

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT
UPCOMING FESTIVALS AND
EVENTS ON PAGES 12 AND 13



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Government consults on new Right To Buy rules for council tenants

The Government has recently consulted on proposed changes to the rules that allow council tenants to apply to buy their homes. The proposed changes include an increase in the amount of discount tenants can claim, and changes to the way the money from the sale is split between the Council and the Government. The proposals also plan to allow every additional home sold to be replaced with a new one.

Many council tenants who have lived in social housing for five years or more are eligible to apply to buy their home at a discounted rate. The only tenants excluded from this are those with a Possession Order for rent arrears or living in properties specifically designed or adapted for the elderly or disabled.

The level of discount available depends on the length of tenancy, with the current maximum being £24,000. The new proposals suggest a maximum discount of £50,000 for those who have been tenants for 30 years or more.

Under current rules the Council keeps just 25% of the proceeds of every Right To Buy sale, with the remaining 75% paid to the Government. The proposed new rules would see this split of funds change, with more money being kept locally to build replacement homes.

The changes proposed may be introduced as early as April 2012. To find out more go to the Right To Buy section of the Council's website at www.nwleics.gov.uk



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In this issue

Welcome

Welcome to the spring edition of Vision magazine. You may have noticed this edition of Vision looks a little different. We have changed the way Vision is printed and are raising income from adverts to reduce the cost of the magazine. In these challenging financial times we have also frozen Council Tax for the third year in a row to help relieve the burden on local residents.

Giving **you** value for money is crucial to me and a key priority for the Council is to support businesses and create new jobs in North West Leicestershire. I also believe strongly in the Green Footprints Challenge, which is now in its fourth year. You can find out more about the 2012 Green Footprints Awards in this edition, which this year take place at the greenest hotel in the UK – the Radisson Blu at East Midlands Airport.

In this edition we have also focused on the exciting events ahead for us in 2012. In this Olympic and Diamond Jubilee year, our District has a major role to play, with the planting of the Woodland Trust's flagship Diamond Jubilee wood at the heart of the National Forest right here in North West Leicestershire.

I hope you will be able to join in and contribute to the fantastic events ahead of us this year to make 2012 a year we can all celebrate together.

Richard Blunt

Councillor Richard Blunt - Leader

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richard.blunt@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

2012 show time!

There's plenty to celebrate in 2012. Find out more about forthcoming festivals and fun on pages 12 and 13.

Front cover photograph by Reg Preece



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Please use your blue bag when you dispose of this and other magazines.

New wedding venue

Part of the Council Offices in Coalville have been transformed into a new wedding and ceremony venue.

The original 1930s building is now the new home of the county's registration service for North West Leicestershire and has been renamed as Stenson House, associating the building with Coalville founding father William Stenson, who established the Whitwick Colliery in the 1820s, leading to the development of the town.

Stenson House now includes a ceremony room for up to 60 people, providing an attractive backdrop for weddings, civil partnerships and other ceremonies (such as baby naming or renewal of vows). The first wedding is due to take place at the venue in April.

Councillor Nick Rushton, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services at North West Leicestershire District Council, said: "We are pleased to be working with the County Council on the relocation of the registration service to the original council building. This is a great use of what is a striking building in the heart of Coalville."

To make a provisional booking for a wedding, civil partnership or other ceremony at Stenson House, please contact the County Council's registration service at registration@leics.gov.uk



Ride in Style at Hicks Lodge Cycle Centre with PURPLE MOUNTAIN



Come and discover the exciting new facilities at Hicks Lodge near Moira with Purple Mountain. Take a mountain biking adventure with us. We've quality bike hire for all riders, from tiny tots to experts. Browse the shiny new things in our shop, then refuel in our famous outdoor friendly cafe. Enjoy a breath taking, awe-inspiring day on the traffic free cycle trails and ride in style with Purple Mountain in the heart of the National Forest.

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NEW HICKS LODGE CYCLE CENTRE & CAFE

A: Willesley Woodside, Moira,
Leicestershire. LE65 2UP



New base

for Leicestershire Police at Hood Park Leisure Centre

Following an approach from Leicestershire Police, North West Leicestershire District Council is making office space available at Hood Park Leisure Centre in Ashby de la Zouch, providing a base for local neighbourhood officers at the leisure centre.

The base at Hood Park will provide the Police with flexible, 24/7 access and see the Police located in a busy, central location in the heart of the Ashby community, improving local communication. It will not however be open to the public.

Councillor Nick Rushton, the Council's Corporate Portfolio Holder, said: "The Council works in close partnership with Leicestershire Police on a number of projects, and this new partnership will build on these good relations between the two organisations.

"We are pleased to have been able to work closely with Leicestershire Police to agree to the co-use of office space alongside Council staff at Hood Park Leisure Centre.

"In these difficult financial times, where the Police and North West Leicestershire District Council, alongside other public bodies, are reviewing costs, this new shared working arrangement will contribute to financial savings for both organisations from the costs of running their buildings.

"It will also be a real benefit to the people of Ashby, securing a continued Police presence in the town for the reasonable future and providing the Police with an accessible base in this community."

