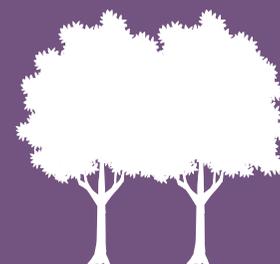


End of Year Report 2015/16



Introduction

This End of Year Report gives you an overview of our work, achievements and performance during 2015/16.

As always, we are working according to our priorities, which last year were:

- **Value for money**
- **Homes and communities**
- **Business and jobs**
- **Green Footprints**

For the coming year, 2016/17, we have a new priority: to regenerate and build confidence in Coalville. You can read about our achievements so far on page 17, but we look forward to including much more detail about the positive things that are happening in Coalville in next year's report..

This report concentrates on our key frontline services – those that affect most residents in their day to day lives. Our waste, leisure, culture, environmental, housing, benefits and planning services

work hard to provide excellent services to all our residents, businesses and visitors.

We always know there are areas to improve, but we use our corporate values to guide us and to ensure we are providing the best service we can.

Our values are:

- **Deliver agreed quality**
- **Be fair and proud**
- **Listen carefully**
- **Support what is possible**
- **Spend our money wisely**

The following pages give examples of how our staff have used these values to shape and provide our services in 2015/16. We'd like to thank them for all their hard work and look forward to ongoing improvements into 2016/17 and beyond.



Cllr Richard Blunt
Leader
North West Leicestershire
District Council



Christine E Fisher
Chief Executive
North West Leicestershire
District Council

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Value for money

Awarded by the RSPCA:

Golden Footprint Award

for the **5th year running!**

for our **stray dogs** service



We work with College Garth Kennels to provide an excellent service when picking up stray dogs, reuniting them with their owners or rehoming them.

2 **Stray dogs** taken to our kennels: **97**
(110 last year)

Up 3,071 > 3,253

Leisure centre memberships
(This is an all time high – and means more people are getting fit and active in our district)

Fitness membership income:

£898,732 in 2014/15

£971,198

in 2015/16 (an increase of £72,466)

Up 37% > 54%

Stray dogs reclaimed
by their owner

Case study: Leisure centre fitness memberships brings in over £70,000 extra income to reinvest in services

Various promotions attracted a total of 1,646 new fitness members

- A £1 membership promotion attracted 56 joins in just one day in September 2015.

To encourage customers to keep their memberships, we have:

- Improved our fitness class programme with a wider variety of classes and more classes to choose from
- Launched a new app to make class bookings easier
- Held more gym challenges with prizes for the winners
- Installed new gym equipment at both leisure centres
- Improved the fitness suite at Hermitage Leisure Centre



Value for money

Case study: up skilling in revenues and benefits to create a better service for customers

Our Revenues and Benefits service – the area that looks after council tax, benefit payments and business rates - is provided through a partnership between North West Leicestershire, Hinckley and Bosworth and Harborough councils.

In April 2015 the partnership had a complete restructure, which saw reductions in the number of staff in some areas. In order for this to succeed, the revenues team embarked on an ambitious training and resource programme between May and November 2015 to create generic Council Tax and Business Rate officers.

The whole team is now able to deal with council tax and business rates enquiries and tasks from start to finish, which provides a much improved service for customers.

The restructure has reduced the amount we have to contribute towards the partnership.

£5,133

the amount of incentive paid by the Government to our Revenues and Benefits partnership (shared with Hinckley and Bosworth and Harborough) for its work identifying Housing Benefit fraud and error.



Value for money

Case study: NWL Swim Academy – reversing the trend to become best practice

At the end of 2008, our swim lessons programme 'Learn To Swim' had 2,243 pupils and an annual income of £31,700 from monthly direct debits.

Over the following six years, numbers dropped to 1,760 (and took the direct debit income to below £30,000 in October 2014, in part due to the difficult economic climate nationally).

We needed to reverse the trend, so we introduced a number of improvements to make the scheme more attractive, including technology for parents to monitor their child's progress online.

Just 18 months on from the former 'Learn To Swim' scheme's low point, the 'NWL Swim Academy' had 2,300 swimmers on the programme (and this is increasing everyweek).

This means we now receive an income of nearly £40,000 from monthly direct debits; we expect this to reach £50,000 by 2017/18.

In April 2016, the ASA used our NWL Swim Academy as a best practice case study for swim lesson facilities in other parts of the country.



