

RCC Weekly Bulletin

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

29th June 2009



Royal visit to Rutland



Sue Renton, RCC Project Officer for Rutland Community Spirit (r) is pictured discussing the project with Princess Anne

Staff and volunteers from Voluntary Action Rutland were recently privileged to welcome HRH Princess Anne, The Princess Royal who opened the building's new extension.

Amongst those presented to Her Royal Highness, were Sue Renton, Project Officer from Rutland Community Spirit and a project volunteer from Ryhall, Anne Harrison.

Sue said, "We were glad to be part of this important day. Princess Anne was very interested in our work and was clearly aware of the issues facing people living alone in isolated areas."

Leicestershire Rural Partnership (LRP) The Six to Fix Conference



RCC Chairman, Dale Mortimer, is pictured (centre) at one of the workshops

The LRP held its 12th Conference at Hothorpe Hall on 19th June 2009. Chaired by Jeremy Prescott, the RCC Director and introduced by Lesley Pendleton, the LRP Chairman, the Conference was attended by over 100 delegates.

Dr Stuart Burgess, Chairman of the Commission for Rural Communities (CRC) presented on England's Rural Areas -Releasing their Potential. He was followed by Andrew Morgan, the Skills and Communities Director at Emda who presented on the East Midlands Rural Economy. Matthew Kempson then gave an LRP perspective on local initiatives.

After lunch delegates had the opportunity to attend two workshops focusing on the six areas that were highlighted by the CRC.

www.ruralcc.org.uk

Please email the Editor, Bridget Masters, with any news items: bmasters@ruralcc.org.uk

Old chippings bring new life to roads



Surface dressing in Gilmorton

Around 6,000 tonnes of recycled chippings will be re-used on Leicestershire's roads this summer.

Over the next few months, almost £2.3 million will be spent on re-surfacing to extend the life of the county's roads and pavements by up to 10 years.

This involves re-using chippings which were swept up last year and sent to the County Council's special recycling facility at Battram for washing and separating. These are added to new bitumen and rolled to give a skid-resistant surface, extending the life of the road by up to 10 years - the recycled chippings make up over a quarter of the 22,000 tonnes used throughout the season.

During re-surfacing, roads are swept by machines at least three times within 28 days of the dressing being applied to collect any loose chippings.

Matthew Lugg, the County Council's Director of Highways and Transportation, said: "Surfacing-dressing is the most cost-effective way of keeping our roads in good condition. It costs around 80% less than other surfacing techniques and recycling chippings saves over £60,000 a season.

To find out more about surface dressing and see the forthcoming schedule of work, visit: www.leics.gov.uk/surface-dressing.

For general enquiries or to report a problem with a road in the County, call 0116 305 0001.

Funding to install renewable energy technologies

Not for profit organisations such as community groups, charities, schools, colleges and faith groups, etc are being invited to apply for funding to install renewable energy technologies (such as wind turbines and solar panels) and energy saving measures (such as roof and cavity wall insulation).

Under the new Community Sustainable Energy programme, £8 million will be available for the installation of micro generation technologies and energy efficiency measures (Capital grants) and £1 million for project development grants.

The maximum Capital grant available is £50,000 or 50% of the project costs. The maximum project development grant is £5,000 or 75 per cent of the study cost – whichever is lower. The funding programme is being managed by the Building Research Establishment on behalf of the Big Lottery Fund's "Changing Spaces" Programme.

The Selection Panel are particularly keen to receive more applications for projects in the East Midlands, London, North East, North West and Yorkshire as proportionally there have been fewer applications so far.

Project development grants (for studies investigating the feasibility of installing any combination of the technologies) will be awarded on a first-come first-served basis until all funds are spent.

Capital grants will be awarded on a competitive basis at quarterly selection panel meetings.

The next application deadline is the 7th August 2009.

