



# RCC Weekly Bulletin

*The weekly newsletter of the Rural Community Council (Leicestershire & Rutland)*

*Monday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2008*

## Time to get in the Christmas mood!



There are plenty of Christmas events taking place around the two counties this month so, to help you get in the mood for Christmas, here are a few that are taking place during this week:

A Christmas tree festival is being held at St Martin's Church, Desford from Friday 5<sup>th</sup> until Monday 8<sup>th</sup> December. 10am – 6pm each day.

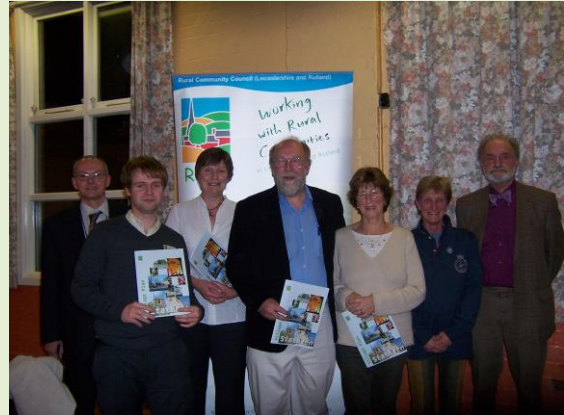
Anstey is holding a Christmas Gala next Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> December, from 4pm – 7pm, at the Jubilee Hall on Staddon Road.

Blaby Christmas Street Fair takes place in Blaby Town Centre from 11am – 10pm next Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> December. Lots of fun with fair rides, stalls and the shops open until late. The Town Centre roads will be closed and pedestrianised but there are car parks available.

Castle Donington is holding a Christmas Cheer event on Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> December at 6pm when the Castle Donington lights will be switched on and the St Edward King & Martyr Church will be open for the Christmas Tree Festival. They are also holding their annual Christmas Fayre in the Church Hall on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2008 at 10am for 4 hours.

Visit our web site at [www.ruralcc.org.uk](http://www.ruralcc.org.uk) and look at our Events Calendar to find out what other events are on offer or to advertise your own event.

## Stathern Parish Plan is launched



**Sam Howlett, RCC Community Development Officer is pictured (2<sup>nd</sup> left) with members of the Stathern Parish Plan Group.**

Stathern successfully launched their Parish Plan at the Stathern War Memorial Institute on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2008.

The event, which was well supported by the local community, was arranged to mark and celebrate the completion and publication of the 'Stathern Parish Plan'. It has been produced thanks to the hard work of a group of local volunteers along with the help and guidance of the Rural Community Council's Rural Action Team.

The evening was lead by Ken Bray, Chairman of the Parish Plan Steering Committee. It included responses to the Action Plan from the Parish Council and Paul Goodman from Leicestershire County Council and was attended by Sam Howlett, the RCC's Community Development Officer for the Melton District.

Special thanks were given to Ken Bray by Sam Howlett and the Chairman of the Parish Council for all of his hard work on the project.

[www.ruralcc.org.uk](http://www.ruralcc.org.uk)

Please email the Editor, Bridget Masters, with any news items: [bmasters@ruralcc.org.uk](mailto:bmasters@ruralcc.org.uk)

## Council campaigns to save phone boxes

Harborough District Council has announced that a number of phone boxes, which have proved vital to villages and communities in the district, have been saved thanks to council intervention.

Earlier this year, British Telecom (BT) announced it was looking to axe 40 call boxes in the district – a move which had caused concern about the potential loss of a vital community amenity.

Harborough District Council lodged objections with BT stating that some phone boxes had a high usage and had also been used to make emergency calls. This week, BT announced it would retain 12 phone boxes after accepting the objections and finding evidence which supported the council's concerns.