Value for money

GOOD IN 2014/15



BETTER IN 2015/16

Recycling mixed together earned us £60,000 in 2014/15

Recycling separated using new sorting technology earned us £95,000 in 2015/16

Crew separated clear glass, mixed colour glass, paper, and textiles

Clever magnets separate the steel and aluminium cans from the plastic

Plastics, steel cans, and aluminium cans were all emptied into a single trough on the collection vehicle

Material is now separated by technology:

- 70% hard plastics
- 20% steel cans
- 10% aluminium cans

Mixed cans and plastics is worth £65,000 per year (current prices)

Separated material is worth £156,000 per year (current prices)



We collected **1,317 tonnes +** of **plastics** and **cans** through our kerbside recycling service in 2015/16

Case study: Recycling separating technology helps us maximise income

We always look for ways to maximise the recycling we collect from our residents and then get the most money for it, so we can put it back into council services.

To do this we've invested £160,000 in machinery which mechanically separates the mixed material into three types: plastics, steel cans and aluminium cans. On today's prices, this increases the sales value of your recycling by over £90,000 a year.

It costs us £15,000 a year in running costs (things like electricity, upgrading the waste permit and annual maintenance) and the £160,000 investment will be paid back in just over two years.

Thank you for your recycling efforts!

Homes and communities

Rent collection

£350,000

still owed to us

(out of **18 million** due in rent)

Collecting as much rent as possible helps us pay for services like repairs and improvements to tenants homes.

Welfare Reform means many tenants who receive benefits have less income than they did before so careful budgeting is more important than ever. Rent collection will always be a priority for us, as will offering financial advice and support to tenants who get into difficulties.

Adaptations

80 adaptations made for elderly and disabled tenants (costing £415,000)

This was our biggest investment in alterations to tenant's homes for 10 years. This included extensions for disabled family members, through to simple grab rails to help people get into and out of their homes more easily.

Empty council homes

207

empty homes in April 2015

reduced

to 138

in March 2016 That's a

33%

reduction

76 days

– average time a home was empty (against a target of 40 days)

Our performance in preparing empty homes for new tenants was not as strong as we planned. We want to complete repairs to empty homes quickly so new tenants can move in and we can collect as much rent as possible.

In a typical year we expect about 360 properties to become empty - last year it was (19% more than usual).

We have changed the way we complete repair work to empty homes and now use our own In-house Repairs Team instead of contractors. Performance improved by the end of 2015/16 and we are confident that we will achieve our target of an average of 40 days empty for each property in 2016/17.

Improvements to tenant's homes

580 tenant's homes received **improvement work** by our contractors Kier and Lovell taking an average of 6.9 days for each property Including: new heating systems, electrical rewiring, new kitchens and new bathrooms.

Tenant **satisfaction** with this work was **98%**

Homes and communities



Case study: Joint Charter with parish councils – working better together

District, town and parish councils across our district signed a Joint Charter in 2015 pledging to work closely together for the benefit of the district.

The signing of the charter was part of a celebration to mark a year of partnership working for the benefit of residents and communities of North West Leicestershire.

Working together, improved communication and listening to local concerns has enabled all the councils to respond effectively.

Here are 12 of the most successful events, schemes and programmes from 2015:

<p>January</p> <p>£100,000 Council Tax Support Grant for town and parish councils</p>	<p>February</p> <p>Community litter picks are on the increase, every village in the district has one!</p>	<p>March</p> <p>We thanked more than 100 volunteers with a celebration event</p>
<p>April</p> <p>First project from £20,000-for-Seven grant programme - new changing facilities for Castle Donington Bowls Club - was completed</p>	<p>May</p> <p>Recycling roadshows went on tour of the district meeting more than 600 residents</p>	<p>June</p> <p>Small Grants Scheme launched – grants of up to £500 for community groups</p>
<p>July</p> <p>District council staff visited various events, including Heart of the Forest Festival, Picnic in the Park and Music in the Park</p>	<p>August</p> <p>Training workshop for councillors: licensing, code of conduct,enviro crimes and planning</p>	<p>September</p> <p>Green Shoots scheme delivered 30,000 spring flowing bulbs to nine parish councils, schools and community groups</p>
<p>October</p> <p>£20,000 for Seven 2015 – £210,000 available for new and innovative community initiatives</p>	<p>November</p> <p>More than 18,000 trees were given away to residents through the Free Tree Scheme</p>	<p>December</p> <p>Joint Charter was signed to set in stone the joint working between town, parish and district councils</p>

Homes and communities

£64,000

Heritage Lottery Funding

secured by **Moira Furnace Museum Trust** with our support



Case study: Volunteering at Moira Furnace – bringing local history to life!

