



## **COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S COLUMN – December 2018**

I would like to wish everybody a merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. If you have been trying to contact me over November, sorry but I have been away on holiday in South Africa and will have hopefully contacted you by now, if not please get back to me.

As your County Councillor, I am always on hand to try and deal with any concerns you may have about services provided by Leicestershire County Council. Such as street lighting, highways, footpaths, overhanging trees and hedges onto the highways/footpaths, social services etc.

### **Winter Service Review**

Following the extreme winter weather of 2017/18 County did 15 days of 24/7 running due to snow conditions, they used 20,000 tonnes of winter grit and filled 1,300 salt bins. The budget for this was £1,628,796 but County spent £2,618,438.

3 New gritters have been ordered and 6 gritters have gone in for refurbishment. The Salt has already been ordered and delivered ready for this coming winter. In fact the gritters have already gone out on a number of occasions. (End of October).

Following the success last year when a new gritter was named. (Gritterthaurus) Another chance to name the 3 new ones will be going out to schools in Leicestershire in the New Year.

I am pleased to report, following many years of my asking Anson Road will now be gritted as will Loughborough Road/Forest Street.

To get up to date about highway issues you can follow on the County Council's twitter feed: [www.twitter.com/LeicsCountyHall](https://www.twitter.com/LeicsCountyHall)

### **Snow Wardens**

Last winter was one of the most severe on record; it put pressure on County's resources meaning they were unable to treat footpaths. The County Council is working with parish and town councils to encourage people to sign up to their Snow Ward scheme. The scheme is intended to provide a more reliable arrangement for



clearing key local footpaths during prolonged severe weather and allows County to concentrate on treating major routes.

Anybody interested in volunteering will receive training and advice on clearing snow and ice safely. They will also be provided with protective clothing, a shovel, brush and wheelbarrow. Anybody interested in volunteering please register your interest by contacting the Town Council.

### **Gritting in Summer**

Since the beginning of July, the highways team have dusted more than 25 locations across the county. It is the first time for a number of years the highway teams have had to carry out dusting using modified gritters. However, the impact of the joint hottest summer on record has caused longer term damage to our roads here in Leicestershire and throughout the country.

### **Do you live near a watercourse, ditch or brook?**

You may or may not be aware that the majority of ordinary (smaller) watercourses are actually the responsibility of the riparian landowner (owner of land/property next to a watercourse/ditch) to maintain, This includes clearing the watercourse of any debris/rubbish (such as leaf litter, branches, waster material) and maintaining the flow (keeping water moving). There is often the belief that the Council are responsible for maintaining ditches, watercourses etc., next to the highway. The Council maintain such watercourse in a few incidences however the majority are riparian owned. Common law places a duty on the owner of land adjacent to a highway to maintain any ditches which function as natural drainage for the land and also as part of the highway drainage.

It is also important to not throw anything into the watercourse such as grass cutting, leaf litter etc., as this could get washed downstream and could cause blockages that can result in localised flooding.

If you are unsure whether you may be a riparian landowner or would like further information then please visit [www.gov.uk/guidance/owning-a-watercourse](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/owning-a-watercourse) or contact [flooding@leics.gov.uk](mailto:flooding@leics.gov.uk) .



## Tackling Loneliness and Social Isolation

There is increasing evidence and awareness that loneliness and social isolation has an impact on people's physical and mental health, wellbeing and independence. This has led to concerns that loneliness and social isolation is having a negative impact on people, communities and the demand for public services.

Over the next few months, the County Council will be working with the University of Leicester and other partners to:-

- Develop better understanding of the nature, extent and impact of loneliness and social isolation on people, communities and public services through collation of evidence from Council data and surveys and discussions with services, partners and community organisations.
- Consider the role the Council can play in tackling loneliness and social isolation across Leicestershire such as leadership and coordination, communications campaigns and potential improvement to delivery of existing services.