Stop Smoking Service support for local resident

North West Leicestershire resident Steve Leeland is celebrating successfully quitting smoking thanks to support from the NHS Leicestershire and Rutland Stop Smoking Service, part of the District's Staying Healthy Partnership.

A smoker for over 40 years, Steve was a regular daily smoker by the age of 10, most recently smoking around 40 cigarettes a day.

Having previously tried nicotine replacement therapies and failed, Steve took the opportunity of a recent illness to make the decision to make a positive change.

- His GP referred him to the smoking cessation nurse at Whitwick Health Centre, who recommended a suitable course of treatment, resulting in Steve successfully stopping smoking within five weeks.
- Since quitting in November, Steve's noticed his breathing has improved, he's stopped snoring and is staggered by how much money he's saved.
- Steve said: "My family have been very supportive through the whole process, they are enjoying the fact that they can walk with me without having to breathe my second hand smoke."
- "I have looked on this as me making a positive change to my life. Stopping smoking is NOT easy, it takes a conscious effort and a very positive outlook, however, it is NOT impossible. I would hope that my experience will encourage anyone who is considering attempting to quit to give it a try."
- The NHS stop smoking service can help any smoker to stop, is free to access and totally confidential. Find out more by calling 0845 045 2828.

Community FOCUS



FOCUS ON FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS

Do you have a local project or initiative that will benefit communities of North West Leicestershire? If the answer is yes and you need some funding for your initiative, then the following grant schemes may be able to help.

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMUNITY CHEST GRANTS

Your community group or local initiative could benefit from a small grant from the Council's Community Chest Grant Scheme – through either of the following grants:

- 'One Off' Grant Fund – a District-wide grant scheme, up to £450 available
- 'Coalville Special Expenses' (for Coalville, Bardon, Greenhill, Snibston (part) and Thringstone) – up to £225 available – grants can be applied for at any time throughout the year.

In November 2011 the Kegworth Plan Group received a Community Chest Grant to help fund Christmas celebrations in the village. The group also received support from local volunteers and hope this will now become an annual celebration.

Funding application deadlines for the 'One Off' Grant Fund for 2012/13 are currently 30th April 2012, 30th June 2012, 30th September 2012 and 31st December 2012 (final dates subject to confirmation). For further information contact grants@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

SHIRE COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT GRANT

These grants are for parish or town councils, community groups and schools, with up to half the cost of community environmental improvements available.

Ashby Woulds Town Council has led an exciting project to create a new community allotment for Albert Village following requests from local residents, which received a grant of £8,000. The National Forest Company put in a planting scheme to shelter the new allotments and an Allotment Association has been formed to help maintain the site. All the plots have been allocated including two for Albert Village School. Children of the school have held a competition to create a logo for the new allotments.

For more details, go to www.leics.gov.uk/index/community/community_grants/environmental_grants.htm

LOCAL COMMUNITY GRANTS FOR AREAS WITH A TOWN OR PARISH COUNCIL

A number of town and parish councils in the District have local community grant schemes. To check availability in your area contact your local town or parish council via www.leicestershireparishcouncils.org/northwestleicestershire

COMMUNITY FORUM BUDGETS

This Leicestershire County Council fund supports local communities to invest in local improvements of their choice. The recently formed Breedon Parish Forum were awarded £1,800 from the Community Forum Budget in November 2011 to support village events and activities in Breedon, Tonge and Wilson.

Deadlines for the next round of funds are as follows:

- Valley – 30th May 2012
- Ashby Measham and Moira – 12th June 2012
- Coalville – 20th June 2012.

For further information visit www.leicestershireforums.org/northwestleicestershire



Councillor Alison Smith, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Community Services went to visit the inspection post at East Midlands Airport



Officers ensure food imported through East Midlands Airport is safe

All meat, fish and other animal products imported into the EU has to be checked to ensure it's safe.

The inspection post at East Midlands Airport is managed and operated by North West Leicestershire District Council. Checks on products such as fresh meat and fish, animal products such as feathers and pet food and fruit and vegetables are routinely undertaken. In 2011, a total of 93 consignments were inspected, with 43 consignments having to be rejected and either re-exported or destroyed.

Councillor Alison Smith said: "I am delighted to have been able to see firsthand this important area of work for our Environmental Health Team".

A catch certificate scheme also came into force in 2010 to help combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fisheries, meaning a catch certificate is needed for all imports and landings of fish and fish products into the EU. A daily flight of fresh Icelandic fish lands at East Midlands Airport and the Council's Environmental Health Team undertake the relevant checks to ensure its legality before it can be released.

FREE health checks – your health matters!

Local residents are encouraged to come along for a FREE health check at a Well Families Clinic in Ashby on 27th March 2012.

Organised by the Council, the clinics can help you make positive changes and include free cholesterol, blood pressure and body mass index screenings.

The Ashby clinic will be held on Tuesday 27th March 2012 at Ashby Baptist Church on Brook Street between 2.30pm and 5.30pm.

At a previous clinic in Coalville a total of nine people, all of whom were unaware of having high

cholesterol and blood pressure, were referred to their own GP's for further advice.

