

# IN TOUCH

COMMUNITY GARDEN – ONE YEAR ON:  
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# Message from the InTouch Editorial Panel

The editorial panel is a group of involved residents working in partnership with the Resident Involvement Team to keep you informed on issues that affect tenants and leaseholders of North West Leicestershire District Council. If you would like to make any comments or contribute to the magazine, please contact the Resident Involvement Team on 01530 454605 or [resident.involvement@nwleicestershire.gov.uk](mailto:resident.involvement@nwleicestershire.gov.uk)

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## Tenancy audits

Don't forget, as per April's In Touch, housing officers are visiting the district for tenancy audits. If you haven't had yours yet, you'll receive your appointment letter in the post.

## Stock condition surveys

We want to know the condition of all our properties as we plan where to invest in the future. As part of this we have asked Savills to complete stock condition surveys on all our homes over the next year.

Savills is still setting up the team to complete the work, but you might be contacted to organise access so they can survey the inside and outside of your home. Look out for more information in the next edition.



**HALLOWEEN**  
spooktacular fun  
AT NEWMARKET, MARLBOROUGH SQUARE, COALVILLE

 **Saturday 28 October**  
**10.30am - 2.30pm**

**Creative Kids Club**

- Free spooky fun, crafts and activities
- Drawing competition
- Best dressed costume competition
- Prizes to be won and more!

# Community garden – one year on

## It's harvest time at the new Community Garden in Greenhill.

A year since the garden was opened by the Friends of Greenhill Tenant Association and the greenhouse and beds are filled with fresh produce.

The space continues to grow, with an updated mural brightening the space.



## Fun at the summer play scheme

The Willesley Tenant Association (TA) ran a really-well attended play scheme through the summer holidays at the Red Cabin, Ridgeway Road, Willesley.

We were pleased to support with arranging for a sports coach to help run sport sessions and games.

The finale saw the TA hire the Ashby Leisure Centre lido for an end of summer pool party. It was great to see all children from the estate attending with their families.



## Free tree scheme is back

For the 14th year in a row, we're giving away free trees to residents and community groups.

From 9 to 27 October, you can apply for up to two free saplings from four different species:

- Hazel
- Rowan
- Elder
- Wild Cherry

Trees must be collected on Sunday 19 November.

Your planting and care instructions will be given at collection.

Find out more and apply online at [www.nwleics.gov.uk/freetrees](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/freetrees).

# Looking to move home?



# HomeSwapper

## Did you know you could swap your tenancy and move home with a mutual exchange?

Mutual exchanges can happen between any social tenants, with the landlord's permission. So whether you want to stay in the district, move further away or move into a housing association home, this could be the option for you.

For more information visit [www.nwleics.gov.uk/home\\_exchange](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/home_exchange)

Find out more about swapping your tenancy at our mutual exchange drop-in event.

Come and meet some of our team and learn more about your options. You can even use our self-serve computers to register with the national Homeswapper portal and take a look at the homes available.

**Tuesday 24 October**  
**Customer Centre, Belvoir Road,**  
**Coalville. 9.30am to 12.30pm.**



# Get involved – join a working group

Tenants, leaseholders, council staff and councillors work together to review, monitor and help to improve the Housing Management & Repairs services delivered to tenants and leaseholders.

We're always looking for new members to join our working groups, to help bring new ideas and fresh eyes to service reviews.

By joining a working group you might look at:

- Repairs
- Planned investment
- Rents
- Antisocial behaviour
- Allocations
- Tenancy and estate management

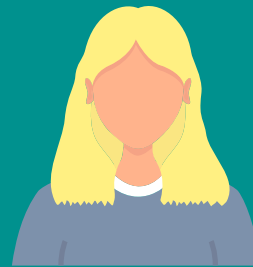
Getting involved does not always mean coming to formal meetings. There are opportunities to get involved virtually, as well as in the community with tenant associations. Training is always delivered, will look great on your CV and may also give a confidence and skills boost.



Derek from Hugglescote started getting involved in Working Groups after moving back from overseas. He said *"I really look forward to the meetings and find them a great way of keeping*

*intouch with what's going on. They are quite educational"*

Joining a group also has social benefits, it's a great way of finding new friends. Derek added: *"The Working groups also gave me an opportunity to meet new people."*



"Isobel, also from Hugglescote, focused on the improvement of old skills and the development of new ones. "By getting involved with clubs in and around my area, I have been able to carry on my

bookkeeping skills as a treasurer as well as getting outside as part of a gardening club. It's had a very positive impact on my mental health."

