RCC Weekly Bulletin

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

6th April 2009

New County Secretary for LRAPLC

Austin Roberts will be taking up the duties of County Secretary to the Leicestershire & Rutland Association of Local Councils formally from 20th April 2009.

Austin has some 40 years experience with Leicester City Council,working in the field of organisational improvement.

He is very much looking forward to working with everyone and is especially pleased to do so at a time when the role of local councils and the value of community engagement is being increasingly recognised. One of Austin's early priorities will be to increase the number of Councils with Quality Council status.

Huw Irranca-Davies, Rural Affairs Minister visits Leicestershire

(l to r) Martin Hening, Huw Irranca-Davies - DEFRA Minister, Lesley Pendleton- Chairman of the LRP and Nikki Hening.

The DEFRA Minister, Huw Irranca-Davies selected the new Diseworth Heritage Centre for a meeting with senior members of Leicestershire Rural Partnership to discuss Rural Proofing.

He asked first for a tour of the Centre and congratulated Nikki & Martin Hening and those who had made it possible, saying it is a fine example of good use of disused buildings for the benefit of the community.'

see page 3 for more about the visit

stop press .....Our 2009 Village Events Diary is now available

The booklet contains events from April to December that will take place in local villages and towns. Copies are available from local libraries & museums or send a SAE (9" x 4") to Diana Cook, Rural Community Council (Leicestershire & Rutland), 133 Loughborough Road, Leicester, LE4 5LQ.

You can also find all the events listed on our web site at www.ruralcc.org.uk with an opportunity to send in details of your own event if you have not already done so.

Burbage Heritage Trail to go ahead

Burbage Heritage Group is pleased to announce that their project to establish a Burbage Heritage Trail will be going ahead this year following successful bids to Awards for All and VAL Grassroots.

These grants, together with a grant from Burbage Parish Council, will enable the Group to install three interpretation/ display boards, 5 blue plaques and provide a leaflet giving further information about the interesting people and places around Burbage village.

Burbage Heritage Group hope to have the Trail up and running by early September 2009 to co-incide with the National Heritage Weekend.

Library opens a new chapter for village

A £781,000 library and community centre was opened last week in Newbold Verdon,thanks to support from the Big Lottery Fund.

It is the first new library to open with support from the Big Lottery Fund, which has awarded £781,402 for the building and its reading garden. The library will also be a base for the youth service, voluntary groups and the community.

Mick McGrath, head of the Big Lottery Fund in the East Midlands, said: “The opening of the first BIG-funded library couldn’t have come at a better time.

“Libraries sit at the heart of our communities so are ideally placed to host a range of important local services. The Newbold Verdon building is a shining example for other libraries to follow.”

GCR buys Loughborough Goods Office

Loughborough Goods Office

The Great Central Railway has announced the successful purchase of the Loughborough Goods Office. It is eighty six years since it was last in the ownership of the Great Central Railway.

The building has been purchased using grants from Charnwood Borough Council and the Leicester Shire Economic Partnership (via the East Midlands Development Agency). The railway is also grateful to Leicester Shire Promotions Ltd. for their support. To match the public funding and provide a fund to renovate the Victorian structure, the railway launched a one month appeal. Funds are still coming in, but it is currently expected (including gift aid) to reach around £70,000.

The building will provide new office accommodation for the railway and a meeting space. It is also planned to use some of the space at Loughborough Central Station (which will become vacant when the offices are moved), as new display space.

The building will be named Lovatt House by the Great Central Railway. This recognises the contribution of late company secretary, Richard Lovatt (and of his father Bruce Lovatt before him) to the preservation of the Great Central Railway.

Help needed to find region's rarest mammal

The Hazel Dormouse has not been sighted in Leicestershire since the 1970s and in Rutland since the 1990s.

Conservationists in Leicestershire and Rutland have launched an appeal for help in a major survey aimed at finding out if the Hazel Dormouse still exists in the two counties.A partnership between Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council and the Leicester and Rutland Wildlife Trust aims to mobilise volunteers to help with the survey.

Apart from encouraging people to report any sightings, the project will be using dormouse boxes, dormouse nest tubes and an autumn nut hunt to identify the animal's presence by the unique way in which it opens hazel nuts.

The mouse sized little animal is one of our prettiest wild animals. It possesses a coat of golden or light sandy brown fur that extends on to its tail..It spends all of its waking hours (it is only active at night) clambering about in trees, hedgerows, scrub and woodlands, rarely coming to the ground. The only time it does come to the ground is to sleep, the dormouse hibernates for the winter between October and March.