As well as the free health screenings, these successful clinics offer a range of health and well-being advice, including information on how to stop smoking, mental health issues, diet and nutrition, benefit advice, details of activities in the District, and much more.

There are fun exercise challenges for all ages and free healthy snacks and fruit juices to try during the afternoon.

For further details contact Julie Summerton on 01530 454541 or email julie.summerton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

£70m investment in council housing in next decade

North West Leicestershire's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan is due to be approved by Council in March. The document outlines the Council's plans for its housing services for the next 30 years. The changes outlined in the plan will mean that over £70 million of investment will be carried out to tenants' homes over the next 10 years.

This business plan is part of a series of new rules for council housing, which will see the Council buy itself out of the current government housing subsidy system. Once the plan is implemented in April 2012, all income from tenants' rent will be kept by the Council. By having more control we will be able to use this income to release additional funds for investment to improve tenants' homes and provide services to tenants.

A programme of improvements is currently being developed in consultation with tenants which will ensure all tenants' homes meet the Decent Homes Standard by 2015.

North West Leicestershire District Council's Portfolio Holder for Housing and Customer Services, Councillor Roger Bayliss, said: "I would like to thank the many tenant representatives who have dedicated countless hours on a voluntary basis to help create this plan. They have worked tirelessly with officers to improve the housing service for the benefit of all their fellow tenants."



Turning empty houses into homes

The Council is working with local housing associations to help turn empty houses in the District into homes.

Over 240 properties in North West Leicestershire that had been empty for more than six months were brought back into use last year, reducing the number of empty homes from 861 to 615. However more still needs to be done, and the Council is now working with three local housing associations to bid for Homes and Communities Agency funds to turn empty houses in the District into homes. If the bids are successful, the funding will provide up to £460,000 to fund improvements to transform empty properties.

Councillor Trevor Pendleton, the Council's Portfolio Holder for Planning and Engagement, said: "With fewer houses being built at the moment, we want to make the best of what we have already, working with owners, the public and our housing association partners to make use of empty houses in the District to provide homes for the 500 families who are waiting for affordable rented housing."

The Council already matches people seeking a home with landlords, offers free online advertising and checks that homes are safe and warm. In addition the Council is exploring other options, including the possibility of providing short term loans to help landlords upgrade properties as well as asking property owners and the public for their ideas on how to bring empty properties back into use.

Discussions are being held at local Community Forum meetings and you can also take part in an online survey at www.leicestershireforums.org

1,000 new doors fitted to council tenants' homes

Council tenant Mrs Moore is pictured, right, with Councillor Roger Bayliss, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Customer Services, celebrating the fitting of the 1,000th new door as part of the Council's investment programme to improve tenants' homes.

To celebrate the milestone Councillor Bayliss presented a bouquet of flowers to Mrs Moore, who lives in the property in Hugglescote where the 1,000th door was fitted.

The door replacement programme is just one part of the Council's Housing Improvement Programme, which started in April 2009 following consultation with tenants about their priorities for improvements.

Councillor Bayliss said: "Improving the quality of tenants' homes to meet the Decent Homes Standard by 2015 is a key priority for the Council, and I'm delighted to mark this major milestone in delivering these improvements."

Mrs Moore said: "The new door has really given me piece of mind with the extra security and added warmth."

Councillor Bayliss added: "It's really exciting to see firsthand the difference that these improvements make to people's lives, and I am looking forward to being able to share many more improvement milestones with tenants over the next three years".

Following the award of £20.75 million in government grant funding, the Council will soon be starting work on the Decent Homes Improvement Programme, which will run from 2012 to 2015. As part of this work a further 1,760 tenants homes will benefit from new doors, with other improvements including new kitchens, bathrooms, roofs, rewiring, windows, boilers and central heating systems also planned.

The Council are in the final stages of planning the details of this new improvement programme, which will see work completed to over 3,700 tenants' homes in the next three years.



Council tenant Mrs Moore with Councillor Roger Bayliss

Free home insulation

Rockwarm Insulation – in partnership with North West Leicestershire Council and the Energy Saving Trust – are offering free home insulation for North West Leicestershire homeowners or tenants of private landlords in the District.

Free cavity wall insulation is on offer for qualifying properties (with a normal 75mm wall cavity) and free loft insulation is available for qualifying properties that currently have less than 60mm of insulation.

To arrange a free survey call Rockwarm on 02476 345554 or 0800 132689.

**2012's Civic Dinner and
Green Footprints Awards
will be held at the Radisson Blu
Hotel, East Midlands Airport.**

Now in their fourth year, the Green Footprints Awards have seen 50 environmental projects shortlisted and 17 winners announced. Every year our judging teams comment on the high standard of the entries received and this year has been no exception!

The judging teams have shortlisted the following projects, who will be invited to the Awards night at Radisson Blu in April. With its impressive green credentials, the hotel will provide the perfect backdrop to celebrate community and business achievements across North West Leicestershire in meeting the Green Footprints Challenge.

Daniel Keane, General Manager at Radisson Blu said: "We are delighted to be the main sponsor of the 2012 Green Footprints Awards and look forward to playing host to the awards dinner to announce the winners.

