

Economy – Transport

People and businesses need infrastructure that provides excellent connectivity that meets their every-day needs. Transport infrastructure is a key enabler providing access to opportunity and opening up sites for growth. We aim to ensure good connectivity within the county and across the UK through working closely with partners to realise the Midlands Connect Strategy. We also continue to progress delivery of our local transport priorities to support growth, reduce congestion, increase road safety and support more sustainable travel.

Midlands Connect – the Midlands Connect Strategy outlines the region’s vision to become an engine for growth through investment in transport infrastructure. It proposes a 25-year programme of investment in strategic road and rail improvements to reduce congestion, improve journey times and support housing growth. We are currently involved in a number of Midlands Connect projects that are directly related to the successful delivery of our Prospectus for Growth. These projects include improvements to rail services to places such as Coventry and Birmingham, the A46 Trans Midland Trade Corridor, which is also a key element of the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan, and upgrades to the A5 and A42. These projects will greatly enhance people’s ability to travel efficiently and safely around and through Leicestershire in the context of much needed houses and jobs to meet the demands of the area’s growing population.

Transport for East Midlands (TfEM) – through our involvement in TfEM we have set out our top priorities for transport improvements across the East Midlands including making the most of the HS2 development, securing a Midland Main Line fit for the 21st century, improving access to East Midlands Airport, the A46 Growth Corridor, A5 Improvement Corridor and transforming East-West connectivity.

Rail Strategy – working with the City Council and LLEP we have set out rail priorities up to 2043 to influence the Government and rail companies to fund further improvements to Leicestershire’s rail network and services, benefiting residents and delivering significant benefits. The strategy aims to achieve significant improvements to rail travel to and from Leicestershire stations including cutting journey times to other cities around the country. Progress includes providing input into the East Midlands Trains and Cross-Country refranchising processes and working jointly with Midlands Connect, Leicester City Council and Warwickshire County Council to develop a business case for the reinstatement of direct Leicester to Coventry rail services. Midlands Connect has now submitted a Strategic Outline Business Case to the Department for Transport (DfT), underpinning the case to secure further funding to develop the project to the more detailed Outline Business Case stage (OBC). Ahead of the DfT’s funding decision, Midlands Connect is taking forward work to investigate options in the Nuneaton area for restoring a direct rail link between the line to Leicester and the line to Coventry; we have contributed £50,000 towards this work, which is essential to the development of the OBC.

In June 2019 we welcomed Midlands Connect’s announcement of the most ambitious upgrade of the region’s rail network for a generation (known as the Midlands Rail Hub). The plans outline an additional 24 extra trains per hour on the network which will increase capacity and reduce journey times; this includes proposals for additional, faster and better quality train services between Leicester and Birmingham. Midlands Connect’s Midlands Engine Rail would see a £3.5bn

improvement programme to transform the region's rail network including space for 736 more passenger trains each day and improved services to 60 locations.

In September 2019 Midlands Connect presented plans to establish a direct hourly train service between Leicester and Leeds via HS2. A direct service between Leicester and Leeds could have a journey time of 46 minutes. Trains capable of running on both conventional and high-speed rails would travel up the Midland Mainline and on a freight track to Toton and then further north on HS2. The proposal would help cut congestion and boost the local economy.

HS2 - we are also learning more about the implications for the council of work to develop the proposals for and to build HS2 Phase 2b. In October 2018 we agreed investment to secure a proactive approach to managing the potential impact of HS2 such as minimising visual and noise disruption for residents and seeking to achieve economic benefits for the county through improved connectivity with cities to the North as well as the Thames Valley.

Midland Mainline - we also welcomed DfT confirmation of electrification of the Midland Mainline from Kettering to Market Harborough, as an important step in achieving incremental electrification for the mainline.

Ivanhoe Line - in July 2019 we announced that we would be contributing £10,000 towards a new feasibility study of the Leicester to Burton line, led by the Campaign for the Reinstatement of the Ivanhoe Line.

Major Road Schemes Supporting Growth

Since November 2016, we have outlined a list of transport projects totalling in excess of £360m and with the potential to generate at least £500m GVA for the local economy. We have a very strong track record of securing external funding, having since 2014 secured over £120m to invest in supporting growth and improving the County's transport infrastructure.