This has helped to:

- Recruit a volunteer coordinator
- Create a WW1 exhibition and books
- Hold reminiscence events
- Arrange heritage activities.

This project has enabled the Trust to support and develop heritage and environmental volunteers 'on the ground' to help improve the heritage offer at Moira Furnace.

Moira Furnace Museum volunteers have done some amazing research and worked incredibly hard over the winter months to bring to life the social and industrial history of the site.

Reminiscence days were held to carry out research of the Moira Furnace families and their cottage industries.

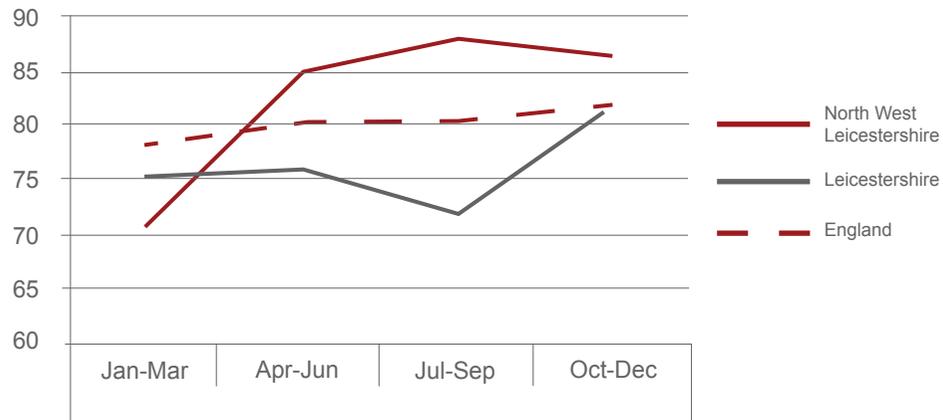
The stories discovered were recorded and archived and authentic displays were created at the museum.

We hope that the revitalized museum and an events and activity programme for 2016 will increase the number of visitors to Moira Furnace Museum and Country Park.

www.moirafurnace.org

Homes and communities

Planning application decisions within target time



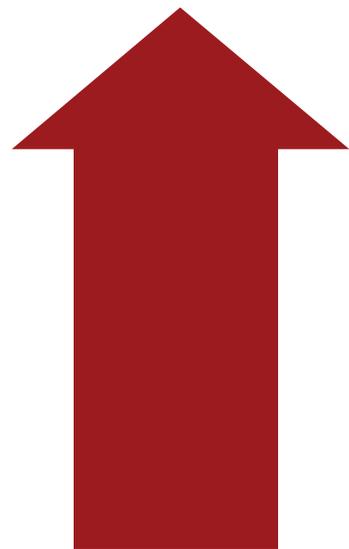
86.50%

of other applications, including householder developments and change of use determined within statutory 8 week time period (national target: 80%)



