

## **Leicestershire County Council Report November 2023**

### **County Hall to be lit up in red to mark Remembrance**

The building will be illuminated each night from Saturday 28 October until Remembrance Sunday on 12 November.

The County Hall headquarters of Leicestershire County Council is once more being lit up in red to mark Remembrance and to support the Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal 2023.

A service to mark Armistice and to pay tribute to all those who lost their lives in conflict is being held at County Hall on Friday, 10 November.

### **Toy appeal launched to help give children a happy Christmas**

An annual toy appeal which last year helped more than 900 children and almost 400 families has launched its 2023 drive – and is hoping to be even bigger and better than last year.

The Hinckley and Bosworth Christmas Toy and Food Appeal has been running since 2009 and has grown every year since its launch.

The appeal is a huge partnership effort between Leicestershire County Council's Children and Family Wellbeing Service, the Salvation Army and the Hinckley and Bosworth Food Bank, as well as numerous other partners and supporters.

The 2023 appeal was launched at Hinckley Fire Station, which has supported the appeal with a very generous donation every year.

Donation bins are located throughout Hinckley, where people who would like to do their bit to ensure a child gets a present on Christmas Day can drop off their gift of a brand-new toy. The bins also feature a QR code for the appeal's Amazon wish list – donors can select a toy and order it to be sent directly to the organisers.

More information on how to donate to the appeal can be found on the [Hinckley and Bosworth Children and Family Wellbeing Centre's Facebook page](#). (Link is external and opens in new window)

Any business, church, community group or charity which would like to join the growing number of supporters of the appeal is asked to contact Laura Foster on [laura.foster@leics.gov.uk](mailto:laura.foster@leics.gov.uk) (link sends email) to get involved.

### **Proposals mooted to reduce waste site spend**

Proposals to reduce waste site costs are going out for consultation.

Closing three recycling and household waste sites which are comparatively expensive to run or are relatively close to other sites is part of proposals. People will be asked to have their say on the plan which would save £420,000 by:

Closing three sites - Market Harborough, Shepshed and Somerby

Changing the opening days at Bottesford and Melton Mowbray

Closing all sites on Christmas Eve

Changing summer opening hours at all recycling and household waste sites

The council has repeatedly highlighted the current financial pressures, including the need to save £90m by 2026, and a recent £9m forecast overspend for this year's finances due to rising social care costs.

Proposed closures would save £270,000 per year, with the change in summer opening hours saving a further £150,000 per year.

A 12-week consultation is intended to begin in November.

### **Good response to see council's cycling, walking and wheeling ambitions**

More than 50 individuals and organisations gained a closer insight into the county council's cycling, walking and wheeling ambitions during a forum held at County Hall, Glenfield.

The forum, hosted by the authority's sustainable travel and transport team, included opportunities to hear about the council's cycling and walking strategy and to review plans to create local cycling and walking infrastructure plans across the county, some of which are already being consulted on.

As well as the detailing of plans, the forum also shared the varied initiatives that the sustainable travel and transport team run with attendees.

A representative from Active Travel England, the Department for Transport executive agency which provides guidance and funding to local schemes, also gave a presentation on the organisation's collaboration with the council to improve the county's active travel options.

The council will be looking to develop the forum in the future which will include forming closer links with local communities involved in the cycling and walking initiative.

To find out more about the council's ambitions, visit the [Choose How You Move website \(Link is external and opens in new window\)](#) and the cycling and walking section [of the LCC website.](#)

### **EV Chargepoints Consultation**

A reminder that the consultation regarding EV Chargepoints will run until 30th November 2023 and will provide an opportunity for current and future EV owners to have a say about their charging habits or potential charging concerns and help shape where public EV Chargepoints are located in Leicestershire.

Feedback from the survey and interactive map will provide the authority with a better understanding of the demand for on-street chargepoints and charging requirements and help to plan a network of chargepoints that works for communities.

### **Household Support Fund**

The Household Support Fund is provided by the government to local authorities to support residents experiencing financial hardship with essentials such as food and fuel.

The second pot will open on 2nd October and run until Christmas, or until expended. The final tranche will open in January 2024.

A variety of Council services and partners can make a referral to the Household Support Fund, including district and borough Council's and voluntary organisations. The referrer is responsible for verifying the claimant's identity, age and address and for ensuring other criteria are met. Vouchers are then provided by phone app, e-voucher or printed voucher.

Only one application can be made per tranche.

Leicestershire County Council's scheme provides the following support:

Food vouchers

Households with children - £20 per adult per week, £15 per child per week (for maximum of 2 weeks)

Single households - £25 per week (for maximum of 2 weeks)

Multiple adult households - £20 per adult per week (for maximum of 2 weeks)

Fuel vouchers

Family household - £98

Single household - £56

Food vouchers for families with pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM)

Vouchers are also provided to the parents/carers of all pupils who are eligible for FSM. These are distributed through schools and there are restrictions that mean the vouchers cannot be used to purchase controlled products such as alcohol and tobacco. The vouchers are issued as follows for 2023/24:

Vouchers to the value of £15.00 per child per week, are issued to eligible pupils in Leicestershire Schools and FE Colleges over the May, October and February half terms.

Vouchers to the value of £90.00 are issued for the Summer holidays

Vouchers to the value of £40.00 will be issued for the Christmas holidays

Vouchers to the value of £30.00 will be issued for Easter holidays.

Full details, including a copy of the Council's policy can be found here

- <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/adult-social-care-and-health/assessment-and-eligibility-for-care-and-support/household-support-fund>

### **Families with children urged to consider fostering**

If you would like to explore how fostering would fit into your family, then you're welcome to attend one of the council's virtual 'Find out about fostering' events.

They are on the evenings of Wednesday 1 November, Thursday 23 November and Tuesday 12 December.

You can book your place by visiting [our Fostering website section](#), emailing [fostering@leics.gov.uk](mailto:fostering@leics.gov.uk) (link sends email) or calling 0116 305 0505.

Lines are open until 8pm on Tuesday and Thursdays, and on the first Saturday of the month 10-12 noon.