

Leader's Statement

16 September 2025

Ian Davies

I just wanted to use the beginning of this statement to pass our sincere condolences to the wife and family of Ian Davies; who sadly passed away at the beginning of August.

Ian's passing has left a huge hole at the Council as he was both 'Mr Planning' and 'Mr Blaby'. He was very much a showman and Planning Committee was his stage. I therefore wanted to use this opportunity to formally recognise the huge impact Ian Davies has had both at the Council and across our communities.

He worked at the Council for more than 35 years and referred to it as his home, he significantly shaped significant developments in the District such as Fosse Park, Everards Meadows, Countesthorpe Country Park and Fosse Meadows. He has left a huge legacy both in physical terms but more importantly on everybody who had the privilege of working alongside him.

Specialist supported housing formally opens

It's important to us as a Council that we do everything we can to support our vulnerable residents, which is why it was fantastic to see the formal opening of new specialist accommodation.

Our fellow member Cllr Les Phillimore officially opened Frost Court in Blaby village, a development of 15 apartments providing independent living for people with mental health needs.

Along with other partners we were instrumental in funding this scheme, the first of its kind in the District for many years and a much-needed facility.



Food waste consultation

As you know, the Government has mandated that we introduce weekly household food waste collections next spring. While this is a significant service addition it will help us improve our District's recycling rates and contribute to our Net Zero ambitions.

An enormous amount of work is already going on behind the scenes to help us plan and prepare for this new service. Recently we ran a public consultation on the introduction of the food waste collection service as well as changes to how we collect cardboard.

The response was huge, with more than 2,700 households completing the survey and it was pleasing to see more than half of respondents said they were likely to use the food waste collection service.

The feedback has helped shape our new Kerbside Waste Collection Policy which went to Cabinet earlier this month. There is still much work to be done but it is impressive how cross-team collaboration is pushing this project forward.

Works at Huncote

Our work to manage and mitigate gas emissions on the old landfill site at the rear of Huncote Leisure Centre has been completed. This latest phase involved installing new monitoring and gas venting equipment as well as alterations to parts of the former BMX track.

Now the wider field is open to the public once more with just the track area cordoned off. It was disappointing that our efforts to fence off the site, in the interests of public safety due to its condition, were hampered by several instances of vandalism and trespass.

However, our responsibility is to keep our residents safe and healthy and it was imperative we restricted access to the track to prevent anyone injuring themselves.

We are looking at long-term 'rewilding' plans for the area as a whole, so eventually we hope it will become valuable open space which people can enjoy safely.

Fosse Meadows biodiversity project

The new custodians of our popular country park, Fosse Meadows, near Sharnford, have begun a woodland management project aimed at boosting biodiversity for the benefit of both wildlife and visitors.

Not-for-profit enterprise, Green Circle Nature Regeneration, along with qualified arborists, are thinning selected weakly trees, allowing stronger trees to flourish,

encouraging more plant, insect and bird life and so creating a richer natural environment.

After signing a 20-year lease agreement with us in March to take over the maintenance of Fosse Meadows it's exciting to see their plans start in earnest. You can read more here: [Exciting project to improve country park – Blaby District Council](#)

Volunteering initiatives

Our wonderful community garden A Place to Grow received some special guests recently as part of a fresh volunteering project. A group of 18 employees from Earthsense, a Leicester-based company specialising in air quality monitors and advanced air pollution modelling, spent an afternoon weeding, clearing and painting on the garden and allotment plots. The 18 volunteers carried out their work while the site was closed with support from our A Place to Grow co-ordinator and members of our Health and Leisure Team.

Our teams are also exploring volunteering opportunities and taking advantage of the time we allow each month for community support. Some of our staff use their time to volunteer at our Armed Forces Coffee Mornings while others have visited Huncote Community Library, helping tidy the outside space and Glen Hills Primary School to help paint fencing. It's fantastic to see such efforts being made to assist our communities.

Milestone for New Lubbesthorpe

Eagerly expected community facilities have opened at our award-winning development New Lubbesthorpe, delighting residents. The new Sainsbury's Local store is proving immensely popular while there is a real buzz about the expected launch of a cafe-bistro and another new retail outlet. It's great to see progress in this fabulous new community.

You can read more about it here: [Exciting progress at New Lubbesthorpe – Blaby District Council](#)

Local Government Reorganisation update

We have been working in close partnership with the other District and Borough Councils in Leicestershire, alongside Rutland County Council. This approach has led to the development of the North, City, South proposal - a model we believe offers the greatest benefit to our communities.

We recently concluded a public engagement exercise which actively sought views from residents, communities, businesses and organisations, these responses have been vital in helping us understand the priorities and concerns of those we serve, and in shaping a proposal that truly reflects their needs.

A theme that arose from all of the feedback including from the Councillor sessions we held, was a concern regarding the expansion of the City Council. I am committed to ensuring that every aspect of the North, City, South model is robust, evidence-led and aligned with the long-term interests of our communities.

With that in mind and having met with the other North City South Leaders and reviewed the evidence and information. I have come to a judgment alongside my cabinet, that our final proposal should not propose an expansion to the City Council boundary.

The full justification and evidence to support this will be contained in the final proposal which will be shared with Councillors and the public as part of our governance processes.

I'm confident that our bid is the best option and that it presents the right mix of scale and efficiencies to secure the best outcomes for our residents, business, Councillors and our staff.

The North City South Proposal will:

- Create three equally balanced councils, each serving round 400,000
- Keep councils connected and accountable to local communities
- Use existing boundaries to avoid complex, costly and disruptive changes
- Protect and support the vulnerable and focuses on prevention
- Deliver devolution and economic growth
- Boost efficiency, saving nearly £43 million a year
- Meet the Government criteria for local government reorganisation and devolution
- Be a less complex and costly boundary change proposal while meeting the governments ambition for the future of Local Government

I look forward to sharing further details with members as we get closer to finalising the submission to government.

Armed Forces support

We're proud to support past and present members of our Armed Forces and were delighted to be bestowed an Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme Silver Award. Now we hope to work towards a Gold Award with an application expected in the new year.

We will be building on all our efforts including our Armed Forces Coffee Mornings, flag-raising commemoration events such as the recent VJ Day and help with recruitment and jobs as well as community assistance.

As part of our commitment, I and other members were privileged to spend time with our coffee morning veterans on a visit to the beautiful and poignant National Memorial Arboretum in Arlewas, Staffordshire.

We attended the Daily Act of Remembrance in the Millenium Chapel of Peace and Forgiveness, which included the Last Post, a two-minute silence and

Reveille. There was a short talk on the history of the site before we boarded the land train which took us around some of the key memorials.

The Arboretum's objective is to honour the fallen, recognise service and sacrifice and foster pride in the British Armed Forces and civilian community. It was certainly an opportunity to remember, reflect and appreciate.

