completed work seeking assurance on Keeping Adolescents Safe.
- Work has also continued to understand how well the Partnership works to safeguard children from diverse backgrounds. The Partnership has worked to improve engagement with schools with its priority of effective safeguarding in independent and out of school settings, including setting up an independent schools' forum during 2022/23.
- In relation to adult safeguarding, we have progressed priorities for 2022/23 on Hidden Harm and Care Homes. We have continued to support up-to-date training in agencies, including all key partners and many care providers, through providing a competency framework for adult safeguarding and disseminating learning from reviews.
- Our LLR Safeguarding Adults Board YouTube channel continues to develop a bank of safeguarding videos and other resources that can be utilised by partners for learning and development. Safeguarding Matters Live was launched with live online briefings for all staff across the children and adults multi-agency partnerships. They share learning from reviews and audits, guidance updates, and resources to support practice.
- The LLR safeguarding adults deep dive assurance exercise analysed data around specific areas of concern regarding individuals who self-neglect, who have mental ill-health and/ or learning disabilities, and individuals from black and other diverse backgrounds. A resource pack was also developed for care providers. It highlights procedures, guidance, information and resources available to care homes.
- During 2022/23 we received 5,000 adult safeguarding alerts. An alert can include any concern for welfare and may often require a response from the Authority. There were 500 completed safeguarding enquiries, and of the enquiries where an outcome was expressed, 93% were fully or partially achieved.



7.3 People enjoy long lives in good health

Good health is a basic precondition for people to take an active role in family, community and work life. Health outcomes are influenced by a wide range of social, economic and environmental factors, known as 'wider determinants of health'. We will embed a 'Health in all Policies' approach to systematically consider the health implications of all decisions.

Our aims by 2026

- Improved healthy life expectancy and reduced health inequalities
- Increased proportion of residents with a healthy weight
- Improved mental wellbeing and reduced prevalence of mental ill health



Progress in 2022/23

Life expectancy and reduced health inequalities

- In 2022 we agreed a Public Health Strategy to protect and improve the health and quality of life of everyone in Leicestershire. The Strategy includes building on the strengths of people in communities, promoting healthy living and healthy places, providing public health services that meet community needs, and working in partnership to transform services.
- In May 2023 we launched a new Healthy Workplaces Leicestershire programme to help businesses and organisations become healthier places to work. Offering a workforce health needs assessment, health MOT for staff, training, and support, with a fully bespoke and tailored programme for each workforce. We are also embedding a Health in All Policies approach across the whole Council.
- In May 2023 a free 12-week weight management course to help men get back in shape and lose weight was launched. The course, run in partnership with Active Together, is delivered in local group sessions.
- We have continued to promote the importance of practical steps to protect against the spread of Covid-19 including testing, vaccinations, face coverings in crowded indoor spaces and staying at home when ill.
- We examined health inequalities in Leicestershire, identified the populations and areas most at risk of the poorest outcomes and set out actions for improvement.
- We work to improve the health and wellbeing of eligible adults aged 40-74 years through earlier awareness, assessment and management of the major factors and conditions driving premature death, disability and health inequalities through our local NHS Health Checks. In 2022/23 17,985 NHS Health Checks were completed.

- We continue to roll out of the Making Every Contact Count (Healthy Conversation Skills) Programme, linking in with district and health partners to embed the approach.
- We recommissioned a health trainers service for adult offenders on community orders or license, to support them to make a change towards a healthier lifestyle.
- We successfully recommissioned a substance misuse treatment service which combines community treatment, inpatient detoxification services and residential rehab services, more tailored to the needs of Leicestershire residents.
- We secured grant funding to enhance drug treatment and harm reduction services specifically focusing on harm reduction, young people and encouraging those previously reluctant to engage.
- We have introduced a Dual Diagnosis offer, in partnership with the health service, for service users who require substance support along with their mental health, in LLR.

Healthy Weight

- Our Good Food Leicestershire service continues to work to tackle issues from food poverty to diet-related ill-health and was named a bronze award winner in a competition run by Sustainable Food Places. The application highlighted the varied projects and partnerships which include championing local producers.
- More than 150 new and expecting mums benefitted from healthy food boxes with guidance such as recipe cards and online access to videos demonstrating how to create healthy meals. The project forms part of our work to support residents to access healthier foods, and to improve health and minimise diet-related risks for women who are overweight in pregnancy and post pregnancy.
- Help has been made available to men in Leicestershire looking to lose weight, exercise more and eat healthily. Our Men's Weight Management service set up new face-to-face sessions where men could get support from experts and each other as they improve their lifestyles. Held in partnership with Active Leicestershire, Men's Weight Management offered a free, 12-week programme, delivered locally in group sessions.
- We also implemented a new healthy weight strategy and action plan and are working with health partners to pilot a tier 3 weight management service.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

- To support World Suicide Prevention Day, LLR Suicide Audit and Prevention Group (SAPG) and Start a Conversation – Suicide is Preventable, hosted a series of events to raise awareness and offer education and support to professionals and the public.
- We urged men to talk to their friends about their feelings, as part of a campaign to reduce levels of male suicides - the 'Get the Ball Rolling' campaign. In addition, a range of support services are available to support people with their mental health including - The Tomorrow Project, Harmless, Mensoar and DistrACT.
- 200 attendees from across public sector organisations and the voluntary sector attended this years' 'Time to Talk' Suicide Prevention Conference. The event raised awareness, knowledge and understanding of suicide amongst professionals.
- In November 2022 we held an event to support people who had been diagnosed with younger onset dementia. Visitors were able to have their say about the challenges they face living with the condition and to speak to healthcare professionals who provide support within the community.
- We opened a new supported living scheme for people with mental health as a support need.
- We continue to be a trauma informed organisation and have an aim to understand, recognise and do our best to respond to the impact of trauma on mental health and physical well-being of our children and families.

