

# Leading Leicestershire: Transforming Public Services

Leicestershire County Council  
Annual Performance Report 2014



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## **Introduction and Overall Performance Summary**

Local government is facing major challenges. We have been given the most difficult funding position since World War II, with significant reductions now needed in our spending, due to government plans for national budget deficit reduction. Our revenue support grant from government fell by 20% over 2012/13 and 2013/14 with a further 11% fall in 2014/15. Over the next four years we expect a further significant reduction in funding of around 35%. There is also increasing demand on a range of services, including from our ageing population.

In Spring 2014, following widespread public consultation, the County Council agreed three major strategies in response to these challenges: a new Strategic Plan to 2018 setting out our priorities and targets for service delivery and improvement; a revised three year Medium Term Financial Strategy to support delivery of the Strategic Plan and achieve the savings required; and a major new Transformation Plan setting out the programmes and projects that will be necessary to reshape the Council and services.

The Strategic Plan sets out 69 priority areas with supporting performance measures and targets across 5 key themes – leadership and transformation, enabling economic growth, better care through health and social care integration, supporting children and families, and safer communities – a better environment and place.

Whilst implementation of the Strategic Plan and supporting Transformation Plan are still in their relatively early stages this Annual Report sets out our progress to date in mobilising delivery together with other improvements to services over the last 12 months.

### **Performance Summary**

Overall analysis of the narrative shows strong examples of delivery across the theme areas. There are good plans and governance in place supporting delivery and improvement. Overall provisional analysis of the available comparative performance data shows that Leicestershire is the top performing county in the region and continues to be amongst the highest performing counties nationally. There has been improvement on a significant number of priority indicators and a good number are in the top quartile for performance.

Leicestershire has a range of areas of top quartile performance including Council efficiency; our approach to equality and diversity; highway maintenance and condition; minimal numbers of young people not in education employment or training (NEETs); feelings of safety among users of our adult social care services; many aspects of public health, many aspects of children and young people's health; timeliness and number of adoptions; and support for vulnerable families with complex needs. Other areas of strong relative performance include waste management and recycling; sport and physical activity; aspects of educational attainment; youth justice; and community cohesion.

Particular areas of improved performance over the past year include - **Leadership and Transformation:** resident perceptions regarding the value for money provided by the County Council; the Council's Stonewall Workplace Equality Index ranking; and the number of volunteer enquiries and conversions. In relation to **Enabling Economic Growth:** the unemployment rate, which fell from 2% to 1.2% over the year to June 2014 and other economy indicators; skill levels; tourist visitor numbers and contribution to the local economy; new housing delivery; and the proportion of the population with access to high speed broadband.

**Better Care - Health and Social Care Integration:** many aspects of public health are top quartile and/or improved including health inequalities, mortality rates for Cardiovascular Disease, cancer and respiratory disease, non-opiate drug treatment, and sports participation; the number of care home providers exceeding the "standard quality" of service outlined in the Quality Assessment Framework also increased. For **Supporting Children and Families:** children's participation in sport and physical activity; children in care waiting less than 20 months for adoption; aspects of educational attainment including early years attainment and progress between key stages 1 and 2; teenage pregnancy and Children's Centres OFSTED inspection ratings.

**Safer Communities and a Better Environment/Place:** the number of first time entrants to the youth justice system almost halved compared to the previous year; all indicators linked to minimising antisocial behaviour have shown improvements; and numbers killed and seriously injured on Leicestershire's roads continue to fall. Good progress has also been on improving the authorities' environmental performance.

A small number of areas require a continued delivery focus, though these are already covered within existing organisational improvement plans. For **Leadership and Transformation:** working days lost to sickness absence following previous good performance has slipped back to the English local authority average. Sickness absence management processes are being reinforced. **Better Care - Health and Social Care Integration:** continuing the pace of work around securing outcome improvements from greater health and social care integration and the Better Care Fund including mitigating pressures on the acute sector and preventative adult social care services. Continuing efforts to minimise public health trends such as relating to obesity and child tooth decay, and ensuring mental health services are high performing.

For **Supporting Children and Families:** bringing through the improved educational attainment of children in care at Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4 and continuing the improvements in educational performance in collaboration with the Leicestershire Educational Excellence Partnership. **Safer Communities and a Better Environment/Place:** total crime, domestic burglary and vehicle crime increased slightly from last year, albeit from a low base following a number of years of reducing crime levels.

## **Leadership and Transformation**

Our new Vision for Transformation and Transformation Plan were agreed in May 2014 and set out how we are transforming public services to meet the funding gap and improve outcomes for residents. The vision includes five broad transformation objectives – to work the Leicestershire pound to reduce the cost of services and maximise funding; to manage demand through prevention to reduce pressures on front line services; to integrate with partners to provide a better experience for people through joined-up services and pooled budgets; to recognise communities and individuals and to support active communities; and to work effectively through a culture that focuses on priorities, people and outcomes.

The **Transformation Plan**, led by our Transformation Board and being implemented by a new Transformation Unit, is comprised of 24 major service projects and 6 corporate enabler projects to support the transformation and wider changes in the Council. The 6 corporate enablers are now progressing with improvements in relation to Customers and Communities, Effective Commissioning, People and Organisational Development, Data and Business Intelligence, Information and Technology, and Property and Asset Management. The Transformation Programme is progressing different delivery models, looking at how customers access our services and how effectively we commission services, and in some cases considering if we need to stop delivering certain services and do different things instead. The involvement of the community and service users is key and we are ensuring that there is appropriate consultation and engagement in relation to possible changes. Further details are set out in the sections below.

**Communities Strategy** - in order to ensure that service delivery is embedded in partnership work with communities we have set out a fresh approach to support this in our new Communities Strategy. The Strategy sets out how we will help people and communities to support themselves and vulnerable people; work with communities to design and deliver services in a way which increases the ability of community groups to get involved in delivery; and develop the voluntary and community sector as an effective provider of services. As part of the approach we have launched a new £420K Community Grants Programme. The new programme comprises two grant schemes – the £260K SHIRE Community Solutions Grant scheme for grants up to £10,000 focusing on early intervention and prevention for the young, vulnerable and elderly – and the £160K Your SHIRE Community Grant scheme for grants up to £2,500 to smaller groups and charities to help them develop their activities and start new community services. Our Social Enterprise Grant Fund also provides support for social enterprise development across the county. The scheme supports existing and emerging social enterprises with small grants, with a focus on vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities, older people, and worklessness. Twenty one projects were funded during 2013/14.

The new Grants Programme replaces the previous Community Forum Budgets and Big Society Grants and more clearly targets funding to support local priorities. In 2013/14, 174 community projects were awarded grants from the Community Forum Budgets scheme, with 1,500 people involved in deciding how the funds were allocated at the 25 decision nights. In addition Big Society Grant Fund allocations were awarded to 77 projects. The projects have improved a number of areas

including supporting the development of youth, sports and community facilities as well as neighbourhood plan development across the County.

Support for volunteering saw over 5,000 volunteer enquiries dealt with by Voluntary Action Leicestershire in 2013/14 via our infrastructure support contract, with 46% of those going on to volunteer. 77 groups were supported with training on volunteer recruitment and management and 692 groups were also supported with a range of activities including on winning tenders for service delivery and obtaining funding. Voluntary groups secured over £1m in grants during the year. We also continue to pilot innovative schemes to encourage volunteering such as the time-banking schemes in Coalville and Lutterworth which encourage residents to exchange services using units of time to help get things done in individual homes and communities.

**Customer Services** - our Customer Services were re-accredited in March 2014 with the Customer Service Excellence Standard. As part of the approach an independent telephone survey of customers of our Customer Service Centre (CSC) was undertaken and found that 81% of respondents were satisfied with the overall service. The survey recommendations are being used to further improve the service. A new set of Customer Service Standards have been implemented and a new customer insight system (Cmetrix) installed to provide robust customer perception data linked to the Standards.

During 2013/14, complaints recording and reporting were further improved with 271 corporate complaints reported and assessed, up from 234 the previous year. Complaint response times were maintained, with 82% receiving a response within 10 days. Commendations continued to rise with 128 recorded (excluding Social Care) compared to 103 in 2013. Flooding and drainage-related complaints featured prominently during 2013 with 29 complaints. Following a number of improvements the volume of complaints dropped to 7 during 2013/14 and 3 commendations were received about the service. Keeping customers updated remains an area for improvement and is now a commitment within our Customer Service Standards. Better customer service is underpinned by effective customer information. During 2013/14 we were chosen to host a pioneering new national Centre of Excellence to help share information. The Centre will help councils, government departments, police, health agencies and others to work together to share appropriate information in a safe, seamless way.

**Digital Delivery** – our Systems and Technology enabler project is providing the information and technology infrastructure, solutions and services needed to support Council and service transformation. It is putting in place the foundations for the information and technology solutions that we will need over the next 3 – 5 years to deliver effective, value for money, flexible and scalable IT services. As part of our IT support approach our ICT Service Desk has been awarded the coveted four star accreditation for the second year running by the Service Desk Institute (SDI). Digital delivery is a key part of our strategy. Our website is currently rated 2 stars out of 4 and we have therefore commenced a major project to redevelop and re-launch the site to improve usability and widen the range of online services. Using low-cost, digital and social media has continued to be a focus during the year. The number of people we are reaching via our main social media channel, Twitter, has increased by

81% year-on-year and our combined reach via social media is now approximately 21,000 people. Since 2009, the proportion of people who feel well informed about local public services has increased by 33% to 73.5%. Enhanced digital delivery requires new innovative ideas and hi-tech creative ideas to help vulnerable people have therefore been developed in our partnership with De Montfort University. The 48-hour hackathon brought programmers together to generate new ideas to improve the lives of older and vulnerable people in the county – including ‘apps’ to help people with dementia, help care workers to monitor service users and support transport applications for voluntary groups.

**Strategic Commissioning and Procurement** - a new Commissioning and Procurement Strategy is in preparation through our Effective Commissioning enabler project. It will set out how our commissioning and procurement approaches are being improved to support the wider transformation of services and the Council, improve outcomes and deliver better value for taxpayers. To support better commissioning we are implementing new commissioning structures and enhanced commissioning support services; our aims being to better understand needs and demand and enhance our commissioning evidence base, challenge existing service delivery, and improve our commercial approach, contract performance management and delivery. During 2013/14, £7.4m procurement savings were achieved and approximately 52% of our procurement expenditure was with small and medium size enterprises.

**Asset Rationalisation and Utilisation** - we have agreed a new Asset Management Plan to make the most of our property portfolio including selling surplus properties. We are aiming to raise £13m over the next three years from land and building disposals. We have already saved £700k a year by having fewer but better offices and sharing buildings. In February adult and children’s social care services moved into The Symington Building in Market Harborough, which also includes a museum, library, and register office within the District Council’s refurbished office base. We also share buildings with Melton and Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Councils. Just under £15m was generated from the sale of surplus properties during 2013/14.

