

PARISH PARTNERSHIPS

A-Z GUIDE



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Introduction

Welcome to the Parish and Communities Partnership Scheme Handbook – your practical guide to working collaboratively with Leicestershire County Council to enhance and support your local area.

This handbook has been designed to empower parish councils, community groups, and trusted third parties by providing clear, accessible information on a wide range of services, initiatives, and opportunities. From biodiversity and flood resilience to festive lighting and road maintenance, the guide offers an A–Z overview of how communities can engage with and contribute to the wellbeing of their local environment.

The Parish Partnerships initiative, launched in February 2025, is at the heart of this approach. It enables communities to take an active role in delivering low-level improvement works on the highway, fostering stronger relationships, increasing local pride, and offering practical solutions where council resources may be limited.

Whether you're looking to report an issue, apply for a licence, or start a local nature recovery project, this handbook is here to support you every step of the way. Together, we can build safer, greener, and more connected communities across Leicestershire.

Biodiversity

The importance of biodiversity

Conserving and enhancing Leicestershire's biodiversity helps:

- Our health and wellbeing – providing spaces we can relax, learn and exercise
- The local economy - we benefit from the environment as it enables us to produce a variety of food, medicines, and other products.
- Environment - it can help to absorb some of these harmful greenhouse gases and reduce the impacts of climate change.

In Leicestershire, biodiversity is under threat due to several factors, including:

- Habitat loss and species loss
- The introduction of invasive species
- Exploitation of natural resources and minerals
- Poor water and air quality
- Loss of soils
- Climate change

We are one of the poorest counties for biodiversity and conservation value in the UK, as our Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) represent only 2% of the land - compared to the national average of 6%.

Leicestershire County Council will minimise the environmental impact of its activities and will improve the wider environment through local action. We will play our full part to protect the environment of Leicestershire. We will tackle climate change and embed environmental sustainability into what we do.

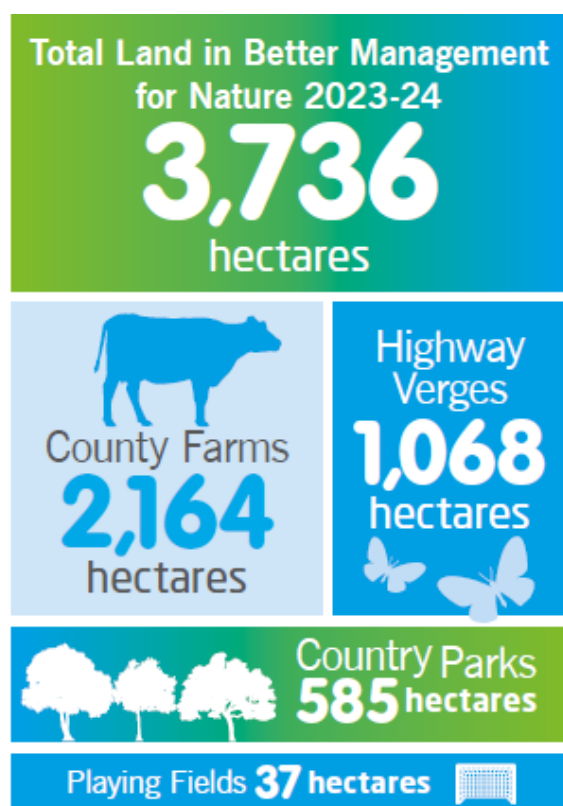


Make a difference in Leicestershire

- Make space for nature every day in your garden and homes. The Wildlife Trust and other organisations have many gardening tips on their websites.
- Buy products that are visibly sustainably sourced products if you can.
- Get involved in volunteering and encourage others to do their bit for nature.

Biodiversity Action Plan

Please follow this link to view the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan.



Festive Lights – S178 Licence

How to apply

In the build up to the festive season if your parish or community are proposing to erect any festive decorations, over, along or across the highway, you will need to apply for a licence under Section 178 of the Highways Act 1980.

