

# Blaby together

committed to our community

## Building Our Big Society

This is the second annual newsletter by Blaby Together for the people who work, live and visit Blaby District; we hope you find it interesting, informative and useful.

In 2008 local organisations from the public, private and voluntary Sector came together and agreed to carry out a number of projects in Partnership, as Blaby Together, to help further improve life in our area. These projects are captured within the Blaby District Sustainable Community Strategy which Blaby Together uses to measure what has been achieved, and the milestones for delivering longer term goals. In this edition we wish to celebrate some of those achievements that have taken place over the past three years under the four ambitions of the Sustainable Community Strategy and how it has made a difference to people within Blaby District.

As Leader of Blaby District Council and Chair of Blaby Together, I am proud of what has been achieved by sharing resources and working more closely with our partners, in meeting community needs. But, I am not complacent and will continue to push for local service improvements through arrangements which maximise the use of the total funding made available to our area, and by making better use of existing facilities to improve access to services.

During 2010 we have carried out an extensive consultation with the public and our partners to identify new and emerging priorities which people would like the Partnership to focus on, and these will be outlined in the new Sustainable Community Strategy for 2011-14 (please read inside for more details).

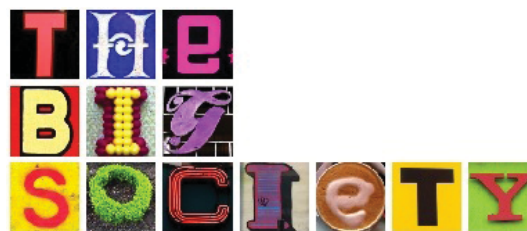


Photo of the Children's Centre in Huncote, please read more inside

Building a Big Society is at the heart of the coalition Government's vision for change. To create a climate that engages and empowers local people and communities in order to build a Big Society.

Inside this edition we demonstrate our ongoing commitment to Big Society and also achievements from projects which have recently been put in place including; the Children's Centre Programme supporting 0-5 year olds and their families, and community projects that have benefited from funding awarded to them by partners such as the District Council or through links with Community Forums.



The Partnership faces a year of financial and structural challenges yet I look forward to another year of improving the quality of life in our District

which will be achieved through the work of Blaby Together Partnership.

### Ernie White

*Leader of Blaby District Council  
Chairman of Blaby Together*

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- **Town Centre Master Plan unfolds** Pg 3
- **Local homes for local people** Pg 3
- **Community Led plans** Pg 5
- **Stop & Tell** Pg 6
- **Sure Start in Blaby** Pg 7
- **Grow, Cook & Eat** Pg 8



## Who are Blaby Together?

### It comprises:

- Blaby District Council
- Leicestershire County Council
- Leicestershire Constabulary
- NHS Leicestershire County & Rutland
- Three Oaks Homes
- Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service
- East Midlands Housing
- Leicestershire & Rutland Rural Community Council
- Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce
- Community Action Blaby District
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Environment Agency
- Voluntary Action Leicestershire
- Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils
- Federation of Small Businesses

## Priorities for 2011 – 2014

During 2010 we consulted with our partners and members of the public on our priorities for the next three years. The consultation included a survey entitled 'Tell Us More' and we ran a prize draw for everyone who took part.

Mrs Anita Crowdell was the lucky winner and won 12 months free membership to Enderby Leisure Centre. The priorities for 2011-2014 are provided on the back page for your information.



**Mrs Crowdell receiving her prize from Cllr Ted-Webster Williams and Martin Miles, Contract Manager of Enderby Leisure Centre.**

In 2008 local people said the following should be Blaby Together's priorities

### The Priorities for have been divided into four main themes:



#### **A clean, attractive and sustainable environment**

Including the economy, transport, physical environment, climate change and housing.



#### **The contribution of our children and young people**

Including positive choices, being actively involved and being able to reach their potential.



#### **The safety, strength and health of our communities**

Including working together to make our communities safer, tackling anti-social behaviour, engaging with all communities, supporting older people to be independent and for all people to be as healthy and active as they can be.