Cllr Barbara Johnson (Lib Dem), who had campaigned with Cllr Sarah Hill to save The Crescent phone box in Market Harborough, said: "We mounted a vigorous campaign and handed in forms and a petition signed by residents to the council which was passed to BT. We argued that this phone box was well used by the community and very central and we are pleased, as are the community, that it will stay."

Some parish councils are looking at adopting red phone boxes in their village for heritage reasons, which means the kiosk shall remain, but the phone inside will be removed by BT. Parish councils, which have not yet done so, can still apply to BT to adopt a phone box on the list. Just visit [www.payphones.bt.com/adopt\\_a\\_kiosk/HTML/payphone/index.htm](http://www.payphones.bt.com/adopt_a_kiosk/HTML/payphone/index.htm)

## Rainbows Christmas Concert

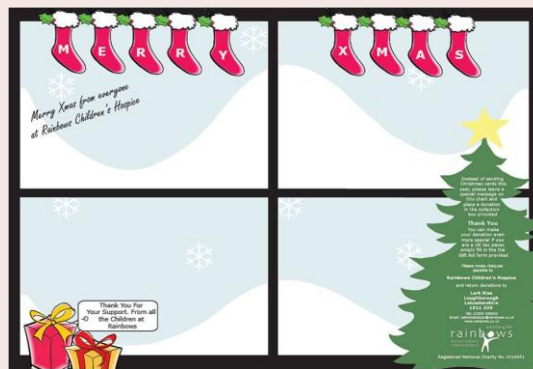
Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> December, 7.30pm  
at St James the Greater in Leicester.

Selection of traditional and modern Christmas music performed by Stoneygate School Band, Avenue Primary School Choir, Hall Orchard Recorder Group, Humphrey Perking High School and the Rainbows Staff Choir. All this will be followed by delicious mince pies and fruit punch.

The compare for the evening will be BBC Radio Leicester presenter, Dave Andrews.

Tickets are £7.50 each. To purchase your ticket please call Emma Lovegrove on 01509 638 006 or visit [www.rainbows.co.uk](http://www.rainbows.co.uk).

## Rainbow's Christmas Poster



**Businesses, shops and pubs can have a free Rainbows' Christmas poster. Instead of sending each other Christmas cards, put it on the wall for everybody to sign their Christmas messages on. Then donate any money you save to Rainbows.**

**To order your poster and donation box call 01509 638 062.**

## Beat the crunch with bus vouchers

Bus users can save money during December with discounted travel vouchers. Voucher booklets are currently being distributed to residents along the applicable bus routes.

The vouchers are available to redeem on services around Ashby de la Zouch Coalville, Hinckley, Loughborough, Lutterworth, Market Harborough, Melton Mowbray and many more places.

The leaflets contain vouchers that when handed to the driver allow passengers to travel for just £1 on a single journey, from December 1 to 23.

As well as the money-saving vouchers, the leaflets also contain a loyalty card. When this is sent back with three valid bus tickets it entitles the holder to a free mini shopper set, consisting of a reusable bag and a trolley coin keyring.

It also includes entry into a free prize draw with High Street vouchers and local attractions tickets up for grabs; perfect Christmas presents for all the family.

As well as being distributed to households, travel vouchers can be obtained by calling 0116 3058777 or e-mailing [passengertransport@leics.gov.uk](mailto:passengertransport@leics.gov.uk)

## Looking for Christmas gifts with a difference?



**Donington le Heath Manor House**

This Christmas you'll find hundreds of great gift ideas in local museum shops and at special shopping events in the run up to the festive season

**Snibston Discovery Museum** at Coalville has a fantastic range of gifts to suit all ages. Their Christmas Craft Fair will also be held on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> December - 10am-3pm.

**Bosworth Battlefield's** gift shop has a fantastic range of unique items, from toys to jewellery, books to tapestries plus Bosworth's very own 'Let Battle Commence' Ale. There is also a Medieval Christmas Evening at Bosworth Battlefield on Wednesday, 3 December, between 6pm and 8.30pm.