The cost of energy including environmental levies and water represents 40% of the running costs of our estate. We have therefore agreed a new Property Energy Strategy paving the way for new investment in energy efficiency. The Strategy aims to save £400k per year by reducing the circa £2.3m we pay for energy and carbon levy by 24% by 2017. This will be achieved by investing over £4m to introduce energy efficiency measures and renewable energy technologies including solar power and biomass heating, manage heating and cooling systems to deliver appropriate temperatures, and appointment of dedicated energy staff. The work will also include improvements to windows, lighting and the way buildings are occupied.

**People and Organisational Development** - our People Strategy sets out our vision for our workforce and the key actions we are taking to meet our human resources and wider objectives. The Strategy focuses on supporting the Council's Strategic Plan and Transformation Programme. Key activities include developing our leadership capability and capacity; managing and sustaining high staff performance; targeted learning and development; employee engagement and recognition with a clear employment deal; employee health and wellbeing; and equality of opportunity for all. Our People and Organisation Development enabler project is working to

ensure that the Council has the right staff, with the right skills, working in the right way. Three key themes of facilitating individual, team and organisational development; developing our culture and behaviours to enable transformation; and developing flexible, adaptive ways of working form the enabler workstreams and will support the Council in achieving transformation.

During the period of transformation the People Strategy is addressing the challenges arising from major change such as improving absence management, which was top quartile performance but has recently slipped back to average, supporting the health and wellbeing of employees, workforce planning, innovation and performance improvement and supporting the organisational redesign and restructure projects taking place. This work will build upon achievements to date, including the implementation of Mental Health First Aid and its positive impact on managers and staff; Leading for High Performance and the focus upon leadership during significant transformation and change; proactively undertaking Health and Safety audits across the Council; and our award for the Management of Health and Safety.

**Equalities and Diversity** - we are working hard to embed good human rights practice and to link this with equalities considerations. We continue to assess the impact of changes in policy and service on the diverse population of the County through Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments. These have resulted in improvements across a range of services. For example robust equalities monitoring has been used to identify six groups for further work to ensure they represent the diverse people of Leicestershire and support reducing inequalities in health and social care. We launched our commitment to the British Sign Language Charter in November 2013 to promote better access to public services for deaf communities. We also continue to work with the British Deaf Association and other deaf organisations to achieve better outcomes for deaf people and their communities. We continue to host quarterly meetings of the Interfaith Forum, tackling subjects such as 'Faith and Education'. The forum continues to create opportunities to foster good relations between different groups and builds on the areas reputation for good race relations practice.

We continue to work towards achieving a workforce that is representative of the communities of Leicestershire. Initiatives include our Spring Forward programme provided as a form of positive action to support female members of staff. In 2014 the % of our senior female staff increased to 53.6%. We were also placed 11th in Stonewall's list of the best employers for lesbian, gay and bisexual staff. The Council has climbed the ranking for the fifth consecutive year, moving from 166th in 2009. Our workers' group for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender staff has also been named workers' group of the year. The two accolades recognise the value we place on diversity and in delivering services which meet the needs of all residents.

**Scrutinising Local Services** - in order to ensure better outcomes and value for local people, our Scrutiny Commission and Committees have been actively involved in a number of major reviews in 2013/14 including:

Supporting Children and Families – influencing home to school transport policy to include a new measure of free transport provision to the “nearest suitable Leicestershire school” addressing concerns from parents and stakeholders.



Assessing how the Council is supporting a new approach to ensuring high standards in schools through the Leicestershire Education Excellence Partnership. Reviewing bodies monitoring child protection, child welfare and wellbeing and ensuring new arrangements to improve governance and oversight of children's social care.

Better Health and Care – welcoming plans to move services out of University Hospitals of Leicester (UHL) hospitals and into community hospitals and other community settings, recognising the difficulty UHL has had in seeing people attending A&E within four hours and supporting UHL in its efforts to improve facilities. Undertaking follow up visits to the Leicestershire Partnership Trust mental ill health Bradgate Unit to assess the improvements made to patient care. Supporting the Council's work to develop extra care housing, but highlighting where progress in extending schemes could be improved. Focusing on how home care services can be improved by better commissioning of contracts with care providers to provide more cost effective solutions.

Environment and Transport – examining the Loughborough Town Centre Bus Trials to ensure a pedestrianised zone; influencing changes to Bus Policy to deliver savings whilst ensuring continuation of services for some bus users; and influencing proposals on opening times at recycling and household waste sites.

**Value for Money and Efficiency** - the County Council is low funded, receiving £56 (23%) per head less than the average County Council and our budget per head of population is the lowest of all counties. On average other comparable county councils spend £81 (15%) more per head of population. We are also facing increases in expenditure because of the need to provide care to the increasing number of older and vulnerable people and for disposing of waste in more environmentally friendly ways. For 2014/15 we were able to find an extra £21m to meet demand pressures in adult social care and £2.7m to meet cost pressures in waste disposal.

In February 2014 as a result of our efforts to achieve efficiency savings and with the help of a £2.4m grant from the government we were able to freeze Council Tax levels for the 4th consecutive year. Our efforts mean that increasing numbers of residents are recognising the value for money that the Council provides. The percentage of residents who feel the Council offers value for money has increased by 30% to 61.2% over recent years, higher than the national average.

Following our pressure over a number of years for the Government to deliver fairer funding for Leicestershire schools the Department for Education announced in March that Leicestershire will benefit from an additional £20m in school funding in 2015/16. This is welcomed by both the County Council and schools alike. However we continue to campaign for fairer funding to be built into the new national funding formula. We will also continue to campaign for Leicestershire to receive a fairer overall funding settlement across our services.

## **Enabling Economic Growth**

Ensuring that we have a thriving economy underpinned by good infrastructure that creates jobs and prosperity is one of our top priorities. A strong economy enables local businesses to grow and local people to improve their standards of living. Economic growth also provides opportunities for those furthest from the labour market to secure employment and can reduce demand for state benefits and public services. The Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership's (LLEP) Strategic Economic Plan 2014-20 (SEP), outlines the framework for our Growth Deal and City Deal, agreed earlier this year with the government and the European Structural and Investment Funds Strategy 2014-20 (ESIF).

The Growth Deal provides access to £28m in 2015/16 and a further indicative £52m between 2016 and 2020. Programmes will unlock key development sites, improve transport connectivity, improve broadband access, and invest in further education and skills training provision. The City Deal allows the County and City to access £16m of funding. Key projects include a new Advanced Technology Innovation Centre and associated infrastructure at Loughborough University Science and Enterprise Parks, employment schemes for under 25s and those furthest from the labour market and a range of innovative business support programmes. The European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) are expected to provide £111m of funding in the years to 2020, including £3m through the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.

## **Building the Infrastructure for Growth**

We are preparing a new Enabling Growth Plan which will set out our proposed activity and investment to support the local economy. It will support delivery of the economic priorities in the Council's Strategic Plan and the SEP. The Plan will be structured around the three key themes of Place, People and Business and set out activity and investment to support economic growth and employment.

**Employment Land/Development Sites** – five Growth Areas identified in the SEP are the focus of large scale infrastructure provision and new development. These are the Leicester Urban Area, the East Midlands Enterprise Gateway area, Loughborough, the Coalville Growth Corridor and South West Leicestershire. Within these are transformational projects which will achieve significant wider economic impact. These are Loughborough University Science and Enterprise Parks (LUSEP), the MIRA Technology Park Enterprise Zone and the East Midlands Gateway Strategic Rail Freight Interchange. Within these projects a range of activity is being supported including access improvements, land acquisition and site assembly, and loans, grants and gap funding to stimulate private sector investment to unlock the economic opportunities these sites offer.

We have committed £1.5m to support expansion of LUSEP, of which £450K has been provided as part of the City Deal to deliver an Advanced Technology Innovation Centre. Completion of this scheme is anticipated in July 2015 and consideration is being given to the further expansion of LUSEP. MIRA Technology Park Enterprise Zone will create over 2,000 direct high value jobs and support over 3,000 indirect jobs. It is recognised as one of the most successful Enterprise Zones in the country and has already created over 250 jobs and attracted significant foreign direct investment. The

East Midlands Gateway Strategic Rail Freight Interchange has the potential to create 6,000 jobs.

**Broadband Connectivity** - the £18.6m Superfast Leicestershire programme will increase the number of premises with superfast broadband access from 75% to 94.8%, equating to around 62,000 additional premises. 3,400 additional premises have been provided with super-fast broadband access to date, with the full rollout due for completion within 2 years. We are exploring a range of solutions to secure 100% superfast coverage across the County and a significant part of this will be roll out of a Superfast Extension Programme. The Council has committed a further £2m to support the Extension Programme and also secured and underwritten Government funding for the scheme. The first community to benefit from the Superfast Leicestershire Programme rollout was Cossington, where, in July 2014, school children organised a link up with America to celebrate the availability of the new service.

**Housing Growth** - 2,369 additional homes were completed across Leicestershire during 2013/14, which was a significant increase on the 1,888 completed the previous year. Helping people to buy their first home is crucial in achieving and maintaining a sustainable housing market. With this in mind, our £8.4m scheme to help homebuyers in conjunction with Lloyds Bank has supported 360 first-time buyers' to purchase properties, with a total value of £42m. The scheme enabled low cost loans to first-time buyers with a deposit of just 5%. We will get our investment back, with interest, in five years' time.

**Affordable Housing** - 539 affordable homes were delivered during 2013/14, which was significantly higher than the 386 delivered the previous year. In collaboration through the Leicestershire Rural Housing Group we have procured a Rural Affordable Housing Partner to plan housing needs and develop a pipeline of projects and funds for future development of affordable homes. Since 2010 we have delivered 117 homes in 15 villages with 2 more schemes currently on site. In October 2013, 4 affordable homes were completed in Elmesthorpe and in November we agreed a contribution to 13 affordable bungalows in Blaby and 4 affordable houses in Blackfordby.

### **Business Growth and Business Support**

**Business Advice and Finance** - through the City Deal and Regional Growth Fund investment the LLEP has secured funding for a new Business Growth Hub to provide business development advice and support, and grant funding for local businesses, including small and medium size enterprises. We are working with the LLEP to ensure the Hub meets the needs of county businesses, including those in rural areas. The Better Business for All Partnership between businesses and regulators has continued to cut red tape for businesses and improve business growth. Businesses are finding less call on their time by regulators because of the success of a pilot project allowing regulators to better share information. In December our Leicestershire Local Enterprise Fund was launched with Funding Circle, a leading online marketplace for business loans, to help firms develop and grow. By August 2014, 21 Leicestershire businesses had received over £1.1m of loans to help expansion and job creation, of which the Council has lent £220,000.

**Business Premises and Workspaces** - our County Farms Estate continues to support new start farmers and provided an economic return of £393K during 2013/14, an improvement on the previous year. In addition the portfolio contributed £10m in capital receipts through estate restructuring and the release of development sites. Our industrial units produced a net surplus of £415K during 2013/14, also an improvement on the previous year. New investment is planned through our Corporate Asset Investment Fund to ensure the portfolio continues to meet the needs of new start businesses and generates economic growth and returns.

