

## **County Councillors Report July 2025.**

### **Popular children's reading challenge returns to Leicestershire**

A new reading challenge aiming to inspire youngsters to connect with nature through storytelling launches next month.

Leicestershire County Council is inviting children to join the fun initiative and read six or more library looks over the summer, collecting rewards as they go.

Last year, a huge 250,000 children's books and over 13,000 e and eAudiobooks were issued across the county.

Children taking part will also receive free entry Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre, as well as the 1620s House and Garden at Donington le Heath, when attending with a paying adult.

This challenge is a simple, no fuss way to keep children learning, reading, and thinking over the summer, without costing families a penny. It boosts confidence, keeps reading levels up, and encourages imagination.

And giving free access to two of our brilliant local heritage sites is exactly the kind of added value we should be offering, celebrating our history while making the most of what we already have.

We are looking forward to seeing families right across Leicestershire get stuck in.”

Created by the Reading Agency, the challenge is available for free in both County Council-run and community-managed libraries across Leicestershire.

It runs between 5 July and 6 September and is open to children aged four-to-12.

Information about the challenge, events and how to sign up to the library online is available at [www.leicestershire.gov.uk/summer-reading-challenge](http://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/summer-reading-challenge).

### **Community team celebrates 10 years of support**

A network of people who work at the heart of Leicestershire's communities to improve lives are celebrating their 10th anniversary.

The county council's 'local area coordinators' aren't often in the spotlight but provide a lifeline to many who need health and wellbeing support.

By supporting people to link in with others and connect with local groups, they help residents to make positive changes, and also reduce demand on public services.

A decade on, the 30-strong team remain a constant, trusted presence enabling them to connect with thousands of residents, community organisations and other professionals to offer a wide-range of support.

Elliot Hall is a community centre in South Wigston and thanks to the work of the coordinator for Wigston, Mary Flynn, has become a hub for residents and a number of different groups.

Mary also supports the Pantry Nook programme which for £5 per week, gives access to fresh food, hygiene products and preloved clothes.

Councillor Michael Squires, cabinet member for health, said: “For 10 years, our Local Area Coordinators have diligently transformed lives and have been that crucial link between service users and service providers.

“Their work is about building trust, interagency working, restoring dignity, and making people feel seen, heard, and supported.

“As Cabinet Member for health, I’m proud to join in celebrating a decade of personalised, local, care that puts people first.”

Mary added: “In the past eight years I have worked with charities and residents to support the pantry and community groups to develop and become established.

“Working in partnership with the residents we can highlight that the solution lies within the individual.”

Contact a local area coordinator at [www.leicestershire.gov.uk/local-area-co-ordinators](http://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/local-area-co-ordinators) or call 0116 305 0705 to find out more.

### **Free dinosaur ‘T-Reks’ walking trails launching in Leicestershire parks.**

**\*\*\*Free family events to mark the walking trail launches will be held in a variety of parks including Melton Country Park, Watermead Country Park (Syston end), Welland Park in Market Harborough, Hollycroft Park in Hinckley, Snibston Colliery Park in Coalville and Everard Meadows, near Fosse Park. For full details, see notes section \*\*\***

Leicestershire parks are going Jurassic this summer with ‘*roarsome*’ new dinosaur artwork created by local children.

A series of 'Dino T-Reks' walking trails will launch on Wednesday, 16 July and will be free to use in 14 Leicestershire parks during the summer holidays.

Schoolchildren were tasked with creating the designs for the trail markers by Leicestershire County Council's Sustainable Travel team.

A total of 95 colourful dinosaur trail markers all inspired by sustainable travel methods will now be unleashed into the parks.

Alexander Clarke, headteacher at St Bartholomew's Church of England Primary School in Quorn, said: "We were really keen to be involved with the Dino T-Reks competition. One of the things we're keen to promote in schools is making sure children are outside, they're out and away from devices as much as possible. We were fortunate that three of our children were selected as winners, and we're very much looking forward to seeing their designs on the trails to encourage and get our children out in the open air and being active."

