

matters

Summer 2026

leicestershire.gov.uk

£2.5m roads boost after record wet winter

More potholes are being fixed, faster, thanks to extra investment.

A new fast response grass cutting team is also now in place, keeping Leicestershire roads clear and safe, following the cash boost.

The crew quickly responds to immediate safety risks caused by overhanging vegetation, improving visibility and keeping road signs clear.

Councillor Andrew Hamilton-Gray, cabinet member for highways and transport, said: "After the wet winter, we're stepping up and doing everything we can to repair roads as fast as possible.

"The extra inspectors we've recruited are out and about, helping us assess pothole reports more quickly. And over the summer, we'll strengthen and protect roads through our £3m summer resurfacing programme.

"We know how much residents value our roads. And that's why we're making every

pound work harder and unlocking scarce resource to direct into what matters to you."

The £2.5m investment will help tackle damage caused by the wettest winter on record and has been redirected from an underspend into priority areas.

Cash for the grass cutting team comes from our Service Improvement Fund which also supports improvements to bus services, grit bins, footpaths and weed spraying.

You might see our highways teams repairing road surfaces this summer – this helps prevent more difficult expensive repairs later on.

'Surface dressing' minimises potholes, keeps roads waterproof, improves road safety and reduces fuel consumption for motorists.

What we do every year:

4,100,000 sq m
of grass mowed – equivalent
to 578 football pitches

10,000
potholes fixed

11,500

tonnes of stone used to
resurface roads - equivalent of
950 double-decker buses.

£63m

spent maintaining
2,700 miles of road

**"We know how
much residents
value our
roads."**

**Councillor Andrew
Hamilton-Gray, cabinet
member for highways
and transport**





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

It costs around 13p to print and deliver each copy. To help save money on the distribution, we work closely with Royal Mail. We're sorry if you receive Leicestershire Matters just over the border in a neighbouring county - but by using standard postal routes we actually save £750 per issue.

Contact us:

leicestershire.gov.uk

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

Email

leics-matters@leics.gov.uk

X@LeicsCountyHall

Facebook LeicsCountyHall

Instagram LeicsCountyHall

TikTok @LeicsCountyCouncil

General enquiries

Mon - Thur: 8.30am - 5pm

Fri: 8.30am - 4.30pm

Telephone: 0116 232 3232

Post

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

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Council leader, Dan Harrison, answers the big questions



Q: What is happening with local government reorganisation?

A: We're waiting for a decision from Government which is expected over the summer.

Our bid was submitted last winter, alongside two different options. We believe our proposal is the best option to build a better Leicestershire and Rutland. It's simple, strategic and sensible, makes it easier for you to access services and saves £40m a year to reinvest in key priorities.

Next steps are very much in the Government's hands but as soon as we know more, we'll let you know what it means for you.

Q: How are you delivering value for money?

A: I promised we'd make every pound work harder – and that's exactly what we're doing.

We've delivered a budget for the people of Leicestershire. We set a 2.99 per cent Council Tax rise – there hasn't been a lower increase for over a decade.

We're investing £127m in supporting vulnerable people and re-directing extra cash into what matters most to you – fixing roads, paying off debt and delivering multi-million-pound savings.

We've taken a microscope to our spending and pinpointed opportunities to save between £30m and £60m a year. And it's not just savings. Smarter spending will also lead to improved services and lives. I'm proud of our Better Leicestershire Programme which will leave a real legacy for Leicestershire.

Q: You've changed the cabinet line up – why?

A: We're a year in and Leicestershire faces some of the biggest challenges it has seen in decades, including local government reorganisation, ongoing financial pressures and the need to respond to major issues such as flooding, transport and care demand.

That's why the strongest cabinet is needed – to provide the capacity, focus and leadership needed to grip these issues and get the best outcomes for residents at this pivotal time.

I'm confident we have a top team which will help us build on progress, meet the challenges ahead and secure a strong future for Leicestershire.

Get the latest council news straight to your inbox

Sign up at: leicestershire.gov.uk/signup



GET SUMMER READY



Deputy Leader Kevin Crook with people enjoying the library

Coalville library is a real page-turner

Money from housing developers has been used to refurbish Coalville Library.

The newly-renovated space has proved a big hit with children and families who've been taking advantage of the new facilities and providing positive feedback.

Councillor Kevin Crook, cabinet member for libraries, said: "This great work means the library is even better equipped to serve people for many years to come."

Get ready for summer reading challenge



The popular summer reading challenge begins on 4 July.

This year's theme is "Read to the Beat" and celebrates the joy of music.

Throughout the summer, children taking part can borrow library books or eBooks, collect stickers and rewards, and work towards completing six reading goals.

Councillor Kevin Crook said: "Challenges like this are a fantastic way to inspire children to enjoy reading throughout the holidays and I'm pleased our libraries will be hosting events."

The challenge is completely free, and libraries across the county will have events and activities over the holidays.

Sign up at **leicestershire.gov.uk/summer-reading-challenge**



THE
READING
AGENCY

UNIVERSAL
UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP
UNITED KINGDOM



Summer savings by bus

This summer, look out for offers that will take you places, with discounted bus travel all over the county.

Get up to date Travel Information by bus, bike, walking and everything in between, visit **choosehowyoumove.co.uk**



Better Leicestershire

SMARTER SPENDING IMPROVING LIVES

Our Better Leicestershire Programme is on track to drive down costs and improve services for you.