In December 2018 we set out plans to secure more than £50m to support new homes, job opportunities and reduce journey times in Leicestershire through the Government's Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF). Our bids were submitted by the March 22 deadline and a decision by Government is still awaited. The bids provide the opportunity to ensure transport infrastructure is in place in a more coordinated way than would normally be possible through the usual planning process.

Melton Mowbray Distributor Road (MMDR) – in October 2018 we invited residents to look at detailed plans for the new MMDR, as well as submitting the planning application for the scheme. The proposals aim to transform the local area by tackling congestion, enabling housing growth, supporting business productivity and helping people get to work and college. In May 2019 plans for the relief road were considered by the council's Development Control and Regulatory Board and planning permission was granted. The plans were carefully developed to minimise the impact on the environment, local landowners and residents and, along the way, there have been refinements to the route following the feedback received. The proposals include a re-alignment of and enhancements to the River Eye SSSI, a shared footway along the length of the scheme and the creation of six roundabouts. The scheme's environmental proposals have recently received an East Midlands Royal Town Planning Institute award in the Natural Environment category. Work on the relief road is currently set to start next year and be completed in 2023. The route

of the road runs from the A606 Nottingham Road and crosses Scalford Road, Melton Spinney Road and Thorpe Road (A607) before re-joining the A606 Burton Road. The Department of Transport awarded £49.5m towards the road.

Hinckley – two junctions in Hinckley are to see a £5m investment to improve capacity and reduce congestion within the town. Works are scheduled for 2020.

Loughborough - M1, Junction 23 – over the Summer 2019 work commenced on a multi-million pound scheme to reduce congestion and unlock future development in Loughborough. The highway improvement scheme which will also provide access to the West of Loughborough Sustainable Urban Extension and the Loughborough University Science and Enterprise Park (LUSEP). The scheme is being funded by developers, £5m from Highways England and £12m from the LLEP. The second stage of the £25m project will include improvements to support future development and traffic growth. The scheme will upgrade a single carriageway to dual carriageway and create a new roundabout for two large housing and employment sites as well as providing cycling and walking facilities.

Coalville, A511 - in August 2019 we announced that the Council's A511 Coalville Growth Corridor plans had been included in priorities for Major Road Network funding by Midlands Connect, with a £42m request to support delivery. The proposals include improvements at nine locations between the A42 at Ashby and M1 Junction 22 and a new link road which would create a new north-south link across Coalville. Midlands Connect felt it was an ambitious proposal with compelling evidence that it creates new jobs and homes, improves access to major employers like Amazon and will improve air quality by reducing congestion. The proposal also aims to improve journey time reliability for public transport.

Anstey Lane and A46 - the County Council led on the delivery of improvements on behalf of the City Council, which will see a range of measures introduced on the A5630 Anstey Lane and A46 to increase capacity and improve journey times. The scheme will see the existing single lane section of road between the A46 interchange and Bennion Road roundabout upgraded to a dual carriageway.

Additional lanes will be created at the approach to the roundabouts at both junctions with new traffic lights installed. Pedestrian and cycling routes along the busy stretch of road will also be improved as part of the scheme. The improvements are designed to help accommodate the extra traffic that will be generated by the 3,000-home Ashton Green development by Leicester City Council. It will also support growth anticipated from future housing developments in the north of Leicester and in the county. Improvements began in September 2019.

Highways Capital Programme – in March 2019 we agreed a capital programme totaling £159.2m to 2023 for highways and transport. Key projects include the Melton Distributor Road, the transport asset management programme, Anstey Lane A46 improvements, M1 Junction 23 improvements, advanced design for major schemes, vehicle replacements, Hinckley Area Project Zone 4, Melton Depot replacement, and local safety schemes. Advance design works include the A511/A50 and M1 Junction 20a.

