

County Councillors Report February 2024

Severn Trent Flood Alleviation Scheme Leicester Road, Groby Update.

Severn Trent and their contractors, Forkers, are working hard on Leicester Road on the flood alleviation scheme. Despite their best efforts, they've been slowed down by the discovery of some surprise gas pipes and electricity cables. Utility companies have maps of their services showing what is where but getting them up to date is a forever job. The gas, water and electricity companies can't touch each other's services for obvious safety reasons so have to request a call out by the appropriate company.

Another hindrance has been the old Leicester Road. The concrete structure adds further complications when trying to dig and lay pipes.

Despite this, flood alleviation work is advancing and, if there are no more surprises, the team are hoping to move to the next phase from week commencing 5 Feb. This will mean that:

- Residents and visitors to houses on the service road will need to use the newly opened up access to Leicester Road. You'll be able to turn left or right to get in and out.

If residents have any questions about access, please do speak to the team on site who are a friendly bunch and there to help.

We're working with the local Highways team to see where we can make some time back and catch up.

Storm Hank Funding.

Following the impact of Storm Henk, county and district councils have been working with Government leads to clarify a number of issues relating to the national flooding funding, and collaborating to put the best system in place locally.

From today (Friday), householders and businesses are encouraged to apply for the first element of this funding which is being managed by district councils.

Leicester City Council is also contacting eligible residents and businesses to encourage them to apply for funding.

The financial support includes:

- **A £500 grant for households** - where the living accommodation has been flooded or the home has been left uninhabitable, such as when utilities have been cut off
- **Eligible households may also qualify for the Council Tax Discount scheme** - entitling them to a 100 per cent discount for a minimum of three months

For affected businesses, the following schemes, which have stricter criteria, are available:

- **Business Rates Relief Scheme** -100 per cent relief on business rates for a minimum of three months. To qualify, flood water must have entered the property, or the flooding seriously impacted upon the business's ability to trade from the property during Storm Henk
- **Business Recovery Grant** - A grant payment of £2,500 for those severely affected by Storm Henk, with criteria closely aligned with the Business Rate Relief Scheme

Leicestershire County Council will also be coordinating a property flood grant – where eligible flood-hit property owners can apply for up to £5,000 to help make their homes and businesses more resilient to future flooding – and more details will be available soon.

Councils are contacting eligible people directly and increasing awareness through broader activity including media relations and social media posts.

Application forms, eligibility criteria and extra information can be found on district council websites. Anyone unable to complete the form online is advised to call their district council directly. Information is also available on our website:

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/flood-funding>

Watch out for Rogue Traders cashing in on Storm Damage.

Residents who have suffered damage caused by last week's Storm Henk are being warned by Leicestershire Trading Standards to be on their guard against rogue traders.

Hundreds of homes and businesses were damaged as Storm Henk tore through the county last week, with Loughborough and the surrounding area particularly affected by widespread flooding.

Leicestershire County Council's Trading Standards team is now urging people to be on the alert for doorstep traders and cold callers offering building repairs, garden work and clean-up services, which may be sub-standard and over-priced. Rogue traders target people when they are at their most vulnerable and use events like Storm Henk to cash in and make money. They know that people need to make urgent repairs to their property or clear up fallen trees, so may knock on the door and suggest repairs that they claim they can carry out quickly.

These unscrupulous traders pose as legitimate tradespeople, often targeting the elderly and vulnerable people within our communities. These offenders are extremely believable and can come across as very charming and trustworthy, but they can also use aggressive behaviour and scare tactics. They advise people that work needs to be done when it often doesn't – this work can be sub-standard and consumers can find themselves paying more than they originally agreed.

We would ask people to be on their guard against this type of scam, and to look out for our friends, families and neighbours to ensure they don't fall victim. The message is simple - if you're not sure, don't open the door.

Leicestershire Trading Standards has issued a checklist to help people steer clear of rogue traders and doorstep scams:

- Do not agree to any work on the doorstep
- Go online to search for reviews and recommendations
- Is the trader listed as a Limited Company? – if so, it should be listed on Companies House. Does the company exist? If not, the trader is giving false information about their company details
- Obtain a minimum of three quotes by different tradespeople
- Obtain full details of each business that provides a quote, visit any website and/or social media page they hold, check their address on the Royal Mail website
- Ensure that the contract of works required, the quoted and agreed final price are all received in writing.
- Never pay in cash - use a secure method such as bank transfer or credit card
- Do not feel pressured to pay prior to any work being conducted. A reputable builder will not request money up front for work that has not been carried out. If the trader is legitimate, they won't mind waiting for you to come back to them once you have made an informed decision. Be wary of those that say they can start straight away, whatever reason they give you
- For contracts over the value of £42, traders must give you a notice that you have 14 days to change your mind and cancel the contract. An exception is if work needs to be carried out in an emergency or at your express request, but you must waive these rights in writing.
- Has the trader offered to take you to the bank to withdraw money? If so, this is considered an 'aggressive practice', so consider this a warning sign
- Speak to friends or family before parting with any money if you are unsure
- If you feel in immediate danger, call the police on 999 or for a non-urgent matter, call 101

For more advice and guidance, call 0808 223 1133 or visit <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer> . To report a rogue trader, visit www.leicestershire.gov.uk/tradingstandards

Temporary Traffic Regulation Order Glebe Road and Crane Ley Road, Groby.

Leicestershire County Council Highways has agreed to a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order at the above location. The Temporary Traffic Regulation Order will be implemented for public safety for Leicestershire County Council to facilitate carriageway patching and any other associated work to the highway. Road closures and prohibition of waiting/loading are required Glebe Road, Groby between the junction of Highfield Road and the junction of Footpath R110 and Crane Ley Road, Groby between (and including) the junction of Glebe Road and the junction of Mallard Avenue on the 13th February 2024 for 1 day between the hours of 9am and 3pm. The proposed alternative diversion route will be signed on site. During the closures, alternative routes available to all traffic can be viewed at

<https://one.network/?tm=GB136854606>

Finally, I would like to wish all residents and fellow councillors a very Happy, Healthy, and prosperous New Year. I would also like to thank you all for your continued support and remind you that should you need my help or advice, I always pride myself on making myself available to residents. Remember I am only a phone call or email away.

Ozzy O'shea.

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