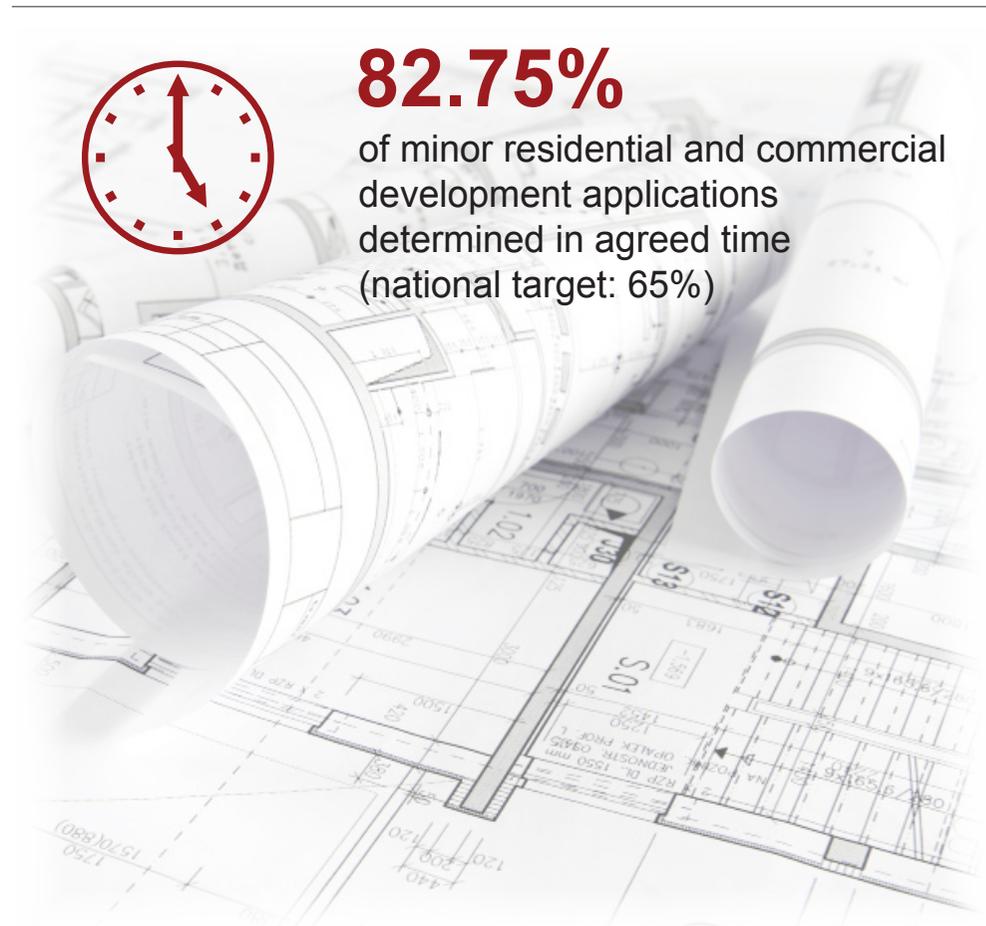
82.75%

of minor residential and commercial development applications determined in agreed time (national target: 65%)



88.42%

of planning applications on major residential and commercial developments applications determined in agreed time (national target: 60%)



Homes and communities

Case study: #LocalPlanMySay – getting your views on how our district should develop in the future

The Local Plan is a document that will guide development in the district over the next 20 years.

We needed to know the thoughts of residents and businesses about our draft plan, so carried out a major consultation between 29 September and 30 November 2015:

- Paper copies of the plan and feedback forms were available at libraries, parish council offices, leisure centres, and community offices
- A mobile exhibition toured the district
- Open door presentations in Ashby de la Zouch, Castle Donington and Coalville specifically targeted parish and district councillors
- Mobile messages using council vehicles promoted key messages to the local community
- The plan was available on the council's website, with a form for comments to be submitted to us electronically
- Themed tweets and press releases were issued at regular intervals throughout the process.



326

individuals and organisations
responded with

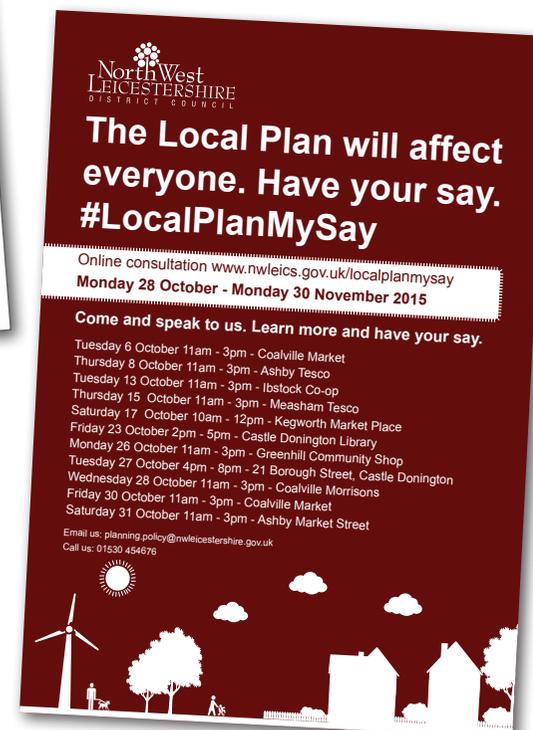
1,935

individual comments

424

standard letters were
received concerning two
specific issues

The final Local Plan and any final representations will be presented to the Secretary of State. Once adopted, the Local Plan will allow us to control where new growth, in particular new housing, will take place.