<http://www.communitysustainable.org.uk/>

Church project scoops top award



(l-r) the Rev Andrew Quigley of St Nicholas Church, Derek Park, director of Midland Stonemasonry, Alison Barber, church warden, Keith Hamilton of B3 Architects, Richard Burdon, church warden, Jack Taylor of Harborough DC, and Patrick MaGee contracts manager for Midland Stonemasonry – with the extension in the background

A church in Market Harborough which underwent a much-needed revamp has landed a major award. The extension of Grade II listed St Nicholas Church in Little Bowden has been named 'Best Commercial Project under £1m' at the Local Authority Building Control Built in Quality Regional Awards 2009.

The project, which was nominated for the award by Harborough District Council Building Control, saw disabled access provided at the church as the main nave had steps which made wheelchair access impossible.

The work involved the lowering of a public footpath which ran through the site and the moving of more than 40 graves at the west of the church.

The new facilities include toilets, a place for food to be served and meeting spaces.

The project, which cost £520,000 and was funded by the church with donations and grants, will now go forward to compete in the national LABC Awards.

Flag flying for Armed Forces day



(l to r) Colonel Colville, the Deputy Lieutenant of Leicester, World War II veteran 84-year-old James Walton and Blaby District Council Chairman Alan Bailey.

Over 70 people turned out to a flag raising ceremony to pay tribute to past and present members of the Armed Forces.

Ex servicemen and their families along with current troops, Councillors and members of the British Red Cross attended the event at Blaby District Council's offices in Narborough. The Lord Lieutenant of Leicester was also represented by one of her deputies, Colonel Colville.

Parcels and cash donations were collected for the Support our Soldiers charity which aims to boost the morale of British troops abroad by sending out gift packages and messages of support.

Steve Parker works in the Community Safety Team at the Council but has also served in the RAF Police in Northern Ireland among other places, he said: "I think it's extremely important that the public appreciate what our soldiers are doing.

"Regardless of politics we have to remember that these people are putting their lives at risk."

The specially designed flag based on the Union Jack, was raised at 10.30am on Monday 22nd June to mark the beginning of a week of events leading up to Armed Forces Day on Saturday 27th June.

Get Involved

Planning Aid is looking to involve the wider community in the Regional Plan Review.

The Regional Assembly is particularly interested in comments from people that represent the following groups:

- * Members of minority ethnic groups and faith communities.
- * People with low literacy from poor socio-economic backgrounds.
- * The disabled, frail elderly and long-term or permanently sick.
- * Young adults and under-represented youth groups.
- * Isolated rural communities on low incomes.
- * Small to medium scale enterprises (SME's).

You can get involved by attending one of Planning Aid's evening events in your area. Visit the Get Involved web site at <http://www.eastmidlands-getinvolved.org.uk> for details of events and for more information.

Safer Homes Fund

The Safer Homes Fund is a £6million programme for voluntary and community sector organisations. It aims to improve home security in key target areas. These are areas that are disproportionately affected by crime and are known to have lower rates of home security.

Grants of between £10,000 and £100,000 are available to voluntary and community sector organisations to fund activity including fitting window locks, repairing windows and doors, advising people on using security effectively, and signposting people to further support.

There will be an additional £500,000 available for Neighbourhood Watch programmes to receive grants of between £1,000 and £50,000.

Visit <http://grantsadmin.co.uk/saferhomes/> for more information.

The final closing date for receipt of applications is 12pm Friday 31st July 2009

it's time to find

the BIG family idea

Do you have a great idea to improve family life in the UK? Would you like to see that idea piloted and turned into reality?

The Big Family Idea is a competition open to members of the public and professional bodies, being run by the organisers of National Family Week and supported by the BIG Lottery Fund. They are looking for great ideas that could improve family life either in your street, in your town or village or in the UK.

Although there isn't a direct prize, the winner will have the achievement of seeing their idea selected, and then piloted by a suitable organisation with funds from BIG of up to £150,000 (subject to appropriately fundable ideas being submitted).

Entries are open from the 15th May to 31st July 2009. For more information, as well as terms and conditions, visit www.nationalfamilyweek.co.uk which is running the competition.