Launched last winter, the root-and-branch review has now identified potential extra savings of up to £60m.

Let's take a closer look at the pioneering project.

What is the Better Leicestershire Programme?

It's a comprehensive review of our £1.3Bn-a-year budget to spot opportunities to work smarter and improve services. Its goal is to help close an £85m budget gap.

What savings have been identified?

Experts, Newton, who've led the review, say between £32m and £60m could be saved - on top of £44m of savings already identified in our four-year budget plan.

They've pinpointed a wide range of opportunities, including: expanding our home care team (HART) to boost independence, supporting the care market, intervening to prevent people

reaching crisis point and creating more residential care places.

How will it improve services and lives?

It might sound incongruous but smarter spending can change lives.

The proposals above would lead to better support when someone comes home from hospital. Stepping up support so children can stay with their families would prevent problems growing and reduce the chance of them needing to go into care.

Maximising AI and tech will mean more time for staff on front line support and getting better value from contracts unlocks more money to redirect into services which matter most to you.

What happens next?

We will roll out the changes over the next few years and update you on progress.

Council leader, Dan Harrison, said:

"Simply put, this is about making every pound of taxpayers' money work harder.



Dan Harrison

"And not only that. We care and by working smarter, we can do even

more to improve our residents' lives and protect the services they value.

"This is a pioneering project and no stone has been left unturned. This work opens up opportunities we can explore to reduce costs further over the next few years.

"It's a starting point and opens the door to further opportunities.

"Residents expect us to grip our budget and reduce costs and that's exactly what we're doing."

Councillor Harrison Fowler, cabinet member for resources,

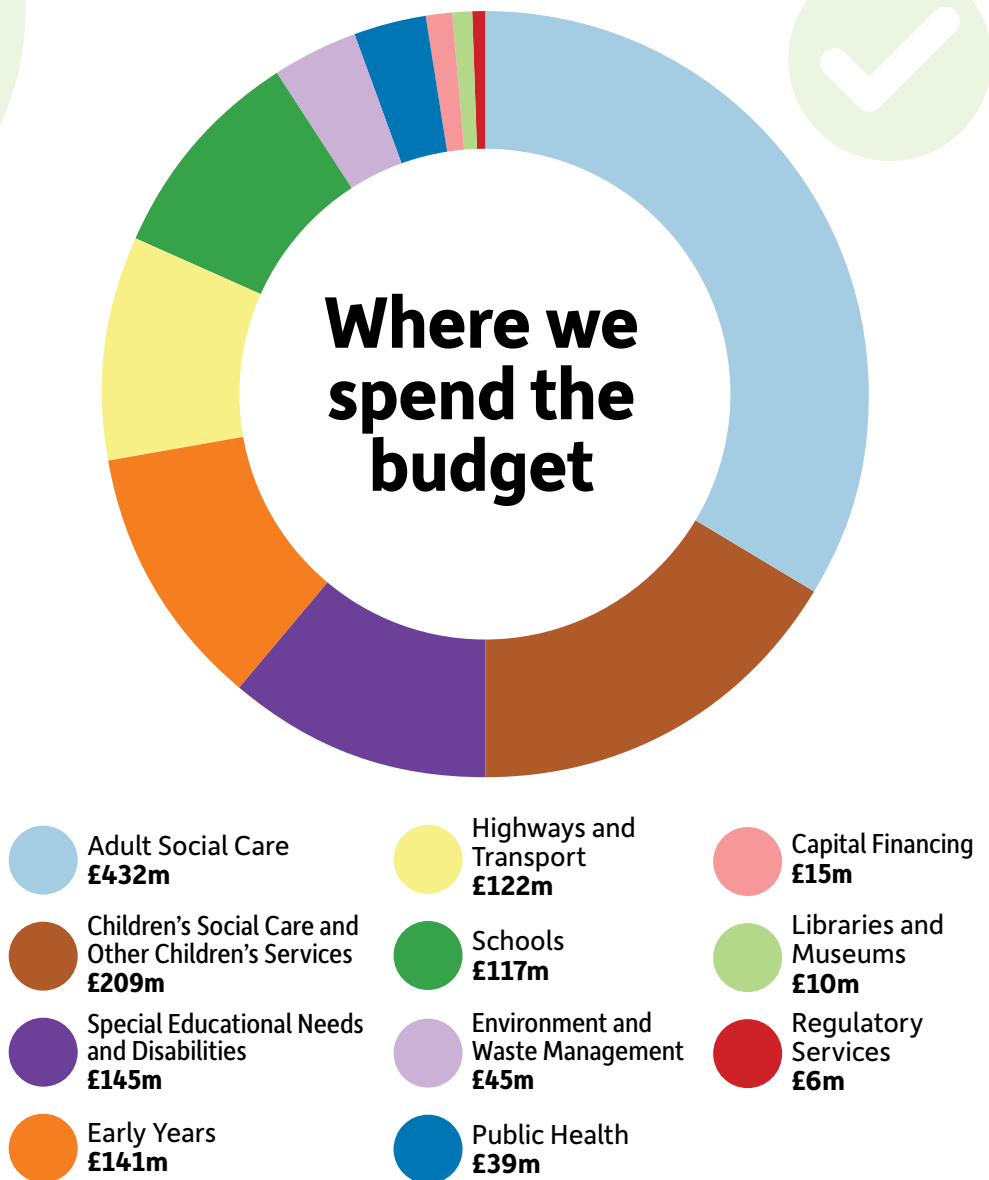


Harrison Fowler

said: "This review is a gamechanger. It takes a huge chunk out of the budget gap and offers the opportunity to reset how the council works.