Homes and communities

126
affordable homes
delivered in 2015-16



Case study: Royal Oak Court affordable housing

Formerly a lively pub, the Pick and Shovel stood empty for more than ten years, with various attempts to redevelop the site failing.

In July 2014, we approached emh group with a proposal to build affordable housing on the site and the promise to match fund the work (£500,000), subject to a successful funding bid to the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).

This offer was accepted by emh group, and the HCA bid for £420,000 was successful.

The group completed the purchase of the site and received planning permission in February 2015.

The £2.2 million development saw the old building demolished, and 14 one-bedroom apartments built in its place, creating a landmark building at the key crossroads in Coalville and providing much needed affordable housing.

The apartments, which were officially opened in March 2016, are owned and managed by emh homes, the landlord arm of the group. Demolition and construction work was carried out by Lindum.

Before

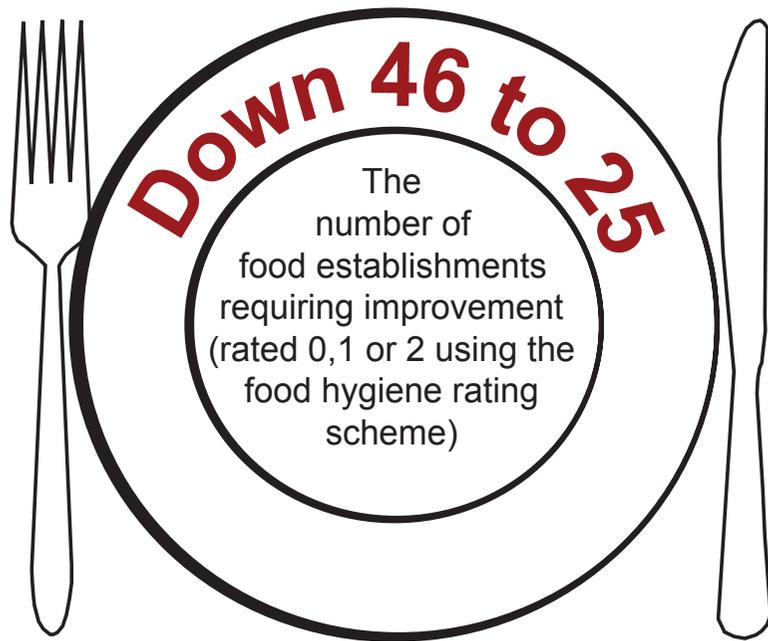
Cllr Richard Blunt Leader of North West Leicestershire District Council with Jim Patman Group Development Director at East Midlands Housing at the former Pick and Shovel site.



After



Homes and communities



65.5 % of vehicles inspected passed the test first time (65% in 2015 and 64% in 2014).



grants totalling

£240,000

generated over

£1 million from other sources for projects during 2014/15.

35%

reduction in crime at Download Festival



15

performances of Chelsea's Choice the play to raise awareness of grooming and child sexual exploitation

Business and jobs



97% of businesses said their relationship with our **Environmental Health** was **'good'**



of businesses said they felt they could **rely on the advice** given by our regulatory officers



96.6% of food businesses have **food hygiene** rating of **3,4 or 5**

Down
from **44** to **38**
The number of **food businesses** categorized as **'high risk'**

Case study: Cooperating with businesses and supporting growth through the planning process

In April 2015 a major application for a large extension to the existing DHL warehouse and distribution hub at East Midlands Airport was submitted.

Major planning applications like this can often take up to six months or more to decide, but early discussions with DHL told us that they needed to start construction on site before the end of the summer of 2015.

Through careful negotiation, our planning and development team worked to ensure that this important economic development project was determined in only four months.

This meant DHL could start construction in mid August 2015. The warehouse element of the building should be operational by late July 2016 and the office area by September 2016.

Business and jobs

Case study: Grants help to boost small and medium businesses

Coalville-based County Drains Ltd received a £6,820 grant from our Enterprising North West Leicestershire grant scheme, which allowed it to invest in a new high pressure jetting unit and two CCTV surveying units.

The company, which was established in 2003, provides professional drainage solutions together with high pressure cleaning and closed circuit camera surveys.