"As the greenest hotel in the country, we feel it is very appropriate that we are involved in the Green Footprints Awards."

Businesses

- Donington Park Farmhouse Hotel
- FC Cartons Ltd
- John Merison (BMC) Ltd

Children and Young People

- Prince's Trust '12 Days of Christmas'
- VIP Holly Hayes Wood
- VIP Snibston



Partnerships and Community Groups

- Appleby Environment Thermal Imaging Project
- Coalville Resource Centre Community Garden
- North West Leicestershire Volunteer Rangers

Schools

- Ivanhoe College
- Kegworth Primary Green Gang
- Newton Burgoland Primary

Sustainable Urban Design

- Ashfield into Focus extension
- Forestry Commission (Hicks Lodge Cycle Centre)
- Manchester Airports Group (owners of East Midlands Airport)

The judges wish to thank all those individuals, community groups and businesses that entered this year's awards. Good luck to all the shortlisted entries!



Last year's winners with the Chairman of the Council

Sponsors of the Green Footprints Challenge 2012



The National Forest Company – Creating Woodlands

The National Forest Company offers a range of unique funding schemes designed to encourage tree planting and the creation of wildlife habitats within the Forest's 200 square miles.

Oakthorpe, Donisthorpe and Acresford Parish Plan Action Group recently applied to the creating woodlands scheme, receiving £3,300 towards a number of initiatives taking place in the Donisthorpe Community Orchard.

For further information about Creating Woodlands and other National Forest opportunities contact 01283 551211 or visit www.nationalforest.org/woodlandcreation

Green solutions for businesses

Another supporter of this year's Green Footprints Awards is Ashby based Prescient Power. The company aims to make renewable energy a simple and viable alternative to fossil fuels; the aim is to help us all reduce our carbon emissions, offering renewable energy solutions for homes and businesses, such as solar photovoltaic systems, wind turbine power, heat pumps systems, solar thermal panels, hydroelectricity and biomass boilers.

Green technologies at Stephenson College

Raising the skills levels in 'green technologies' is a priority for Stephenson College and there has been significant investment by the College to support this. The facilities in the New Technologies Centre are some of the most advanced in the country and continue to develop to support high quality training and assessment in green technologies.

The College has also been awarded National Skills Academy status for Environmental Technologies and is a lead provider in the Midlands and surrounding areas. In recognition of its contribution to the green agenda the College is now a recognised centre for providing 'sustainable technology' training to manufacturers and colleges throughout the country and currently works with leading brands including Worcester Bosch and Baxi.

The training programmes on offer at the College include solar thermal, photovoltaics, water recycling, heat pumps (ground to water and air to water), woody biomass, mechanical ventilation heat recovery and micro combined heat and power.

To find out more about the New Technologies Centre and the training programmes available call 01530 836136.



There's plenty

Why not have your own Jubilee street party

If you want to mark the Diamond Jubilee of the Queen's reign with a street party over the special long Bank Holiday weekend (2nd-5th June), the Council is making this process as easy as possible, with no fees.

If your event involves temporary road closures you'll need approval from either North West Leicestershire District Council or Leicestershire County Council, depending on the type of closure required.

For an event to be classed as a street party the following criteria must be met:

- For residents/neighbours only
- Publicity only to residents
- No selling of goods
- In a quiet road or street
- Self organised
- No formal risk assessment required.

If you want to apply for a street party find out more by following the link on the home page of our website at www.nwleics.gov.uk

Diamond Jubilee celebrations

Coalville will kick off the Diamond Jubilee celebrations across the District with a special celebration event in Coalville Park on Sunday 27th May from 12-6pm. This event includes live local music, have a go sports, children's play, community stalls and free family entertainment. Contact Julia Harley for further details 01530 454 604.

A free Jubilee music festival takes place in the grounds of Measham Leisure Centre on Saturday 2nd June. For more details contact Measham Parish Office on 01530 271 833.

Ashby's Big Weekend sees a number of special events taking place for the Diamond Jubilee, including the following:

Ashby Arts Festival 2012 will run from the 1st-4th June and will include exhibitions, music, outdoor gallery, competitions and work shops. For further information visit www.ashbyartsfestival.co.uk

The Fake Festival on Saturday 2nd June at the Bath Grounds is a fantastic chance to experience a real festival atmosphere with tribute bands for Coldplay, Blondie and Kasabian. For more information see www.fakefestivals.co.uk

On Sunday 3rd June, the Bath Grounds will be transformed for Jim's Jubilee Tractor Run, including vintage tractors, performances from live bands and free arts activities for everyone.

Monday 4th June sees Ashby's Jubilee Street Party take place along Market Street, with bookable tables, children's rides and entertainment for all the family. To find out more contact Ashby Town Council on 01530 416961.



to celebrate!

Get set for the Olympics

On Sunday 15th April the North West Leicestershire Local Sports Alliance will be staging an event to mark 100 days to go until the London 2012 Olympic Games.

Taking place at Hood Park Leisure Centre in Ashby from 10am, the event is themed around family participation and will involve activities and challenges linked to Olympic sports, including bmx, badminton, hockey, athletics, football, volleyball and archery.