#### **High quality, responsive, efficient and valued public services**

For partners to deliver customer focused services and for customers to expect and receive the best services.

The articles which follow are just some of the examples of where 'real people' have benefited from the work of Blaby Together.

## How Can Blaby Together Make a Difference to Me?

**Be involved** – An easy way of doing this is by attending Community Forums. Community Forums are public meetings that take place every three months, dealing with a variety of local and county issues and offer the opportunity for members of the public to come and hear what is happening in their local area, as well as feeding back their concerns or ideas to organisations such as Blaby District Council, Leicestershire County Council, NHS and Leicestershire Constabulary.

For more details on when and where the next community forum is taking place, please go to the website [www.leicestershireforums.org](http://www.leicestershireforums.org) or telephone **0116 305 5562**. There are other groups within the district focusing on, older people, young people, business and commerce and community projects which anyone can get involved in. Please contact us via: e-mail: [strategic.partnerships@blaby.gov.uk](mailto:strategic.partnerships@blaby.gov.uk) or tel: **0116 272 7582 / 7718**

## Town Centre Master Plan unfolds



Working in partnership with local businesses, the District Council, the Parish Council, and Leicestershire County Council have implemented street scene improvements in Blaby Town Centre over the past 12 months. Improvements to the Town Centre include new benches, bollards, notice boards, street name signs, litter bins and new lighting in John's Court precinct as part of Phase 1 of the Master plan.

## Local Homes for Local People

Work has begun on seven new affordable homes in the village of Croft which will be available exclusively to residents with local connections. Enabling households to remain in their own neighbourhoods is a key ambition across Blaby District, and all other communities have been approached and invited to explore the available options and opportunities for themselves.

Other affordable developments in the district have provided good quality affordable housing for more local people, including the new development of 28 homes at The Dicken in Whetstone, and the regeneration project at Duncan Avenue in Huncote, which has replaced the outdated 'Cornish' flats with decent, modern homes for local residents.



## Choice Based Letting Scheme

Local People in need of housing will be yet more empowered with information and choice when the new Choice Based Lettings scheme is introduced. The scheme is a joint venture between all of the District and Borough Councils of Leicestershire, and the majority of Registered Social Landlords working in the County. It will simplify the application process, and allow local people to see which properties are available, and where, giving a much greater understanding of what housing is available in the district and their position in relation to other households in need.

For more information on how your community can provide local homes for local people, contact Blaby District Housing Strategy Team on **0116 272 7527** or email [housing.strategies@blaby.gov.uk](mailto:housing.strategies@blaby.gov.uk)

## Resident Support Team

Blaby District Council has teamed up with Three Oaks Homes and South and West Leicestershire Citizens Advice Bureau to provide a holistic support package to vulnerable people within the District. The Resident Support team is supporting residents in several ways.



Debbie Griggs of the Resident Support Team at a residents consultation event

Its Support Officers support people to maintain independent living in their homes. The officers support people who are threatened with losing their home or support people to set up home.

The Debt advisor has been providing advice to people at appointments at the main Council Offices in Narborough and at the Civic Centre in Braunstone.

A Children's Worker is working closely with the Children's Centre Team and Leicestershire Youth Offending Team to provide emotional support to children and Young people who have witnessed domestic violence or who have committed anti-social behaviour

A Worklessness Officer provides advice and support in accessing training and employment.

**The holistic nature of the team is shown by a case example. An 18 year old single parent was referred to the team as she was being forced to move out of the family home into her own property. She had no family support and had never lived by herself before. The Resident Support Officer supported her to move-in and developed a routine of paying bills and cooking. She has also been supported to access appropriate parent and child support groups at a local children's centre. The Debt Advisor was able to ensure that she was receiving all the correct benefits. She has now settled into her accommodation and will work with the Worklessness Officer to look at accessing a training course at college.**

## Support to drug and alcohol users

A specialist Drug and Alcohol Worker has been hired through County funding to give help and support to drug and alcohol users and also provide help and support to their families and friends.