"Clearly, investment would be needed to create change on this scale but it goes with the territory and will bring big, long-term gains for our taxpayers.

"Setting up a rolling programme, with plenty of ideas in the pipeline, will leave a legacy for Leicestershire."



We're investing a £7m underspend into what matters to you:

£2.5m

in repairing roads

£2.5m

to reduce debt - currently at its lowest ever level

£2m

to deliver savings

Our gross budget is **£1.3Bn** a year

We spend **£25m** every week



Better Leicestershire: Putting independence at the 'hart'

Our Homecare Assessment and Reablement Teams (HART) play an important role helping people regain independence after an illness or injury through short, intensive home-based reablement



care. Expanding HART team is part of our plan. Fiona from the team tells us how they change lives.

Q: How does the HART service work?

FIONA: "We give a helping hand at home while people get back on their feet, as well as important rehabilitation of lost skills and confidence - everything from meals and personal care to a good chat is one step closer to greater independence."

Q: What do you enjoy most about your job?

FIONA: "People do get tired of hearing about how much I love my job - but it's true! Setting goals like showering independently or making a cup of tea and seeing people achieve them over time with my support is so rewarding."

Building a better Leicestershire for business

Leicestershire is very much open for business – and we're working hand-in-hand to help drive growth.



Council leader, Dan Harrison, with Paul Martin from Firethorn

New £125m logistics hub takes shape

We were delighted to take part in a turf-cutting ceremony at a brand new 80-acre logistics site in Bardon.

UK real estate investor and developer, Firethorn, plan to deliver 947,650 sq ft of space at the Mountpark site, creating jobs and attracting big distribution and manufacturing businesses to set up shop.

Contractor BlueEarth Construction has started work on the site which offers direct access to the strategic national highway network at Junction 22 of the M1.

Council leader, Dan

Harrison, said "We're working hard to build the Leicestershire of the future, with prosperity, jobs and economic growth at the heart.

"This £125m investment is significant, offering opportunities for big companies to set up shop, as well as a 37-acre country park and over 2km of walking routes.

"Bardon is a top UK location for logistics. We really are leading the way in Leicestershire and we're shouting from the rooftops that we're open for business."



(l-r) Jamie Missenden, Galliford Try, Cabinet Member, Adam Tilbury, Janna Walker, County Council and Government Minister Simon Lightwood.

New road gets a slice of history

The brand new North East Melton Mowbray Distributor Road is now open to traffic.

Our biggest-ever road project is 4.5 miles long and cost £131m.

A public poll helped name the road, with 65 per cent choosing Pork Pie Way.

It will help to cut congestion in the town centre, improve journey reliability and support future

housing and economic growth. The scheme also includes new walking and cycling routes.

Dan Harrison said: "This is a once-in-a-generation moment for our county. This scheme stands on decades of work and has been delivered through some of the most challenging years any major project could face."



A new chapter in banking

A new banking hub serving customers of six major high street banks has opened its doors at Ashby Library.

The handy new service helps people to pay in cash and cheques, withdraw cash, top up gas and electricity and pay utility bills.

Operated by the Post Office, the hub is based in Ashby Library until its permanent home is finalised.

Find out more by visiting: cashaccess.co.uk/hubs/ashby-de-la-zouch-leicestershire

or scan the QR code.



Bridge rebuilt after engineering feat

A £19.5m scheme replacing a 90-year-old bridge with a modern, future-proof crossing is set to open in July.

Engineers have used innovative methods to replace the outdated Zouch Bridge, including building the new bridge alongside the old one, and installing huge steel beams without cranes.

During construction, complex work in and around the river has been carefully managed to protect while also ensuring the bridge is safe and resilient for decades to come.

CONNECT TO WORK

Funded by UK Government

Connecting staff with businesses

Are you a local employer looking for staff? We're here to help you recruit and retain committed, motivated people through Connect to Work.

The project supports disabled people, people with health conditions and those who have found it difficult to move into or stay in work. Carers and former armed forces personnel are also eligible.

Our teams give businesses free one-to-one support and on the job help - and we stay involved when someone starts work to help them in their job.

Visit leicestershire.gov.uk/connect-to-work or scan the QR code to find out more and register your business's interest.



Broadband boost

The first premises have been connected as part of a major project bringing faster, more reliable internet access to residents and business owners.

Melton and Charnwood are the first areas to benefit from the programme, which is funded by the government in partnership with CityFibre, and will support thousands of homes and businesses across Leicestershire.

Fast and reliable connection is becoming ever more important in homes, and especially to help businesses operate. Project Gigabit has now started to help with more areas to come in the coming months.



John Bloxham

Councillor Dr John Bloxham, cabinet member for growth, said: "Businesses and homes being connected is something we can't take for granted, especially in rural areas.

We're pleased to see this project is starting to make a difference with more businesses to come."

Is your home or business eligible? Visit gov.uk/guidance/check-your-gigabit-broadband-availability to find out.

