

# Parish Update

September 2014



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SKDC4business launches independent retail support

## Superfast Broadband in our communities

**Parish councils in South Kesteven are now benefitting from superfast broadband** at community locations and village halls.

Historically Lincolnshire has had some of the slowest broadband connections but Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) has allowed BT to provide superfast broadband to many communities.

Last year SKDC improved broadband in parishes that voiced an interest in the scheme as part of its commitment to improve community wireless facilities across rural parts of the district.

Foston, Denton, Colsterworth, Castle

Bytham, Folkingham and Tallington community hubs have all taken part in the pilot scheme and are now live offering wireless access.

Folkingham Village Hall chairman Yvonne Jardine has been among those to benefit.

She said: "The village hall committee like to keep the hall as up to date as possible so having broadband and wi-fi helps us with this aim.

"We hope that it will increase the use of the hall and therefore keep this vital community building open.

"For those of us who help at the regular clubs it is good to be able to send and receive emails and be

able to access the internet and show and help those who do not have the facilities in their homes."

The scheme has involved using normal broadband connections and a satellite based link where the speed of broadband was simply not enough for certain locations in the district.

The parishes have benefitted from SKDC funding to cover installation and running cost of connections for the first year and this will continue on a sliding scale for 2014/15 and 2015/16. For further information about the scheme contact 01476 406433.



Yvonne Jardine

SOUTH KESTEVEN'S FANTASTIC SCIENCE AND ARTS FESTIVAL

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# Sandbags to help combat flooding

**Parish councils are to be offered free sand and sandbags** by the district council to combat localised flooding.

Extreme weather conditions have affected many communities in the UK this year with flash flooding being a particular problem during the summer months.

Cllr John Smith, Cabinet portfolio holder for the Environment, said that South Kesteven had experienced localised flooding when a significant amount of water has fallen quickly over a relatively small area.

"This makes it difficult to respond to isolated events within the



timescale needed for an effective defence to be put in place. By the time staff are mobilised, sandbags are loaded and transported, the damage to properties is already done.

"To help reduce response times, and to encourage a spirit of community self-help, we would like to offer parish councils the opportunity to hold and maintain a stock of sand and sandbags for their own use."

#### **This means SKDC will:**

- Supply one tonne of sand and 100 sandbags
- Conduct an annual survey to understand how much sand has been used and how beneficial the supply has been

#### **The council asks parishes to:**

- Identify a suitable location for storage in advance (on hard-standing and under cover if possible)
- Provide a named contact so we can arrange for delivery
- Monitor use of sand and sandbags

- Make sure the sand is only used for flood defence

Communities, who feel they are at risk of any form of disruptive event, not just flooding, can also prepare a Community Emergency and Flood Plan. It can be developed with the help of SKDC and Lincolnshire County Council's Emergency Planning Unit, and further information can be found at <http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/lincolnshire-prepared/>

We also encourage parishes to sign up for the Environment Agency's Flood Warnings Direct service, which gives automated advanced warning of potential flooding from rivers. This is a free service and can be found at <http://apps.environment-agency.gov.uk/flood/31618.aspx>

Parish councils wishing to take up the offer of free sand and sandbags or those who have any queries about the Community Emergency & Flood Plan, can contact Graeme Hemsall on [graeme.hemsall@lincoln.fire-uk.org](mailto:graeme.hemsall@lincoln.fire-uk.org)

## Use home collection service and avoid fly-tipping

**SKDC is reminding residents** that common electrical items cannot be collected with standard bin collections.

These items need to be taken to Household Waste and Recycling Centres in the district or can be collected by the council's home collection service.

TVs and DVD players are among the common electrical items which technically, if left on a pavement, are classed as a fly-tipping offence.

Residents need to call 01476 40 60 80 to arrange for a specific home collection or use the Household Waste and Recycling Centres in Grantham and Bourne to dispose of electrical or household goods.

Grantham's Mowbeck Way facility and Bourne's Pinfold Lane Industrial Estate centre are open Friday to Monday, 9am to 4pm every week.



The collection service is charged at £11 for the first item and £5 each for all other items.

SKDC's portfolio holder for healthy environment Cllr John Smith said: "We appreciate residents may not always have the means to transport items to our Household Waste and Recycling Centres.

"Therefore the home collection service is here to help you dispose of your goods responsibly. If you leave

them on the pavement or street outside your home you run the risk of being prosecuted.