If you would like to join a working group or know more about our service and what we offer, please contact the Resident Involvement Team on 01530 454605 or email [resident.involvement@nwleicestershire.gov.uk](mailto:resident.involvement@nwleicestershire.gov.uk)

## You said, we did

Members of our working groups and scrutiny panels make a real difference. Thanks to feedback from some tenants we've recently organised a Meet the Housing Ombudsman event.

You may have received a text message from us about attending the one-hour session online.

There's still time to sign up a reserve a virtual seat to learn more about the Housing Ombudsman service.

Meet the Housing Ombudsman.  
Monday 9 October, 1pm to 2pm.

Find out more at  
[www.nwleics.gov.uk/housingombudsman](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/housingombudsman).

# Safeguarding – looking out for our tenants

**We take our legal, moral, and ethical duties to safeguard our tenants, residents and staff very seriously. We have trained staff across the organisation to look out for people at risk, whether this is from neglect, abuse, or financial struggles.**

Our volunteer team of highly trained Designated Safeguarding Officers works across the council to support colleagues referring cases and makes sure they're acted on.

In 2022/23 our staff made 140 referrals, with concerns about debt, living conditions, domestic abuse, drugs and suicide. This year, we have seen an increase in reports about mental health.

Not all safeguarding referrals are sent to social care teams, we make sure the best team to support those in need is contacted. From mental health teams and GPs, to the fire service and community support services.

As a landlord we're working to provide support when and where it's needed. We're increasing housing audits and working with other services to make sure support is given as soon as possible. We have also used the government's Help for Households scheme to provide help to 46 households.

If you are struggling, please reach out to someone.

Call us on 01530 454545.

Call the Samaritans on 116123

## What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding protects a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

An adult in need of safeguarding is:

- 18 + and
- Has care and support needs and
- Cannot protect themselves from abuse or neglect.

Abuse can be a single or repeated acts and can include neglect.

# Beware of cold callers



Council staff will always carry ID and will be happy to show it to you.

**We've had reports of cold callers visiting our tenants claiming to have been sent by us to complete energy efficiency surveys or work for installing solar panels.**

These people are not related to any council programme or work. If you receive a visit from someone that you're not expecting, please don't let them in. We will always write to you, so you know we, or contractors working for us, are coming and when to expect us.

If you're unsure if someone is working with or for us, ask for their ID and contact us so we can confirm for you.