Tell us your experience of mobile connection in the county at leicestershire.gov.uk/digital-leicestershire or scan the QR code.



Delivering for Leicestershire

Every day, we deliver around 400 different services.

You might not realise but our services impact your daily life – and the lives of our 700,000-plus population.

From streetlighting, libraries, boosting health and tackling rogue traders to driving our economy, increasing recycling, enabling older people to stay independent and keeping children safe, we work hard round the clock.

And with a yearly gross budget of £1.3bn and 6,000 staff, that's just a small snapshot.

Read our graphics to get an insight into how we're delivering for you over a year:

800

▶ children and young people in our care

Looked after
530 hectares
of Country
Park Land

▶ **40,000sqm**
of grass verges cut ▲

1,100

new carer
▲
passports issued

181,000

books borrowed
during summer
reading challenge

Find out more. Follow us on  and  LeicsCountyHall



40,000

new contacts about
adult social care ▲

4,000 ▲

complaints investigated
by Trading Standards

70,000

journeys on on-demand ▲
3,500 bus stops maintained

1,300

homes helped to
cut energy bills ►

152,000

visitors to museums
and heritage sites ►

Tree planting
total upped to

524,000

16,500

tonnes of rock salt
ready to grit roads

94% offered their number
one primary school place
and **90%** of secondary pupils

2,700

miles of roads
looked after ►



Former carer gives top tips

Dementia affects thousands of people across the county and carer champion, Ken, is helping others support people with the condition.

The county council has a Dementia Support Service, provided by Age UK Leicestershire and Rutland, which offers free information, support and guidance for people with memory issues and/or a diagnosis of dementia, and their carers.

Ken, 88, is an inspirational former carer from Loughborough who's working hard to raise awareness of dementia support. He cared for his wife Dorothy who was diagnosed with vascular dementia for many years, before she sadly passed away in 2022.

Since losing his wife, Ken has dedicated time to educate other carers in as many ways as possible, including his 'Ken's Top Tips' leaflet - full of practical advice on caring for a loved one living with dementia.

Ken said: "When Dorothy passed away, of course I grieved. But after two weeks I woke up, looked up to the ceiling and said 'thank you Dot', the way she thanked me for looking after her every day until her passing.

"Today I walk to her tree I chose - to touch a branch and say 'thank you Dot for looking after me. This helps to put a smile on my face as my Dorothy would approve.

"The Ken's Tips leaflet helps those to avoid the stress of being a carer for their loved ones."

Councillor Michael Squires, cabinet member for adult social care, said: "Ken is one of many who care for loved ones living with dementia every day and what he's doing is selfless and inspirational.

"It can be a daunting time when a dementia diagnosis is made but there is so much support available."

Our Dementia Support Service, provided by Age UK Leicestershire and Rutland, offers free information, support and guidance for people with memory issues and/or a diagnosis of dementia, and their carers.

Find out more about the service by visiting leicestershire.gov.uk/dementia, call 0116 223 7363 or email dementia.support@ageukleics.org.uk.

Ken's leaflet is available leicestershire.gov.uk/kens-tips, or scan the QR code.

What support is available from the Dementia Support Service?

- Personalised one-to-one support
- Memory cafes and social groups
- Post diagnosis and information sessions
- Information on accessing adult social care services



Councillor Michael Squires with Ken Swale

Some of Ken's top tips

- 1 When showing photo albums of friends and family, try not to say "do you remember" because often they can't, and this can cause distress.
- 2 Try not to correct, but go with the flow and prevent it from upsetting you.
- 3 When talking to them, look into their eyes to show you care. Hold their hand, smile and give them a hug.
- 4 Go out for walks, shopping, activities – try something new.
- 5 Don't say goodbye, say you are going to work if you are going out and leaving them with a carer/family member.
- 6 **MOST IMPORTANT** – Get support for you, take some time out, do something that makes you feel good and never be afraid to ask for support/advice and help.



Special event celebrates carers

County Hall was the location of an event to thank unpaid carers for everything they do.

Across the county, we support just over 2,000 unpaid carers, but there's an estimated 60,000 people who are classed as carers looking after a loved one.

As well as thanking carers for what they do every single day, they were also invited to feed back on plans in our new carers strategy.

More than 300 unpaid carers have been spoken to already alongside the engagement panel, with this event also a chance to get even more first-hand feedback on plans.



Michael Squires

Michael Squires said: "Unpaid carers are unsung heroes providing

invaluable care and support every day, often without recognition.

"If you look after someone who could not manage without your help, you may

be a carer and support is available – you're not alone. "We're also making sure we listen to carer's first-hand experiences to help us refresh our strategy."

Are you a carer?

Many people don't realise they're a carer. If you regularly look after a family member, partner, or friend who cannot manage everyday life without your support, then you are.

Here in Leicestershire, this care is unpaid even if you happen to receive Carer's Allowance.

If you want help and support as a carer, talk to us. Our carers assessment will help us to identify the support you need.

Visit leicestershire.gov.uk/looking-after-someone or scan the QR code. You can also call 0116 305 0004.



Take advantage of our carers' passport



Carers of people aged 18 and over can get themselves a pass to offers at locations across the county.

The pass is available for your wallet, as a lanyard or you can download it onto your phone.

