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Sara & Neil - Owners of Gymphobics Wigston

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Cosby is a Big Tourism Winner

The village of Cosby was a big winner when local businesses were honoured at the Leicestershire Promotions Tourism and Hospitality Awards 2024.

At a glittering ceremony in Leicester's Athena late last year, Cosby saw awards and commendations for two events held there in the summer.

Now in its 14th year, the awards, organised by Leicestershire Promotions, are the regional heat of the national VisitEngland Awards for Excellence. Many of the winners will go forward as Leicestershire's nominations for the national awards.

The Victory show, a World War Two re-enactment event held in Cosby, was the winner in the Best Event/Festival (paid entry) category.

Best Day Out in Leicestershire, sponsored by St Martins Lodge, was won by Cosby Yarn Bomb, which was also Highly Commended in the Best Free Event category.

Martin Peters, Chief Executive of Leicestershire Promotions said: "Tourism is a high pressure industry and it's vital we recognise excellence across the sector. We pride ourselves on the most rigorous assessment process and finalists and winners receive invaluable feedback to



help them develop their businesses further. 12 of our winners now go forwards to the national VisitEngland Awards next spring, so we wish them well and congratulate all our winners."

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Young Leicestershire Group Honoured by King

Young Leicestershire, a group which transforms the lives of society's disadvantaged young people, has been honoured with the King's Award for Voluntary Service, the highest award a voluntary group can receive in the UK.



The King's Award for Voluntary Service

The voluntary organisation is one of six Leicestershire winners – a diverse mix of voluntary groups from across a number of charitable sectors.

All were nominated by the public of Leicestershire. The King's Award for Voluntary Service holds the same value as an MBE and acknowledges the remarkable efforts of volunteer groups in their communities.

Mike Kapur OBE CStJ, Lord-Lieutenant of Leicestershire, said: *"I am delighted that so many of Leicestershire's wonderful voluntary groups have received the recognition they deserve in this year of the King's Awards for Voluntary Service.*

"This award is a fitting tribute to their compassion, dedication, and selflessness in helping others. I am eagerly looking forward to presenting the awards and meeting the volunteers who dedicate their time to others."

Leicestershire's winners are among 281 charities,

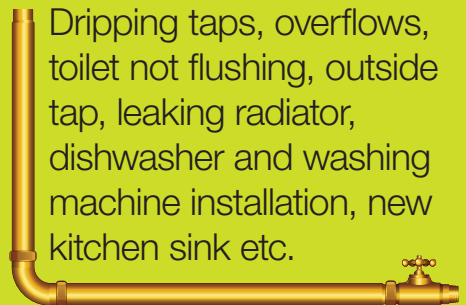
social enterprises and voluntary groups from across the UK and Channel Islands to receive the prestigious award.

The number of nominations remains high year on year, showing that the voluntary sector is thriving and full of innovative ideas to make life better for those around them.

The King's Award for Voluntary Service aims to recognise outstanding work by volunteer groups to benefit their local communities. Formerly, these awards were known as the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. Recipients are announced each year on the King's Birthday.

Representatives of the winning groups will receive the award crystal and certificate from the Lord-Lieutenant, and two volunteers from each group will be invited attend a garden party at Buckingham Palace in May 2025 along with other recipients of this year's Award.

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We have seen an increase in interest for holidays to Australasia, Canada, Japan and South America and our specialist travel partners that we use have in-depth knowledge in these areas. Holiday Lounge also offer Exclusive departures to various destinations including Majorca, Cyprus, Jersey and Lapland for the Northern Lights, and New for 2025 specialising in Weddings in Cyprus at the 4* Athena Beach Hotel in Paphos

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Age Concern on Hand to Help with Winter Pension Credit

Recent figures show that 6,500 Leicestershire residents are at risk of missing out on pension credit this winter.

More pensioners are getting support to claim it, helping them to stay warm and well, due to a new partnership between Leicestershire County Council and Age UK Leicester Shire & Rutland.

The council is using a slice of its Government-funded Household Support Fund to help Age UK so they can help more people check if they're eligible for Government support and complete the application process.

The charity has been over-subscribed with requests this year and the move is supporting them to deal with the surge in calls.

Recent figures show over half of those that qualify are at risk of missing out on pension credit.

Councillor Deborah Taylor, acting leader of Leicestershire County Council, said: *"Navigating the application process for pension credit is not straightforward. And with colder weather kicking in, we want to help as many pensioners as possible to have that money in the bank."*

"Inflation may be reducing but cost of living increases remain baked in. And pension credit



unlocks help with NHS costs, TV licence and Council Tax, which can make a big difference if you're struggling to pay bills.

"A small amount of cash can make a big difference and means Age UK can bolster their face-to-face support, which we know many older people value."

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Flood Support in Blaby District

As extreme weather conditions and flooding hit our region, Blaby District Council staff worked with partner organisations to support hundreds of residents and homes, setting up rest centres in Whetstone and Braunstone.

These have been offering a warm space and support to residents and staff have also been out door knocking, checking on vulnerable residents in the flood-affected areas to ensure their safety and provide any necessary support.

If your property has been affected by the flooding and you need assistance, please contact Customer Services on 0116 275 0555.

Additionally, workers have been street sweeping, prioritising those areas affected.

A spokesperson said: *“Please note that sweeping is challenging during freezing weather, but we will do our best to get out where we can.”*

If your property has been impacted by flooding, please ensure you log the incident with the lead flood authority, Leicestershire County Council. Their website also contains useful information on what to do in the event of a flood.

