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| |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **VCS Newsletter** | | |  | | --- | | [View this email in your browser](https://mailchi.mp/0ac7386358fc/community-and-volunteering-news-for-july?e=8744b8a0f2) | | | |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Purple text on a white background  AI-generated content may be incorrect. | | |
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It was great to see so many of you in-person at our first Voluntary and Community Sector Forum in June. We are working on an action plan shaped by your discussions and details about the next meeting are included in this newsletter.  Our first grant round of the year also saw some fantastic projects receive funding, so make sure you keep reading for information on the next Community Grants deadline. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **🖊️ Our Community Grants** | | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Actors performing on the stage | | **Successful Community Grant applications** Ten organisations have received a share of £26,000 awarded in our first grant round last month.   Funding went to a range of projects; from large green grants towards solar power and rainwater harvesting schemes, to smaller revenue grants for groups providing support to young parents, residents struggling with cost-of-living challenges, and inclusive sporting activities.   Half of the organisations that received grants were first-time applicants to the scheme including Kirby Muxloe Players (as shown in the photo), Greenfield Primary School’s Parent Teacher and Friends’ Association and 42nd Leicester Scouts in Glenfield. Our Everyone Active grant went to Blaby Bowling Club and will contribute towards the running of an open day for people with disabilities to try bowls.   The next deadline for applications is **Friday 19 September 2025 at 5pm** and we are holding an online information session in August to find out more about the different grants we offer, eligibility criteria, changes for this year and tips for making a strong application.  **When:** Wednesday 6 August from 11am to 12pm **Where:** Online via [MS Teams](https://blaby.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e14d20362ed3822be5be4ef96&id=765486b8a2&e=8744b8a0f2)  Our Net Zero Programme Deliver Officer will also talk about the Capital Green Grant including; ideas for green projects, the benefits of ‘going green’, things to consider when planning your project, and other sources of environmental funding.     For full details about the grants scheme visit: [Community Grants – Blaby District Council](https://blaby.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e14d20362ed3822be5be4ef96&id=148bdd5397&e=8744b8a0f2) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **💷 External funding opportunities** | | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Coins and notes | | Here are some funding opportunities that caught our eye this month:  **Community Matters Fund (Low Carbon Communities)** Short-term grants of up to either £2,000 or £5,000, depending on your organisation’s status, are available for projects relating to the following themes:   * Improving energy efficiency and lowering bills for community centres and halls (for example, insulation and glazing upgrades, smart thermostats, energy efficient lighting systems) * Education and advice from qualified professionals on sustainability, renewable energy, and retrofit * Promoting sustainable transport infrastructure (such as supporting active transport schemes, cycling racks, electric car charging points)   Deadline for applications is 1 August 2025, and grants must be spent by 28 November 2025. For full criteria visit: [Community Matters Fund (Low Carbon Communities](https://blaby.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e14d20362ed3822be5be4ef96&id=c7ca20366b&e=8744b8a0f2))   **Community Action Fund** The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) has launched this new fund for community organisations that can deliver projects to tackle six key community safety themes. Eligible groups can apply for up to £10,000.   The first two themed rounds will open on the following dates:   * Rural Crime - 1 September 2025 * Road Safety - 17 November 2025   Further details can be found on the PCC’s website at: [Community Action Fund](https://blaby.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e14d20362ed3822be5be4ef96&id=6687680ab4&e=8744b8a0f2)   **Samworth Brothers Community Opportunity Fund** Funding is available for organisations delivering sport or food and nutrition projects for young people under the age of 18 years of age and looking to expand their capacity. The fund can support both revenue and capital costs. Applications are reviewed on a monthly basis and should be submitted by the 25th of the month.   For more information visit: [Samworth Brothers Community Opportunity Fund](https://blaby.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e14d20362ed3822be5be4ef96&id=37e9e37582&e=8744b8a0f2)   **The Naturesave Trust** Funding is available for charities, social enterprises, and grassroots community organisations who are working to connect communities to nature to improve people's physical and mental wellbeing as well as create positive action for climate change. Projects could include:   * Arts and cultural activities * Community gardening * Green gyms * Eco anxiety and mental health * Community wildlife surveys * Training a community with green skills   There are three funding windows a year for grants up to £5,000 and the next window will open in September.   For more information visit: [The Naturesave Trust](https://blaby.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e14d20362ed3822be5be4ef96&id=fe96525085&e=8744b8a0f2)   **Get Ready Community Energy Fund** This fund is offered by GreenerFuture Leicestershire – a partnership between Leicestershire County Council, Community Energy Pathways and Green Fox Community Energy. Community organisations can apply for funding to kickstart renewable energy and energy efficiency projects in their area. For example, projects that reduce the energy use of homes or community buildings, and renewable energy generation projects such as photovoltaic panels, heat pumps and wind turbines.   