The deadline for applying for the licence is usually before the end of October, the Special Projects Team will send out regular communications on when the deadline will be each year.

You can apply for a S178 Licence by completing our online application form [here](#)

As part of the application process, you will be required to provide evidence that the column is safe and fit for purpose for the specific loads required, this is done by having the asset structurally tested. For a list of non-destructive column testers, please contact the Special Projects Team.



Flooding

Flooding Responsibilities

Leicestershire County Council are the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) which covers:

- investigating reported flooding occurrences (mainly where properties have been flooded internally) after the event in priority of the flooding impact
- being the statutory consultee for Major Planning Applications
- issuing consents for works on watercourses and can enforce to ensure flow is maintained in the watercourse (under the Land Drainage Act)
- having a responsibility for strategic flood risk management planning (co-ordination role with other risk management authorities)

Other responsibilities are held by:

- Land Owners – the owner of the land or property next to or over a river, stream, ditch or piped flow of water (culvert) that forms part of a watercourse, is legally termed a 'riparian landowner' of that section of the watercourse
- The Environment Agency – manages the risk of flooding from main rivers, reservoirs, estuaries and the sea, as well as being a coastal erosion risk management authority
- Highway authorities (LCC) – are responsible for highway drainage. We are the highways authority for Leicestershire Water and sewerage companies
- Water and Sewerage companies – are responsible for managing the risks of flooding from water and foul or combined sewer systems (Severn Trent Water and Anglian Water in Leicestershire)

More information about flooding and who to contact can be found at **Flood Risk Know What to Do** and **Be Aware - Flooding**.

Severe Flooding in Leicestershire

The unnamed storm which hit Leicestershire on 6th January resulted in internal flooding to around 700 properties across the county. This storm event resulted in the worst recorded impacts in recent history for Leicestershire.

The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) focused on recovering from the event, bringing all responsible agencies together to understand what happened and look for actions that could be taken to help reduce the impacts of future events. This is alongside delivering all other statutory functions required of the LLFA.

The Council co-ordinated several flooding drop in events around the county to offer advice and support on how to deal with the impacts of flooding.

Flood Wardens

Community Flood Wardens are members of the local community and are supported by Leicestershire County Council, the Environment Agency and LLR Prepared. Leicestershire has around 30 volunteers across the county. The work Flood Wardens do in their local community is vital in preparing for and responding to flooding incidents.

Nominated volunteers will sign up with their District or Borough Council and become part of the Community Flood Plan for their area. The number of Community Flood Wardens will depend on the size of the community – a single individual may cover one street, connecting streets or even the whole community.

If you're interested in becoming a flood warden, please contact Leicestershire County Council via the details below

- Website – [read more about becoming a flood warden here](#)
- Email – Emergency.Management@leics.gov.uk
- Phone – 0116 305 6101



Community Response Plan

In an emergency the Emergency Services will always have to prioritise those in greatest need, especially where life is in danger. There may be times when your community is affected by an emergency but lives are not in immediate danger. Being able to help yourselves and those around you will assist the emergency responders and reduce the impact on your community, both in the short and longer term.

If you are interested in developing a Community Response Plan you can find all the information required here.

Grass Cutting

Why do we cut the grass?

As a highway authority we are responsible for maintaining the highway for safety and this is the main reason we cut grass.

All verges adjacent to the public highway are cut for safety purposes to maintain visibility at junctions, and to ensure that road and pavement widths are not reduced by overhanging grass.

Type and Frequency of Cuts

URBAN Grass Cutting

These are generally the small verges within towns and villages, fronting houses within the 30mph speed limit. URBAN GRASS is programmed to be cut up to **6 times per season** – weather dependent.

RURAL Grass Cutting

This is the longer, rougher grass verges wither side of the 60mph roads, which link towns and villages. RURAL GRASS is programmed to be **cut 3 times per season**.

Schedule

[Visit the up-to-date grass cutting programmes online here](#)



Gritting and Salt Bins

Leicestershire County Council has a fleet of 23 gritters, which grit 1,3000 miles of the roads during the winter months.