Why not challenge your family and friends on the volleyball spike challenge or the football speed gun? Each sport will be represented by members of local clubs, who'll be on hand to provide information on how to become more involved.

All activities are free of charge and will provide an excellent opportunity to try something new. For more information email zara.barnes@nwleicestershire.gov.uk



Local events in 2012

March

25th - Sport Relief, Hicks Lodge

April

21st - St George's Day, Coalville

May

7th - Castle Donington Medieval Market

19th - 20th - Moira Canal Festival

27th - Coalville Celebration Event

June

1st - 4th - Ashby Arts Festival

2nd - 5th - Diamond Jubilee Events

23rd - Heart of the Forest Festival

July

1st - Music in the Park, Castle Donington

7th - 8th - Grass Roots Festival, Sir John Moore Foundation, Appleby Magna

15th - Ashby Show, Heather

27th - 29th - Heather Music Festival

August

4th - Ibstock Fun Day

17th - 19th - Moira Furnace Folk Festival

September

8th - Miners Gala

14th - 18th - Ashby Statutes

For a full events listing please visit
www.somewherenicetogo.co.uk

Spotlight on...

Help create the flagship woodland for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee

The Woodland Trust has announced exciting plans for a new flagship woodland near Normanton-le-Heath.

Covering 186 hectares, the site will become the pinnacle of the Jubilee Woods project, which aims to plant 60 prestigious Diamond Woods and six million trees across the UK, involving millions of people in creating new woods to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

Located in the heart of the National Forest, the new wood will create valuable new wildlife habitats and be a focal point for visitors. More than 300,000 native broadleaved trees will be planted, a five hectare lake will provide a home for wetland species and seven hectares of irreplaceable ancient woodland will be protected. The site will also increase access in the area, linking up existing public rights of way and surrounding woodland sites, and enabling access to new and wider landscapes for people to discover and enjoy.

Helen Shepherd, Regional Development Officer for the Woodland Trust, said: "This is a great chance to celebrate the reign of one of our best-loved and longest-reigning monarchs while transforming the landscape, planting hundreds of thousands of trees on a truly historic scale – but we need your help to do it."

"This woodland is a unique chance to get involved in a project that marks a moment in history; the Jubilee Woods project is one of only a handful of schemes supported by Buckingham Palace and the pinnacle of it will be right here in North West Leicestershire."

The Woodland Trust needs to raise £3.3m from a variety of sources to enable the project to happen. Support from the local community will be vital and a local appeal target of £50,000 has been set. If you would like to find out more or offer to help please contact Helen Shepherd on 0845 293 5876 or email helenshepherd@woodlandtrust.org.uk

A consultation day to comment on draft designs for the site will be held on Saturday 31st March from 11am to 3pm at Heather St John's FC in Heather – everybody welcome.

Free Tree Scheme

celebrates another successful year

Clare Hopewell, Kegworth

"This is the first year we've taken part in the scheme and we're really pleased. I think it's great that people are being offered the opportunity to plant them in their gardens. They provide privacy and help the environment, so it's wonderful to be involved."

Caroline Boxall, Ashby de la Zouch

"We had two trees two years ago and they are flourishing. Thank you! It is a great scheme."

Tim Sporne, Coalville

"This is an excellent joint initiative between the National Forest and North West Leicestershire District Council. I shall be encouraging other residents to take part also."

These are just a few of the comments from North West Leicestershire residents who took part in this year's Free Tree Scheme. Now in its fifth year, the initiative is run in partnership with the National Forest Company, and is proving as popular as ever. Thank you to everyone who has taken part; due to your interest and enthusiasm we've managed to plant over 2,000 native trees across the District this year. This brings the total to 6,326 native trees planted since 2008 – well done everyone!

Over 70% of people came along to collect their trees on the collection day in November. Those trees left over will also certainly go to a good home, such as Holly Hayes Wood on the edge of Whitwick where the Friends group received 80 young trees to plant. The trees will be



Michelle Sendles, Whitwick

"We've made a conservation area at the bottom of our garden with ferns and wild garlic and we've planted up our free trees from previous years. This year we had just enough elderflower berries to make a pie – next year we're hoping for elderflower cordial and wine! Without the Council's Free Tree Scheme I'd probably never have got around to doing this."

planted over the next year to replace non native sycamores that are being removed and also to restock the woods where necessary.

Making North West Leicestershire a safer place for all



The Safer North West Partnership brings together a number of agencies to reduce crime and disorder in the District. The partnership is made up of a number of organisations including the District and County Council, Police, Fire & Rescue Service, Youth Service, Probation and housing associations among others. By working together and sharing information, resources can be targeted more effectively where they are needed.

Our vision is to work together with those who live, work and visit North West Leicestershire to maintain and improve pride in our communities. This year the Partnership is focusing on three key priorities:

- 1. Tackling crime**
- 2. Further reducing anti-social behaviour**
- 3. Supporting pride in our communities.**

Over the past year the Partnership has helped drive down crime and disorder, with theft and violent crime numbers both down in the District. Anti-social behaviour has seen the greatest decrease – down this year by almost a third. The Joint Action Group has helped achieve this success. Made up of individuals from across the Partnership, the group meet monthly to decide actions that address emerging crime trends and problem locations.

