



Letterbox

Our Way to Better Customer Care

Refuse, Recycling and Garden waste collection dates for Easter and May Bank Holidays 2011

Fri	Apr	22	No Collection
Mon	Apr	25	No Collection
Fri	Apr	29	Double Collection*
Mon	May	2	No Collection
Mon	May	30	No Collection

*6 black bags and unlimited recycling bags

You will receive a double collection on your following week's collection. Please note that the Council Offices are closed on 29 April, but your refuse and recycling waste will be collected as indicated above.

Voters in Oadby and Wigston

will be able to go to the polls on Thursday, 5 May 2011 when all 26 seats on the Borough Council will be up for grabs.



On the same day, a referendum on the voting system for United Kingdom parliamentary elections will also be held.

If you are not included on the Register of Electors you will not be able to vote. Applications to be registered as an elector can be made to the Electoral Registration Officer at the Council Offices, Station Road, Wigston, until 14 April 2011.

Applications to receive a postal vote at these polls need to be received by the Electoral Registration Officer by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, 14 April, if they are to be effective at these elections.

If you have any queries about your voting arrangements, please telephone (0116) 2572 722, or email electoral.services@oadby-wigston.gov.uk

Kyle Loomes was unanimously voted Young Citizen of the Year by the Panel.

There were a total of five nominations for the award and after looking very closely at all the excellent nominations the judging panel were able to choose an outright winner.

Kyle is 16 years old, lives in Wigston and is a year 12 pupil at Birkett House School. Kyle was nominated by his teacher Rose Philpott.

Despite having learning difficulties Kyle has been a great support to his family during very challenging circumstances, he is always cheerful, kind, thoughtful and polite and a very good example to his peer group. He is particularly kind and caring towards other students if they



are upset and helps lesser able students, encouraging them to make their own choices and be independent.

Kyle works hard at his school work and is making good progress despite the challenging times in his personal life. He is a good team member in a variety of sporting events run for young people with disabilities.

Brocks Hill Visitor Centre's tenth anniversary



We launch our year of special events on **Sunday 10 April - Woodfest and Traditional Crafts Day**. The Mayor will open the event at 10:00 a.m. FREE entry and FREE parking. Hands on activities, demonstrations and stalls.

Easter holiday activities include:

20 Wednesday – Meet the Hedgehogs
Leicester Hedgehog Rescue returns with their fascinating stories of hedgehog survival and wildlife information. Drop in FREE session 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

21 Thursday – Make an Easter hat
1 Session £1.70 per child. Booking Essential. Easter hat parade at 12:30 p.m. with first and runner-up prizes. £1.00 per entry. Entries can be made at home.

24 Sunday – Easter Egg rolling competition
Decorate an egg and then enter in a race. £1.20 per egg. 4 races throughout the day.

28 Thursday - Animal Roadshow
5 sessions £2.80 per person (children and accompanying adults). Meet with 'The Animal Man' and his animals up close in these exciting and informative sessions. Over the years they have been seen on many television programmes. 4 years and over. Booking essential.

29 Friday – Royal Wedding
For this exceptional Bank Holiday the Visitor Centre will be CLOSED.

For activities over the Easter break and for further information please contact the centre on telephone (0116) 2572 888 or visit our web site: www.brockshill.co.uk





Housing Benefit is changing from April 2011 for private tenants

Who will be affected?

If you are currently renting from a private landlord and receiving Housing Benefit and you made your claim for your current address on or after 7 April 2008 or you are thinking of renting in the private sector after 1 April 2011.

What is changing?

The changes are:

The £15.00 Local Housing allowance excess ceases.

There will no longer be a five bedroom Local Housing rate. The maximum level is for a four bedroom property.

A new upper limit of Local housing Allowance will be introduced for each property size.

All the Local Housing Allowance rates will be lower.

Some disabled customers needing overnight care may in specific circumstances have a change to their room rate.

What will the changes mean?

If you are currently receiving Housing Benefit, it is possible that the amount of benefit you get to pay your rent could go down or if your Local Housing Allowance is paid direct to your landlord the amount your Landlord gets could go down.

When is it changing?

The law is changing from 1 April 2011 but if you are currently receiving Local Housing Allowance and you do not move home or have a change in circumstance then you will usually be entitled to have your current payments continue for up to 9 months from the anniversary date of your claim provided your circumstances don't change. The Benefits Section will be writing to existing customers about this.

All new customers claiming Local Housing Allowance after 1 April will come under the new rules.

Important

If you are getting or thinking of claiming Local Housing Allowance you need to consider the changes before you renew or make a new tenancy agreement with a private landlord. For all queries concerning Local Housing allowance contact the Benefits Section.

Monday to Thursday 8:45 a.m. – 4:45 p.m. Friday 8:45 a.m. – 4:15 p.m.

Direct Dial (0116) 257 2703
Main Switchboard (0116) 288 8961

If your landlord threatens to evict you due to these changes please contact Housing Options for further advice on (0116) 288 8961.

Methods of Payment for Council Services

All council departments have the facility to take card payments from you over the phone, please ask a member of staff for details.

The most convenient way to make payment for your Council Tax or Housing Rent is to set up a direct debit. Direct Debits are collected over 10 months a year and allow you to select a payment date of either 1st or 15th of each month. Direct Debits are protected by the Direct Debit Guarantee and can be set up by contacting either Council Tax or Housing Rents, or by picking up a direct debit mandate from one of our Customer Service centres.