[Get more information about gritting, flooding and find travel updates when travelling during the winter months on our website.](#)



Salt Bins

To request a new salt bin this must be submitted to your local Town, Parish, District or Borough Council but the bin must meet a certain criteria and is for use on the public highway only.

All bins are re-stocked at the beginning of the winter session around the 1st November, this is part of a schedule as and when resources and priorities allow.

[Visit our website for more information.](#)

Reporting an Issue

What identifies as an issue?

An issue is something which is an immediate safety hazard.

We have trained inspectors that are out on the roads all the time, if you see something that is an immediate safety hazard, call it in on the number below.

For example, if you see that a kerb has been hit and is now a danger to motorist and pedestrians, by calling this number and reporting the safety hazard means that it can be made safe a lot faster

How to report an issue

! Imminent risk: If you wish to report something that could cause serious harm or pose an imminent risk to health and safety, please call 0116 305001.

For minor issues please use the online [report it form](#).

Guidance on photographs

Pictures should clearly show the extent of the defect (photo 1) and where possible measurements of the defect (e.g. length x width, diameter, depth). Pictures should give context, so have a wider view of the surrounding area (photo 2 and 3) this is important in identifying the exact location of the defect (e.g. next to the school).

Please try not to include people (facial images) or vehicle registrations in pictures.



Photo 1 – The defect, make sure all sides of the defect are in the photo



Photo 2 – Photograph the defect and the view up the road/pavement



Photo 3 – Photograph the defect and the view down the road/pavement



Local Nature Recovery Strategy

The LNRS empowers local communities and parishes to take part in nature recovery through citizen science, habitat creation, and local initiatives. It shows how nature benefits health, wellbeing, and climate resilience, and identifies practical ways to make space for nature in villages, towns, and the City.

Why it matters:

- Encourages local pride and stewardship.
- Improves access to nature and green spaces.
- Builds resilience to climate impacts like flooding and heatwaves.
- Enables communities to be more effective in their nature recovery actions.



Net Zero Toolkit

Leicestershire town, parish and community groups Net Zero toolkit

This resource aims to provide a starting point for town and parish councils and community groups to address net zero in their local community.

Find out more at [Leicestershire Communities | Net Zero Toolkit](#)



Causeway One Network

One Network is a unique digital web-based road management platform that connects road operators, utilities, contractors, traffic management teams and the public with an aim to reduce disruption, keep traffic moving and improve journeys.

To assist users in setting up an account and finding locations we have developed a simple guide that has been uploaded to the Parishes and Communities web page.

[View the guide here](#)



Overgrown Vegetation Postcard Initiative

The aim of this initiative is to provide the Parish/Town Councils/Groups with a solution for managing incidences where the vegetation within the boundary of an owner/occupier residence obstructs/inconveniences the public highway or footpath.

The initiative will provide guidance, information and support to empower Parish/Town Councils/Groups.

**Leicestershire
Communities**

In partnership with your local Parish Council

Overhanging Vegetation on the Highway

Date: _____

Address: _____

Dear Resident,

We note that your tree/hedge requires cutting back to ensure it isn't blocking the path/highway.

We understand you are the owner/occupier, so would ask that you cut back the tree/hedge within the next 2 weeks.

If you are not able to do this, or you are not the owner, please do get in touch with us via the contact details, below.

Please ignore this postcard if you have already received information from Leicestershire County Council.