We would like to have your views on the work of The Safer North West Partnership. Do you agree with these priorities? Do you have any suggestions on how to involve your community? Please contact 01530 454545 or community.safety@nwleicestershire.gov.uk with your views.

Stephenson College students support community project



Students of Stephenson College with Councillor Trevor Pendleton

A group of painting and decorating students from Stephenson College recently showcased their skills by painting the inside of Kegworth Village Hall. Members of the community joined them to celebrate completion of the project and thank them for their hard work.

The students applied for funding through The Safer North West Partnership's Respect Challenge, which supports initiatives that encourage young people to take an active and positive role in society. The students have been invited to an award ceremony this month at Conkers to celebrate their achievements.

Councillor Trevor Pendleton, Chairman of The Safer North West Partnership, said: "Too often we hear people complaining about young people. This project is a great example of how young people in our District are doing something positive and taking pride in their community."

Nigel Leigh, Principal at Stephenson College, said: "Projects such as this help demonstrate the valuable contribution students can make and promote their abilities to audiences outside of our college."

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Carry on composting

It's that time of year when we venture back out into the garden. With all those prunings and grass cuttings, it's a good time to think about what to do with them.

Councillor Alison Smith, Deputy Leader of North West Leicestershire District Council and Portfolio Holder for Community Services, said: "We want to continue to encourage the excellent efforts of our residents who are recycling. Composting garden waste not only saves it from being sent to landfill, it also helps create a really useful, environmentally friendly garden product."

"Each household in the District composted a phenomenal 200kgs in their garden bins last year – we want you to do even more this year."

Compost at home – With excellent offers on compost bins it's easy to start composting your fruit and vegetable peelings. Call 0844 571 4444 for local offers on compost bins and accessories.

Compost in the garden waste bin – You can compost hedge trimmings, grass cuttings, leaves and



small branches in your brown lidded garden bin. In March and April last year residents composted over 2,000 tonnes of garden waste. You can order extra recycling containers by calling 01530 454572.

Take it to your local recycling site – We have two sites in North West Leicestershire at Lount and Coalville, which can recycle all sorts of things, including compostable waste. Both are open 8am-8pm in the summer months, with Lount due to reopen by mid March, following its refurbishment.



Councillor Alison Smith visits the Depot to see the textiles already recycled

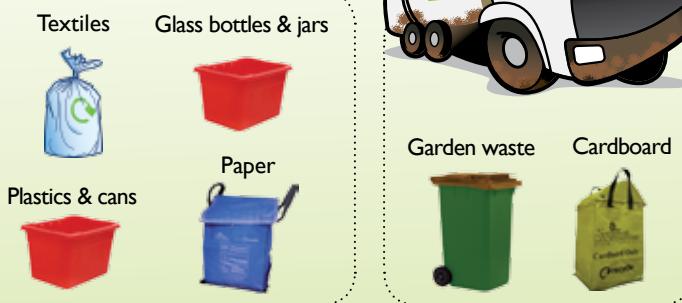
Textiles recycling update

In November 2011 we launched our textile recycling service. We had special pods fitted on the back of our vehicles so we could keep it separate from the rest of the materials. It has been a great success so far; North West Leicestershire residents have recycled over 20 tonnes.

Depending on the quality, the recycled textiles could go to vintage clothes shops, general re-sale or are shredded for furniture fillings.

For more information on recycling in North West Leicestershire visit www.nwleics.gov.uk/recycling

On your recycling day we collect in **two vehicles** to keep all the materials separate.
Thank you for separating your glass and plastic.



Fly-tipping

Are you thinking of updating, extending or improving your house or garden this spring? If so, have you thought about how you will dispose of the waste?

Bulky waste such as fridges, freezers and sofas can be collected by the District Council. If you need any assistance regarding waste disposal contact our Customer Service Centre on 01530 454545 or visit our website www.nwleics.gov.uk where you can also check if home alterations require planning permission or are subject to building control regulations.

If you're considering paying a third party to remove any waste as part of a job, or someone offers to dispose of it for you, make sure they are a registered waste carrier.

You can ask to see their waste transfer certificate, or check with the Environment Agency to see if they are licensed. If the waste is dumped irresponsibly then it could be you who is responsible.

Fly-tipping is defined as the "illegal deposit of any waste onto land that does not have a permit to accept it". It can be hazardous to the public and is a serious criminal offence,

for which courts can apply fines of up to £50,000 or imprison offenders if necessary.

What should you do if you see someone fly-tipping?

Report it straight away and take note of the following:

- Date, time and place of the incident
- What the waste looks like and how much there is
- Descriptions of any person and/or vehicles involved along with the registration number

The crime can then be investigated and removed.

Fly-tippers are doing something illegal so do not want to be caught. Do not approach them or put your own safety at risk.

More information can also be found at www.environment-agency.gov.uk



Inconsiderate parking

With our roads becoming busier, it's important we all do our bit to help traffic flow – but leading busy lives sometimes means we're not as thoughtful as we should be, especially when parking vehicles.