**Tourism** - over 29 million people visited the County and City in 2013 and the number of jobs supported by tourism increased from 19,604 to 20,485. The economic impact of tourism in Leicester and Leicestershire increased by double the national growth rate, partly due to the national and international interest regarding the discovery of King Richard III. We continue to support tourism through our contract with Leicester Shire Promotions which delivers a range of initiatives to increase leisure and business tourism to the county. See also the Better Place section of this report setting out related activity to improve the local tourism offer.

**Rural Economy** - we lead the Leicestershire Rural Partnership which plays a key role in supporting the LLEP's and our priorities to support the rural economy. £170,000 of funding was allocated to 17 projects during 2013/14 through our Rural Capital Grant Scheme, creating up to 60 new jobs and safeguarding 70 others. The Village Shop Support programme also approved £13,657 to enhance and sustain 7 village shops. The scheme offers grants of up to £3,000 to village shops and post offices to improve the range, quality and accessibility of services. We secured £19,200 from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to prepare a Rural Development Programme bid for East Leicestershire. If successful, £1.74m will be secured for a six year programme to support job creation and rural growth.

**Impact on Business Growth** - in summer 2014 Leicestershire was named alongside four other areas as among the fastest growing economies outside London by the Royal Bank of Scotland Regional Growth Tracker. At the same time, the national Enterprise Research Centre highlighted that Leicester and Leicestershire was the only LEP outside London and the South East with an above average proportion of fast-growing firms.

### **Employment and Skills Support**

**Supporting People into Employment** - we are awaiting finalisation of the European Structural and Investment Fund Strategy that will provide up to £111m funding for development programmes across Leicester and Leicestershire, such as a planned new Employment and Skills Hub. We are working closely with the LLEP and other key partners to ensure the Hub and programmes deliver services which meet the needs of those furthest from the labour market in the county.

Work Clubs and Enterprise Hubs run in 6 of our main libraries. From November 2013 to August 2014, 950 people have been engaged through the Work Clubs. In addition, 7 job fairs were delivered during 2013/14 aimed at county residents who are currently unemployed. The events brought together potential employers, training providers, Job Centre Plus, district councils and further education colleges and attracted around 2,300 attendees. Feedback from companies that participated was positive and a

number of attendees found jobs as a result of their attendance. Our Wheels 2 Work project loans out scooters for up to 6 months to people travelling to employment or education, targeted at specific geographical areas and people furthest from the labour market. The age eligibility criteria have been extended and the scheme has supported 234 clients in accessing work or training. The County Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimant rate is now on a steady downward trend from a recession peak of 2.9% in mid-2009, and was 1.2% for the latest quarter. This is close to the historic low of 1.1% in June 2008. The County employment rate has recovered from a low of 71.4% in 2010 to 73.2% for the latest quarter.

**Higher Level Skills Development and Retention** - to prosper and grow businesses need people with the right skills, experience and qualifications. A total of 14,127 students were engaged in post-16 education during 2013/14. Of these students, 75.8% were studying for Level 3 ('A' Level equivalent) qualifications, an increase on the previous 2 years. Whilst the national trend for 'A' Level results indicates that the overall pass rate has fallen, in Leicestershire provisional results indicate that standards have been maintained compared to last year and a record number of 18 year olds were accepted into their first choice university. The proportion of people with degree level qualifications also increased from 30.4% in 2012 to 33% in 2013.

**Increasing Employment Skills** - in collaboration with the LLEP Employment and Skills Board and major partners such as the Leicestershire Education Business Company (LEBC) and Leicestershire Cares, the link between education and business has strengthened. There were 10,248 enrolments for our Adult Learning Programmes during the 2013/14 academic year. 36% of participants enrolled in programmes with vocational outcomes or English and Math's provision. A new facility was launched in Market Harborough combining the library and museum with community space for the provision of adult learning. A range of library and museum facilities have also been upgraded to provide adult learning spaces in deprived areas of the County, which has contributed to an increase in adult learning enrolment. The proportion of people achieving a level 2 qualification by the age of 19 was 85% during 2013. In addition, the further education success rates and apprenticeship completion rates for the county were above the national average and reached their highest level ever. The ambition of the sector is to reach the top quartile nationally within the next two years.

**Minimising Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs)** - the Prince's Trust 'Get Started' and 'Get Into' programmes for vulnerable young people who are furthest from the labour market commenced in spring 2014. The aims are to help participants re-engage with learning and boost employability by giving NEET young people work skills and experience by partnering with employers and training organisations. Since the start of the programme, 19 participants have moved into employment, 2 into apprenticeships, 17 into further education or training and 6 into volunteering.

The 5-year Princes Trust Talent Match Programme is providing bespoke, intensive employment support for 18-24 year olds who have been unemployed for over 12 months in Greenhill Ward, Coalville. To date the project has worked with 22 young people. Prospects, the education, employment and training company, continues to deliver careers information, advice and guidance on behalf of the Council to young people aged 16-19. The number of 16-18 year old NEETs in Leicestershire reached a record low of 2.8% in June – one of the best results in the country.

**Apprenticeships** – in May, the County Council signed a new charter to demonstrate our commitment to recruiting apprentices. We currently have 53 apprentices in roles such as administration, finance and customer services. Our Adult Learning Service has a further 41 apprentices enrolled on apprenticeship programmes currently working for other public and private sector companies in Leicestershire. A total of 379 apprenticeships were started across Leicestershire during 2014, of which 62.5% apprentices completed their learning aims, an improvement compared to 60.1% during 2013.

### **Strategic Transport Infrastructure**

An effective and safe transport network is an enabler of growth and vital to the local economy. We continue to progress delivery of our Local Transport Plan priorities and Implementation Plan to 2017, to support economic growth, reduce congestion, improve access to jobs and training, increase road safety and support more sustainable ways of travel such as walking, cycling and public transport.

**Major Schemes Supporting Economic Growth** - in March 2014 Loughborough's Inner Relief road was completed ahead of schedule as part of phase one of an ambitious £19m transport scheme to reduce traffic in the town, make Loughborough more attractive and safer and attract further investment, development and regeneration activity. Phase two includes making the town more pedestrian friendly and controlled crossings and carriageway facilities for cyclists, and is scheduled to be completed at the end of 2014. Throughout 2013/14 we have worked jointly with Leicester City Council to develop proposals for a £19m North West Leicester Major Transport Project. This will see measures delivered in and around the A50, Anstey Lane and A6 corridors, which will improve travel conditions, tackle congestion and support growth. Work has also continued to prepare for a new bridge across the M1 to access the planned 4,250 home 'New Lubbethorpe' development to the west of Leicester. This will help minimise the impact of traffic on Beggars Lane and the A47 and provide important links between the new housing, employment facilities and other amenities.

In addition to these major schemes we have secured over £10m additional funding from our Growth Deal. More than £4.6m has been attracted to fund transport improvements in Hinckley including £1m for sustainable transport schemes. This will help to deliver our ambitious Hinckley Area Project, which includes a range of measures to support people to access jobs and training; to provide better access to shopping areas; and to tackle congestion including enabling people to cycle, walk and use public transport. The scheme also includes improvements in Earl Shilton and Burbage including new traffic calming, bus stops, Zebra crossings and cycle parking facilities. The Growth Deal funding also enables us to support growth by improving a number of other key junctions in the county, including M1 Junction 22 and A42 Junction 13.

£13.6m has been allocated to the LLEP through the Growing Places Fund to support road infrastructure that helps unlock stalled development sites. Projects to be supported in the County include junction and road improvements at Bardon Grange near Coalville to support a 3,500 unit housing development including 700 affordable

homes and 20+ hectares of employment land, junction improvements to the Flagstaff roundabout on the A42 to support growth in North West Leicestershire and road improvements at Optimus Point Business Park in Glenfield, providing 111,000 sq. m of employment space, creating around 2,000 jobs, a district community centre and 250 homes.

**Reducing Congestion** - a £3.5m scheme to improve safety and ease congestion at the major Fosse Park/Asda roundabout was completed in Spring 2014, complementing a Highways Agency scheme to ease congestion at Junction 21 of the M1. Together these works provide improved journey time reliability for businesses in the area. A £2.4m scheme to reduce congestion and improve safety at the A46/A50 roundabout near Glenfield was also finished in 2013/14, helping to improve traffic flow and access to a major employment and housing development in Glenfield.

**Sustainable Transport** - Our work to encourage more people to walk, cycle and use public transport as part of their daily journeys has seen major improvements to bus infrastructure and the walking and cycling network, as well as ongoing interest in our key sustainable travel initiatives. To support this we launched a new website and app that unlocks prizes and shopping deals the more people travel sustainably. During 2013 we also launched new guidance for developers that will see the development of travel plans to ensure that new developments encourage the use of sustainable transport modes to access local services. We also launched a new countywide web-based car share scheme in April 2013, which is being used by an increasing number of employers, with 19 businesses using it by the end of March 2014.

**Walking and Cycling** - we are part way through our three year programme of improvements to tackle congestion and encourage more walking, cycling and public transport use in two of our busiest towns, Loughborough and Coalville. During the last two years we have delivered a £2m investment to improve the Coalville walking and cycling network, including a £116,000 scheme linking Stephenson Way in the town to Hall Lane in Whitwick. We have delivered a number of travel awareness events to promote cycling and walking in Loughborough and Coalville, including the Big Family Bike Ride, with over 1200 people attending these events. We have recruited 59 schools to our 'Choose How You Move' schools programme, aiming to promote healthier lifestyles to pupils and reduce congestion and pollution outside the school gate. In 2013-14 schools within the scheme saw a 5% reduction in arrivals by car. We have also developed our Personalised Travel Planning efforts. Since 2011 these have seen, on average, a 4% reduction in car use for work journeys and a 20% reduction in car use for shopping journeys amongst participants. Our Choose How You Move personal travel planning project won the Skanska Sustainability Award 2014.

We have delivered 53 free adult cycle courses to 667 people and supported 440 people to attend work or training interviews through 'access to work' grants. We have also increased the number of people cycling to Loughborough Railway Station. The installation of bike maintenance facilities, sustainable travel information stands and bike/motorbike stands have contributed to the Station winning 2013 Best Medium Railway Station in the East Midlands.

**Bus Services** – our ambitious scheme to reduce bus journey times and increase public transport usage on a key route into Leicester was completed during winter

2013/14. The £5m A426 bus corridor project aims to improve bus reliability and ease congestion. The project includes a number of measures to encourage greater bus use such as improved information provision and personalised travel planning. Arriva has launched its refurbished 'Breeze' buses along the route and preliminary results show an encouraging increase in bus passengers. We are also developing a prioritised programme of bus corridor improvement schemes to deliver in the coming years. Working with Arriva and Kinchbus we have also promoted a range of offers and incentives to encourage more bus use, including savings on a variety of tickets. Park and Ride usage continues to grow on our park and ride services with revised routes and a link provided directly between Enderby and the Leicester Royal Infirmary from September 2014. As part of Real Time Passenger Information delivery in Leicester and Leicestershire, a new journey Planner and Travel Portal has been developed as part of our 'choose how you move' scheme. This will allow comparison of walking, cycling, bus, train and car options for different journeys and, with improvements to roadside bus information, should also support improved confidence in and satisfaction with passenger transport.