- Children in care and previously looked after children's emotional wellbeing is tracked through a questionnaire. Where they are experiencing difficulties, they have access to support through the Therapeutic Fund, Adoption Support Fund and CAMHS.
- The Friendly Communities of Leicestershire initiative, developed with our Public Health Service, is also tackling loneliness and social isolation in communities.
- We have set up a multi-agency drug and alcohol deaths review panel to review deaths directly caused by substance misuse and identify lessons learned to prevent future deaths.
- In collaboration with a number of local agencies and social prescribers our Learning for Wellbeing and Mental Health programmes attracted 1587 enrolments helping adults to become more resilient and recover from poor mental health. 97% of learners stated that participation in learning had improved their wellbeing.

7.4 Carers and people with care needs are supported to live active, independent and fulfilling lives

It is important that people find it easy to access information about social care services and that service users are satisfied with their care and support, live as independently as possible and report a good quality of life. The Council also aspires for unpaid carers in the community to feel more recognised, valued and supported to undertake their caring role.

Our aims by 2026

- More people find it easy to access information and advice about Adult Care services
- Improvements in the experiences of those who receive adult social care and support
- Carers feel more recognised, valued and supported to undertake their caring role.

Progress in 2022/23

Adult Social Care

- Since launch in April 2022, our Care Technology team has installed 3293 pieces of equipment with 1251 users of the service. 97% of customers say that the technology has made them feel more safe and secure in their own home and 95% that it has provided friends, family and carers with more reassurance.
- Our website content continues to evolve, for example with the use of video to explain how to complete an on-line financial assessment, with further visual content planned on how people can navigate adult social care more effectively.
- The age of young people in transition that we work with has reduced to 17, and we deliver positive work through the young adult disability team.
- Our Adaptations Team has processed 3,521 referrals for minor adaptations and 1,018 referrals for major adaptations. It also processed 1,841 referrals from external sources, including 105 via the Handyperson Application Form, 1636 for minor adaptations from the NHS and 100 from the Red Cross/VISTA.
- In 2022/23, 87.4% of people who received reablement in Leicestershire subsequently had no ongoing services, placing us in the best 25% of councils. Similarly, 89% of people were living at home 91 days post discharge from reablement again in the top 25%.
- In 2022/3 over 40 working-age adults moved out of residential settings into more independent settings and 100 fewer older adults (804) were permanently placed in residential homes per year.

- In February 2023 significant additional funding was allocated to support vulnerable people – to pay for more home and residential care and support people with physical disabilities, learning disabilities and mental health needs.
- Staff from the council’s Crisis Response Service and HART reablement service worked every day over the Christmas and New Year period. When the local NHS Trust declared a critical incident teams continued to support discharges. Our brokerage team provided additional support over the festive period, ensuring that people could be safely discharged from hospital by finding care services.
- The Council supported 600 tenants in over 130 properties within supported living across Leicestershire.
- In November 2022 our Inspired to Care Team were a finalist for the Outstanding Contribution to Social Care Award in the East Midlands. The project helps social care providers recruit committed frontline care professionals.
- We agreed a new 2-year Better Care Fund Plan (worth £75.7m in 2023/24) jointly with the ICB to deliver more integrated health and social care. Recent delivery includes the Home First model, the approach to social prescribing, and major improvements to hospital discharge and reablement. Also supporting the development of new urgent care services in the community and at home and integrated neighbourhood teams and care coordination.
- The BCF plan includes additional investment in Intermediate Care priorities including an Intake model. The model will revolutionise the way we support patients discharged home and give a basis for provision of Reablement, Recovery and Rehabilitation and inform a similar development for step-up community care.

Carers

- In January 2023 our Joint LLR Carers Strategy was refreshed. It commits to a shared vision and priorities for recognising, valuing, and supporting carers across the area. New commitments include introduction of a Young Carer’s passport across the region.
- We recommissioned the Carers Support Resource contract and successfully awarded the contract to Voluntary Action South Leicestershire (VASL) to support all carers in the County with information, advice and support.
- The Council also enabled delivery of grants for 154 unpaid carers worth £56k, who supported someone recently discharged from hospital.
- Nearly 6,000 carers were given a carers passport which offers them discounts to local shops, attractions and amenities.
- Lutterworth Library continued to offer ‘Reading Friends’ a monthly book-group specifically aimed at carers. This provides an opportunity to socialise and meet with others whilst providing some much-needed respite.