"Therefore ring and arrange a collection and we can take away all your unwanted electrical items and household furniture and you can do your part to help keep your street clean and tidy."

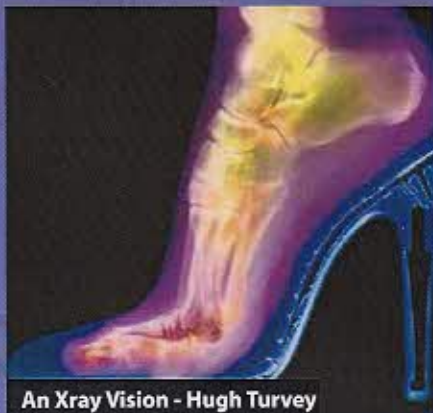
Fridges and freezers are charged separately at £11 each due to the disposal costs of these items.

Once payment has been made, SKDC will collect the item from outside a property on a day agreed with residents at the time of booking.

SKDC is unable to collect radiators, builder's rubble, bricks, concrete, paving slabs or garden furniture.

All bulky collections will be carried out by employees wearing an SKDC high visibility jacket driving an SKDC vehicle.

# Gravity Fields Festival ready for lift off



An Xray Vision - Hugh Turvey



Gandini



One Giant Leap

Grantham's second Gravity Fields Festival is gearing up for another scintillating programme of 120-plus events, top level presentations, serious science, international speakers and an explosive finale in Grantham.

The science, arts and heritage festival – 24 to 28 September – celebrates the area's close connection with Sir Isaac Newton as the world's greatest scientist.

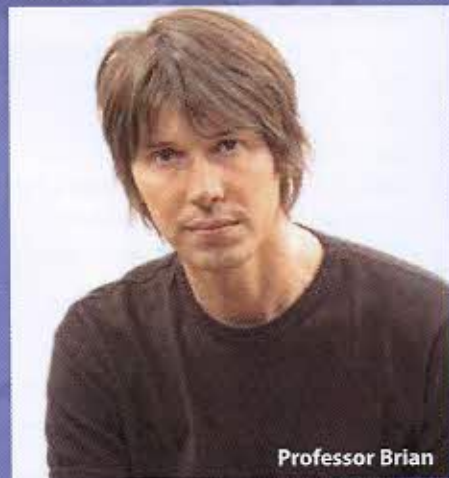
Its programme of events stretches

from Stamford Arts Centre to Woolsthorpe Manor, Newton's birthplace, and the main festival focus in and around Grantham. Many events are free to attend.

Highlights include the family show One Giant Leap, a one-man dash around the universe, Gandini Smashed juggling, a globe-trotting 'International Science Images' exhibition from the Royal Photographic Society, special George Centre science fair, shows from the

Science Museum and the National Space Centre, Sky At Night's Chris Lintott stargazing and Professor Mark Miodownik, BBC Science Club.

## Brian Cox web interview is latest festival coup



Professor Brian

Professor Brian Cox, the UK's best known physicist, is to appear at the Gravity Fields Festival via a live video link in a last minute festival coup.

Star of blockbuster shows, TV presenter, author and frequently labelled the rock star scientist, Professor Cox OBE will feature in

a special half hour question and answer session in Grantham's St Wulfram's Church on Saturday afternoon (27 September).

The man credited with making science engaging and accessible to millions will be asked questions by Dallas Campbell, TV presenter and Patron of Gravity Fields Festival, as part of the two day CERN Live exhibition, curated by Dr Harry Cliff.

This event is not ticketed but those attending the previous free event in the same venue 'Smashing Physics' with Professor Jonathan Butterworth will be given priority to remain in the venue.

Interested members of the audience are invited to arrive at St Wulfram's Church from 3.30pm but entry into the building will not begin until 3.45pm. Adult attendees will be invited to donate £5 per person.

Please enter via the North Door, Church Street entrance of St Wulfram's Church, where the CERN Live event is taking place. (Wheelchair access remains via the South Door)

Professor Cox's books and TV programmes have been read and watched around the world. With his down-to-earth and likeable enthusiasm, Brian's tag of rock star scientist harks back to his days as keyboard player for D:Ream.

As Professor of Particle Physics at Manchester University, he is also a key part of the ATLAS and the CERN Large Hadron Collider projects.