# Recipe: Bread-in-a-bag

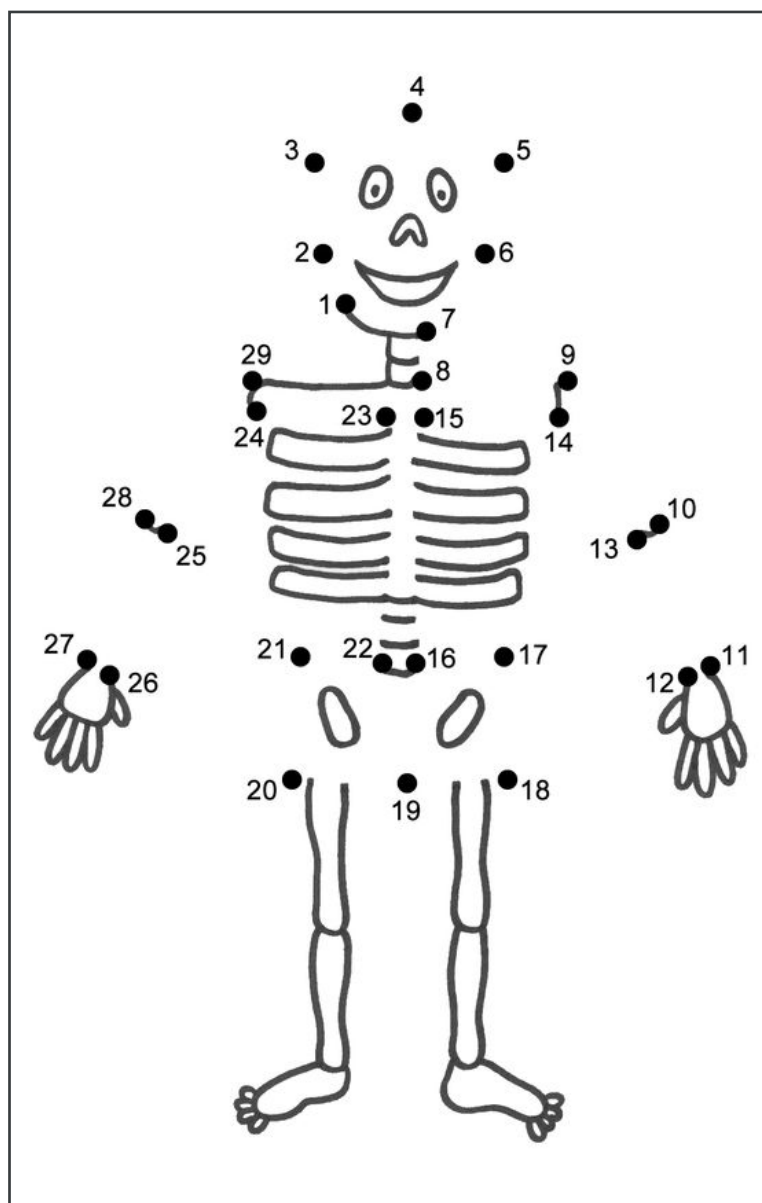
## You will need

- 110g whole meal bread flour, plus 1 tbsp extra
- 110g white bread flour
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 x 7g sachet of dried yeast
- 150ml lukewarm water
- 1 x large resealable food bag
- Kitchen foil or baking tray



## To make

- Use a baking tray or make your own - cut a piece of foil about 80cm long. Fold it in half and scrunch up the corners to make a baking tray.
- Put the empty bag on the scales. Measure both flours into the bag. Add salt and dried yeast. Seal the bag and give it a good shake.
- Open the bag and add the water. Squeeze out the air and re-seal the bag.
- Knead dough in the bag with the heels of your hands, turning occasionally. Knead for at least 10 minutes until it stops sticking to the bag.
- Dust the table with flour. Take dough out of the bag and knead twice again.
- Shape the dough with your hands.
- Put the shaped dough in the foil tray or baking tray.
- Sprinkle with flour. Lay the bag on top. Leave in a warm place to rise for 45-60 minutes.
- Half an hour before baking pre-heat the oven to 220C/200C Fan/Gas 7.
- Remove the bag. Put the bread in the oven. Bake for 20-25 minutes until risen and golden.
- The bread should sound hollow when trapped on the bottom. Place on a rack to cool before serving.





# Motorbikes, mopeds and scooters in the community

## Noticed an increase in the anti-social use of off road bikes?

There have been several motorbike thefts reported in the area and we want to help you keep them safe. Often, these are being stolen from driveways where they're visible.

To help keep them safe, here's what you can do:

- Remove the keys
- Fit an alarm to deter thieves
- Property mark the parts
- Keep your motorcycle, moped or scooter in a shed or garage
- Claim a free lock from us by emailing [communitysafety@nwleicetshere.gov.uk](mailto:communitysafety@nwleicetshere.gov.uk)

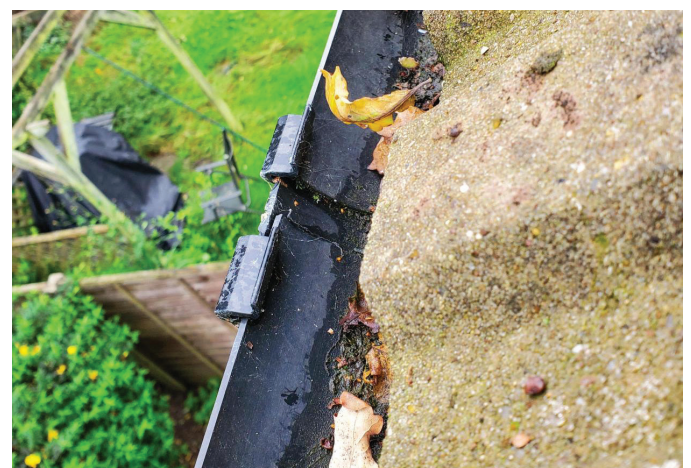
If you see off road bikes, mopeds and e-powered motorbikes being used illegally and causing a nuisance in your area, report it to us at [www.nwleics.gov.uk/report](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/report)



# From a little drop of rain

During the autumn and winter months we are likely to see more rain, which can cause many different issues, from impacts to driving conditions, through to worry about our homes.

A common cause of flooding and damp problems is blocked guttering and drains. If you notice leaves or debris in your gutters please clear them as soon as you can so they continue to work properly. If you notice an leaks from the guttering, or have blocked drains let us know as soon as you can. This means we can complete work to help before the rain arrives.



If you have had issues with flooding in the past, please contact your Housing Officer on **01530 454660** who can arrange for sand bags or gel bags to be delivered if it is necessary. Doing this before rainfall can help prevent any water getting into your property.

