

PARISH UPDATES – DECEMBER 2021

Welcome Back Fund

As our Christmas shopping gets into full swing, the high streets of our four market towns are set to get a new lease of life for the festive season and beyond thanks to a £250,000 government grant.

The Welcome Back Fund will be used to support our local businesses by boosting footfall of local residents and customers as they return to the high streets after two years of lockdowns and restrictions.

The Fund will also be used to make improvements to our beloved public spaces, whether it be planting street trees or cleaning and fixing features which could benefit from this grant.

We will be running a campaign for the Christmas period, supporting the public as they return to the high streets and ensuring that we all remain safe from the spread of COVID-19. In the New Year, we will launch a second campaign to continue to promote our high streets in 2022 and local business in what will hopefully be a more normal world.

Climate Matters

This month we published our first annual report on SKDC'S carbon emissions since our declaration of climate emergency two years ago. While there is always more we can all do to deal with the crisis we find ourselves in, but we as a Council are making great progress.

SKDC has seen a 24.85% reduction in our baseline CO₂e emissions in the last year, including a 52.63% reduction in council housing energy consumption, a 33.73% reduction in Council electricity usage, and a 25.9% reduction in emissions from business travel.

It is important that we keep this momentum going, which is why we are transitioning 160 council-owned properties away from inefficient off-gas sources and upgrading 100 streetlights to efficient LED bulbs. We will also be integrating street trees into all future developments and, through the Blue Green Corridor and our wetland plans for Queen Elizabeth Park, we continue to support local marine wildlife.

Tree planting

One of the most powerful weapons we have in our arsenal to defeat climate change is the planting of trees for the absorption of atmospheric carbon.

That is why we have been celebrating National Tree Week with a campaign to plant new trees across the District, and I myself helped with a planting at Gonerby Hill Foot.

We live in an area of beautiful rural scenery, so we all appreciate the green aesthetics we see on a daily basis. However, those green features that we often take for granted are, in fact, the best guardians of our future, which is why it is so important to expand the greening of our District wherever possible.

Community Awards

We recently announced the winner's of the SK Community Awards, all of whom have done the District proud in their tireless work to make South Kesteven a great place to live.

Awards were given to members of our community who, for no personal credit, have dedicated their time to the service of South Kesteven, whether this be helping those in need, keeping our District clean, or looking out for the safety and wellbeing of their peers.

Having experienced so much trauma and isolation over the past few years, it is so important to put a spotlight on those in our community whose great achievements may otherwise go unnoticed and to remind us all how important it is to support one another through the darkest of times.

Trinity Road

Last month, I was able to visit one of our newest housing development sites on Trinity Road, Stamford, which is on progress to deliver 5 modern bungalows by April 2022.

The properties are being constructed with timber frames, which are both more sustainable to produce than brick structures and also provide better insulation to save energy usage for tenants.

The development will help SKDC meet the housing demands of local residents and the accessibility of each property will be tailored towards the needs of the residents allocated to them.

Longhurst

I was also able to visit the recently completed Spires development in Great Gonerby, which has brought 46 affordable new homes to the District, all of which are either Shared Ownership, Affordable Rent and Rent to Buy properties.

It was fantastic to see the finished product at the Spires, which has become is a fantastic new community of modern homes that have been incredibly popular and will help us meet the demands of local families.