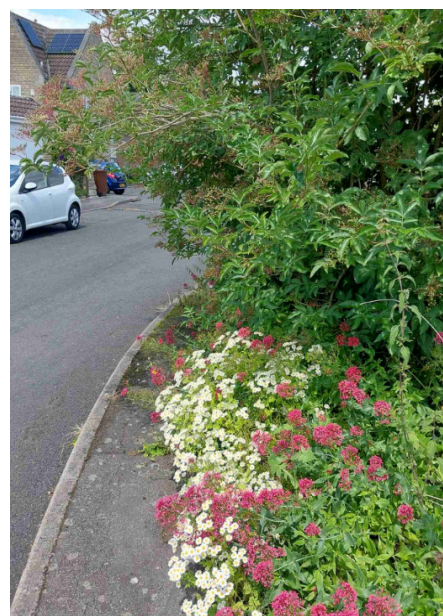
Yours faithfully,

*Parish Council Stamp

Key points of the initiative

- To be used only where the overgrown vegetation is in the owner/occupier residence onto a highway/footway (including Public Rights of Way (PROW))
- Not to be used for non-highway issues and between owner/occupier residences
- Printed post cards will be provided by LCC
- The responsibility for resident communication and managing the responses/feedback from the affected residents is with the Parish/Town Councils/Groups and not LCC
- The period March to August must be avoided due to this being the main breeding season for nesting birds, although this is weather dependent

Examples of what is overgrown



Parish Partnerships



About the Partnerships and how to apply

The Parish Partnerships were launched in February 2025.

The initiative is to support and enable trusted third parties to carry out low level improvement work on LCC maintained highway in partnership with LCC.

The type of work includes extra grass cutting, extra sign cleaning, asset maintenance and vegetation clearance. This work does not replace the LCC program of works currently in place.

The partnerships have seen many benefits. These include: -

- Increased engagement and awareness of E&T services and improved positive relationships.
- Providing solutions, breaking down previous barriers and meeting the needs of the community.
- Enabling an alternative when budget limitations restrict the Council from carrying out work requests.
- These alternative solutions address local problems that may be raised by Elected Members which will ultimately benefit the local communities.

If you are interested in a Parish Partnership, please get in touch with the Special Projects team on the following email address: -

ETDSpecialProjects@leics.gov.uk



Parking Report It Online Form

You can tell us about problems on roads or pavements in the county, such as potholes, through our online form. You can report most types of problems with county roads, pavements and public rights of way online.

Report a road problem

If you are contacting us about something in the county that could cause serious harm or pose an imminent risk to health and safety, please call us on

0116 305 0001



Recycling and Household Waste Sites

There are 13 Recycling and Household Waste Sites (RHWS) and four waste transfer stations in Leicestershire that are operated directly by Leicestershire County Council. There are approximately 1.3 million visits to the sites each year with 76,000 tonnes of waste handled each year through the RHWS.

The Waste Collection Authorities (district/borough councils) provide kerbside collections of residual waste, recycling and green waste from residents.



Planned Roadworks and Road Closures

A list of planned roadworks and road closures is available on the [Parishes and communities webpage](#), this is updated every week. For emergency roadworks and road closures, please see [One Network](#).



Event Road Closures

Remembrance Day

Leicestershire County Council process all road closures and restrictions for Remembrance Day.

Please get in touch with eventsnetworkmanagement@leics.gov.uk with your plans for this year's event.

Snow Wardens

Every winter the Special Projects team offer Snow Warden training to any parishes wanting to volunteer. The training is provided at Croft Depot, Arbor Road, Croft.

The role of a Snow Warden is to take care of your local parish streets and help to reduce the risks that arise in winter due to snow and ice. Snow wardens have a massive impact on the parish, they are essential in looking after people in the local area and making the footpaths safer.

All Snow Wardens will be provided with the appropriate personal protective equipment needed to complete the job safely.



If you are interested in becoming a Snow Warden for your local parish, please contact us ETDSpecialprojects@leics.gov.uk

We usually begin advertising for volunteers around September time.

Speed Limits

National speed limits

The following speed limits apply to all single and dual carriageways with street lights, unless there are signs showing otherwise:

- 30 miles per hour (48km/h) in England, Scotland or Northern Ireland
- 20 miles per hour (32km/h) in Wales

Locally set speed limits

Local councils can set their own speed limits in certain areas, and these must be clearly signed.

For example:

- 20mph zone in built-up area near a school
- 50mph (rather than 60mph) limit on a stretch of road with sharp bends

Read more information about speed limits [here](#).