**Highways Maintenance** - the condition of Leicestershire's roads continues to be very good, and amongst the best in the country. Public satisfaction with the condition of our roads is the highest for any county highways authority for the sixth consecutive year and ranked 12th best across the country. This reflects the Council's highway asset management strategy, the robustness of which plays an important role in ensuring that the condition of our highway infrastructure assets is particularly good. The percentage of our footway network with defects remains low and we have also made progress in reducing the percentage of our street lighting columns that need replacement. The percentage of our traffic signal installations requiring renewal remains very low and the condition of our bridges and rights of way network has remained stable. A successful application to the Department for Transport resulted in over £2.6m being allocated for highway repairs in the county, including addressing potholes.

**Floods and Winter Maintenance** – winter 2013/14 was the wettest for 248 years and generally milder than average. Nevertheless our fleet of gritters undertook 54 runs using 6280 tonnes of salt and keeping the main routes open to traffic. In March 2014, we were successful in obtaining £1.5m for repairs to flood and severe weather damaged roads.

**More Customer Focussed Highways Services** - we are reviewing and improving the way we respond to the public and customers concerns about our highways and the service we provide. Following a review of our Customer Service Centre and highways working in June 2013, a number of procedural changes have been made. This has helped to address a backlog of work and streamline the way in which customer enquiries are tackled. The net effect has seen the average time taken to address reactive repairs reduce by at least 50%, including an 89% improvement in the time taken to clear a blocked gully.

**Street Light Dimming** – in August we began to roll out our street light dimming scheme to Loughborough. The scheme will save £900,000 per year in energy and reduce our carbon footprint. By the end of 2014 three quarters of our 68,000 street lights will have been altered. Evidence from police data shows no increase in crime in areas with dimmed street lights and in some cases crime has fallen in these areas.



## **Better Care - Health and Social Care Integration**

Health and care integration is a local and national priority with local areas being asked to set out plans to achieve a new vision for health and care integration by 2018/19. Developing more effective ways to coordinate care and integrate services around the person, and to predict and prevent avoidable admissions to hospital are key to improving outcomes and ensuring high quality and sustainable services in the future.

**Better Care Together** - across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, through the Better Care Together Programme, all partners are working together to change our health and care system over the next 5 years to reduce demand and reliance on acute services in favour of more integrated, high quality care in community settings. To support delivery a social care fund was made available to develop early opportunities for health and care integration in each area. In Leicestershire this led to a joint fund of £13m with delivery across a number of priorities such as First Contact, Carer Support, Dementia Services, and integrating reablement across health and social care.

**Better Care Fund** - each Health and Wellbeing Board has been asked to extend the above approach by operating a larger pooled budget called the Better Care Fund (BCF), shared between health and local government, to support further integration. The total value of our fund in 2015/16 will be £38.3m. A jointly agreed plan on integration in Leicestershire was submitted to NHS England in April 2014. Following changes to arrangements nationally over the summer, a revised Better Care Fund plan was submitted in September 2014. The Leicestershire BCF plan is structured around 4 themes covering unified prevention, integrated care for those with long term conditions, integrated urgent response and hospital discharge and reablement. The Plan will result in improvement to health and care services including more services outside hospital operating 24/7, better co-ordination and access to prevention, information and advice, a joined up response in two hours for those needing urgent assistance in the community, more timely and effective support to help people leaving hospital and more help for people with long term conditions. The plan also aims to provide more support closer to home, help people maintain independence in the community for as long as possible, minimise avoidable admissions to hospital, and reduce the time spent in hospital. Progress to date relating to each of the key themes is provided below.

**Unified Prevention** – we have progressed an Early Intervention and Prevention Review aimed at focusing resources on those most likely to need health and social care support in the future. The review is part of developing a co-ordinated preventative approach across the County with key partners. In 2013/14 our Assistive Technology Team supported 1,600 people with monitored technologies in their home, such as community alarms linked to falls detection; environmental sensors and property sensors. In addition 1,400 people were supported with stand-alone technologies ranging from memory and communication aids to environmental controls. We have also been working with health partners to increase community based support for people with health needs through initiatives such as virtual wards, reablement and proactive care. Virtual wards use the systems and staffing of a hospital ward, but without the physical building, providing preventative care for people in their own homes. Our approach to prevention also involves an integrated offer of housing support targeted to improve health and wellbeing. Our First Contact scheme and Local

Area Coordination will be signposting people to practical housing advice and interventions using one referral form.

Older people are also supported through our 4Ways2Warmth campaign. Warm home officers, based in district councils, offer independent and tailored advice on keeping homes warm, provide support such as emergency heaters and check energy tariffs and eligibility for heating and insulation grant. A new information and advice service has also been commissioned that focuses on Adult Social Care. Employees from the 7 main libraries across the County have received training about the assisted information in libraries offer. The training enables libraries staff to signpost service users to appropriate resources.

**Long Term Conditions** - effective models of care have been developed to support people with long term conditions to maintain independence through proactive care and integrated care teams. Care plans step up care when required and step it down again when the person stabilises. Developments implemented in 2014 include the introduction of case management for the over 75s, extension of care plans to more people with long term conditions in each GP practice, adopting the NHS number across care planning records, and 7 day service pilots in GP practices targeting patients with long term conditions and complex care needs.

**Integrated Urgent Response** – an Integrated Crisis Response Service (ICRS) pilot began in September 2013 involving our adult care services supporting residents who are experiencing a health or social care crisis within their own home and without which they may be admitted to hospital or a care home. During the first year of the pilot, ICRS helped 500 service users avoid a hospital admission and 218 service users avoid a residential admission. The Better Care Fund has been used to integrate health components of the service and an overnight nursing assessment launched on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014. In addition, the older person's unit was launched on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2014. The unit provides GP's and other health care professionals with an alternative method of obtaining a comprehensive geriatric assessment as opposed to being admitted to the acute sector.

**Improved Hospital Discharge and Reablement** - the Council's Home Care Assessment and Reablement Team (HART) provides intensive support for up to six weeks to help service users maintain independence in the community. Evidence shows that this type of service can reduce or delay the need for longer term, more costly services. In addition support has been given to a reablement service for patients who leave hospital with no family support. Volunteers work with patients on a range of tasks to rebuild confidence and prevent social isolation, including preparing the home for return from hospital and supporting access to community activity and befriending.

### **Better Adult Social Care**

To support Better Care we aim to have high quality local social care services for older people, vulnerable adults, carers and people with disabilities. The Care Act 2014 aims to make access to care and support clearer and fairer. There will be a cap on the care costs people incur over their lifetime and a national eligibility threshold to ensure equitable access to social care. The Care Act also aims to ensure continuity of care when people move between areas. In order to ensure Care Act readiness we have

established a Care Act Programme, programme plan and series of work streams to take the work forward.

**Carers** – our Carers Strategy action plan confirms our commitment to identify carers early on and support them to maintain a balance between their caring responsibilities and have a life outside their caring role. Work to date includes the development and launch of The Carers Charter, including seven promises on how we will work with and support local carers. The Carers' Champion Network has also been developed to raise the profile of carers. The Care Act introduces significant new duties for carers and for the first time will put carers on a par with those for whom they care. This means we will see an increase in the number of carers requiring assessment and will need to ensure carers are effectively supported through the provision of carers' personal budgets. We are well prepared for the change and as part of the overall prevention offer a new offer for carers will be in place for 2015. The new offer builds on already successful carer support services, offering universal and targeted support to carers including the Pilot Carers Health and Wellbeing service which works directly with local GP practices to promote the identification of carers; ensuring carers have access to appropriate advice information and support early on in their caring role.

**Personalisation** - the number of users and carers receiving support as self-directed support (personal budgets as a managed budget) has increased in Leicestershire since 2012-13. Whilst the overall number has increased the percentage of users and carers receiving support via cash payments has reduced in 2013-14. Work is underway to address barriers associated with the uptake of cash payments including the offer of advice and support services. This approach recognises that using cash payments can be complicated and individuals need varying levels and types of support to successfully achieve the best outcomes possible from them.

**Extra Care Housing** – in July we agreed to invest £1.56m towards the £9.5m cost to build an extra care housing scheme providing around 60 apartments for older and frail people in Loughborough. The scheme will offer a range of on-site facilities as well as flexible care and support. The scheme comes on top of the £1.3m funding we committed to support a new extra care scheme in Blaby, which will provide 50 additional flats and 13 bungalows in the area in 2015. Further developments in Harborough are also planned, including through £100,000 we have provided to the Brooklands Gardens scheme, which will deliver additional extra care services from 2015 onwards. We also continue to work with key partners to explore other potential extra care opportunities across the County.

**Dementia Support** - the Memory Support Coordination Service, in place from October 2014, supports people affected by dementia or memory loss to plan for the future, receive emotional support, and assist them to identify and access opportunities in their communities. The service includes a range of memory cafes and carer and peer groups which help people to maintain their independence and support carers in their caring role.

**Support for People with Learning Disabilities** is a priority. We are implementing a supporting action plan and range of activity to improve provision with a focus on prevention, early intervention and integrated care, supported by a pooled budget. We also continue to implement the action plan from the Winterbourne View case. Short

breaks for carers have been identified as a key issue to sustaining care and we have therefore produced a revised short breaks strategy and implementation plan to ensure outcomes are achieved. Our Shared Lives programme has seen an increase in new placements, primarily for those with learning disabilities. Service users are benefitting from increased choice in service provision due to success in recruiting new shared lives carers and consequent placements. We are also working with housing partners to support people with learning disabilities or mental health needs to secure their own home as part of the Pathway to Housing Project. The project received 154 referrals and supported 50 individuals to move into settled accommodation in 2013-14 and continues to grow as awareness of the project increases.

**Care Home Quality** – in 2013/14 15,949 people received services from the Council, a slight increase from the previous year. In contrast the national picture shows a 5% reduction in people accessing services. In Leicestershire the majority of people (81%) received community based services, 16% residential care services and 3% nursing care. There was a 4% reduction in placements in residential care in line with efforts to help people to continue to live at home. 45 care providers in Leicestershire were recognised for their commitment to quality and best practice at events in November and August, a number receiving our Dignity in Care Awards, while others gained a Quality Assessment award at Gold, Silver or Bronze level. Dignity in care recipients met 10 challenges including zero tolerance to abuse, treating each person as an individual, maintaining independence and engaging with family members. A residential home for people with learning disabilities in Melton Mowbray also made the final five of the national dignity in care awards. Our Quality Improvement Team continues to work with health service and other partners to improve the standard of care in residential and nursing homes.

**Adult Safeguarding** – we recognise that keeping vulnerable adults safe is one of our most important priorities and have strong partnership arrangements through the Safeguarding Adults Board. The Board works closely with the local Safeguarding Children’s Board to ensure better outcomes for children, young people and adult service users. A Sector Led Peer Review found that there is a clear vision and strategy for adult safeguarding across all agencies in Leicestershire. Partners commented on the effectiveness of the Adults Safeguarding Board with good representation across a range of agencies and that safeguarding is seen as “everybody’s business”.