Traffic Management and Safety

Average Speed Cameras – there are communities across the county who feel speeding motorists are having a negative effect on life in their local area. In order to help tackle this, seven pilot sites for our average speed camera trial were switched on starting from September 2018. The scheme aims to provide a deterrent to prevent speeding. The Council has committed £500k to the 12-month trial which provides the funding for the cameras, equipment, staffing and enforcement action by the police. Since the cameras have been switched on just under 10,000 people have been issued a ticket for speeding, up to January 2019. Evidence also shows the cameras have been successful in lowering speeds at these locations. In September 2018 the Council stepped up its campaign with HM Treasury to keep the fines collected from the average speed camera trial which could then be re-invested in a further roll-out of the cameras across the County.

Reducing Rural Speeds – in March 2019 the Council announced that it was expanding the speed reduction scheme to include a further 24 rural routes. The project sees stretches of roads with a speed limit of 60mph reduced to 50mph. The move follows a study in 2017 which found that around 60% of collisions which caused injury on rural routes involved motorists exceeding the 60mph limit and the routes chosen all had well evidenced collision reduction reasons to reduce the speed limit. The speed limit reductions also incorporate reviews of the existing road markings and signs to ensure that they provide adequate warnings of the road conditions.

Road Safety – in August 2019 we commenced work on safety improvements on the crossroads between Charley Road, Iveshead Road and Abbey Road between Coalville and Shepshed. The work involves installing new road signs in all directions indicating bends in the road and the carriageway resurfacing. It is hoped that the road safety measures will reduce the number of accidents at this location. As part of our service offer we have investigated over 3000 enquiries, relating to parking, speeding, HGV issues, and pedestrian facilities to name a few and introduced approximately 100 safety/traffic management schemes throughout the County.

Bikeability - in 2018/19 over 2400 students were trained on roads at Level 2. This training usually takes place in the last year of primary school and can encourage children to cycle when they move to high school. Funding has been granted to support the delivery of Bikeability and training is continuing in 2019/20. In 2018/19 training using balance bikes has also been undertaken for more than 500 children aged 4 to 6. This 'Bikeability Balance' training gives children the confidence to begin riding.

Motorcyclist Safety - we remain supporters of The Shiny Side Up Partnership (SSU) an East Midlands motorcycle safety partnership. Originally set up to try and drive down casualties relating to sports bike riders this has now broadened to include lower capacity scooters and motorcycles. The County Council uses a variety of SSUP roadside posters at sites that have a poor motorcycle casualty history. These messages include Bike Crash Site Ahead and Think Bike. The roadside posters are bright yellow and have become a regular seasonal way of reminding riders and other

road users to take extra care and look out for each other. The website has been refreshed in 2019.

Red Route - Leicestershire's first 'red route' to combat dangerous parking on the A453 near East Midlands airport was introduced on a pilot basis. Double red lines replaced double yellow lines with effect from 5 August 2019. Red routes have a tougher zero tolerance approach to traffic violations and will benefit businesses, commuters and residents as well as cut congestion, pollution and help reduce accidents. The route will be enforced by automatic number plate recognition.

School Keep Clear scheme – in September 2018 the School Keep Clear scheme was launched with funding of £500k to address concerns about parking outside schools. The scheme makes more zig-zag zones enforceable outside schools and colleges. A camera car is used to collect evidence to enable fines to be issued to drivers who park on zig-zag markings. Since it launched, the scheme has seen 146 schools sign up, with a further 11 schools consulting on joining.

Driver Education - we have continued to offer our popular pre-driver days in 2019 to promote safety and highlight potential risks. They include an introduction to driving and cover issues relating to speed, safety and also a practical driving session, accompanied by a qualified driving instructor. Our older driver scheme Safer Driving with Age (SAGE) has also continued. The scheme encourages safe responsible driving by providing older drivers with a practical driving assessment in their own car with a qualified driving instructor. Driver education is an increasingly important part of speed management and driver behaviour change. The County Council facilitate the running of national driver education workshops on behalf of Leicestershire Police. In 2018/19, 22,500 drivers opted to attend courses as an alternative to receiving a fine and points on their driving licence. The aim of the courses is to help drivers understand the adverse consequences of their driving behaviour and give tips and advice to improve compliance and improve safety.

Community Speed Watch – this scheme continues to be a popular initiative which encourages local communities to get involved in identifying speeding motorists; and thereafter encouraging them to drive at more appropriate speeds. In 2018, there were 18 schemes and the details of more than 3,000 speeding vehicles were passed through to the police who, where possible, wrote to the registered keeper of the vehicles reminding them of the dangers associated with speed. The Community Speed Watch website has also been updated.