For further protection, visit the Blue Pages (bluepages.org.uk) for flood defence equipment to safeguard your home.



Report blocked drains on the highway to Leicestershire County Council.

Flooding from sewers should be reported to Severn Trent.

For flooding from main rivers contact the Environment Agency.

Stay safe and take care.

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Parks and Allotments Protected After £1 Sale!

Two popular parks and a collection of village allotments in south Leicestershire are to be sold for a £1 each to local Parish Councils, safeguarding their future as open spaces.

At a Full Council meeting, members of Blaby District Council agreed to the transfer of Southey Close recreation ground and Jubilee Park to Enderby Parish Council.

They also approved the sale of Holt Crescent allotments to Thurlaston Parish Council to retain them as allotments.

The deals agreed with both parishes will see the land kept as public open spaces in perpetuity. In the case of Southey Close, Blaby District Council had already pledged no development would take place. The transfer reinforces that commitment.

While Enderby Parish Council will take control of Southey Close recreation ground, due to its former use as landfill, discussions will take place around Blaby District Council's responsibility for any future monitoring and remediation work, if required.

Councillor Nigel Grundy, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services and Assets, said: *"We have been working with both Enderby and Thurlaston Parish Councils for some time to arrange these transfers. The move ensures a secure future for these popular green areas.*

"As well as ensuring they are safe from development the transfer allows the Parish Councils to follow local need, access funding opportunities unavailable to us and offer more in the way of community events and activities.

"We are delighted these green spaces will be safeguarded for generations to come."



COMPETITION WINNER

We would like to congratulate **Joan Morson from Nuneaton** on being our lucky winner to our latest competition in conjunction with Stone and Ivy Restaurant at Weston Hall, Bulkington, Nuneaton.



We hope you enjoy a Three course meal for two courtesy of Stone and Ivy Restaurant.

If you would like to be a lucky winner in 2025, please look out for our next Competition and as they say, you have to be in it to win it!

Starshine Sweepalot and Bin Richard the 3rd

Meet Starshine Sweepalot and Bin Richard the 3rd – the two new fantastically named electric vehicles joining Blaby District Council’s fleet.

Youngsters from across the District were called on to come up with sparky names for the vehicles – and they certainly delivered!

The electric street sweeper will be called Starshine Sweepalot thanks to five-year-old Esme Walton-Wright, while the converted bin lorry will be known as Bin Richard the 3rd, courtesy of Tabitha Tame, aged eight.

The two titles were chosen from the dozens of entries.

Winners, Esme who attends Greenfield Primary in Countesthorpe and Tabitha, a pupil at Huncote Primary, will receive a Lego replica of the vehicle they named. The vehicles themselves will proudly sport the names as part of their Blaby District Council EV livery.

The competition was open to school-age children and offered a fun challenge as well as highlighting the Council’s commitment to improving air quality with ambitions for a zero-emission fleet.

Councillor Cashmore, Portfolio Holder for Climate and Councillor Phillimore, Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services, had a tough decision choosing the winning names from the imaginative and quirky entries.

The winners have been notified and a prize presentation ceremony is being planned.

The electric sweeper is already doing the rounds while the bin lorry is expected to be on the streets soon.



Both vehicles were made possible thanks to £573,701 funding received in 2023 from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs’ (DEFRA) Air Quality Grant. Part was used to purchase the sweeper while the rest went on an electric conversion kit for a diesel bin lorry.

Air Quality Grants aim to support local authorities in tackling pollutants including fine particulate matter and nitrogen oxides. This can create a healthier environment for everyone.

The new vehicles will be used across the District but predominantly in the Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAS). The AQMAS feature major traffic routes and dense populations with air pollutant levels higher than government-set targets.

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Hinckley & District Parkinson's Group

We are already well in to 2025, but looking back at the past year you may be wondering whether we are any closer to finding a cure for Parkinson's Disease?

Canadian Michael J. Fox is well known as a film actor – including the 'Back to the Future' series – but after being diagnosed with Parkinson's in 1991 he became determined to find a cure for the disease and in 2000 set up the Michael J. Fox Foundation in the USA to help fund research. His worsening symptoms [particularly memory loss and speech difficulties] meant that he effectively retired from acting in 2020, although last June he appeared on the Glastonbury stage playing the guitar with Coldplay!



In his end of year message about his Foundation he wrote of more funding than ever before going into research, with greater public awareness of the illness. The Foundation funded a record number of projects, with teams working hard to discover the biology behind Parkinson's to find the next discovery that may lead to a cure. Similar work is going on here in Britain through the Parkinson's UK organisation and a breakthrough is always possible at any time.

The Parkinson's Group at Hinckley continues to support those with Parkinson's locally as well as raising funds particularly to support the research work going on in the Leicester Universities. Regular meetings continue each month on the 2nd Sunday of the month at 2.30 on February 9th at the Mary Forryan Centre {LE10 1LW}; 'Get Active' Tuesday exercises at 3.00 at the St. Francis Centre; 'Movement to Music' [2.30] and 'Singing for Fun';[4.00] at Elmesthorpe Village Hall on Friday afternoons; Our Carers Group is on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at the same time as the exercise class, and there's Bowling at Barwell on the 4th Wednesday, February 26th. If you want to come along to the informal tea and chat, with the closure of Dobbies at Stapleton, the venue for the next 'Drop In' at the time of going to press was uncertain, but members will

be circulated or they can ring Janet Kavanagh on 07932615233. Janet can also answer any other enquiries about the Group.

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