Willow, Liliya, and Sofia, all aged five, were selected as winners from St Bartholomew's for their drawings, and were excited to hear their dinosaurs had been selected for one of the trails. They were presented with representations from project partner Questr of their drawings, and certificates recognising their work. Willow said she scoots to school and wears a helmet, and the girls said that walking, scooting, and cycling gives them "fresh air", "energy", and "exercise". Sofia said she would like to see the "colourful dinosaurs, and my dinosaur, at the park."

As families walk, scoot, or cycle their way along the trails, they can spot up to eight dino markers, scan QR codes with their phones to collect letters, spell a mystery word and enter a draw to win a prize donated by a local business.

Councillor Charles Whitford, cabinet member for highways, transport and waste at Leicestershire County Council, said: "These Dino T-Reks Family Walking Trails are a fun, free way for families to get active, explore our local parks and even see their child's artwork.

"This really is a fantastic and free summer holiday activity. Each trail is unique – for example, you may see a stegosaurus on a scooter or a brontosaurus on a bike - and all of them have been designed by local children."

### **The free Dino T-Reks walking trails will be found in:**

Watermead Country Park, Market Bosworth Country Park, Snibston Country Park in Coalville, Forest East Park in LFE, Welland Park in Market Harborough, Melton Country Park, Spital Playing Field in Castle Donington, Blaby Road Park, Jubilee Park in Enderby, Queen's Park in Loughborough, Hollycroft Park in Hinckley, Bottesford Park and Everards Meadows near Fosse Park.

The trails will launch at a family event on 16 July at Melton Country Park which will include information about sustainable travel and activities such as a make-your-own smoothie bike.

Full details can be found online at: [www.choosehowyoumove.co.uk/dino-t-reks](http://www.choosehowyoumove.co.uk/dino-t-reks)

- To mark the launch on *16 July at Melton Country Park* there will be a family event including a visit from mascot Theo the Fox.
- The interactive part of the trail has been created by Questr to enable anyone with a smart device to scan QR codes situated on the designed Dinos.
- The *Choose How You Move* team will also visit other parks throughout July and August with more free activities and giveaways, including:
  - 21 July, 12:00-14:00 - Welland Park, Harborough (near café)
  - 30 July, 11:00-13:00 - Everards Meadows, near Fosse Park (near Jenno's)
  - 8 August, 11:00-13:00 - Hollycroft Park, Hinckley (near Sports Pavilion)
  - 11 August, 11:00-13:00 - Watermead Country Park, Syston, (near the car park)
  - 19 August, 11:00-13:00 - Snibston Colliery Country Park, Coalville (near play area)
  - 21 August, 11:00-13:00 - Brocks Hill Country Park, Oadby (near play area)
- Additionally, adults can also try an e-bike for free and get £300 off when you complete a short training session at either Melton Country Park (16 July) or Welland Park (21 July). Full details at: [choosehowyoumove.co.uk/cycling/ebike](http://choosehowyoumove.co.uk/cycling/ebike)

### **Grants available to boost conservation areas in the Borough.**

Grant funding is now available to enhance the character of conservation areas in Hinckley and Bosworth.

The Heritage Building Improvement Grant is open to property owners and tenants to undertake repairs and other works that will improve the condition and appearance of their building(s) in such areas.

This grant scheme is funded by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). A total of £35,000 will be allocated during the 2025/26 financial year.

This grant scheme supports and incentivises building owners and occupiers to invest in works that secure lasting improvements to historic buildings, including reinstating lost historic features, details and shopfronts.

“This is a great opportunity for buildings to be given a new lease of life. Our conservation areas in Hinckley and Bosworth are so important to the local area, and the appearance of buildings plays a huge part in making them so special.”

For more information on the grant scheme and the application process, visit [www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/heritagegrant](http://www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/heritagegrant)

The scheme will remain open for applications until 5pm on Friday 29 August. If all funds have been allocated before this date, the grant scheme will be closed early.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank residents and councillors for your continued support. I am available at Parish Council meetings, or I can visit you if you need help or advice. Remember I am only an Email or a phone call away.

*Ozzy O'shea.*

*Always Working for you Locally.*

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