Hinckley Pedestrian Crossing – in January 2019 work started on a new pedestrian crossing scheme to improve access to amenities and provide safe crossing in Lancaster Road, Hinckley. The work completed on 1 February and will improve safety for pedestrians.

Delivering Enhanced Service for Communities – in June 2019 we agreed an enhanced highways service for parishes and communities, due to an increase in the number of communications to the service, with investment of £550k in 2019/20. The investment will help to improve specific groups of highways assets such as highways signs and lining.

Sustainable Travel

Choose How You Move – in November 2018 businesses across the county were given the opportunity to learn how sustainable travel schemes can help businesses. Many employers are already operating sustainable travel programmes including car shares and bike to work. The event provided a further opportunity for business to learn how to implement their own schemes including funding and grants to make changes.

Personal Travel Plans - in July 2019 personal travel plans were launched by the county and city councils to around 10,500 residents living in Birstall and Mowacre Hill. As part of the scheme people were asked about their travel patterns and given information and advice about alternative options, such as walking, cycling and public transport. The work with residents aims to make it easier for them to make sustainable and healthier travel choices.

Modeshift STARS – in February 2019 two county primary schools were honoured for their commitment to sustainable travel. Elizabeth Woodville was named county, midlands and north west primary school of the year at the Modeshift STARS school travel awards. Millfield LEAD Academy was also nominated in the Leicestershire category. Modeshift STARS is a national awards scheme established to recognise schools which demonstrate excellence in supporting walking, cycling and other forms of sustainable travel for the journey to school. Both Elizabeth Woodville and Millfield worked closely with the Council's safe and sustainable travel team. Measures have included no waiting zones, new pick up and drop off times and a nearby 'park and stride' which have helped relieve traffic congestion and increased active travel.

Public Transport – the Council also supports public transport in a variety of ways including by providing or supporting 100,000+ concessionary bus passes to help elderly and disabled pass holder travel free on local bus services. School transport is provided for 6,000+ school children, both mainstream and for those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). Over 33,000 blue badge permits are provided to allow disabled residents to have preferential parking closer to their destination. Three park and ride bus services provide fast and frequent buses in to Leicester and around 30 supported local bus service contracts are provided carrying bus passengers where commercial operators do not operate. Over 40 demand responsive transport services as an alternative to buses are provided and we also support Community transport providers across the County to provide services for those residents unable to use bus services or who are rurally isolated.

On Demand Travel - in April 2019 the first use of a section 106 planning gain agreement was used to finance an on-demand bus service in Leicestershire. Bus operator Arriva began providing the demand responsive, ride-sharing service, named ArrivaClick at the New Lubbethorpe development. Passengers book journeys using an app showing their preferred pick up point and destination and are matched with others and provided a seat on a 15-seater minibus.

Highways Maintenance and Management

Highways Maintenance – Leicestershire has some of the best maintained roads in the country and was the highest rated county council for road condition in a recent public satisfaction survey. Last year a total of £17m was invested in Highways Asset maintenance including £14.6m on carriageways, £0.8m on footways and rights of way, £0.9m on bridge maintenance and strengthening and £0.6m on flood alleviation.

In September 2018 we called on the Government to provide extra funds towards fixing Leicestershire roads damaged by the long summer heatwave. A total of £2.25m generated from investments was earmarked to fix the worst hit roads across the county, however more funds were needed to treat all affected sites. Gritters were deployed during soaring temperatures to protect roads at risk of melting by spreading 150 tonnes of granite.

Winter Maintenance – in October 2018 we welcomed three new state-of-the-art gritters to our fleet to help keep roads safe and traffic moving in winter. The new vehicles are fitted with the latest technology, including GPS systems which provide automatic grit spreading and route navigation to make the service as cost effective as possible. We also refurbished six gritters with technology, reviewed routes and increased coverage to 47% of the network and built salt levels to 18,500 tonnes.