The new equipment has allowed the business to expand, recruiting three new members of staff and securing the future of one existing role. This in turn will increase the range and quality of services offered by the company and grow its turnover.

The total project cost was £20,460, towards which the Enterprising NWL grant contributed £6,820.

Rob McClumpha, sales and marketing manager at County Drains Ltd said: "This latest equipment is already making a significant difference to both ourselves and our clients and allowing us to continue growing within North West Leicestershire. New jobs have already been created and the future's looking bright."

Rob McClumpha, David Phipson and Cllr Richard Blunt Leader of North West Leicestershire District Council at County Drains



£225,000 allocated to shops on High Street and Hotel Street in Coalville to improve their shop fronts

First shop front complete: March 2016



Before

After

Grants have helped to attract

£1.1million in private sector funding

(£5.80 private sector spend for every £1 of our grants)

£195,000

provided to **11** small and medium sized

businesses

through the Enterprising North West Leicestershire grant scheme

36 new jobs

as a result of grants (that's one new full time job for every £5,435 of grant funding)

Green footprints

93.5%

satisfaction with our waste collection service
(94% for recycling specifically)



given to the public in 2015
(compared to 8,433 in 2014)

Each year **13** members of our **street cleansing crew** clean up:

- **424 miles of roads** and verges
- **1,000+** fly tips
- **750** tonnes of waste from 750 street litter bins

Average

457kg of **recycling** from **each household** in the district every year



of roadside **litter** and **detritus** cleaned from the **A42** in spring 2016

Case study: Litter picking the A42

Every year litter thrown from motorists on the A42 results in the 24km stretch that runs through our district becoming an eyesore.

It is our responsibility as a district council to keep this high speed dual carriageway road clear of litter. To do this, we have to book road space a year in advance with the Highways Agency so we can close one lane to keep our crews safe.

We carry out the litter picking over six weekends in 4km stretches including the entry and exit slip roads.

The costs of the project including traffic management, vehicles and staff amounts to around £40,000 (this compares favourably with private contractor quotes of £80,000 for the same work).



Before



After

Residents Survey 2015

Thank you to all those who completed our residents survey in summer 2015. Your feedback is important to us and helps to guide how we provide services for you.

We're pleased to say that several aspects of the feedback were very positive, with most respondents believing that:

- The district is a good place to live
- The countryside and the transport links are particularly good factors
- Residents trust us as a council
- We keep Council Tax low
- Residents feel we promote the district well
- We protect the environment through our recycling and planning services.

We have taken a number of learning points from some of the feedback, in particular:

- How we encourage and support economic growth
- How we provide value for money
- How we listen to our residents.

We're now working to understand the meaning behind some of the feedback through focus groups and using social media to drill down into that. We're also feeding the results into our teams so they can use the feedback to improve their services.

We know we have a lot of work to do to improve how satisfied residents are with us as a council, and we hope to be able to do this over the next two years before our next widespread survey.

Building Confidence in Coalville



One of our main priorities for the coming years is to regenerate and build confidence in Coalville.

In autumn last year we received more than 200 responses to a survey about the town. This revealed what people love about Coalville and where they think the challenges lie. We're now working to address those challenges and are very keen to continue listening to people's views and working with others to make positive changes.

We're already working with more than 70 people from the business community and from groups and organisations who have an interest in the town to make positive physical changes to buildings, streets and infrastructure, as well as celebrating Coalville's heritage and organising more community events that will attract people to the town.

We look forward to reporting on more success for Coalville in the next End of Year Report.

Here are some of the first successes for the project:

- With our financial help, advice and support, emh group have opened Royal Oak Court, a development of 14 affordable apartments on the site of the former Pick and Shovel pub
- Martin & Co on High Street has become the first premises to benefit from our Shop Front Improvement grant scheme and now has a completely new shop front. At the time of writing, we had granted a further two grants and received applications from five more premises. We hope that these improvements will help to create a more vibrant and appealing Hotel Street and High Street
- For the first time, we've produced publicity materials to advertise all summer events in Coalville. We plan to do this for winter and spring events too
- We're working with others to bring more family-friendly events to the town centre. We hope this will bring the community together and help support businesses by increasing footfall
- We're talking to business owners about their plans for their premises and also to developers who have a desire to invest in Coalville.



Find out more about our performance at



www.nwleics.gov.uk/performance



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01530 454545