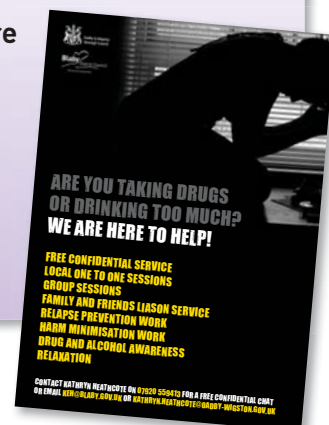
Kathryn Heathcote has been employed by Blaby District Council in a joint partnership with Oadby and Wigston Borough Council. Kathryn will be working for two days each week for Oadby and Wigston Council and three days each week for Blaby District council. She will be working with individuals who have drug or alcohol problems on a one to one basis, using different counselling skills and supporting them through their recovery.

**Ben\*, has been receiving support from Kathryn since July. Ben was a heavy heroin user and was injecting on a daily basis. Ben would buy his needles second hand to inject and would often commit crimes to help fund his habit. When Kathryn started working with Ben she initially needed to ensure that Ben had not contracted any infections through using 'second hand' needles. She arranged an appointment with Ben's doctor to make sure that he had all the relevant health checks completed. Luckily Ben's results were negative. He had not caught anything from using dirty needles and eventually after a lot of support and counselling Kathryn has managed to get him onto a methadone programme.**

**Today Ben is still on his methadone and is still being supported by Kathryn on a weekly basis. He is starting to turn his life around and is looking forward to going back to college next year.**

If you or anybody you know has a drug or alcohol problem call Kathryn Heathcote on **07920 559413**. All calls are totally confidential.

\*Name has been changed.





Enderby Parish Plan Group

## Parish and Community Led Plans

The coalition government has launched the 'Big Society' which highlights that communities should play a greater role in local decision making.

Parish and Community led planning is a community driven process, facilitated by the Rural Community Council, that enables local people to identify the needs and priorities of their community and empower local volunteers to become actively involved in local decision making and project delivery.

The Community Led Plan process involves consultation with all sections of a community and results in the production of a comprehensive action plan which highlights local issues and priorities as well as recommending projects and activities to help tackle them at a local level.

The RCC community development team are working with and supporting communities across the district to produce and implement Parish and Community Led Plans. Current projects in Blaby District include; Enderby, Narborough & Littlethorpe, Kirby Muxloe, Countesthorpe, Croft, Leicester Forest East, Glenfield and Blaby.

## Communities Cutting Carbon

The Rural Communities Council's Cutting Carbon project aims to support action on climate change in local communities in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

As part of this work, 10 community groups will be given help to develop projects and events that help to respond to climate change in their local area. The project is also making grant funding available for these activities through the "Climate Friendly Communities" grant, publishing a monthly newsletter and organising regular events and networking opportunities for interested groups and individuals.

In Blaby District, the project is working in Enderby to support efforts to act on climate change in the village. Through working with the existing Parish Plan group, a public meeting was organised in October 2010 to explore ideas for action in the village. As a result of this meeting, a group has formed under the banner "Pride in Enderby" which is now meeting regularly and looking to carry out projects to improve green space in the village, reduce Enderby's carbon footprint and bring together people within the community.

For more information please contact the Communities Cutting Carbon project officer Andrew Reeves on **0116 2689718** or email: [areeves@ruralcc.org.uk](mailto:areeves@ruralcc.org.uk)

## 2<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL COMMUNITY FESTIVAL OF CULTURE CUBAN SALSA... AFRICAN DRUMMING... CHINESE LION DANCE... CIRCUS SKILLS... INDIAN DANCING... AND MORE

### Annual Cultural Festival



The Partnership supports an annual cultural festival which is held annually at Brockington College. Residents in Blaby are being invited to celebrate their heritage at the second Blaby District Cultural Festival in February 2011.

For further information on past and future festivals, faith groups, community organisations, artists or anyone wanting to express their cultural differences and show their heritage should contact Community Action Blaby District on **0116 2727669** or email: [community@cabd.org.uk](mailto:community@cabd.org.uk)

Organised by Community Action Blaby District



# STOP & TELL – The campaign that urges victims to report hate incidents



Hate incidents may be physical, verbal or written abuse against someone because of their age, disability, gender, race, religion/belief or sexual orientation. Racial or homophobic abuse, threatening letters or damage to property are all examples of hate incidents.

