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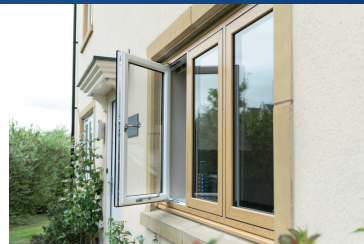
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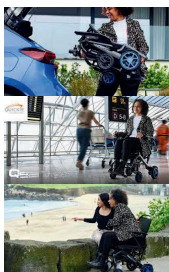
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More Unsung Heroes Honoured

A Cosby football coach and a Brownies leader and a charity from Countesthorpe were among those honoured at the Blaby District Council Community Awards 2024.

The annual awards recognise and celebrate the contribution and achievements of volunteers and voluntary sector organisations from across the District.

There are three categories - Volunteer of the Year, Young Volunteer of the Year and Community Group of the Year, the winner of which is voted for by the public.

Volunteer of the Year Award winner was retired teacher Tanya Smith who has been a bereavement volunteer with the charity Cruse Bereavement for 24 years.

Runner-up was Paul White the long-standing volunteer manager and coach for the Cosby Coyotes under-17s football team.

Betty Saunders - better known as Akela to many local children and parents in the Blaby area - received a special recognition award for her long service to scouting.

Young Volunteer of the Year was Hannah Farrands - a young leader at 2nd Countesthorpe Brownies. Over the last four years Hannah's inclusive and modern approach has really enhanced the group. Using her own experiences she has helped other girls overcome obstacles and achieve their potential.

The Community Group of the Year category attracted more than 1,200 public votes. Top prize of £1,000 went to Thistly Meadow Primary



School Parent Teacher Association for their huge fundraising efforts to enhance facilities to benefit both pupils and the community.

The runner-up was the relatively new equine charity The Next Chapter Rescue and Rehoming Centre in Countesthorpe.

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Act Now for a VE Day Street Party

Local communities are being encouraged to apply for free road closures to host street parties to celebrate the 80th anniversary of VE Day in May.

The historic anniversary, commemorating the end of the Second World War in Europe, takes place on Thursday 8 May, and celebrations are being planned across the country across the weekend from Thursday 8 to Sunday 11 May.

Leicestershire County Council is waiving the usual fee for closing roads in order to hold events, to help support communities and groups who want to organise events.

The deadline for applications for a free road closure to allow a celebration of the 80th anniversary of VE Day to be held is Friday, 21 March.

Councillor Ozzy O'Shea, cabinet member for highways, said: *"The 80th anniversary of VE Day is an historic event for the country - and the county of Leicestershire.*

"We want to help people to celebrate and encourage communities to come together to mark this special occasion, so we'll be waiving road closure fees.

"However, if you are planning an event, such



as a street party, you will need to let us know in good time, so that the necessary arrangements can be put in place."

The council is also offering free loans of signs and cones for event organisers, which will need to be collected from and returned to the Mountsorrel Highways Depot. These also need to be applied for by the deadline of Friday 21 March.

Guidance on organising an event and an application for a road closure is available on the county council's highways pages or by e-mailing eventsnetworkmanagement@leics.gov.uk

Communities across Leicestershire are invited to get involved in the commemorations by hosting parties of celebration throughout the day in the streets, gardens, churches, town halls, pubs, and clubs.

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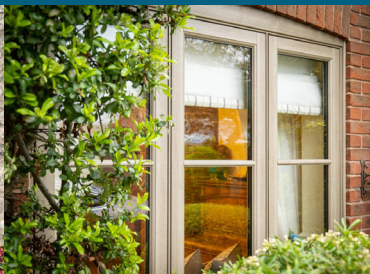
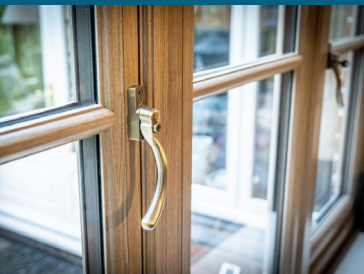
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Bin Lorry Fleet to Collect Blaby District Food Waste

Seven new green bin lorries and thousands of new bins and caddies will be bought to introduce food waste collections in Blaby District.

Weekly collections will start for residents across Blaby district from April 2026, the council has said.

The food that is collected will be taken to biogas plants to generate green energy, said Blaby District Council, rather than heading to landfill via black bins.

The fleet of £105,000 vehicles powered by vegetable oil will be ordered to collect waste from residents across the area.

Each household in Blaby will receive a small bin for waste including tea bags, vegetable peelings and left-overs and a larger bin for outside to store the food waste bags.

The authority said the scheme is being introduced to meet government food waste rules.

The government said more than 10 million tonnes of food is wasted every year in the UK.

It said rolling out collections nationwide could help cut more than 18 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions nationally connected with food waste.

Councils will be legally required to introduce schemes from 31 March 2026.

Nigel Grundy, the district council's neighbourhood services and assets portfolio holder, said the collections will be *"a challenge"* but the council *"applauds the reasoning behind it"*.

He added: *"I think once people realise how much food they are throwing away – thanks to it being collected in one place – they will want to act."*

"If you are throwing away food you are



throwing away money."

The council agreed to contribute £50,000 to the rollout, alongside £920,000 of government grants.



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