A cashiering service is available Monday to Friday 8:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. where payment for any service can be made by cash, card or cheque. This facility can become very busy at the beginning of each month and we advise where possible that alternative payment methods are used.

An automated payment kiosk is located at the main Council Offices and allows payments by cash and card, this facility is available for use within our opening hours of Monday - Thursday 8:45 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. and Friday 8:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. A receipt for each transaction is provided.

Our automated payment line is available by telephoning Leicester (0116) 257 2850 and payments can be made 24 hours a day, 7 days a week all you need is your reference number then choose the relevant department from the options given to make your payment.

Your Council Tax

This year the authority has had to face difficult circumstances such as reduced income on Council activities like, planning application and building control fees and a sizeable reduction in the level of grant that Central Government could give us.

However, despite these issues, through looking at innovative and other ways of providing our frontline services the Council has managed to maintain all these services whilst leaving our share of the Council Tax at the same level as it presently is.

This means that our share of the Council Tax is £202.60 for 2010/11 and will remain at £202.60 for 2011/12 (based on a band 'D' property).

Children's Easter Competition

Easter Bunnies have been hidden within this edition of letterbox tell us how many you have found and you will go into a draw to win a chocolate bunny.

The Competition is open to children aged 16 and under. Put your age, contact details and how many Easter Bunnies you have found onto a letter or postcard addressed to Customer Services. **The closing date for entries is Friday 6 May and the winner will be notified.**

Our last winner of our last competition was **Natasha Omar**. Natasha received a swimming pass for 4 persons for 4 sessions.



This publication can be made available in your language and in alternative formats such as Braille, large print, electronic and audio tape. Tel: (0116) 2572 712 or Email: pr@oadby-wigston.gov.uk

Being cautious of doorstep sellers



Don't be fooled by a smart suit or a convincing story, the caller at your door might still be a rogue trader. That's the message from Leicestershire Trading Standards Service and it wants people to be vigilant to avoid rogue traders, especially those offering to do home improvements: building work, driveways, gardening services, roof cleaning and repairs.

The County Council and the police have launched a number of No Cold Calling Zones in Oadby and Wigston, to discourage people from trying to sell goods and services door to door. Although cold calling is not illegal, this type of activity has been linked to doorstep crime carried out by bogus traders and officials, such as the 'man from the waterboard', as well as burglaries that occurs whilst the householder is distracted and high pressure sales techniques where the trader or representative won't leave until a sale is made.

Even if you do not live in a zone, it is always best to be cautious:

- Never agree to any home improvements over the doorstep – use reputable firms that have been recommended to you and obtain several quotes.

- Don't be taken in by impressive logos and professional looking leaflets, it is easy to obtain an 0845 number and a postal address to make a business look legitimate.
- Be wary of firms offering to carry out a free security check on your home.
- Never let a trader into your home if they have cold called, even if they have identity badges.

Leicestershire Trading Standards Service also ask residents to take the cautious approach when receiving unsolicited calls via the telephone offering goods and services, especially bogus double-glazing salesman who use threats of residents having their benefits being reduced or face taxes if they do not buy.

Always remember, if you receive telephone calls - or letters and emails - saying that you have won a lottery, a prize draw or a tax rebate, our advice to residents is that you should never give money or any personal information - including bank details - as no reputable company or organisation would cold call and ask for these on the promise of a 'reward'.

You can mostly stop UK-based junk mail by signing up to the Mailing

Preference Service (MPS) on 0845 703 4599 or at www.mponline.org.uk. There is a similar service, the Telephone Preference Service, to stop unwanted telephone sales calls: ring 0845 070 0707, or go to www.tpsonline.org.uk.

Anyone with concerns on the trading practices of businesses, a request for a 'no cold calling' door sticker or details of how to avoid rogue trading, should contact Consumer Direct on 0845 404 0506.

Please remember...

All Council staff and contractors will have an ID card and will show you it, if they visit your home.

Please help us by making sure you know the person who is visiting you.

If you are unsure – then do not let the person into your home.

You can always call to check someone's identity – phone (0116) 2572 614.

POLICE AND TRADING STANDARDS
NOTICE
NO COLD CALLING

NO UNINVITED CALLERS

THE CONSUMER PROTECTION GROUP BUSINESS REVENUE ASSOCIATIONS 2016
YOU ARE NOT WELCOME HERE
PLEASE LEAVE ANY PROPERTY AND DO NOT RETURN OR YOU
MAY BE QUilty OF AN OFFENCE

The Digital switch over



Take Pride where you live!

Just to remind residents if you are planning on replacing your old television to digital.

Please remember to make arrangements for your old TV to be removed and disposed of correctly. If you are in receipt of benefits you can have your television removed free of charge, otherwise the charge will be £17.10 for the first item and £3.10 for each additional item.

To book a collection you can call client services on (0116) 257 2830

Or you can take your old TV to the local amenities site in Oadby – there is no charge if you take it yourself.

Over the last couple of months the housing officers have worked hard with estate inspections and it comes as a bit of a shock to learn that over 50 dumped TV's have been recovered from one estate alone.

If anyone is aware of who is responsible for any form of fly-tipping you can contact your housing officer on (0116) 288 8961. Any information you give will be treated confidentially.