



# Cluster News

## PARISH PARTNERSHIPS December

### Welcome to the December issue

As the festive season fast approaches, and another year closes, we bring you the last issue of Cluster News for 2008. We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

**We look forward to seeing you all again at the cluster meetings in January!**

### Housing consultation

Parish Councils are invited to comment on the North Kesteven Consultation Draft Housing Strategy by January 16 2009. The document sets out the District's housing issues and proposed actions to address them. The aim is 'working to provide affordable, appropriate, accessible, high quality homes for all'. One of the five agreed priorities is to improve the energy efficiency of housing and meet housing needs of our diverse population, with a focus on older persons and those with special needs.

We would be pleased to receive general comments but would also like you to give us feedback on some specific points, such as are our housing aim and priorities right? Is the document clear? You can download the document from the NKDC's website. If you would prefer a hard copy please contact Stephen Priestley, Housing Strategy Manager on 01529 308295. We will also be looking for comments on other draft strategies in January. See details on page three.

### Devolved fund expenditure for 2008/09

#### **The Ruskington and Metheringham Clusters have opted to spend their allocated money on the Wheels 2 Work scheme.**

The scheme offers a moped to those who have no access to either public or personal transport. People apply for the scheme, and if they qualify, will receive a moped and all the necessary safety equipment such as helmet, gloves, jacket and a high visibility vest.

An annual cost of £2,160 includes a new bike, safety equipment, the CBT bike test, insurance and maintenance. Over the course of the year, two or three people can benefit from using the bikes.

#### **North Hykeham Town Council has voted to spend its Devolved Fund on a new nativity event,** on the Millennium Green.

This will involve five local schools, a Christmas Market, grotto, live music, and other festive activities in aid of Children In Need. The nativity event will take place on December 17, from 7-9pm.

Four Parishes have decided to invest in some IT equipment, which will enable the relevant parishes to display planning applications on the Internet.

Bassingham Cluster has decided to spend its £2,000 on LIVES - and it looks as though the Cliff Cluster will do the same.

### Your favourite green spaces

#### **SustainNK wants to hear all about your favourite trees and green spaces across the District.**

Green spaces are vital in supporting ecosystems and maintaining biodiversity – not to mention providing pleasing surroundings. Trees have direct health benefits, both by clearing pollutants from the local atmosphere, and as objects of beauty.

We want parishes to nominate their favourite trees and green spaces, help us to find out their history, what they mean to communities, and how we can protect them for future generations. All feedback will be published in 2009 in a booklet designed to celebrate our natural heritage. If you would like to know more, contact David Webb, Sustainability Officer on 01529 414155 ext 2572, or [sustainability@n-kesteven.gov.uk](mailto:sustainability@n-kesteven.gov.uk)

## NKDC achieves Chartermark Award

NKDC is one of only six councils in England to receive Charter Mark recognition across the whole organisation. The Cabinet Office has congratulated the District Council on its success and commitment to the accreditation that has been matched by only five other councils in England, and one in Scotland.

The accolade was announced at TodayNK on November 7. This was a celebratory event that brought together the Council's priorities with the Local Strategic Partnership's Sustainable Community Strategy.

Leader of the District Council, Councillor Mrs Marion Brighton, OBE, said: "This is a prestigious and highly regarded honour, and it is wonderful that every department has been awarded for its continued dedication and focus on customer service."

## Name for the new Lincoln Sub Regional Country Park

NKDC has been working in partnership with County, City and West Lindsey District Councils on creating a Sub Regional Country Park (SRCP).

The idea is to create an easily accessible network of managed outdoor places to encourage the use of green spaces, historic sites and leisure facilities in and around Lincoln.

To take the project on to the next stage, the SRCP now needs a name, and we would like you to get involved by sending in ideas. Send suggestions to: [www.n-kesteven.gov.uk/subregionalcountypark](http://www.n-kesteven.gov.uk/subregionalcountypark) or [luisa\\_mcintosh@n-kesteven.gov.uk](mailto:luisa_mcintosh@n-kesteven.gov.uk)

## Area of special advertisement control

In the 1960s the Government introduced powers for local authorities to designate areas of special advertisement control in rural areas. This gave councils additional controls over the type and size of adverts that can be displayed without needing an application.