You'll also find a selection of gifts at **Donington le Heath Manor House, The Record Office and Melton Carnegie Museum** (closed for refurbishment from Monday 15 December - so hurry!).

## 10 % Discount Voucher

Leicestershire County Council is also offering 10% discount on gifts from Snibston Discovery Museum, Bosworth Battlefield, Donington le Heath Manor House and Melton Carnegie Museum.

You can print off the online voucher at [www.leics.gov.uk/shopping\\_voucher](http://www.leics.gov.uk/shopping_voucher) and hand it in when you pay for purchases before 24 December 2008.

## Next steps in delivering parish power

Communities Secretary Hazel Blears has outlined plans to encourage new town and parish councils to be set up so that more decision-making powers are devolved to local people. She particularly wants to see more set up in urban areas.

Over £750,000 will be allocated to the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) to help communities create new town and parish councils, particularly in urban areas including London. The funding will also be used to encourage both new and existing councils to work to meet the highest possible standards in service delivery and community engagement.

Working with organisations including the Local Government Association, the Society of Local Council Clerks and the Participatory Budgeting Unit, the NALC will develop new good practice guidance on devolving decision-making, a revitalised National Training Strategy for town and parish councillors, and help for councillors to encourage greater community involvement.

New and existing councils that successfully meet approved standards will be recognised through NALC's Quality Parish and Town Council Scheme. It is hoped that the number of Quality Councils could rise from around 650 today, to as many as 2,500 by April 2011.

There are currently 8,900 parish councils and 70,000 elected parish councillors in England, covering 90% of the country. Although small in size, they perform key functions in their local communities, such as managing parks and allotments, maintaining community halls and investing in community transport projects.

Parish councils have been a popular and effective way to represent the views of local people, particularly in rural areas. Now, Ms Blears is looking to parish, town and neighbourhood councils to repeat their success in England's cities, representing people in densely-populated, urban areas.

In recognition of the impact they can make, changes have been made so that, for the first time since 1963, parish councils can now be created in London.

## Frolesworth Village Hall re-opens



**David Beeson, Chairman of Frolesworth Village Hall, thanked everyone involved in the hall refurbishment.**

RCC Village Halls Advisor, John Moore, visited Frolesworth Village Hall on the evening of Wednesday 26 November 2008 for the re-opening of the hall after extensive refurbishment.

David Beeson the hall chairman spoke about the support received in carrying out the work which included a 'Shire' village hall grant of £10075 arranged through the Rural Community Council.

Other support came from Awards For all and Harborough District Council.

For any advice on village halls please contact John Moore on 0116 2689701 or email [jmoore@ruralcc.org.uk](mailto:jmoore@ruralcc.org.uk)



**The new plaque was created by a member of the village hall committee and was unveiled by a 93 year old resident of the village**

## Big Thinking on the Big Lottery Fund



The Big Lottery Fund has just launched its public consultation web site called *Big Thinking*.

Over the next few months The Big Lottery will be asking you to help shape its funding policies from 2009 - 2015. This will help to guide decisions on how funds are awarded and identify the projects that help to make the biggest impact with your Lottery pound.

Visit <http://www.big-thinking.org.uk/> to take part in the survey.

## 'In Safe Hands' project launched



Blaby Community Safety Partnership have launched their 'In Safe Hands' project.

'In Safe Hands' is a private room in the council building devoted to supporting survivors of domestic violence. Blaby's outreach worker will be able to hold one-to-one confidential sessions with people as well as group meetings in the new facility.

The Community Safety Partnership is also sponsoring an Ad Van that will be touring Blaby District. This will have a domestic violence helpline number on it to encourage people who want to seek help to call and speak in complete confidence to an advisor.

For anyone needing help or advice the following helplines are available:

- 24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline on 0808 2000 247.
- Those who commit acts of domestic violence can contact the confidential Domestic Violence Integrated Response Project for advice on 0116 255 0004.