You can use it for a free hot drink or a discount at participating venues. It's part of the commitment to

value and recognise the work carers do every day.

Voluntary Action South Leicestershire are operating the passport.

If you're eligible, call 01858 468543, email maureen@supportforcarers.org or visit supportforcarers.org/what-we-offer/carers-passport to register. You can also see a list of participating venues.



Council Leader Dan Harrison with engagement panel member Matthew



Make a difference on our engagement panel

Our Engagement Panel is made up of volunteers who have experience with the council's adult social care.

Every month they meet to help us make sure we're getting our services right. They feed back on different topics using their knowledge and experience.

They have also recently fed back on our planned new carer's strategy, which will look to ramp up our support for carers so they're recognised, valued and listened to.

Martyn Colebourne, chairman of the engagement panel, said: "Our panel has lived experience of both

carers and people who need carers and we know that anyone who has experience with caring has vital knowledge and proficiency they can pass on."

Dan Harrison said: "I've enjoyed meeting the panel and listening to their honest, forthright views. It's exactly what we need to make sure we can keep improving where we can."

If you're interested in joining and making your voice heard, visit leicestershirecommunities.org.uk/asc/engagement-advisory-panel or call 0116 305 4886.

WHAT'S ON

There's lots to see and do this summer in our country parks, heritage sites, museums and libraries.



BOSWORTH BATTLEFIELD HERITAGE CENTRE AND COUNTRY PARK

Sutton Cheney, Leicestershire, CV13 0AD
bosworthbattlefield.org.uk
Tel: 01455 290429

Open daily April to October 10am-5pm
and November to March 10am-4pm.

One of the UK's leading historical visitor attractions that explores the stories behind the Battle of Bosworth in 1485.

Quantum Theatre presents: Treasure Island

Sat 8 August, 3.30pm – 5.30pm,
from £12. Family tickets available
– see website for details.

Ahoy there me hearties! Long John Silver and his crew of salty old sea dogs are weighing anchor at Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre this summer with the pirate classic, Treasure Island.

**Don't forget our
Bosworth Medieval Festival
takes place on
Sat 22 & Sun 23 August,
see back page for details.**

Scan the code
to subscribe to
what's on emails.



Ashby Road, Coalville, LE67 3LN

Book online at
centurytheatre.co.uk
or call the box office
0333 666 3366
centurytheatre.co.uk
f/CenturyTheatre
@century_theatre



Short Circuit Comedy presents



**Coalville
Comedy Club,
Fri 4 September,
8pm, £15**

Comedy is back with
quick-witted Carl Jones, sold out Edinburgh
Festival Fringe regular Ingrid Dahle, Live at
the Apollo's Rob Woodward and the UK's
premier improv group, The Noise Next Door.

Hambledon Productions presents



**The Phantom
Raspberry Blower
of Old Town London,
Sat 12 September,
7.30pm, from £20**

Immortalised by The Two Ronnies, this Jack
the Ripper parody is raspberry-jam-packed
with Spike Milligan's and Ronnie Barker's
love of surreal absurdism, clever puns,
quick-fire jokes and famous wordplay.



Manor Road, Coalville, LE67 2FW
1620sHouse.org.uk
Tel: 01455 290429

**Pricing for outdoor theatre: from £12,
family tickets available - See website
for details.**

Multiple award-winning
Illyria return to the
beautiful gardens of 1620s
House this summer for
two fantastic classic tales...



Pinocchio

Fri 31 July, 6pm – 8pm

Celebrate this magical coming-of-age
tale in a thrilling musical outdoor show.

The Three Musketeers

Sun 16 August, 7pm – 9.30pm

Join young D'Artagnan who is
desperate to become a Musketeer of
the King's Guard. To prove himself he
sets off on an adventure to retrieve the
Queen's jewels. Will he succeed?

FREE Cut and Create: The History of Home Dressmaking



**Melton Carnegie Museum,
Thorpe End, LE13 1RB
Until 3 October 2026**

Tue to Sat, 10am-4.30pm.

Featuring items of clothing, sewing
equipment and dress patterns, this
family-friendly exhibition uses objects to
tell the story of the home dressmaker and
the equipment used to create the latest
fashions.

FREE Walking Through Time: 50 years of the Leicestershire Fieldworkers

**Harborough Museum, Adam and Eve
Street, Market Harborough, LE16 7LT
Runs until Sat 31 October**

Tue to Fri, 10am-6pm, Sat 10am-4pm.

This special exhibition delves into the
discoveries and people that helped put
the region at the forefront of community
archaeology in Britain from the past
50 years. With displays celebrating the
Fieldworker's anniversary across various
sites, it's one not to miss.



Beaumanor Hall

Woodhouse, Leicestershire, LE12 8TX
beaumanorhall.co.uk Tel: 01509 890119
X @beaumanorhall



Summer Fair

Sat 8 & Sun 9 August

10am – 4pm. £4 on the day
(free for children aged 12 and under). Free parking.

Set within the beautiful house and gardens of Beaumanor Hall, this fair offers the opportunity to explore a range of shopping stalls.

As well as discovering local talented businesses, there's lots of family-friendly activities and entertainment too. Search 'Beaumanor' on Eventbrite for the tickets, or visit beaumanorhall.co.uk for more details.