The Council and our public sector partners are already doing a great deal: for example the day-to-day work of our social workers supporting vulnerable children, adults and families; blue lights services working to keep people safe; their network of local area coordinators who are actively connecting people within communities; and County's trading standards team working to protect vulnerable people being taken advantage of.

Every time County connects with someone it makes a difference. However, this is not something County can do alone and fortunately there are some amazing volunteers and community groups in Leicestershire and Shepshed that are already doing a huge amount of good work to tackle loneliness and isolation, including community connection projects for older people, good neighbour schemes, local groups to cater to a wide range of interests, such as Age UK's men in sheds, Kirkhill Luncheon Club, Silver Circle, Baptist Ladies , the 2013 Club (Used to be known as the Stroke Club) and the Glenmore Centre luncheon club (**who are desperate for volunteers**).



## **'Start A Conversation' – suicide prevention campaign**

Death from suicide has devastating consequences for family, friends and colleagues. There are on average 55 deaths from suicide each year in Leicestershire and it remains the biggest killer of men under 50 and the leading cause of death in young people.

Covering Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland and working in partnership with a number of organisations from a variety of sectors from the community, the 'Start A Conversation' campaign launched on World Suicide Prevention Day in September.

The aim is to make sure that people are aware of the warning signs of suicidal behaviour and have an open and honest approach to conversations.

The campaign also seeks to:

- Remove stigmas and myths and make it ok to have conversations about suicide
- Provide information and advice to individuals at crisis point
- Build safer communities through awareness raising
- Help people maintain good mental health
- Support those who have been bereaved by suicide

To make a pledge and find out more visit [www.startaconversation.co.uk](http://www.startaconversation.co.uk)

## **HS2 UPDATE**

I am still attending regular meetings of the various HS2 Boards, the mitigation board and the Environmental Board. Leicestershire needs to make sure that when looking at the impact around Toton the impact around junction 24 and the need to make sure that connectivity to this area are taken into account, if not a golden opportunity will have been lost.



### **Bradgate Park**

I have now done 9 years as a Trustee at Bradgate Park and have had to step down. I found this very interesting and was surprised at the amount of work that goes on behind the scenes. I shall of course still visit the park with my granddaughter as I have always done, I know that it is well used by residents of Shepshed where for £3 all day parking you can go as a family, take a picnic, do rock climbing, go fishing and walk.

### **Tickow Lane – closure**

I am afraid I must report that the closure of Tickow Lane is to continue until 21<sup>st</sup> December. I have written to County expressing my concerns amount the length of time this has been closed and have asked that no further extension is given. My major concerns have been that it has not been easy for myself or members of the public to keep an eye on what is happening in the area such as the hedges being cut down etc.

### **Resident raised concerns**

Main complaints this month have been about overgrown hedges and trees causing problems to pedestrians. I also receive a number of letters from residents who wish to remain anonymous, can I assure you that if possible I will take up the issues mentioned, such as noisy neighbours, overgrown hedges etc., In some cases without having more information I am unable to take it further.

Buses – residents in the new estate on Buttercup Fields have contacted me regarding their concerns about the possibility of buses going into this new estate. (This might have been part of the planning permission) At the time of going to press I have not received any information from either County or Charnwood regarding their concerns. It is ironic but other areas of Shepshed are crying out for buses to go down their road.

### **Your help**



Again I would like to thank the residents who keep me informed regarding issues around Shepshed, such as overgrown hedges, litter, dog mess etc., without your eyes and ears I could not get them reported and sorted.

or help and advice on County matters, I can be contacted on 502974 or e mail [christine\\_radford@hotmail.com](mailto:christine_radford@hotmail.com) or [christine.radford@leics.gov.uk](mailto:christine.radford@leics.gov.uk) or come along to my monthly Surgery on the FIRST Saturday of the month in the Town Council Offices, 47a Charnwood Road 10-11am. No appointment is necessary.

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