Anyone who would like to report a dormouse or would like a dormouse survey information pack can contact the Dormouse Project on:0116 2671950/0116 2293632
Email: wildlife@leics.gov.uk

Huw Irranca-Davies, Rural Affairs Minister visits Leicestershire

(l to r), Craig Felts, Managing Director of Midlands Rural Housing, Swannington resident, Julie Siddles and Rural Affairs Minster, Huw Irranca-Davies

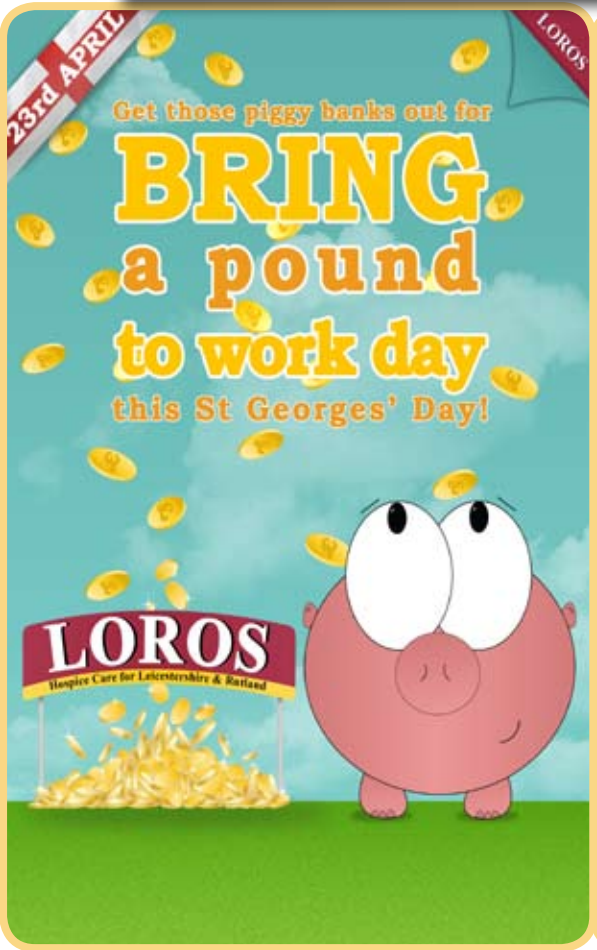
Huw came to the region on the 30th March to launch the National Forest's new Delivery Plan www.nationalforest.org/about_us/consultation/

Later in the day he found time to see some of the LRP's work. His first stop was Foan Hill in Swannington to visit an affordable rural housing site where he met with some of the local tenants. The site was developed in partnership between Midlands Rural Housing, the local Parish Council and North West Leicestershire District Council, and is now managed by Leicestershire Rural Housing Association (LRHA). The Association's Local Connections Criteria was utilised to ensure that local people were housed in the new homes.

Following this Huw was given a guided tour to see the finishing touches being made to the new Diseworth Heritage Centre, which is being officially opened on 7th April by the Lord-Lieutenant of Leicestershire, Lady Gretton.

At the centre the Minister met with Mrs Lesley Pendleton, the LRP's Chairman, along with senior Leicestershire County Council staff, including Assistant Directors from Adult Social Care and Leicestershire Highways. Part of the afternoon was devoted to discussing Leicestershire's approach to rural proofing as well as challenges around implementing government policy within rural areas.

Bring a pound to work day!



Get those piggy banks out for the LOROS this St Georges Day, 23rd April.

Register your company or school to take part in the Bring a pound to work day to support LOROS in raising over £4 million it needs each year in voluntary donations.

It is so simple, either ask your colleagues for a pound each or hold an event for LOROS under the Bring a pound to work name. This could be anything from a dress down day to creating your own event.

Once registered, you can also start asking friends and family for sponsorship for your event and set up your own just giving page to get sponsored straight away. Remember to inform them about Gift Aid as for every pound donated LOROS can claim 28p extra from the Government at no extra cost to you or your sponsors.

To take part in this event, contact the Fundraising Department on 0116 2318431

Log on to pick up latest on roadworks

Comprehensive, user-friendly information on roadworks in Leicestershire is available on Leicestershire County Council's website.

Details are arranged by district and include links to motorway, trunk road and inner city roadworks. There is also a web link to the BBC travel news where an up-to-date list of work taking place throughout the city and county is available.

Roadworks information is available at www.leics.gov.uk/roadworks or by calling 0116 305 0001.

VACANCY FOR TRUSTEE/TREASURER

The LeicestHERday Trust has a non executive vacancy on their Board for a Trustee/Treasurer.

This could be your opportunity to open up new horizons for yourself, or someone you know, and have the chance to shape the future of the LeicestHERday Trust.

If you are interested, or you know of someone else who may be interested in the vacancy, please contact the LeicestHERday office by Thursday 9 April 2009 at the very latest, on 0116 2575615 or email info@LeicestHERday.org.uk for an application form. This is a non fee paying post.