The Council's Civil Enforcement Officers have found a variety of parking issues and offences taking place, including parking on pavements, across dropped kerbs and in front of school gates.

Officers will issue fines to drivers who have parked irresponsibly. Such behaviour not only causes a nuisance to residents, but can be dangerous or even life threatening to those who may have to walk into the road to get past the vehicle. People with disabilities, parents with pushchairs and young children can all be affected by inconsiderate parking.

Go the *extra mile* this year for Sport Relief

Sport Relief 2012 is on its way from Friday 23rd to Sunday 25th March. With over a million people expected to join in the Sainsbury's Sport Relief Mile, there's no better way to take part in the UK's biggest year of sport and help to change lives too.

North West Leicestershire District Council's Active Together Team invites you to join hundreds of other 'milers' to do your mile at Hicks Lodge National Cycle Centre on Sunday 25th March.

The newly opened visitor attraction in Moira is set in beautiful young woodland within the National Forest, providing the perfect backdrop for the event.

You can take part in a one, three or six mile race and then kick-back and enjoy some music and family fun at the centre. To book your place at the Hicks Lodge Mile simply visit www.sportrelief.com

And why not get in shape by joining one of the areas successful Run England groups. Jogit Hermitage provides a perfect platform for beginners wanting to give running a try. The group meets every Tuesday at Hermitage Leisure Centre in Whitwick from 7pm.

For further information please contact Zara Barnes at zara.barnes@nwleicestershire.gov.uk



Join in the fun this Easter

Are you looking for some fun activities for the kids over the Easter holiday? If so, take a look at the Easter school holiday activities on offer at leisure facilities across the District. Whether you fancy making a splash in the pool, trying your hand at a new sport, racing around the sports hall on the indoor karting track or just coming along for a game of badminton or squash, there's plenty to do for all ages. And if you're a member of a Club Activ8 school you can redeem your points against various activities. Pick up a leaflet at a leisure centre or log onto www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/holidays to find out more.

Leisure Link membership for 2012-13

If you're a Leisure Link scheme member then don't forget to renew your membership from 1st April 2012. Joining fees are just £5.50 for North West Leicestershire residents. Please bring all supporting documents, such as proof of any benefits you're claiming, when you come to renew your membership.

If you fit any of the following categories you too could be saving yourself some money by joining the Leisure Link scheme:

- People in receipt of a means tested benefit
- People with disabilities
- Corporate parenting families
- Carers
- Full/part time students aged 16 and 17 years
- Full time students aged 18 years
- People aged over 60 years.

For up to date information on the benefits of the scheme, pick up a leaflet from your local leisure centre, call Hermitage Leisure Centre on 01530 811215 or visit www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/leisurelink

And don't forget there's a range of activities for all on offer at the Council's leisure centres.

Here's a taster of what's currently on offer at Measham Leisure Centre:

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

- **STREET DANCE**, Mondays, 4.30-5.30pm for 5-12 year olds
- **AIKIDO**, Mondays, 5.30-6.15pm for 5-10 year olds
- **ZUMBATOMIC**, Wednesdays, 5.45-6.30pm for 9-15 year olds
- **MINI DRIBBLERS**, Thursdays, 4.30-5.30pm for 3-5 year olds

FITNESS CLASSES

- **50 PLUS MOBILITY**, Tuesdays, 9.30-10.30am
- **PILATES**, Tuesdays, 9.45-10.45am
- **ZUMBA**, Thursdays, 10.30-11.30am
- **BOXERCISE**, Thursdays, 6.30-7.30pm
- **50 PLUS AEROBICS**, Fridays, 9.30-10.30am

For a copy of the fitness class programme for all the District's leisure centres please call Hermitage Leisure Centre on 01530 811215 or Hood Park Leisure Centre on 01530 41218.

Hermitages Legendary C U R R Y Q U I Z N I G H T

Cash prize for winning team
All entry fees go to Coalville Town FC
Teams are limited to six and the event is open to all ages.
To book contact Hermitage Leisure Centre on 01530 811215 or Hood Park Leisure Centre on 01530 412181.

Five reasons NOT to have a Will:



1. I dislike my children and want them to never speak to each other again after the battle of my estate.
2. I hate my spouse and want him or her to suffer the agony of attempting to probate my estate without a Will...
3. I would like my minor children to be put into care whilst the courts decide which greedy relative, if any, will get custody.
4. My family doesn't need the money so I want the Government to take as much of my estate for taxes as possible.
5. I have reliable information that I am never going to die.

...AND IF YOU DON'T AGREE WITH ANY OF THESE POINTS PERHAPS YOU SHOULD BE ASKING YOURSELF A VERY IMPORTANT QUESTION:
WHAT OTHER LOGICAL REASON IS THERE FOR ME NOT HAVING A WILL?

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www.nlwwf.com

New Chamber of Commerce for North West Leicestershire

Businesses in North West Leicestershire have a new voice in our community. Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce has asked John Merison to revive the North West Leicestershire Chamber of Trade & Commerce and on 10th January, along with other business owners in the area, John held the inaugural meeting at Da Vinci's restaurant in Coalville to begin forming a steering committee.