We monitor the weather constantly and if freezing temperatures are forecast have a total of 23 gritters and drivers who spread rock salt across key routes. In January 2019 gritters hit the roads as temperatures plummeted. In March 2019 the three winners of a competition to name our three new gritting vehicles were announced. The three new vehicles are now on standby along with the rest of the gritting fleet.

Highways Support – in September 2018 Storm Bronagh caused disruption across Leicestershire. Over a period of two days, crews cleared more than 90 sites where the road network was disrupted by falling debris. In November 2018 Storm Diana hit the county and the crews worked to keep traffic moving and deal with any flooding. Crews were out 14 times removing blockages from roads across the county. In March 2019 emergency gangs were busy clearing trees and branches which fell during Storm Freya. Emergency gangs dealt with 18 call outs to remove trees blocking roads and footpaths, ensuring the safety of people while keeping traffic moving.

In August 2019 our highways crews were out again clearing trees and branches following heavy rain and strong winds. The teams dealt with over twenty incidents of fallen trees blocking roads across the county and fifteen call outs. Trees and branches which were blocking roads were moved to one side to allow traffic to pass safely.

Grass Cutting - the grass-cutting season commenced in April with the council's teams mowing the equivalent of 532 pitches at Leicester City FC's King Power Stadium each month. The authority maintains nearly 3.8million square metres of urban grass in residential areas. Residents who want to find out when verges are scheduled to be cut in their area can use the council's interactive grass-cutting map. We cut grass in towns and villages for safety reasons, not just to enhance the appearance of communities. Looking after verges, central reservations and islands ensures that visibility is not restricted for motorists and cyclists at junctions and that pavement widths are not reduced.

We have bought some new areas of grass cutting in house, with the arrival of two new teams to take on the additional work. The insourcing has seen an additional 11,705 grass verges added to the programme on top of the 29,139 already maintained. The change will give more flexibility to respond to changes and manage demand in the area. Work is currently ongoing with those communities who no longer want their verges cut but would like to see those areas remain 'wild' to support biodiversity and wildlife.

Gully Cleaning - to tackle blocked drains we are applying a new 'risk-based' approach to gully cleaning that includes increasing the number of roadside drains treated annually - from 64,000 per year to 92,000 – without costs rising. The change follows a seven-month trial to find a more cost effective and focused way of cleaning the county's 130,000 gullies. The trial found that it would be beneficial for more regular visits to roads at high risk of flooding due to the drains filling faster with silt. Previously drains were cleaned on an 18 to 24-month fixed programme, whether the road was at risk of flooding or not. The changes are part of our new highways asset management plan and were rolled out across the county from early 2019.

Great Communities – Environment and Waste

Our aim is to ensure that we protect our environment by sustainably managing our natural resources. We also aim to enhance the environment across the county and improve the quality of life of residents.

Environment Strategy – in July 2018 we approved a new Environment Strategy covering the period to 2030 and an associated three-year Action Plan. To date over £21m has been invested in significant projects across the county which have direct and indirect environmental benefits including converting the street lighting to LED bulbs, installation of solar panels and the installation of a biomass boiler at County Hall. Under the new strategy we aim to minimise our environmental impacts and contribute to the improvement of the wider environment through local action. We will also continue to play a significant role in protecting and enhancing the environment of Leicestershire, meeting the challenges of climate change and seeking to embed environmental sustainability into both social and economic development in the county.

The Strategy consists of 15 aims, and a number of high-level targets, covering climate change, waste, water, energy, transportation and environmental performance. Key aspects of the Strategy include empowering communities, residents, the public sector and businesses to become resilient to climate change alongside the council's commitment to reduce its own impact on the environment. Targets include a 38% reduction in carbon emissions by 2030 (against a 2016/17 baseline), an increase in the level of low carbon and renewable energy generated on council land and properties to 15% by 2021 and increasing the proportion of less polluting and more efficient vehicles in our fleet and reducing business mileage. As part of the UK100 campaign we have pledged to use 100% clean energy by 2050.

Climate Emergency Declaration – in May 2019 we declared a climate emergency and committed to become carbon neutral by 2030 for our own operations, to work with others and to lobby government to make the wider 2030 target possible and to limit global warming to less than 1.5 degrees. In September 2019 we agreed new proposals to begin to implement our commitment to become carbon neutral by 2030.