Community Speed Watch

Community Speed Watch (CSW) is an educational program to help volunteers reduce speeding traffic through their community and is part of the Road Safety Partnership



Structures Licences

Leicestershire County Council, as the local highway authority, has a duty to maintain all publicly maintainable highways in Leicestershire to a safe and acceptable standard. In order to do this we require any structure placed on the highway must have a license - this includes street furniture, scaffolds, skips, structures, cabins, building materials etc.

Parishes currently require an individual licence for each structure and associated insurance for any asset not owned by the highway authority, statutory undertaker or utility company.

Before you apply

You will need the following documents when submitting your application as we will be unable to process your application without these:

- **Scale map** – pointing to the location of the structure/equipment
- **Detailed description** of the structure/equipment with a specification. (Photographs can be provided in addition to this)
- In date **Public Liability Insurance (PLI)** certificate (minimum indemnity of £10 million)
- Evidence of any **consultation** undertaken (if applicable)
- **Planning permission** approval (if applicable)

Visit our webpage for more information.

How to apply for a structures licence

A structure licence will be required for any of the following:-

- Benches
- Bollards
- Bus shelters
- Gates
- Litter bins
- Mobile vehicle activated sign
- Notice boards
- Planters
- Plaques
- Signs

Other items will be considered if they meet our structural licence criteria.

Fee

The fee for a structure licence is £235.00 via BACS payment. You will need the following information:

Sort Code: 60-60-06

Account Number: 87418460

Quote payment reference number: 33111-100-8347

Application Form

To request an application form, please contact the Special Projects Team, email:

ETDSpecialProjects@leics.gov.uk

Cultivation Licences

If you are planning to cultivate highway land, you will need to apply for a licence to cultivate.

For an application form please contact the Special Projects team on the email address above.

Surface Dressing

Roads across Leicestershire are treated during the summer months to help reduce the chance of potholes developing. The work is dependent on acceptable road temperatures and dry weather for the process to full take effect. Any areas that cannot be completed because of the weather will be added to next season's programme.

These improvements will help keep the county moving and maintain the condition of the roads.

The works, known as surface dressing, provide the roads with an additional protective layer by sealing the surface with bitumen and stone chippings. The new layer prevents water and air penetrating the tarmac underneath, preventing potholes, while the stone chippings increase the texture of the road surface. This process improves the resistance to skidding and the chippings increase texture which helps drain away water from the road surface, helping to reduce spray and improving road safety.

[Please follow this link for a copy of the 2025 surface dressing programme.](#)



Swifts

Swift Action for Swifts

The swift partnership is a small partnership group of appropriate organisations and volunteers interested in local swift conservation and associated projects across the county. The swift has also been identified as a priority species in the new Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).

Unfortunately, Swift numbers are in severe decline (53% down between 1995 and 2016) owing to loss of breeding sites and the reduced numbers of flying insects caused by our use of insecticide, pesticides and climate change.

[Please click here for information on how you can help Swifts.](#)

There is also a lot of useful information on the RSPB site around helping nesting Swifts, **[please click here to view the website.](#)**



Swifts Need Your Help!

The UK's Swift population has declined by **53%** between 1995 and 2016 and it is estimated that **20,000** nest sites are needed every year just to stabilise the current UK population! You can see Swifts in the UK for only 3 months between May and August when they are here to breed and we need your help to record their nest location during this time.

If we know where existing nests are, we can help protect them and provide new nests if needed in the best places

Swifts nest in urban and rural locations. They nest in holes and cracks as well as artificial nest boxes. Their nests are usually above 5 metres high.

Swift Nest Sightings Needed!

We want to know if you see:

- Swifts flying low over rooftops and then dipping down towards a building and disappearing, it is likely that they have entered a nest.
- Swifts flying low in groups screaming (indicates that there are nests nearby).

Tell us at www.naturespot.org.uk/swifts
email us at landrswifts@gmail.com, visit [f](#) [@lrsnswifts](#) or
download the **Swift Mapper app** from Google play or the App Store

Tree Wardens

Tree Wardens are appointed as guardians of your local trees and are also a source of advice and can help you organise a tree planting scheme.