Our Adult Social Care Survey found that in 2013/14 the proportion of people who felt that the services they used made them feel safe was 90.4%, an increase on previous years and above the national average. Our Safeguarding Team continues to investigate allegations and safeguarding referrals from people living in residential care, nursing homes and private hospitals. The team work closely with agencies such as the Police, NHS and Care Quality Commission. Audits indicate improved performance against safeguarding standards. Performance was particularly strong in the adult service audit with eight organisations fully compliant. The Safeguarding Board also delivered domestic homicide reviews on behalf of community safety partnerships. Two reviews were carried out in 2013/14 and learning disseminated through the Serious Case Review Subgroup. In addition the Safeguarding Adults training network meets on a bi-monthly basis to ensure learning is effectively disseminated.

## **Better Public Health**

Public health functions transferred to the Council in April 2013. They play a key role in contributing to our aim of a healthy population with increased life expectancy and reduced health inequalities. A number of public health issues have been prioritised in our local Health and Wellbeing Strategy including reducing cancer mortality, reducing obesity and smoking, improved sexual health and reducing the harm caused by substance misuse. We have also prioritised the importance of getting health right from childhood through the Healthy Child Programme.

**Life Expectancy and Health Inequalities** - everyone in Leicestershire deserves a long and healthy life. On the whole, people in the County enjoy good overall levels of health and wellbeing. However there are people who experience worse health or die younger than others. To reduce health inequalities we are tackling the wider determinants of health. We deliver a series of programmes to address important health determinants such as the housing offer to health, debt advice, and our Fit For Work and Healthy Workplaces programmes. We are also delivering targeted programmes to reduce lifestyle risk factors for premature mortality - smoking, excess alcohol, poor diet, and obesity. These adverse lifestyle factors are more common in socially disadvantaged and excluded groups. We have also commissioned a number of services aimed specifically at improving the health and wellbeing of socially excluded groups such as the travellers' ambassador service and our probation health trainer service.

**Health Checks** - from April 2013 commissioning of NHS health checks became the responsibility of our public health team. The health check programme aims to help prevent heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and kidney disease - the biggest cause of preventable deaths. Everyone between the ages of 40 and 74 not already diagnosed with one of these conditions will be invited every five years to have a check. Participants will also be given advice to help them reduce health risks. In Leicestershire the programme is delivered by GPs. During the year, dementia awareness and alcohol screening were added to the service. At the end of 2013/14 a total of 50,310 people had been invited to undergo a health check and 25,009 people had taken up the offer (49.7%). This equates to 12.2% of the population that are eligible. In 2014/15 we will be re-procuring health check services and will encourage pharmacies and GPs to work together to improve take-up and ensure hard to reach groups are better catered for.

**Cancer Mortality** - cancer is the most common cause of people dying prematurely in Leicestershire. To help tackle this we are helping people to adopt healthier lifestyles and become more aware of cancer risk factors. About half of all cancers can be prevented by lifestyle changes including avoiding smoking and excess alcohol, maintaining an active lifestyle including a healthy diet and weight and by avoiding excessive sun exposure. Many cancers can also be cured if they are detected and treated early. We are working with NHS colleagues to increase awareness of early symptoms of cancer and to improve early access and referral. In doing so we are enhancing access to cancer diagnostic and treatment services and cancer screening for socially excluded groups.

**Healthy Weight Adults** – locally two-thirds of adults are overweight or obese, in line with regional averages, but a major cause of illness and early death. 2013/14 saw a significant increase in public health funding for obesity related programmes in Leicestershire. As a result a number of new initiatives have been commissioned targeting adults to help address the broad issues and behaviours contributing to the growth of obesity. We have commissioned the Master Gardeners programme from Garden Organic to develop a network of volunteers to support the growing of fruit and vegetables in local communities, with a focus on maximising healthy eating, increased activity and improved mental health. Work also continues to expand the targeted basic cookery skills programme run by our adult learning service and to maximise benefits from links with our Love Food Hate Waste programme which teaches people to make money saving and nutritious meals. A significant expansion of healthy weight services has taken place since 2013/14. The Leicestershire Nutrition and Dietetic Service (LNDS) adult weight management programme has doubled the number of courses to 48. A new “Weightwatchers” service was launched in April 2014 to provide 500 free courses to targeted patients and we have also funded a new telephone triage service to improve the weight management referral process.

**Reducing the Harm of Substance Misuse** - our focus covers the whole pathway of substance misuse. In recent times the use of Novel Psychoactive Substances, often called ‘legal highs’, has become an issue. In response the ‘Legal Highs Lethal Lows’ campaign was launched by our Substance Misuse Partnership to highlight the risks and prevent the harm these substances can cause. The social norms alcohol prevention project challenges the misconception that drinking alcohol at a young age is ‘the norm’ and engages pupils in innovative ways to develop their own communication messages, such as posters and drama performances. The project is showing evidence of reducing the number of pupils who drink alcohol. We have commissioned a project to deliver substance misuse awareness and interventions training to frontline staff. So far 82 training sessions have taken place. We also continue to develop the role of GP practices in identifying patients with alcohol-related problems and providing brief advice on health risks and safe levels of drinking. In 2013/14, over 37,000 individuals were screened, resulting in more than 2,000 brief interventions and a further 118 referrals to specialist treatment services. Throughout 2013/14 there has been a steady increase in the numbers treated for substance misuse and a rebalancing of the numbers of alcohol users compared to drug users in treatment, reflecting increasing access to treatment. The numbers successfully completing treatment has also continued to rise. There is a need to ensure that people can sustain their recovery and we have supported the establishment of the Leicestershire and Rutland Recovery Forum and two SMART Recovery groups to help this.

**Tobacco Control and Smoking Cessation** - smoking remains a leading cause of premature death and health inequalities in Leicestershire. Our local tobacco control alliance continues to coordinate a comprehensive tobacco control program with emphasis on prevention, cessation and enforcement. Our expanding tobacco free young person programme – *The Tobacco Trap* – aims to change the opinions of young people and reduce smoking initiation through peer mentoring and dissemination of messages to reinforce the realities of smoking. We promoted the Stoptober campaign which in October saw 2,600 Leicestershire smokers give up cigarettes. 2013/14 also saw our Stop smoking service help over 4,500 smokers to quit. In 2014

we will be re-procuring a provider for stop smoking services under a new contract. Our Trading Standards Service continues to work to reduce the underage and illegal sale of tobacco products and hosts an East Midlands regional post coordinating alcohol and tobacco enforcement. 2013/14 saw the launch of a successful campaign to reduce illegal sale of tobacco products.

**Improved Sexual Health** - our new integrated sexual health service started in January 2014 providing both contraception and sexually transmitted infection treatment within a single service. Extended opening hours are now available from the two hub sites and there are more 'spokes' available at various times across the County, improving access. The Chlamydia Screening Programme offers screening for all sexually active 15-24 year olds. In Leicestershire a total of 22,904 tests were taken in 2013 with 1,444 testing positive. The rate of chlamydia diagnosis was 1,702, lower than the England average of 2,016 but an increase from 2012. Screening coverage in Leicestershire at 27% remains higher than the England average (25%) but increasing coverage across areas will be important to detect and treat chlamydia and reduce its prevalence. Since 1998 under-18 conceptions have reduced by 43% in Leicestershire. The 2012 conception rate was 21.7 conceptions per 1,000 girls aged 15-17 - equating to 254 teenage pregnancies, significantly lower than the national average. Figures saw a 16% drop since last year. Work to support young parents and enable easy access to education, employment and training continues to be a key part of our teenage pregnancy strategy.

**Workplace Health** – the Leicestershire and Rutland Workplace Health Group has reviewed existing workplace health programmes and developed a new integrated pathway to join up the programmes. The group has also encouraged adoption of workplace charter standards and better coordination of activity across specialist provider services. The Leicestershire Fit for Work service is part funded by the Council and local Clinical Commissioning Groups providing expertise and services support people at risk of becoming unemployed due to ill health. Clients receive one to one support from a dedicated case manager with the aim of making access to work and support services readily available.

**Better Mental Health** – good mental health is the foundation for individual wellbeing with a clear link between good mental health, wellbeing and emotional and physical resilience. Mental health and wellbeing are key priorities in Leicestershire. We are focusing on promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all and on the early detection and treatment of those who have mental health problems through a joint mental health and mental health promotion strategy. Mental health first aid training has been commissioned for non-medical frontline staff to help them identify early signs of mental illness, promote good mental health and facilitate onward referral. We are delivering targeted mental health promotion programmes across Leicestershire including 'Reading Aloud', 'Five Ways to Wellbeing', and suicide awareness and prevention programmes. We are helping deliver improved mental health in working aged adults through our 'Healthy Workplaces' and 'Fit For Work' services. A strategic review of preventative mental health services has been conducted and we have commissioned social drop-in provision to support people aged 18 and over who are recovering from or living with mental health problems, to maintain their independence.

## **Better Physical Health, Sport and Physical Activity**

We place high priority on the wide ranging physical and mental health benefits of sport and physical activity for both adults and children. In collaboration with the Leicester-Shire and Rutland Sports (LRS) partnership we aim to increase participation in sport and physical activity, reduce the costs attributed to inactivity and make sport more inclusive.

**Active Young People** – £30,000 was invested via the Leicestershire Legacy Fund to train 111 early years settings in physical play for 0-5 year olds. In addition we invested £50,000 in an apprenticeship scheme to support young people to become coaches. The scheme, in conjunction with Loughborough College, has seen schools receive support for 20 trainee coaches to boost take up of sport and physical activity. £200,000 was invested to maintain and develop the Leicestershire School Sport and Physical Activity Networks (SSPAN) and £164,000 to deliver 172 Sportivate projects resulting in 4,875 11-25 year olds participating. Disabled roadshows took place in all 10 SSPAN areas offering enhanced support for more young disabled people to participate. 119 Go Gold Athletes were awarded funding and 25,000+ young people participated in the School Games Programme including 893 disabled young athletes. Leicester-Shire and Rutland School Games was awarded first place nationally by Sport England and the Youth Sport Trust for a high quality and outstanding School Games Programme.

**Active Adults** - 2014 has also seen £3m invested through our Local Sport Alliances and over 100,000 people benefitting from £750,000 invested in Sport and Physical Activity Commissioning plans, generating 1.8m attendances. £1.2m of funding has also been secured for local clubs resulting from Funding Officer Support. 14000+ people have been engaged in 73 elite athlete visits as part of Olympic Legacy Roadshows and £343,000 invested into local clubs and organisations from the Leicestershire Legacy Fund. LRS has also overseen delivery of the Sport England Inclusive Sport Project to develop a wider disability community offer - achievements include 8 school clubs developed in special schools, 5 Community Roadshows and 198 people trying out Paralympic Sports. Investment in 28 Community Games Events engaged 46,000 people.