Rolling out a 'green' fleet, running electric park and ride buses and creating one of the first zero-carbon industrial estates in the UK are among our plans to tackle climate change. We are investing £450,000 of seed funding to kick-start work on wide-ranging plans. Switching to a green electricity tariff, launching a major tree planting programme and working with developers and others to build 'green' new homes are also being considered. We will be updating our Environment Strategy and Action Plan to reflect these new commitments.

Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions – through our Corporate Energy Strategy we have seen £0.2m extra investment this year in upgraded lighting, boilers and heating controls at county council premises. We have seen real change and initiatives such as LED street lights and solar panels have enabled us to cut our CO2 emissions by over 60%, reduce our wider greenhouse gas emissions by 55% and halve the amount of office waste we produce.

100% Clean Energy – in May 2018 we committed to using 100% clean energy by 2050 by becoming signatory to the UK100 campaign. Aiming to ensure that energy will come from renewable sources such as wind, water and solar power and not from fossil fuels. We will be changing to a 100% renewable electricity tariff from October 2019. Pledging our support to the campaign means we can work with communities and businesses in the county to change to a low carbon economy, which will help to secure an environmentally sustainable future.

Green Energy and Solar Farm - in April 2018 we unveiled innovative proposals for a solar farm and industrial units to generate green energy and almost £1m a year for council services. The plan involves creating a renewable energy facility and 14 workspaces for businesses on land off the A6 north of Quorn. Each year the site would produce 10 megawatts of electricity - enough to power 3000 homes – and generate £940,000 for the council to invest in frontline services.

Fosse Energy – we want to ensure that people in our communities can easily heat their homes using a sustainable source that's affordable. From November 2018 county and city residents were able to sign up to buy green energy from a not-for-profit company that aims to provide some for the cheapest gas and electricity. Customers selecting Fosse Energy's green energy tariff get electricity that is certified as being sourced from UK-based wind and solar generators. All four tariff options provide for 100% renewable electricity. In July the service had 677 customers with 1212 meters on supply. For customers who have not changed supplier recently there is likely to be a considerable saving. A new marketing campaign has been launched with poster sites, Leicestershire Live and park and ride buses. Promoting the services 100% renewable energy and not for profit status.

Electric Vehicle Charging – electric vehicle charging points have been installed at five locations – County Hall, Croft and Mountsorrel Highways Depots, Loughborough Technology Unit and Coalville Business Unit. The charging points are available to visitors and staff, providing cheap charging rates for electric vehicles.

Climate Change Grants – in September 2018 we encouraged community groups to apply for the latest round of Shire Climate Change grants. Grants of up to £5,000 are available through the scheme to help groups and organisations reduce their carbon emissions by improving the energy efficiency of community buildings. Groups which have already been supported include Syston Town Council and Fearon Hall community centre in Loughborough, which received funding to install LED lights and

a new boiler. Funding can not only improve energy efficiency but also improve facilities for local residents. From November 2019, this grant scheme will be replaced by the Shire Environment Grant scheme which will provide funding to projects that not only reduce carbon emissions in the community but also projects that tackle climate change, improve and protect biodiversity and prevent and reduce waste.

Tree Planting – trees make a huge contribution to keeping our air clean and providing habitats for wildlife. In November 2018, farmers and landowners were urged to apply for free trees to help improve Leicestershire’s landscapes. The trees aim to replace those that have been removed or under threat from disease. Up to 15 new trees along with planting items were available. The Free Tree Scheme shows commitment to enhancing the county’s landscapes.

Landscape Study Prize – in the Landscape Institute Awards 2018 the Leicestershire Landscape and Green Infrastructure Study was highly commended. The study provides a robust evidence base to allow planning authorities to be proactive in maximising green infrastructure opportunities in future development.

Clean Air Day – air pollution can have serious negative effects on people’s health. In June 2019 we pledged to support Clean Air Day as part of the council’s commitment to become carbon neutral by 2030. We have already made changes across our operations to reduce carbon emissions by 69% but there’s more to do and we want to lead the way when it comes to improving air quality in the county. We continue to support park and ride sites, bike-ability course, travel planners and an active travel reward app to help reduce emissions as well as active travel activities and initiatives for staff.