Tree Wardens plant, protect and promote their local trees. No training or experience in tree management is needed – just a love of trees and a few hours to spare. Our ambition is to have a tree warden for every parish or community in Leicestershire.

Watch this video to see what its like to be a Tree Warden volunteer.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3XVVam8xUTo&t=166s>



A TREE FOR EVERY PERSON

Leicestershire County Council

Find out how Tree Wardens can make a difference in your parish.

Tree Wardens are volunteers appointed by their parish council to:

- be a contact and support for all things tree related in their local area;
- protect trees by reporting on early signs of pests, disease and vandalism;
- gather information, survey and record information about trees important for wildlife or heritage in their parish;
- help look out for opportunities to plant more trees in the local community, enhancing the environment for parishioners;
- help find the money to fund local tree planting projects, e.g. The Tree Council have grants only available to Tree Wardens;
- get involved in campaigns to raise awareness about the importance of trees.

Trees are important in your parish because they:

- provide a habitat for wildlife;
- provide shade and shelter for people;
- can muffle sound effectively;
- are appreciated by local people for their beauty and the sense of wellbeing they bring;
- and can increase the property value of homes by up to 15% or more.*

THE TREE COUNCIL
TREE WARDEN SCHEME

The Tree Council (lead organisation for the national Tree Warden Scheme) recognised the value of Leicestershire's Tree Wardens back in 1987 and launched the Tree Warden Scheme as a national initiative.

The parish/ town council would be expected to support their Tree Wardens by:

- including them in discussions about tree matters;
- inviting them to attend parish/town council meetings and report any tree related matters;
- support them with any necessary resources needed to carry out their volunteering (within reason);
- and ensure that they are covered for health and safety and insurance as a parish/ town council volunteer.

Leicestershire County Council will support parish councils by:

- providing support and guidance for Tree Wardens at a local level;
- providing at least two training courses and one networking event per year;
- providing links to funding schemes for community and private landowner projects.

For more information about the Tree Warden Scheme and how it could benefit your parish/town council contact your local Tree Warden Coordinator at: EnvironmentTeam@leics.gov.uk

*Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment 2005.

Urban Verge Wildlife Scheme

The Leicestershire Urban Verge Wildlife Initiative is a county wide partnership project, led by the council and supported by local wildlife recording charity NatureSpot.

The project gives parish councils and associated community groups the opportunity to take over the management of selected verges in their area, in order to improve them for wildlife.

The scheme started in 2020, with just 11 verges, but has now grown to cover 71 verges across 60 parishes. It gives communities the chance to reduce the drastic loss of wildflower meadows, which has reduced by 97 per cent since the 1930s.

It has also gained interest from several other councils across the UK who are interested in starting up similar projects.

The success of the scheme is boosting wildlife habitats and encouraging pollinators including bees, butterflies and moths.

Parish councils and community groups interested in joining the scheme can contact the council's environment team at environmenteam@leics.gov.uk.

To find out more about the Urban Verge Wildlife Initiative and how the council is working with NatureSpot to boost biodiversity across the county, please visit [NatureSpot's website](https://www.naturespot.org.uk/).



Waste Management



District Council

Kerbside collections

Collect waste in separate wheelie bins for general rubbish, green garden waste and dry recyclable (paper, card, cans, glass and plastics)

Bulky and trade waste collections



County Council

Recycling, transfer and treatment of collected waste

Manage contracts for bulk haulage, composting, energy from waste, landfill and recycling of over 300,000 tonnes of waste



County Council

Operate 13 Recycling Sites and 4 Waste Transfer Stations

Staff, maintain and manage the sites and plant and equipment.

Haul waste for recycling, treatment or disposal.

[Find out more about recycling and waste services in Leicestershire here.](#)

Supporting our Communities

[Visit our Leicestershire Communities website here.](#)



Leicestershire Communities

In partnership with your local Parish Council