In addition 186 workplaces participated in workplace challenge activity logs and 155 clubs were supported with post-Olympic and Paralympic legacy challenges. A Sky Ride local cycling programme was funded through our Choose How You Move project with 20 guided rides led by locally trained leaders. Over 30 active running clubs are now in place led by 60 qualified run leaders attracting an extra 1,000 runners. The project has been recognised as the Project of the Year at the Run England Regional Awards. Our Physical Activity Health Programmes 'Exercise referral' and 'Heartsmart' both saw growth in the number of participants. We have significantly increased the number of qualified instructors to deliver the programmes, introduced an improved monitoring and evaluation system and increased the range of activities offered. 51 inactive adults were referred onto the Get Healthy, Get into Sport project – targeting inactive people in two priority neighbourhoods.



## **Supporting Children and Families**

Our aim is that children and young people in Leicestershire are safe, achieve their potential and have their health, wellbeing and life chances improved. We place a particular focus on vulnerable children and families such as children in care, children with special educational needs and families with particular problems.

### **Ensuring Children and Young People Are Safe**

**Safeguarding** - in the last year our Children and Families Services have been contacted over 15,000 times about concerns regarding the safeguarding of children. Of these, 5,895 (39%) went on to be full referrals to children's social care - 438 referrals per 10,000 children. The national average is 521 and the regional average 586. Once referrals are made they are assessed to consider the type of support that a child may need and the actions that must be taken. As a result of national changes a new form of assessment was introduced in 2014, called the Single Assessment Framework, to improve the speed and quality of the response to children's needs. The national target in which assessments must be made is 45 days; but we have set a local aim of 40 days.

Following assessment 629 children needed child protection plans - 33 per 10,000 children. The national average is 37.9 and statistical neighbour average is 32.8. At the end of September 2013 the number of children with child protection plans had fallen from 393 to 373 as a result of improvements made from contact through to referral and the provision of early help. However the figure rose to 427 by December 2013 reflecting the increased national profile of the need to protect children as highlighted by cases in the West Midlands and Yorkshire. The number of cases has not changed significantly but the proportion relating to sexual abuse has risen - possibly as a result of heightened public awareness and confidence in reporting. In March we showcased our approach to keeping children safe to experts from around the world. Our 'signs of safety' approach puts children at the centre of all the work, strengthens families and ensures a consistent and balanced approach to assessments. The approach is generating positive feedback from families. Audits last year also indicate sustained or improved performance against safeguarding standards in agencies.

**Child Sexual Exploitation** - there has been joint work during the year on child sexual exploitation, child trafficking and missing children including training and workforce development. There was also a major communications exercise to raise awareness of child sexual exploitation with children and families, which reached 8,000 children in 39 schools. Another campaign raised awareness among key service providers such as taxi drivers, hotel and leisure providers to the incidence of child sexual exploitation and how to report cases. These resulted in an increase in referrals and disclosures. A new co-located unit is now being established with staff from the police and children's services working in one team to share information, expertise and resources. Progress has also been made with Leicestershire police in responding to children who go missing from home and from care. The work has brought together staff and delivered bespoke training, resulting in a 63% reduction in children who go missing from care.

**Effective Child Care Placements** - we recognise that children are best brought up in their own family. Where this is not possible we will seek to ensure alternative, high

quality care arrangements. In December 2013 we adopted a new policy regarding placements to ensure that, whenever possible, children are with families and within Leicestershire.

**Fostering** - on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 there were 456 children in Leicestershire's care. Our Fostering Service recruits foster carers, and also finds ways to place children with their extended families, where possible, through an arrangement called connected carers. Last year there were 183 mainstream and connected carers. On 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 there were 293 children placed with mainstream carers and 63 with connected carers. Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs) provide places for children and at 31<sup>st</sup> March, 107 children had been placed by IFAs. Local Authority Fostering Service Benchmarking shows that local authorities make use of 69% of their foster carers at any one time. In Leicestershire the average is 91% and we are looking to find an extra 100 foster carers in 2014/15. 38 of the children in care were disabled and/or had challenging behaviours and were provided with specialist support and a specific placement.

**Adoption** – the number of adopters and adoptions in Leicestershire continues to increase with the Council finding new homes for 51 youngsters last year. Following changes in legislation we have halved the length of the recruitment process so that people can now be assessed within six to eight months. The Adoption Service has also been reformed during the year. A new full-time recruitment officer now works across Fostering and Adoption Services and the number of new adopters has increased by 40% as a result. At 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 there were 67 approved adopters in Leicestershire, but many more are still needed. A new campaign was launched, intending to break down the myths about adoptive families, and an adoption bus is now visiting events all over the county to provide information and encourage Leicestershire residents to consider fostering and adoption.

**Looked After Children** – our health partners have a dedicated looked after children team, with a specialist nurse for each child. This supports tracking of health assessments over time and ensuring health plans are in place, which is seeing improvements in the health of children. Educational outcomes for Looked After Children are being given greater priority in schools through the work of the virtual school headteacher network, supported by the education of children in care service.

**Care Leavers** - when young people in care are 16 they are referred to as Care Leavers. This does not mean they immediately leave our care – we have a responsibility to support them until they are 25 if they wish – but it does mean that we start to prepare them for independence and adulthood. The Children in Care Service works closely with Prospects to identify the young people most in need of support and this arrangement is being strengthened in 2014/15. We have also signed up to a new charter spelling out how care leavers will be treated and what support they will receive. The document, written by young people in care, sets out commitments to provide lifelong advice and support to find a home. We have also signed up to the national care leavers' charter. In January we hosted an event highlighting the wealth of achievements of our children in care and over 200 care leavers.

## **Supporting Children to Achieve Their Potential**

**High Quality School Places** – inspection outcomes across schools remain positive. Over the last year 64 schools were inspected and more improved than declined with 83% schools now judged good or outstanding, above the national average. We have supported maintained schools and pre-school providers which required improvement or were judged to be inadequate. Local authority support was judged to have had a positive impact on school effectiveness. 90% of youngsters secured places at their first-choice primary school in 2014, with 96% being offered a place at one of their top three choices. In December 2013 we were successful in obtaining £55m of government money following submission of our three-year school place plan, which recognises a rising birth rate, housing growth and demographic change. We are now consulting on a new school place strategy setting out how we plan to invest the money in ensuring a continued supply of high quality school places in the right locations. Creating an extra 500 primary school places is the immediate priority, but we are also committed to developing provision for pupils with special educational needs and working with schools to ensure the right amount of secondary places.

**Good Early Learning and Child Care Provision** - overall 75% of all child care providers received a good or better Ofsted judgement, an increase of 1.2%. 86% of providers received a good or better Ofsted judgement after receiving support from local authority officers. 83% of nursery and playgroup providers have a good or better Ofsted judgement, 75% out of school providers and 71% of child-minders, all increases on last year. This year the Foundation Stage, age 5, good level of development rating has shown significant improvement, from 46.4% to 58.2%. The gap between the lowest performing children and the rest has also reduced from 5.7% to 2.3%. We have rolled out the 2-year-old Free Early Education Entitlement to the 20% most deprived families and 76% of families have taken up their child's place - comparing favourably with the national average of 67%.

**High Standards in Primary** - standards overall have risen in primary schools in 2013/14. The strong performance at Key Stage 1 in 2013 has been maintained in 2014, with Leicestershire performing above the national average in areas of the curriculum assessed. At Key Stage 2 there has been an increase in the number of children reaching the required level in every subject compared to 2013. Reading has increased from 86% to 89%, writing from 82% to 85% and maths from 84% to 86% and the majority are now better than the national average. Pupil progress from Key stage 1 to Key stage 2 has also improved whilst the gap between "pupil premium" performance and all pupils has narrowed. The strong partnerships we have established with schools having a positive impact on pupils learning.

**High Standards in Secondary** - at Key Stage 4 the percentage achieving the benchmark 5A\*-C with English and Maths remained well-above the national floor standard – but is likely to show a dip from previous years when validated results are available, as a result of national changes to the way in which vocational qualifications are counted. There is a broadly improving picture with regard to the percentage of pupils making the expected progress in English and Maths over Key Stages 2 to 4 although this remains an area of focus. The average A Level point score for Leicestershire increased for each category and A Level points per entry increased overall by 0.5 to 208.8. Vocational points per pupil entry increased by 4.1 and are

above the national average. The Leicestershire Secondary Head Teachers' Group is working through the Leicestershire Educational Excellence Partnership (LEEP) to raise standards of progress and attainment in Maths in 2014/15. LEEP, governed by school leaders, the local authority and dioceses continues to help schools strengthen school-to-school partnerships in order to drive improvement.

### **Support for Vulnerable Children**

**Special Educational Needs** - we are one of just 10 authorities chosen to help develop a pioneering new scheme called SEN Direct. Under the scheme parents and young people eligible for a personal budget will be able to create their own tailored package of support. As part of the scheme we are working with the SEND Consortium to devise a one stop online directory bringing together information on the variety of support available. Helping children and young people with SEN or disabilities and their families to receive the right services at the right time. We are also progressing a project to introduce a new single system from birth to 25 years of age for all children with SEN. The project will deliver better integrated assessment and joint commissioning of services in single education, health and social care plans. January saw the official opening of the brand new state of the art Ashmount Special School building in Loughborough. The £9.35m building offers places for 125 children and young people - an increase on the previous 87 places. The school has an outstanding Ofsted rating and recently won the SEN School of the Year in the Times Educational Supplement national awards.

**Transitions into Adulthood** - there have been a series of events with families, professionals and young people to inform our Transitions Strategy and action plan. Strong links have been developed with special school student councils and the parent partnership forum to support delivery. Disabled children entitled to leaving care services are identified at an early stage and transition plans are prepared in advance to identify any potential needs for adult services.

**Excluded Pupils** – pupils excluded from secondary school now benefit from new personalised education packages tailored to their skills and interests. The approach sees the Oakfield Pupil Referral Unit focusing on primary aged children, with responsibility for older children passed to 'behaviour partnerships'. Over the past five years the partnerships have reduced permanent exclusions by over 80%.

**Bullying and Cyber Safety** – a new approach to reducing bullying is being rolled out to classrooms across the county. The restorative approach involves bringing perpetrators and victims together to resolve disputes and the impact of bullying behaviour. The approach has seen significant reductions in exclusions, detentions and improved satisfaction. Awards were also presented to an additional 18 schools to mark their commitment to tackling bullying – over 70 schools across the County have now received the award. We have also run a competition for schools to create an anti-bullying 'app', in conjunction with Loughborough University. In July Leicestershire was named as one of the best local authorities for tackling homophobic bullying. Stonewall ranked the council 10th in the 'education index'. In November we supported anti-bullying week, and as part of the week a new cyber safety 'app' was launched to help pupils stay safe online. The 'app' provides a one stop online directory for children to find advice and help.