Waste Management

Resources and Waste Strategy – the National Resources and Waste Strategy was released in December 2018 and sets out how the Government will preserve material resources by minimising waste, promoting resource efficiency and moving towards a circular economy. During 2019, we have responded to a number of government consultations including consistency in household and business recycling collections in England, a Deposit Return Scheme and Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging.

Waste Education - in January 2019, we provided theatre sessions to schools with the aim of inspiring the next generation of recyclers to think about reducing, reusing and recycling and to encourage more sustainable behaviours. We offered 50 two-hour sessions to all primary schools in Leicestershire who received an interactive and fun workshop. We also offer free educational workshops, activities and talks to community groups in Leicestershire.

Composting – each year Leicestershire residents produce more than 300,000 tonnes of rubbish and recyclables, some of which is uncooked fruit, vegetables and garden waste which could have been composted rather than put in the residual waste bin. To help we continue to offer cut-price compost bins to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill. Residents can also call on the support of a Master Composter, volunteers who use their own skills to raise awareness of the benefits of home composting.

Food Waste Prevention – we continue to promote the Love Food Hate Waste campaign in association with WRAP (Waste Resources and Action Programme) and its national campaign, including the #Spoiled Rotten campaign which is encouraging people to buy only what they need to help reduce the 7.1 million tonnes of food wasted every year in UK homes.

Community Kitchens - the community kitchen project is designed to get people thinking about the food they throw away and how this can be prevented. Led by local volunteers the sessions teach residents new cookery skills. In addition to cutting waste and saving money, the project aims to improve nutritional awareness and healthy eating. The classes also provide a safe space to socialise with others. During 2019 we continued to provide funding to 3 kitchens in Barwell, Earl Shilton and Wykin and continue to seek new kitchens to support.

Recycling – in September 2018, the Council teamed up with Recycle Now as part of Recycle Week to build awareness of and encourage increased participation in recycling behaviour. The council's waste initiative team joined with district councils across the county to provide recycling tips and advice. In August 2019 we launched a new campaign focusing on reducing the amount of contamination in recycling bins. During 2018/19, 5,500 tonnes of material placed in recycling bins in Leicestershire were rejected due to the presence of incorrect items such as disposable nappies and food waste spoiling good quality, recyclable material. We want to recycle as much as we can and aim to increase the 45% recycled to 50%. The council is working with the district councils to improve recycling output with the help of clear information and advice as part of our new campaign.

Shire Recycling Grants – in September 2018 and June 2019 organisations were encouraged to apply for a recycling grant of up to £3,000 for community-based projects to deliver local waste prevention, recycling or composting activities. The grants aim to help to reduce household waste, divert waste from disposal and make the best use of recycling, re-use and composting in a cost-effective way, while bringing Leicestershire communities together. From November 2019, this grant scheme will be replaced by the Shire Environment Grant scheme which will provide funding to projects that tackle climate change, improve and protect biodiversity and prevent and reduce waste.

Real Nappies – the average child will need 5,000 to 6,000 nappy changes before potty training is complete. We offer a free reusable nappy trial kit to Leicestershire residents to reduce the amount of disposal nappies which make up approximately 6% of the household waste bin. The kit contains a variety of different nappies along with wraps and liners and allows the opportunity to see which nappies suit best over a period of four weeks.

Recycling and Household Waste Sites – the Council provides 14 sites across the county. A programme of works at the Recycling and Household Waste Sites and Waste Transfer Stations (WTSs) has continued to ensure ongoing environmental compliance and efficient service provision. This includes improvements at Loughborough WTS and a range of preparatory work for future projects. In December 2018 our Loughborough site reopened ahead of schedule following essential maintenance work.

Waste Treatment - the authority has become a shareholder in an Energy from Waste (EfW) facility. As a shareholder we have secured increased waste treatment

capacity which will increase the resilience of the waste management service, allow us to treat more waste rather than landfill it and realise a significant financial saving of over £0.5m by 2020. A 'bulk haulage' contract has also been procured which aims to increase flexibility for the haulage service by moving waste from the County Council's WTSs more efficiently, allowing us to react to changes in service provision and to realise further savings in the future.

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