Monday 20th February saw an open meeting at Fleet Auctions, Stephenson's Business Park, Coalville – where the new Chamber delivered information regarding its aims and objectives to engage with local businesses and the community to clarify the Chamber's role and to demonstrate the benefits of membership. Guest speakers included Phil Clooney on studio schools, Jonathan Hale on the Loughborough BID and Simon Ghent on technology to transform your business.

Mr Merison said: "This is a fantastic opportunity for businesses in North West Leicestershire to work together to help support each other through these tough times and to get more money into our local economy."

For further information or to register your interest in attending future meetings, please email john.merison@nwleicschamber.co.uk

Support for your business



A new Business Focus Team has been set up to lead the Council's work supporting and helping local businesses. The team works to help businesses wishing to move to the District or expand their current operations and works closely with other agencies such as the Federation of Small Businesses and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership.

The team would like to provide North West Leicestershire businesses with up to date information about training, funding opportunities and local development. If you work for or own a business in the District and would like to be kept up to date by email please send your name, position, email address, business name and website address if you have one to businessfocus@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

The Business Focus team is also part of our Business Corporate Action Team, which brings together several council departments that regularly liaise with businesses, such as Environmental Health and Procurement. The Corporate Action Team is developing an action plan for 2012-13 focusing on:

- Supporting existing businesses
- Establishing first contact with new businesses
- Building relationships with the business community
- Promoting economic development within the District
- Better selling for North West Leicestershire businesses
- Performance monitoring.

For further information contact 01530 454 545.



Reducing the cost of keeping you informed



The Council recognises how important it is to keep all residents informed and explain different aspects of our work.

We use many communication methods, including our website at www.nwleics.gov.uk and social media. As the only regular printed communication with all our residents, Vision magazine remains vitally important for the Council.

As part of the Council's priority to make sure all our services provide good value for money, we have introduced some key changes in this latest edition of Vision to help reduce the cost of keeping you informed.

Vision is delivered on a quarterly basis to around 40,500 homes in our District. By changing the paper size of the magazine and the printing method used, we are making use of a greener printing method as well as reducing the cost of producing Vision.

We also do the majority of the work to produce Vision magazine in house, which is an efficient use of resource and cheaper than using an external design agency. In addition we are driving down the costs of Vision magazine even further by selling suitable advertising. If you are a local company who would like to advertise in a future edition of Vision magazine please get in touch by emailing vision@socius-ltd.co.uk

It is important that we continue to communicate regularly and fully with all our residents, and the Vision magazine remains an important and effective communications method for the Council. We will continue to review the way that Vision is produced so that we keep communicating with you in an efficient way, whilst minimising the production costs of the magazine.

The total cost of producing and distributing the four issues of Vision you receive each year has been reduced to approximately **61p per household** for the whole year – that's just over **15p per copy**.

Ashby museum setting the standard

Ashby de la Zouch Museum is one of just four museums in the country to have received a new national accreditation.

Arts Council England launched a revised Accreditation Scheme in December 2011 for museums and galleries across the UK. The scheme focuses on issues relevant to museums in the 21st century, emphasising visitors' needs and encouraging museums to develop new and imaginative ways for

visitors to interact with their collections.

The accreditation status sets the standard that museums and galleries should aspire to for the benefit of users.

Ashby de la Zouch Museum Trust was one of just four museum

operators across the UK to test out the revised process to meet the new accreditation standard before it opened to other applicants. The museum successfully met all the required criteria and is now one of the first museums to hold full accreditation against the new 2011 standard.

For more information visit www.ashbydelazouchmuseum.org.uk

Freeuse App launched



To extend the range of users who can access its Freeuse service, Leicestershire Waste Partnership has launched a Freeuse App that can be used via smart phones.

The Freeuse website provides a free, simple and easy way to give or take unwanted items to stop them ending up in landfill. Since the website's launch two years ago, over 76 tonnes has been saved from landfill.

The Freeuse App means users can upload photos of items directly from their phone; search, view and express interest in items; share items via Twitter and Facebook; email to a friend and leave feedback.

In addition, the App provides a facility to find nearby recycling points.

A mobile enabled version of the website has also been developed so that it can be accessed by any smart phone user.

For more information visit the Freeuse website at www.freeuseit.org and remember, if you don't use it, freeuseit.



Local charity **appeals** for old electrical goods

The Marlene Reid Centre in Coalville is appealing for old domestic electrical appliances such as cookers and washing machines that are still in good working order.

The REACT project, based behind the Marlene Reid Centre in Belvoir Road, Coalville, re-uses old furniture and electrical appliances, passing them on to local people on low incomes for a nominal charge.

Any funds raised are returned to the project. Last year the REACT project reused 4,336 items of furniture, saving more than 100 tonnes from landfill.

To browse REACT's stock of new and reused furniture the warehouse is open Mondays to Fridays from 9am to 2.30pm.

So, if you are having a clear out and have any electrical appliances, furniture, bedding or anything you think may be of use contact the Marlene Reid Centre on 01530 510515 or call the REACT Furniture Project directly on 01530 512454. Collection of items can be arranged.

To find out more about the project visit www.mrc.uk.net