## **Improving Children's Health and Wellbeing**

**Nutrition and Healthy Weight Children** – 2013/14 saw a significant increase in public health funding for obesity related programmes in Leicestershire. As a result a number of new initiatives have been commissioned targeting children and adults to help address the complex issues contributing to the growth of obesity. The flagship Food For Life Partnership programme was launched in December 2013 and addresses all aspects of food culture in schools through improving school meals take-up, cooking classes, food growing and farm visits in all participating schools. To date 67 schools have been recruited and the programme will be available to every primary school in the county over the next 3 years. Our School Food Support Service was presented with the Food for Life Silver Award recognising the even higher quality menu of locally sourced organic produce. We have also worked to introduce the free school meals for infants' scheme from September 2014.

Children's weight management services have seen similar growth, but are at an earlier stage of development. The Family Lifestyle Club (FLiC) will see an increase in group courses from 13 to 21 in 2014-15 and specialist 1-1 sessions will increase to 80 per year, with courses in every district. 93.5% of FLiC Patients achieved a stable or decreased body mass score. New programmes have also been commissioned to increase awareness and referrals to children's weight management services, including Food Routes and Big Cook, Little Cook. Two new commissions have focused on children's physical development. The first, focused on active play in early year's settings, has run 30 training sessions for 100 early year's settings and the second aims to assess and improve the fundamental movement skills of primary school children.

**Help to Children with Long-Term Health Conditions** – our Public Health Team commission the Healthy Child Programme for school age children and young people through the School Nursing Service. The School Nursing Service specification includes supporting children, young people and their parents/carers and schools to manage health needs associated with long term conditions and disabilities. School nursing input in Special Schools is jointly funded by public health and the Special Schools themselves.

**Breastfeeding** prevalence at 6-8 weeks after birth is lower than the England average with only 44% of babies' breastfed at this stage. Peer support schemes have been targeted in North West Leicestershire and Hinckley and Bosworth providing a coordinator to aim to increase rates.

**Child Oral Health** – we are responsible for ensuring that regular oral health surveys are undertaken. A survey of the oral health of five year olds was conducted in 2012 and published in autumn 2013. This identifies the prevalence and severity of dental decay by measuring the number of decayed, missing and filled teeth. Data from the survey shows that the prevalence and severity of tooth decay in some districts of Leicestershire is higher than the England average. The data is being used to develop an oral health promotion plan, including training frontline staff to deliver basic oral health promotion advice and developing a range of information materials to offer families for different stages in their child's oral development. In addition it will include

training for staff in pre-school settings to undertake supervised tooth brushing with children in their care. A major factor in tooth decay is the frequent intake of refined sugar, which also contributes to other health problems such as obesity. Work underway to improve the diet of families with young children will therefore also contribute to the improvement of oral health more widely.

### **Early Detection and Treatment of Mental Health Problems in Children –**

Leicestershire Healthy Schools provides guidance and support services to schools on the emotional, mental health and wellbeing of children and young people. Training has been delivered to school staff to help identify mental health issues and support children and their families. During 2013 approximately 180 staff from Leicestershire benefitted from free training. Specialist training on using Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for children has also been provided. The Leicestershire Psychology Service (LPS) provides 'Think-Wise' group work for children in year 5 who are at risk of low mood. A staff advice service also provides telephone support for front-line staff concerned about the emotional or mental health of a child or young person. In 2013/14 the service took almost 1,000 calls.

LPS contributes to the Systemic Family Therapy Project to provide additional support for children and young people missing school for mental health reasons. The LPS Emotional Literacy Support Assistant Programme is also training Learning Support Assistants to work with children experiencing relationship and behaviour difficulties in school. In about a quarter of cases the child was referred for assessment by the specialist Child and Adult Mental Health Service (CAMHS). Other cases were offered support, guidance or signposting to community based services. 1,660 children received an assessment or support from CAMHS throughout the year for a range of mental health difficulties such as depression, anxiety, self-harm, eating disorders and developmental conditions such as autism and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

### **Supporting Families**

**Targeted Early Help** - targeted 'early help' describes the type of support given to families by a range of agencies to stop problems happening and to tackle them as soon as possible. During 2014 work to strengthen the integration of early help services continued, supporting improved joining up between services and agencies working with children and families. The new arrangements have supported a 60% increase in early help assessments during the year and a 10% reduction in families needing to be assessed by social care. During the year Children's Centres, Family STEPs, Youth Services and Supporting Leicestershire Families supported an average of 5,246 individuals every 3 months. In February groups were given the opportunity to bid for grants from a £400k fund to help organisations that work with young people to prevent problems growing and to boost their skills. The Early Help grants are available for groups who work with young people aged 11 to 19 or young people with learning disabilities aged to 24.

**Childrens Centres** – children's centres in the County continue to improve. During the year OFSTED ranked five out of six Children's Centre areas as 'good', the second best rating. The centres provide support and information for families with children up to five years old. Activities include healthy eating advice, parenting advice, speech and language training and training support.

**Supporting Leicestershire Families** – during 2014 our Supporting Leicestershire Families service supported 338 families. Families receiving support achieved notable results in reducing incidents of domestic violence (66%), reducing anti-social behaviour (47%) and reducing the number of families at risk of homelessness (18%). The rates of engagement with families has been very high, with 93.5% of those referred engaging with the Family Support Workers. Alongside this Leicestershire has been successful in delivering the National Payment by Results programme by succeeding in ‘turning around’ the lives of 100% of the identified 810 families. The Government praised the scheme and partners for running one of the most effective services in the country. Due to this success Leicestershire has been identified as one of the early entry areas for the expanded phase two supporting families’ programme.

## **Safer Communities – A Better Environment/Place**

We place high priority on keeping Leicestershire communities as some of the safest in the country by minimising crime and antisocial behaviour, reducing youth offending, supporting the victims of crime, ensuring the safety of our roads, and consumer protection services.

**Crime Minimisation** - many factors affect crime and disorder and it can have a significant impact on people's health, well-being and quality of life. So all our services, working alongside communities themselves, have an important role to play in keeping individuals and communities safe. We consider crime and disorder across the breadth of our services and work closely with the Police and Crime Commissioner and partners such as the police and District Councils, as part of Community Safety Partnerships, to ensure that effective action is taken to prevent and minimise crime and to provide support to the victims of crime. Our Police and Crime Panel holds the Police and Crime Commissioner to account and during the year has raised a number of issues including the response to crime trends, the need for improved partnership working and the impact of Police Change Plans on local communities.

**Youth Justice** – we continue to implement our Youth Justice Plan to reduce youth offending, reoffending and minimise custodial sentences for young people. Our Youth Offending Service continues to achieve success in reducing first time entrants to the criminal justice system. 2014 saw the lowest recorded number of young people entering the system for the first time since monitoring began in 2005 and Leicestershire also continues to perform well on the level of young people re-offending, with rates lower than both regional and national averages. A 'pop up' prison cell is being used in a new project to teach young people about the reality of receiving a jail sentence. The Crime and Time initiative has been developed by our Youth Offending Service in conjunction with the Probation Trust and Soft Touch Arts and sees the cell taken to schools, youth groups and those at risk of offending.

**Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)** - we have continued to develop our approach to supporting vulnerable people affected by anti-social behaviour, through revamping and extending our Keep Safe Places initiative and rolling out training to ensure all front-line officers recognise and respond to mental health issues appropriately. Our Keep Safe Places scheme supports people who feel vulnerable, upset, scared or distressed. Set up in libraries, shops, including Age UK shops, and businesses, staff can offer immediate reassurance to anyone that needs it. The initiative has been developed by the Council in partnership with the police, district councils, community partnerships and Age UK. There are now 54 Keep Safe Places across Leicester and Leicestershire where people can go when feeling vulnerable.

Our partnership Trick or Treat campaign in 2013/14 and our overarching Respect/Tolerate campaign to address ASB have both had national recognition as good practice and we have worked to ensure we are able to make the most of new legislation to address ASB with a consistent response across the County. A smaller proportion of people now feel they have been affected by anti-social behaviour and more people feel the police and councils are successfully dealing with ASB and crime in their local area. A new youth café opened in Thurmaston in February, set up by our IMPACT Project following consultation with residents and teenagers about provision in



the area. The youth café hosts activities focussing on music, arts and sports and aims to help reduce anti-social behaviour in the village.

**Domestic Abuse** - we continue to fund services to support those affected by domestic abuse, as well as developing our approach to identify, respond to and prevent it. We have led a single risk assessment approach across all key partners, and have helped to implement the 'Clare's Law' Domestic Abuse Disclosure Scheme locally, supporting people to be informed of a significant abusive history of partners. We supported the introduction of the county domestic abuse helpline in 2013, providing advice and information for anyone affected by domestic abuse. The line has received 640 calls since it was launched in April. Specialist support services have supported over 1,000 people in Leicestershire to improve their safety and support their recovery from the significant impact of abuse.

**Community Cohesion** – we continue work to strengthen community cohesion, supporting communication across community groups such as through the Interfaith Forum and significant events for cohesion, such as the Srebrenica memorial in July. At present 93.8% feel that people from different backgrounds get on well in the local area. In December six young looked after children were supported in a trip to Auschwitz to learn about the holocaust. A documentary of the trip was recorded for use in schools to promote how damaging stereotypes and prejudice can be. Women across the world and the ages were celebrated as part of International Women's Day in March.

**Preventing Violent Extremism** – our learning and development team are supporting delivery of the Prevent Strategy within the Council and more widely in Leicestershire, through close partnership working with other organisations and building preventing violent extremism messages into regular training. We have supported delivery of training to over 350 front-line workers to ensure staff identify risks of extremism and respond appropriately.

**Hate Incidents** – we are working with the police and district councils to encourage people to respect difference and reduce hate incidents through our annual Stop and Tell campaign. Our Hate Incident Monitoring Project continues to raise awareness of how Hate Incidents can be reported and responded to through work with schools, community centres and groups such as through the Respect Difference: Say No to Hate campaign launched in March 2014. A range of awareness raising events including displays at libraries, reporting centres, staff training days, road shows and school assemblies also took place during 2014.

**Road Safety** - the number of people killed or seriously injured on the roads in Leicestershire further reduced in 2013 to 186 from our record low of 196 the previous year. Whilst the number of casualties on our roads increased very slightly in 2013 there were fewer than previous years and 28% (almost 750) fewer than in 2006. Last year's local safety scheme programme included the introduction of traffic signals on a busy roundabout in Wigston. 26 people had been injured at the spot over the last five years and the improvement work, costing in the region of £260,000 makes cycling through the junction safer. In August we launched consultation on a new scheme to improve road safety in Syston. Almost 400 young people took advantage of our pre-driver days at Mallory Park and Bruntingthorpe in 2013. The day focuses on driver

responsibility, impairment and the costs of motoring. Our Road Safety Tutors delivered three nationally approved levels of cyclist training to over 5,500 primary school children. Driver education is an increasingly important part of speed management and, in 2013, some 14,800 drivers across the police area opted to attend Speed Awareness courses. Through the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Road Safety Partnership a series of publicity campaigns have also been reminding drivers to drive responsibly.