Scan to
get tickets

KIDS'
EVENTS

HOLIDAY Outdoor Activities

New activities for 2026! Marauding Mayhem, Camp Craft, Operation Rescue and Woodland Fun have all been added to this year's exciting programme of outdoor activities at Beaumanor Hall.

Our popular high ropes, zip wire and archery days remain available alongside our new activity days where young people can plunge into swashbuckling escapades and more. From £45 per child, per day. Childcare vouchers also accepted. Search 'Beaumanor' on Eventbrite for the full schedule and to book, or call 01509 890119. beaumanorhall.co.uk/outdoor-activities

Wedding Fayre

13 September

Beaumanor Hall



Photo courtesy of Ian Bursill

Other news

Sparks fly in electric exhibition



Deputy Leader Kevin Crook with
BRUSH CEO Nicolas Pitrat

Visitors can now explore the fascinating interactive exhibition, 'Keeping the Lights On: 150 Years of BRUSH' at Charnwood Museum.

Showing how global business BRUSH have inspired growth in the solutions-engineering world, this exhibition includes timelines, artefacts and information about the BRUSH transformers giving people the chance to uncover the history of BRUSH, dating back to its namesake, Charles Francis Brush, right up to the present day.

Councillor Kevin Crook, cabinet member for culture and heritage, said: "The history detailed in this exhibition just shows how powerful and meaningful heritage and legacy can be.

"It's a great celebration for BRUSH and it really highlights how Leicestershire is thriving, bolstering business and supporting economic growth. I'd encourage everyone to visit the museum and see this local piece of history brought to life."

See it for yourself -

Granby Street, Loughborough, LE11 3DU
charnwoodmuseum.co.uk Tel: 01509 233754
Weds - Sat, 10am - 4pm, Sun 1pm - 4pm.
Free entry.

Sculpture of fossil named after Sir David Attenborough

Visitors to Beacon Hill Country Park can learn about the fossil Auroralumina attenboroughii thanks to a new wood-carved sculpture and interpretation area. They were installed as part of Sir David Attenborough's 100th Birthday celebrations and made possible thanks to support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Councillor Adam Tilbury, cabinet member for country parks "Sir David Attenborough is a local legendary figure whose passion for wildlife and conservation continues to pass on from generation to generation. And with Beacon Hill being home to hundreds of wildlife habitats and fragile heathland, it feels like the perfect home to welcome the sculpture of a local fossil named after him."



Councillor Adam Tilbury
with the sculpture

World Cup wonders from our collections

With the FIFA World Cup well underway, we've been looking back on some of the vintage football memorabilia we hold in our collections in the Records Office and Museums Collections.

From a 1958 Thomas Cook brochure for organised trips to Sweden in our Records Office archive to a Ladybird Book 'World Cup 82' at Charnwood Museum, there's lots to be nostalgic about.

Visit leicestershirecollections.org.uk or www.recordoffice.org.uk to find out about appointments to view our collections.



Simple steps to boost health

Good mental health is equally as important as physical health.

People often underestimate the impact of social connections, learning new skills or appreciating the smaller things in life. But studies show that just simple steps can make a big difference.

At some point, most of us will experience difficult situations such as the loss of a loved one, illness, job insecurity, exam stresses, anxiety, loneliness or relationship breakdown. These experiences can affect everyone from children and young people, right the way through to older people.

To help support you, we're promoting five ways to wellbeing. Each 'theme' can be incorporated into daily lives to help build resilience and provide coping strategies.

Simple things like going for a walk, joining a local community group, learning something new or helping a neighbour, can all go towards improving our overall wellbeing. Find out more by visiting

startaconversation.co.uk/5-ways-to-well-being or scan the QR code.



Connect

Building and maintaining strong social connections



Be Active

Take a brisk walk, cycle, swim, play a team sport, do yoga or even dance in the kitchen



Take Notice

Life is busy, often juggling many things. Take a moment to pause, be present and notice the world around you



Keep Learning

New skills, reading or hobbies and interests are great ways to boost mental health



Give

Whether volunteering or simply offering a helping hand to someone in need, supporting others can give a sense of purpose

Find out what's on in our Country Parks **leicscountryparks.org.uk**

More success for stop smoking team

Our QuitReady team has helped nearly 1,300 people stop smoking over the last year.

Bethany is one of those people, who received help from a specialist advisor in the team to help her achieve her goal.

Q: What made you decide to quit smoking?

A: It was right after my first midwife appointment. The carbon monoxide test came back high and it really made me think about what I was putting into my body, especially while pregnant.

Q: How was your experience with QuitReady?

A: The support from my Pregnancy Stop Smoking Specialist Barbora was amazing. She stayed in regular contact with me and even visited me at home, which made a big difference.

Q: Have you noticed any improvements in your health?

A: Absolutely - even my dentist said my gums no longer bleed like they used to and I know it's better for my baby, too.

Q: What would you say to someone else thinking about quitting?

A: I would definitely recommend trying to quit, especially with the QuitReady programme on your side. It's helped me more than I ever expected.



Paul Harrison

Councillor Paul Harrison, cabinet member for public health, said: "Success stories like Bethany show that you can quit, however hard it seems.



Barbora from Quitready with Bethany and baby Willow

Our smoking rates are one of the lowest in the East Midlands and our team are here to help. Quitting with support means you're three times more likely to succeed."

Find out more about QuitReady by

visitingquitready.co.uk
or scan the QR code. You can also call 0345 646 66 66 or text 'ready' to 66777.