Reporting hate incidents really does make a difference. If an incident

is not reported, we cannot do anything to stop it or have a true picture of the difficulties victims are experiencing. Specialist support for victims of hate incidents is available through the Hate Incident Monitoring Project (HIMP).

**Michael\* contacted the HIMP and requested support as he had been verbally abused about his disability whilst out shopping. He explained that he didn't want to report it to the police but he did want to tell someone. The HIMP caseworker organised to meet Michael and he had the opportunity to talk about his experience, any worries and concerns. He reported that he 'would use HIMP again' and that it was 'really useful to talk to someone'.**

This year, in addition to raising awareness through stands at various locations across Blaby District, there will be a special focus on increasing awareness and reporting of hate incidents among young people. For further information about the campaign in Blaby, please contact Zoe Coulson – Anti-Social Behaviour Officer on **0116 2727673**.

**If you are a victim, witness or third party, you can report hate incidents confidentially in the following ways:**

By calling the **Hate Incident Hotline at Blaby District Council – 0116 2727677** or the **Hate Incident Monitoring Project – 0116 3058263**

By completing the online reporting form at: **"<http://www.leics.gov.uk/reportthate>"**  
**[www.leics.gov.uk/reportthate](http://www.leics.gov.uk/reportthate)**

By calling the police – **0116 222222**



Kidz in Kirby

## Kidz in Kirby

Kidz in Kirby is an action group consisting of young people from Kirby Muxloe, who take part and organise community projects and activities to improve their village.

The aims of organising such projects are to instil a sense of pride and ownership for their village in the young people who participate and improving the community of Kirby Muxloe for all residents, with particular emphasis on young people and older or vulnerable people.

Kidz In Kirby received a participatory budget grant from the Blaby North Community Forum, provided by Leicestershire County Council, and have to date, have undertaken the following projects;

- They collected 500 signatures on a petition to improve road safety in Kirby Muxloe.
- Assisted at Kirby Muxloe Gala Day
- Painted a room at the Free Church, Kirby Muxloe for use as a police base
- Painted equipment for a local nursery
- Undertaken 2 litter picks, cleaning rubbish from green areas in Kirby Muxloe. One area had undergone a fire and had been used as a dumping ground – mattresses, garage door, old barbeque etc
- Attended a local nursing home on 3 Sundays to join in bingo with residents, serve teas and coffees and have a chat

If you would like to know more about the group or have ideas about projects they could get involved in, then please contact either Darren Walker at Community Action Blaby District on **0116 272 7669** or PCSO Duane Wright on **0116 222 2222**.

\*Name has been changed.

# Sure Start for young families in Blaby

Sure Start Children's Centres

The SureStart Children's Centre programme is now into its third year of operation in the Blaby district.

The programme is run through Local Partnership Groups and cover children from 0-19 and are led by District Councils. They comprise of local managers who have the authority to commit resources in their organisations. The membership includes the District councils as chairs, Job Centre plus, Community Health Services, the Voluntary and Community sector, the Youth Service, Connexions, Adult Learning , Libraries and Extended Schools. They are charged with working with partners to improve the services for vulnerable children and their parents whilst retaining a small universal offer to support all parents and their families.

Children Centre projects of support include ; breast feeding mums, children in domestic violence households, mothers with post-natal illness, children's attainment speech, language and physical development, teen parents and support on improving lifestyles for families at risk of being obese.

The programme also provides safety equipment for vulnerable families, safety, first aid, cooking, confidence building and parenting courses, financial advice, nursery places for vulnerable 2 year olds and help with accessing information , advice and guidance on learning and work.

The programme employs family outreach workers who support vulnerable families, through individual casework, and run and/or support an range of groups eg stay and play, baby massage and ante-natal courses. In many of these groups the Family Support Workers work alongside partners Health visitors and Midwives.