**Safer Consumer Goods and Trading** - our Trading Standards Service continues to ensure safe and fair trading, principally through advice and guidance to businesses, but also in bringing cases before the courts. The service provided advice and guidance to 1,313 local and national businesses trading within the County, to help them comply with their legal responsibilities. During the year, fifteen cases were brought before the Courts and all resulted in convictions. Seven defendants received a community punishment order, suspended sentence or imprisonment and fines and costs awarded totalled more than £30,000. Almost £50,000 was taken from the defendants by the courts. In twelve other cases we obtained statutory cautions and/or 'undertakings' from the businesses concerned. Overall approximately £887,000 worth of counterfeit goods was seized including significant quantities of illicit tobacco. Officers also campaigned to crack down on cut-price harmful cigarettes by demonstrating the lethal ingredients used. Almost a fifth of Leicestershire retailers sold age restricted products to children during trading standards test purchasing operations last year. Officers carried out tests using volunteer children covering products such as alcohol, cigarettes, knives and gas.

## **A Better Environment**

Protecting the environment and rural character of the county is an important issue and we are implementing a range of plans to do this including our Environment Strategy, Carbon Reduction Strategy, Climate Ready Plan and Waste Management Strategy.

**Reducing our Environmental Impact** - as part of our environment strategy we continue to mitigate environmental risks across the authority and implement schemes to reduce our environmental impact. We have made good progress on reducing our environmental impact overall. Our total waste produced from our operations continues to fall, whilst our recycling rate continues to increase - improving to 63%. From April 2014 a new contract for internal waste is supporting further recycling improvements. We have taken on a new waste partner which will further reduce waste to landfill. We have also begun to collect high value materials, such as office paper, to sell to the industry, which is expected to further improve our performance and reduce costs. During 2013/14 we introduced a new green driver training course aimed at improving staff safety and Council fuel economy. 30 courses have run so far resulting in an average 7%+ improvement in miles per gallon.

**Reducing Carbon Emissions** – we are playing an important role in leading action to reduce carbon emissions and address climate change. We have developed a new Carbon Reduction Strategy and implementation plan outlining how we will work with partners and residents to reduce Leicestershire's carbon emissions to 4.4m tonnes per year by 2020. Leicestershire currently emits the equivalent of 7.3 tonnes of carbon

dioxide per person. Our programme of street lighting switch-off, dimming and part-night-lighting continued during 2014 and has reduced carbon emissions by 9% compared to 2008/9, saving over 1,400 tonnes of carbon per year. The Council has been rated in the top 10% of authorities for carbon emissions saved, with savings by the council's dry recycling, garden, and food waste services at 92kg per person in 2013. We have agreed a new plan for reducing energy consumption and utilising more renewable energy in our buildings, including making improvements to windows, lighting and installation of 600 solar panels. The work should save more than 400 tonnes of carbon emissions per year. Our work so far has resulted in a reduction in the cost of our carbon emissions through the Carbon Reduction Commitment Payments from £642,336 in 2012/13 to £570,540 in 2013/14. We have also put a number of initiatives in place to reduce the emissions from our council fleet vehicles including improved journey planning, fuel management and transport monitoring processes, alongside fleet rationalisation and acquisition of more efficient vehicles.

**Resilience to and Mitigating the Impact of Climate Change** – flooding causes damage and disruption and increased heavy rainfall over the past two years suggest the risk is growing. As the Lead Local Flood Authority we have a duty to assess flood risk and have therefore completed a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment and a Surface Water Management Plan for Loughborough. We are also working to develop a Severe Weather Impact Monitoring System to better understand the impact of climate change on our county and our resilience to climate change. In January homeowners in Charnwood were invited to a flood fair to find out about the local flood risk and hear practical advice on protecting their property including a personal flood plan, flood protection products and a free flood warning service.

**Sustainable Waste Management** – local landfill tax costs taxpayers over £6m per annum. We have reduced waste to landfill from 50% to 31.4% and aim to reduce this further. To do this we will continue to seek opportunities to prevent waste and increase reuse, recycling and composting. Our work on, reuse, recycling, composting and waste treatment last year supported a diversion of approximately 236,000 tonnes of waste from landfill.

**Waste Prevention and Reuse** – whilst the total amount of waste rose in 2013/14, linked to the improving economy, we continue our education and campaign work to support prevention and reuse of household waste as well as recycling and composting. Our programme of work last year included the delivery of 55 classes focussing on waste prevention and re-use and 30 presentations and activities with schools and community groups. We continue to operate our Freeuse website where Leicestershire residents can upload items they no longer want and others can claim them for free. The website has enabled more than 170 tonnes of waste to be diverted from landfill since it was set up. In January 2014 a swap and fix event was held in Coalville with experts on hand to carry out home repairs on clothing, furniture and bikes. A family from Loughborough who cut their food waste by nearly 90% achieved first place in our Leicestershire Food Waste Challenge. The scheme shows that by making a few small changes people can save an average of £645 per year on food bills and do their bit for the environment.

**Recycling and Composting** - changes to Environment Agency guidelines in 2013, recycling market pressures and rising waste have contributed to a drop in recycling

performance this year. To mark Compost Awareness Week our waste partnership offered a number of home compost bins at reduced rate bargain prices. We also delivered a programme of training opportunities for the Master Composters and Waste Action Volunteers and sold over 1,300 home compost bins.

**Household Waste Sites** - we continue to improve our Recycling and Household Waste sites to support effective recycling, waste recovery and disposal. A £3.4m scheme to improve Leicestershire's busiest site at Whetstone, which receives 20,000 tonne of waste per annum, was completed in January. The site includes improved layout, access and parking and a new waste disposal area with easy access skips. The development also includes an improved waste transfer facility. We also constructed a new Waste Transfer Station at Loughborough. A survey of site users, carried out to support ongoing improvement, showed an overall customer satisfaction level of 97.5%.

**Better Place - Enhancing and Protecting Our Natural and Historic Environment** - we continue to exploit opportunities to make Leicestershire a better and more attractive place and seek sources of funding to ensure we have a good tourist, natural environment, historic and cultural offer.

**Green Spaces** - we continue to support high quality green spaces and an enhanced natural environment that contributes to the wellbeing of Leicestershire communities. We have worked to ensure green spaces and the natural environment are key considerations within landscaping of major projects, including Loughborough and other town centre transformations. We have also supported development of the natural and historic environment through assisting Parish and Town Councils with a range of local improvement projects including gateway features and WW1 memorials. The County Council's three major Country Parks: Watermead, Market Bosworth and Beacon Hill all retained their green flag status for the high standard of these spaces. Improvements this year include the installation of new play areas in Market Bosworth and Beacon Hill Country parks, along with a new array of wooden sculptures. Our parks are also being used as venues to train volunteers to get to grips with countryside skills such as willow-weaving. In August our new map showing the entire Charnwood Forest Regional Park won the Ordnance Survey Open Data Award at the Cartographic Society annual awards. The map is encouraging new visitors to discover what Charnwood Forest has to offer.

**Stepping Stones** - to celebrate 21 years of our Stepping Stones Partnership we planted 2.1km of new hedgerow across the Stepping Stones project area, in partnership with the Woodland Trust. The Stepping Stones project itself supported 14 green infrastructure projects through its suite of grant schemes aimed at assisting community groups, schools, parish councils and farmers to improve their local area. Alongside this our Plugs for Bugs grant scheme has proved popular and supported the planting of 18 new wildflower areas. We have also trained over 75 people in rural skills and as Tree Warden volunteers to support the ongoing effective management of the natural environment in Leicestershire.

**Waterways** - we have played an important role in securing funding and supporting action as part of partnerships to develop our waterways, such as the Ashby Canal and River Soar. In May we supported the Moira Canal festival in conjunction with the

Ashby Canal Trust. The trust is one of a number of partners working with us on a multi-million pound project to restore an eight-mile stretch of the canal with a recent cash sum helping extend the canal from Snarestone towards Measham. We have also designed and overseen the implementation of works at 5 farmland sites with initial data indicating positive water management benefits.

**Better Place** - in June we launched a set of new galleries at Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre, the first significant changes to the displays since the discovery of King Richard III's remains. The new galleries revitalise the story at Bosworth including the search for the lost battle location, realised in 2009. The launch of the galleries preceded the unveiling of a new work of art entitled Towards Stillness - commissioned by the Council at Leicester's Cathedral Gardens. This forms part of our £250,000 contribution towards the redevelopment of the gardens. Funding has also been secured through the Local Growth Fund for progressing the Bridging the Gap Great Central Railway project, which when complete will further add to the tourism offer of the County.

**Museums** - in April the doors opened at a new look museum and library in Market Harborough. The work, undertaken as part of the £5.75m transformation of the Symington Building, involved the re-installation of the museum's collections including the Hallaton Treasure. More than twice as many objects are now on display. The integration with the library has created an innovative new cultural space for Harborough with positive impacts on visits and book loans. A range of new resources have also been made available at Melton Carnegie Museum forging stronger links with the Defence Animal Centre in the town, following a grant from the Ministry of Defence. The 'Wellbeing Hi-5' programme which highlighted the health benefits of taking part in cultural activities completed a second successful year. We also carried out a major consultation on proposals to turn Snibston into a mining museum, improve the country park and engage with volunteers and the community, to preserve its colliery heritage as well as to contribute required savings as part of our Medium Term Financial Strategy.

**Online Heritage** - in October we launched a new website with approaching 7,000 images of Leicestershire's past from our heritage collections. Image Leicestershire showcases a selection of the cultural and historical life of the County. The site also includes World War One images to tie in with the centenary commemorations. The Arts Council also approved the Click Connect Curate Create project to explore digitisation and emerging technologies to provide access to museum collections. In December a new iPhone and Android mobile phone app was launched providing visitors with an enhanced experience of the Melton Mowbray heritage trail – making it easier for visitors to follow the trail and find out about the local area.

**Green Plaques** – in April we announced the first 6 winners chosen to be honoured with the new Green Plaque award. The award recognises and celebrates the people and places that have made an important and enduring contribution to the County. June saw the installation of the first plaque in Thringstone, in honour of the philanthropist and social reformer Charles Booth.

**Library Service** - at the end of June we launched the Summer Reading Challenge for 4-12 year olds. The event is the UK's biggest reading event, with 12,000 youngsters

taking part across Leicestershire and volunteer opportunities for 50 young people. A major consultation on proposals for possible changes to the operation of the library service was completed, seeking views about proposals to continue to operate the 16 most used libraries and supporting communities to run the other 36 local libraries. The options, which aim to contribute to required savings, recognise the growth in e-book and internet usage and further encourages the use of libraries as community hubs. The Words on the Street programme continued to attract major authors to Leicestershire to talk about their work. In partnership with the Adult Learning Service, redevelopments in Wigston, Shepshed, Birstall and Lutterworth libraries have enabled additional learning activity to take place through the creation of additional classroom space.

**Century of Stories and War Memorials** - with help from a Heritage Lottery Fund grant we are supporting a four year Century of Stories programme of activities focusing on the contribution Leicestershire people made to World War I and how the conflict affected the county. We also pledged backing and £5,000 for the Royal Leicestershire Regiment memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum. The Regiment – ‘the Tigers’ - are an important part of the county’s rich history. A memorial commemorating County officers who lost their lives in the Second World War was also re-dedicated at the Armistice Day service.