QuitReady
Leicestershire & Rutland

Other news

New chairman milestone



Councillor Linda Danks has been appointed the 50th Chairman of Leicestershire County Council.

She will represent the county council at a host of

events across the county, and has already been part of several occasions in her role.

Councillor Danks said: "I am absolutely honoured to be the 50th Chairman at Leicestershire County Council, I am really looking forward to meeting the wonderful, talented and inspiring people of Leicestershire."

Want to invite the chairman to your event? Visit **leicestershire.gov.uk/chairman** or scan the QR code.



Get 'risk ready' this summer

Residents, community groups, local councils and faith groups can access support to act faster and recover quicker in an emergency.

The programme has been launched by the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) in partnership with Communities Prepared and Groundwork Five Counties, to help people and communities prepare for risks like flooding and utility outages.

A host of support is available on the LRF's website.

Find out more by visiting **llresilienceforum.org.uk/risk-ready-communities** or scan the QR code.



Multi-million investment for SEND school plans

We're looking to build a brand-new school to manage demand for special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) support in the south of the county.

Around 250 places for children aged 4-18 are aiming to be created at a specialist school in Husbands Bosworth.

An investment of £30m would be made to build the school, which will bring much-needed specialist school places to the area.



Charles Pugsley

Councillor Charles Pugsley, cabinet member for children and families, said: "We're in great need of specialist school places for Leicestershire children and many will know the strain we're currently under."

"This is why we want to build a new, purpose-built school in the south of the county, where we've identified the most need. Our ambitions are clear on providing these places."

National leads have also recognised major progress in our support for children and young people with SEND.

By expanding specialist teams completing support plans, stepping up joint working and making better use of digital technology, we've cut the average time taken to complete an education, health and care plan from 58 weeks to 18 weeks. This is below the 20-week statutory timeframe.



Hayley and Mick

Why fostering makes a difference

There are around 800 children in our care with diverse needs, talents, and backgrounds.

Compassionate, friendly foster carers like Hayley and Mick welcome children into their homes, offering support. They have been fostering for 25 years and currently foster teenagers.

What's important to know when you foster?

Mick: "You never know what a child's background is, but once they come into your home, you can change it slowly."

Hayley: "It's not going to change overnight; it can sometimes take ages. Routine and encouragement really helped our teens turn it around."

How do you help them to feel at home in a new surrounding?

Hayley: "We treat them with age-appropriate respect, and it just works. I think because they feel part of the family - their ideas, their views, anything they've got to worry about, it's all taken into consideration."

What kind of support do you get?

Mick: "There's immediate help if you want it."

Hayley: "You've got other foster carers who can help with advice, your supervising social worker, the child's social worker, and numbers you can contact at any time of the day or night."

"You'll never be left on your own, there is always someone at the end of the phone at the very least."

Charles Pugsley said: "We know the best place for our children in care are loving homes with supportive surroundings. Hayley and Mick have spent 25 years transforming the lives of young people and if you feel you could do the same get in touch and we'll support you through the process."

Want to know more?

Visit the Fostering Leicestershire website at leicestershire.gov.uk/fostering or scan the QR code. You can also email fostering@leics.gov.uk, or call 0116 305 0505.



Scrutiny spotlights residents' priorities

Roads, flooding, local government reorganisation, special educational needs and disability support (SEND) and health appointments were among the key issues put under the spotlight by our scrutiny committees last year.

Over 12 months, our councillors considered 176 reports across 40 public meetings, covering subjects from potholes, drainage and school places to adult social care, children in care, resilience and access to GP and NHS services.

The committees don't make final decisions but instead, their role is to test proposals before and after decisions are made, making sure councillors hear evidence, ask difficult questions and consider the impact on local people.

Public interest also grew, with webcast views rising to over 8,500 and 27 questions submitted by residents. In total, scrutiny sent 36 comments to our Cabinet and made 47 recommendations or requests for further information and assurance.

Councillor Deborah Taylor, chair of the Scrutiny Commission, said: "Good scrutiny is about asking the right questions on behalf of residents and making sure important decisions are open, transparent and well-informed.

"It's where non-Cabinet councillors can question plans and challenge decisions and I'd like to thank all Members for their work."

In focus – key topics covered include:

Local government reorganisation – councillors commented on the council's draft proposal and provided feedback on our response to the Government's consultation.

SEND – councillors raised concerns about the impact of national reforms on rising demand for support and welcomed ongoing expansion of specialist provision.

Roads – councillors reviewed initiatives designed to reduce road casualties, considered planned investment and examined processes for pedestrian crossing assessments.

Health – councillors took an in-depth look into mental health services and GP-patient ratios and raised strong concerns about the length of the waiting lists for elective care, diagnostics and cancer treatment.

Find out more at leicestershire.gov.uk/scrutiny or scan the QR code.



Four of our councillors are 'commissioners' and decide on priority issues for scrutiny:



Deborah Taylor CC
Chair of the Scrutiny Commission



Michael Mullaney CC
Vice Chairman of the Scrutiny Commission



Andrew Innes CC
Scrutiny Commissioner

Dr Dee North CC
Scrutiny Commissioner

Have
your
say

Taking in your views

A big thank you to everyone who took the time to send feedback about this magazine.