Two Children Centres are open at Huncote, and Winstanly & Braunstone Town, and the third centre in Countesthorpe is due for completion later this year.

More than 100 families a week are attending the Sure Start centre at the Pavilion in Huncote to access support groups and play sessions for parents with children who are five and under.



Yen Swift and her son Ben

Yen Swift from Thorpe Astley takes her son Ben to a soft play session called Toddler Town at the Pavilion every Friday morning, she said:

**“ The sessions are great because Ben can play independently and there's load of space for him to run around and explore. Each week Ben learns something new and I get to meet other parents from the area at the same time which is fantastic.”**

## Young People Have Their Say



Young people using electronic hand sets

It is Blaby Together's belief that today's community leaders must work with young people who will one day form the next generation of Parish Councillors, Village Hall committee members,

**Community Champions and volunteers responsible for driving forward the community projects of the future.**

Over the past year, RCC Community Development Officers have worked with young people across the district to identify their needs and priorities, help them to develop pride in their neighbourhood and to ensure that they have the opportunity to positively contribute to their local community.

In July 2010, over 400 young people from Glenfield were consulted as part of the Glenfield Parish Plan project using an Electronic Voting Handset system provided by Leicestershire County Council. All of the issues, priorities and suggestions put forward by those involved will now be used to ensure that the Glenfield Parish Plan adequately reflects the needs and views of young people across the parish. In 2010 the RCC also completed successful youth consultations in both Cosby and Kirby Muxloe.



## Anything to say or want to know more?

Blaby Together would like to know what you think... have you got a story to tell on how the Partnership has improved your life or is there something which you think we could do better? If so let us know.

The Partnership will be producing a newsletter once a year and will also provide updates throughout the year as appropriate. If you would like to be added to our database so we can keep you informed, please contact us via:

Email: [strategic.partnerships@blaby.gov.uk](mailto:strategic.partnerships@blaby.gov.uk)

Telephone: **0116 272 7582 / 7718**

Or complete the form below and return to:

**Policy and Partnerships,  
Blaby District Council,  
Desford Road,  
Narborough,  
Leicestershire, LE19 2EP**



Name .....

Address .....

.....

Telephone .....

E-mail .....

How would you prefer to receive information?

Telephone  Email  Post

Comments .....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

## Grow, cook and eat

Grow, cook and eat is a family learning project that focuses on the promotion of family health and wellbeing through cooking and growing your own.

The project began in March 2009 with funding from Blaby Together. Blaby Together money has been used to fund: three six week cooking sessions; a children's garden within the A Place to Grow Community Garden Site; adult and children's gardening equipment; staffing of the garden; and fruit and vegetable plants/seeds for the garden.

Vulnerable families with 0-5 year olds, living in Blaby District are invited to attend a six week cooking session and weekly growing sessions at the children's garden plot.

Both cooking and growing sessions are delivered in the priority neighbourhood, Enderby St Johns. 10 families have benefited from the cooking sessions and over 20 families attended sessions at the children's garden. The project has generated some really positive results with one family tripling their fruit and vegetable intake. Another family commented 'We are cooking more at home now, I made a vegetable lasagne last week'.

**Grow, cook and eat is a partnership venture. Partners include: Blaby District Council; Community Action Blaby District; Home Start Blaby District and Oadby and Wigston; Sure Start; Leicestershire Adult Learning and Leicestershire County and Rutland Community Health Services.**

Although, the Blaby Together funding has now come to an end the strong partnership approach has allowed the project to continue. Grow, cook and eat will begin again in the new year and will operate via the Huncote Children's Centre. Families attending the cook and eat sessions, Big Cook, Little Cook, at the children's centre will be given the opportunity to attend growing sessions at the children's garden.



**Karen Porter with her sons Ashley & Ethan enjoying the benefits of 'growing their own' pictured with Mary-Beth Tighe of HomeStart**

## Next edition will focus on our new priorities for 2011-2014

- Health & Wellbeing for All
- Access to quality provision for Children & Young People
- Vibrant Places – Sustaining and Improving the Environment
- High Quality, Responsive, Efficient & Valued Public Service