The Kesteven Area of Special Control (AOSC) Order was approved in 1963 and it has not been reviewed since.

During this time, the District has changed and settlements have grown significantly.

To address these changes, the Council has reviewed the Area of Special Control and is proposing to relax the level of restriction by excluding the larger settlements from the tighter controls.

This approach will continue to protect more sensitive rural areas of the District, whilst lowering bureaucracy for businesses in more built up areas.

The following settlements are proposed to be excluded from the ASOC:

- Bassingham;
- Billingham;
- Bracebridge Heath;
- Branston;
- Heckington;
- Heighington;
- Metheringham;
- Navenby;
- North Hykeham;
- Ruskington;
- Skellingthorpe;
- Sleaford;
- Waddington;
- Washingborough; and
- Witham St Hughs.

All other settlements will be included.

## Cracking the code

NKDC's Member Services team is offering to help you figure out the new Code of Conduct. It is inviting you to one of a number of training sessions that will provide an update on changes to the Code, and will use case studies to provide you with practical examples of its application.

Dates and locations are as follows:-

26/1/09: NKDC Council Chamber, Sleaford  
10/2/09: North Hykeham Town Council, Council Chamber  
9/3/08: Billingham, the Whyche Community Room.

**All sessions start at 6.30pm and will last approximately two hours.**

If you would like to find out more, please contact Helen Bayne, Member Services Officer on 01529 414155 ext 2280 or email [helen\\_bayne@n-kesteven.gov.uk](mailto:helen_bayne@n-kesteven.gov.uk)

*Cluster News*

## Consultation with Parish Councils

There are a number of plans and strategies that the Council is working on. As far as possible we want to ensure that parish councils have a voice in the development of these documents and would like to encourage you to put forward your comments. We are mindful that these exercises are taking place along similar timescales and as such we are varying the approach used to minimise the need for formal written comments.

The table below explains how we are looking to pursue this consultation. You will note that we are suggesting that two of the documents are discussed during the next round of cluster meetings in January, as a way of capturing the views of our local councils

Thank you in anticipation for your opinions

<b>Consultation Document</b>	<b>What areas it will cover</b>	<b>Written consultation</b>	<b>Consultation Timetable</b>	<b>Other ways to put views forward</b>
Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan	The Business Plan covers the management and maintenance of the Councils own 3,800 properties. It has two main purposes:  a) To establish the priorities for our services to tenants; and b) To review the long term financial position of the services.	Local Strategic Partnership Housing partners and stakeholders To tenants through Januarys edition of At Home Parish Councils	9/1/09 to 19/2/09	Via link to website with e form
Housing Strategy	Housing Needs in the District, National/Regional /Local factors influencing housing issues.  Our response to the needs of the district with a priority on more affordable housing , energy efficient housing, good quality accommodation in the private sector , meeting special needs and homelessness	Local Strategic Partnership Elected Members Housing Partners and Stakeholders NKDC staff Parish Councils Housing Strategic Forum Neighbouring authorities Article in Cluster News	3/12/08 to 16/01/09	Homelessness Forum  Via link to website with e form
Asset Management Plan	The Asset Management Plan sets out how the Council will manage its built assets from 2008 to 2011. It sets the context for a more strategic approach to asset management; shows how current assets are helping to meet the Council's priorities; identifies gaps in asset provision and sets out the actions the Council will take to develop the asset base. It also contains a number of national performance indicators showing performance of Council buildings for issues like energy consumption and state of repair.	Countywide Property Officers Group NKDC staff Stakeholders and service users Parish Councils	8/12/08 to 16/01/09	January Cluster Meetings  Consultation event in January with stakeholders and service users  Via link to website with e form
Climate Change Strategy	As the UK heads to a low-carbon future with the introduction of the Climate Change Bill the Council has a duty to lead by example when tackling the causes and effects of climate change. NKDC will work with partners to encourage local solutions that will help to reduce the amount of greenhouse gas emissions from the district.	Local Strategic Partnership Elected Members NKDC staff Elected Members Parish Councils	27/11/12 to 26/02/09	January Cluster Meetings  Via link to website with e form