Nearly three-quarters of you found Leicestershire Matters useful. You also told us what you like and what you want to see more of.

We've listened to your views and will make sure we focus on:

- Information about our highways and how we're helping the county's bus network
- Continued top tips on waste and recycling
- Honest, open and clear information about how we spend our money
- From trees to flooding, information on how we're helping the environment

Your feedback is always welcome. Email us at leics-matters@leics.gov.uk if you want to have your say.

Explore our wildlife this summer

You can enjoy the summer weather by getting out and about and tracking our local wildlife and habitats.

From hedgehogs and water voles, to swifts and frog spawn, a selection of 100 species have been chosen to show how our habitats are working.

The project is part of work on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland.

Anyone can take part in whichever part of the county you prefer, and it's the perfect activity for families to enjoy this summer.



Adam Tilbury

Councillor Adam Tilbury, cabinet member for the environment, said: "Your help means we'll be able to build a much clearer picture of what's working, where nature is bouncing back and where more support is needed."



What am I looking for?

There are a host of species, but here are some common ones to look out for:

- Hedgehogs
- House sparrow
- Hornet
- Bumblebee hoverfly
- Frog/toad spawn
- Grass snake

What do I need to do?

Take a picture of your find

- Visit naturespot.org or download the iRecord app
- Log the date and exactly where you found it
- Upload the picture
- Keep enjoying the outdoors

Find out more about the Local Nature Recovery Strategy by visiting leicestershire.gov.uk/lnrs.

Found something? Show us!

Send us a picture of your exploring adventures. Message us on Facebook or Instagram, or email leics-matters@leics.gov.uk and we'll use some on our social media.



Don't waste the summer

We've been waiting for the warm weather, later nights and spending more time outside. Here are our top tips for dealing with your waste this summer.

BBQs

Whether you've got charcoal, gas canisters or both, remember:

- Hot coals must be cool before putting them in your general waste black bin
- Gas canisters should not be put in your bin – take it back to the retailer you bought it from



Keep recycling

Most plastic food packaging can be recycled in your kerbside recycling bin, just give it a rinse first.

Drinks bottles, cans and cartons can be recycled too.

Aluminium foil can also be recycled – even if it's had food on it. Just remove as much food residue as you can and scrunch into a ball.

For more information on reducing your waste this summer visit lesswaste.org.uk or scan the QR code.

Stay summer scam safe

The summer is here and the two biggest essentials so we can enjoy the sun and stay protected are suncream and sunglasses.

Trading Standards have, in the past, seized suncream products which turn out to be fake. Some even have a lower protection level (known as SPF) than advertised.

Fakes and lower SPF will offer lower or even no protection against your skin. They might also have unknown ingredients that can cause skin irritations.

It's the same for sunglasses and every pair should have the CE or UKCA European safety standard mark.

Counterfeit and some cheaply imported sunglasses often do not offer the level of protection advertised.

Be on the lookout:

- Be wary of people selling "cheap" suncream or sunglasses from places like Facebook Marketplace or Vinted
- Buy from reputable sources

GROWING GOOD FOOD

Supporting farmers from field to fork

Our local farmers across Leicestershire produce all types of meat, eggs, crops and dairy every single day for local shops, supermarkets and the international market.

Our Trading Standards team supports them to understand the many legal requirements for arable farms and livestock keepers. This includes advice given to nearly 100 new keepers as well as visits to 40 farms throughout Leicestershire in 2025.

The UK has some of the highest standards of animal welfare. Our trained animal health officers respond to complaints and where necessary offer advice, guidance, support or action. Ensuring compliance within the industry helps ensure standards are maintained and enables a level playing field for other businesses helping them to thrive.

Where the food ends up matters too, and nearly 300 food businesses throughout Leicestershire were visited in 2025, which includes butchers, manufacturers, cafes and restaurants.



Carl Abbott

Councillor Carl Abbott, cabinet member for regulatory services, said: "Our team work hard with farmers and we understand the demand on their time, with long

hours, unpredictable weather and financial pressures.

"They help as much as they can and also help to point the people part of our vital agriculture industry to support groups and charities to support their wellbeing."

What do we check?

- Animal feed is manufactured, stored, transported and fed safely
- Livestock for their health and welfare
- Suitable environment for animals, especially those housed
- Medication is recorded correctly
- How they're identified/tagged for traceability
- Livestock transportation is suitable and clean

Did you know?

We also provide advice and guidance to all new food businesses, undertake an annual inspection programme and respond to complaints including those around the provision of allergen information relating to 14 specific allergens, the correct use of additives in food, materials which come into contact with food, food labelling and product descriptions.

Going for gold

A pioneering scheme shaping the future of food across Leicestershire is bidding for a gold award.

Good Food Leicestershire brings together 75 organisations to support local growing, encourage 'farm to fork' approaches and back community food projects.

By tackling food poverty, and championing sustainable local food systems, it aims to improve access to healthy food, making nutritious, affordable and locally produced food the norm.

We're setting our sights on the highest 'gold' accolade in the Sustainable Food Places Awards after securing silver in 2023.

Community Harvest Whetstone is an example of the scheme in action, providing great value veg and recipes.

Find out more at **resources.**

leicestershire.gov.uk/good-food-leicestershire or email **GoodFood@leics.gov.uk**



2025 food summit at Brooksby Melton College



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