Leicestershire Communities

Our Communities Approach

2022 to 2026

easy read

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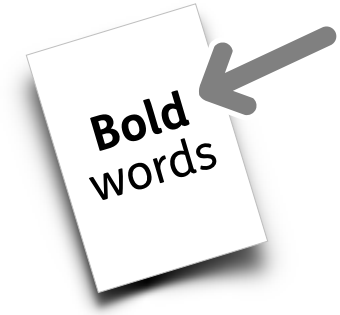


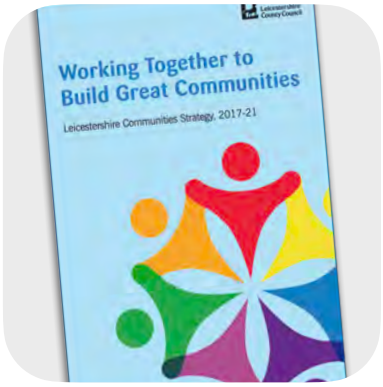
In this easy read document, difficult words are in **bold**. We explain what these words mean in the sentence after they have been used.

Some words are blue and underlined. These are links which will go to another website which has more information.

Introduction

Leicestershire Communities is the part of Leicestershire County Council that supports and works with community groups.

We have written our ideas for a plan for services for people in Leicestershire.



In the past we called these plans our Community **Strategy**.

A **strategy** is a plan of things to do over a period of time.

This time we are calling it ‘Our Communities Approach’.

What we have achieved since 2017

Voluntary Action Leicestershire (VAL)

Leicestershire has over 3,000 community groups.

They are supported by an organisation called Voluntary Action Leicestershire.

Leicestershire Communities works with local NHS health services to support Voluntary Action Leicestershire.

Supporting Town and Parish Councils

There are 7 **Town Councils**, 160 **Parish Councils** and 55 **Parish Meetings** in Leicestershire.

Town Councils and **Parish Councils** run local services and make decisions about local issues.

You vote for people to speak up for you on your Town or Parish Council.

A **Parish Meeting** does not do the same things as a Parish Council, but has to meet at least twice a year and have a Chairperson.

A **parish** is an area.

We help Town and Parish Councils with their work. We also work with and support communities and groups in areas where there are no Parish or Town Councils.

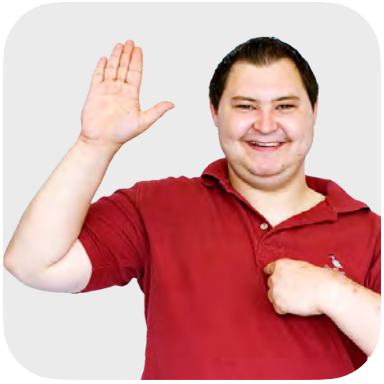
We have a new website to help Town and Parish Councils deal with questions about roads: www.leicestershirehighways.org.uk

We have been helping Town and Parish Councils understand what they need to do about **climate change**.

Climate change is big changes in the weather. For example, storms getting worse than they used to be. Or having less rain in some places.

Asset-based approach

We have been using an **asset-based approach** in our work.



An **asset-based approach** says that local people already have a lot of:

- skills
- information
- people that they know who could help.

We want to build on the skills and knowledge in our local communities.

We have been working with local communities to understand more about the asset-based approach.

Website

We set up the Leicestershire Communities Website: www.leicestershirecommunities.org.uk/

There are pages for people who are interested in plans to change roads or buildings.

There are pages for local libraries that are run by local community groups.

SHIRE Community Grants Fund

The SHIRE Community Grants Fund gives money to local charities and community organisations so they can provide services to local people.

You can find out more at:
www.leicestershirecommunities.org.uk/grants/

The Communities Board

The Communities Board is a group that looks at all the work Leicestershire County Council does with local communities.

The Communities Board will check that this plan is working properly.

COVID-19

COVID-19 is also called Coronavirus. It is an illness that has spread around the world. It can affect your lungs and breathing.

Leicestershire County Council worked with many other organisations to help people cope with the problems caused by COVID-19.

We particularly worked with community groups to help them to support local people.

Communities Fund

In March 2020, we set up a £1 million fund to help community groups carry on during COVID-19.

This helped community groups to carry on supporting their communities and people who needed extra help.

In the end we spent over £2.5 million.

New Policies

As things have been getting back to normal since COVID-19, we have been looking at our **policies**.

Policies are the ways council staff have to do things.

In future we want to work in a way that helps:

- people take part in planning and running services.

- people to be a volunteer so they can support others.

- local people know how to take part in decisions about their local area.

- train people so they can to do more for their local communities.

Our Communities Approach 2022 to 2026

The 3 principles

A **principle** is an idea that tells us how to do things. Our new plan will have 3 principles:

1. Prevention - this means helping people to help themselves.

2. Engagement - this means working together with other people and looking outside the council to the local communities.

3. Catalysts - this means supporting community groups, Town Councils and Parish Councils.

The asset-based approach

Instead of thinking about what a community needs, we will be thinking about what a community can do.

We will be looking at:

- people - their skills and the information they have

- families and friends - the people who can help when needed

- communities - the community groups in the local area

- buildings and parks that the local community can use.

We want County Council staff to understand the asset-based approach and use it in all their work.

We want to support local communities to find out what skills and information local people have.

Then we want local people to use their skills and information to help others in their local community.

Social Action

Social Action is when people come together to solve a problem or to improve their local community.

We will support social action in communities.

For more information

You can look at our website here:
www.leicestershirecommunities.org.uk/getinvolved/communitiesapproach.html

If you need more information please contact us by:

- post:
  Leicestershire County Council
  County Hall
  Glenfield
  Leicester
  LE3 8RA

- phone: 0116 232 3232

- email:
  leicestershirecommunities@leics.gov.uk

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