Eligible costs may include:   * Undertaking feasibility studies * Costs of structural surveys, planning applications, contracts and legal fees * Developing demonstration projects that help educate people about community energy   Expressions of interest must be submitted by 8 September and the grant must be spent by 28 November 2025. For more information visit: [GreenerFuture Leicestershire](https://blaby.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e14d20362ed3822be5be4ef96&id=7e92c37c2c&e=8744b8a0f2)   **De Montfort University Community Challenge Fund** Applications are open to charities, non-profit organisations and community groups in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. Grants between £500 to £2,000 are available for delivery of short projects relating to one of the university’s key research themes:   * Peace, equality and social justice * Lifelong wellbeing * Creative and heritage industries * Living in a digital society * Net zero   The project should offer opportunities for students to learn and gain practical experience by getting involved, such as through knowledge exchange, research opportunities, real-life learning or volunteering.   The next round will be open for applications between 1 – 30 September 2025. For more information read the information pack at: [Community Challenge Fund Information Pack](https://blaby.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e14d20362ed3822be5be4ef96&id=7c60f8592f&e=8744b8a0f2)   As usual, do keep an eye on the following websites for other funding opportunities:   [Leicestershire County Council's Leicestershire Communities website](https://blaby.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e14d20362ed3822be5be4ef96&id=6b6bc070a3&e=8744b8a0f2) [Voluntary Action Leicestershire’s website](https://blaby.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e14d20362ed3822be5be4ef96&id=b691ad1f0d&e=8744b8a0f2) [Funding Finder | Active Together](https://blaby.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e14d20362ed3822be5be4ef96&id=232732790a&e=8744b8a0f2) [Rural Funding Digest](https://blaby.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e14d20362ed3822be5be4ef96&id=16def1e4d9&e=8744b8a0f2) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **📢 Our events, training and initiatives** | | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A collage of two people in a library  AI-generated content may be incorrect. | | **Love Blaby Lottery online information session** With income from the lottery at an all-time high, is it time your organisation joined? Love Blaby Lottery is our weekly, online community lottery that helps local voluntary sector organisations fundraise for free.   If you want to find out more about the lottery and how your group could benefit, join our online session:   **When:** Friday 1 August 2025 from 12pm to 1pm **Where:** Online via [MS Teams](https://blaby.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e14d20362ed3822be5be4ef96&id=e7b814174c&e=8744b8a0f2) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | People sat at a table having a discussion | | **Save the date for our next Voluntary and Community Sector Forum** We are currently arranging our next VCS Forum. Further information will follow shortly, but in the meantime please put the date in your diaries.   **When:** Thursday 18 September, 10am to 12pm **Where:** The Council Chamber, Blaby District Council Offices, LE19 2EP | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **👏🏽 Your news and events** | | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Children riding bikes through a forest | | **Leicestershire Historic Churches Trust** Preparations are underway for Ride+Stride 2025 which takes place on Saturday 13 September. This nationwide event is organised in Leicestershire by the Leicestershire Historic Churches Trust.   Ride+Stride is a sponsored event for cyclists, walkers, joggers, runners, horse-riders and mobility scooter drivers. 50% of sponsorship money goes to the church or chapel chosen by the participant, with the other 50% going to the LeicesterShire Historic Churches Trust to distribute by way of grants to churches and chapels for repair, restoration and improvement projects.  For more information about taking part in the event, including planning your route and to download a sponsorship form, visit: [Leicestershire Historic Churches Trust - Ride+Strid](https://blaby.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e14d20362ed3822be5be4ef96&id=432a3a8998&e=8744b8a0f2)[e](https://blaby.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e14d20362ed3822be5be4ef96&id=27dcbe655f&e=8744b8a0f2)[2025](https://blaby.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e14d20362ed3822be5be4ef96&id=1a3ae60606&e=8744b8a0f2) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **🌳 Free tree giveaway** | | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A tree canopy | | **Woodland Trust free trees for school and community groups** Woodland Trust are giving away hundreds of thousands of trees to support the UK's carbon net-zero by 2050 target.  Applications are open now until 28 August 2025 for tree packs to be delivered in November 2025. For more information visit: [Free trees for schools and communities -](https://blaby.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e14d20362ed3822be5be4ef96&id=c67331b39a&e=8744b8a0f2)[Woodland Trust](https://blaby.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e14d20362ed3822be5be4ef96&id=c0c9c14fca&e=8744b8a0f2) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **🗓️ Future publication dates** | | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | If you have any information or events that you would like to be considered for the ‘Your news and events’ section, please email these to [vcshub@blaby.gov.uk](mailto:vcshub@blaby.gov.uk) in plenty of time. | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A great place to live, work and visit | | |
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