His TV shows include Wonders of the Universe, Wonders of the Solar System and Wonders of Life, each looking at the fundamental science behind everything from stars and planets to atoms and microbiology.

For online souvenir brochure and booking [www.gravityfields.co.uk](http://www.gravityfields.co.uk) 01476 406158

# Empty homes assistance

A council grant is available to help private landlords bring empty homes back into use in the private rental market.

## About the fund

The maximum fund available is £5,000 per property with its main focus being centred around owners bringing their empty home back into use and to provide a source of good quality rented accommodation for those in need.

## Eligible properties

Eligible properties must have been unoccupied and unfurnished for at least six months prior to the date of the application. The vacant period is to be evidenced by council tax bills showing the relevant exemption.

## Eligible applicants

- Eligible applicants must be the owners of the empty home or people representing the owners' interest (such as an executor of a will)
- Consideration of a tenant from the council's housing register
- The property must be intended for the private rental market
- Rents will be set at no higher than Local Housing Allowance Rates for a period of three years
- The council will carry out a survey at the property
- Commitment of work must be evidenced prior to funds being released
- The property when completed will meet the Decent Homes Standard
- The property must be brought back into use within 12 months
- A Land Registry Charge will be



applied to the property for five years from completion

- The Fund is to be fully repaid if the property is not occupied within the 12 months of the fund payment or the property is sold within five years of completion

## Eligible cost's the fund could pay for

- Capital repair cost to the property, for example:
- A new heating system (where there is no heating or the heating is broken, inefficient or inappropriate for the property)
- Electrical work where a full rewire or extensive remedial work is required
- Roof repairs or re-roofing

- Replacement windows and doors
- Material costs
- Contractor's labour costs

## Ineligible costs not paid for by the fund

- Professional fees not related to the labour or materials of the improvement work, for example:
- Estate agent fees
- Surveyor fees
- Architect fees
- Works expected to be covered by a standard building insurance
- Repairs to sheds outbuildings or attachments to a property
- Works on land drainage
- Where works have been completed at the time of enquiry

# Essential home repair assistance survey

Essential Home Repair Assistance (EHRA) is available to eligible private sector home owners following a free property survey.

This can lead to essential repairs being carried out using our approved contractors up to an assistance maximum of £5,000.

Essential Home Repair Assistance is not available for work relating to thermal efficiency, such as insulation,

heating and thermal comfort. For these issues financial support is available through the Government's Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation.

Serious hazards will be identified through the EHRA survey, which uses guidance from the Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) under the Housing Act 2004.

## The survey looks at:

- Whether your home meets the statutory minimum standard related to health and safety
- What the state of repair of certain building components are

Depending on the results of the survey we will advise you if you are eligible to receive EHRA. Types of work considered include electrical re-wires and roof repairs.

# Who is eligible for a free essential home repair assistance survey?

There are a number of eligibility criteria, which include:

- You must be an owner occupier
- You must be in receipt of a qualifying benefit
  - Income support
  - Working tax credit (income less than £16190)
  - Child tax credit (income less than £16190)
  - Housing benefit
  - Income based job seekers allowance
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance
- Attendance allowance
- Disability living allowance
- War disablement pension
- Industrial injuries disablement benefit
- Pension Credit
- Incapacity benefit
- The property to be surveyed was built before 2000
- The property should not have had a Better Homes grant or EHRA in the previous three years
- The owner must have owned and occupied the property for at least three years
- The owner must agree to a local land charge. This will be registered to the property for a period of five years from completion of the grant funded work.

For any further information or advice contact  
01476 40 60 80 ext 6286 or 6562.



## Disabled facilities grants

Financial help is available to help adapt homes to meet the needs of disabled children and adults.

What adaptations could the grant cover?

- Installing a stair lift
- Modifying a bathroom
- Providing ramps
- Making doorways wider
- Making sleeping and toilet facilities accessible

How much grant is available

The maximum mandatory grant available is £30,000. The grant is subject to means-testing, and the amount awarded will depend on your own financial circumstances; you may need to pay part or all of the cost of the work.

Although we pay for whole or part of the work, the contractual relationship is between you and the contractor(s). We will not undertake any additional costs associated with any disputes between you and the contractor(s).



Who is eligible and how to apply

You can apply for a Disabled Facilities Grant if you are a private owner occupier, private tenant or housing association tenant who has had an assessment by an occupational therapist which suggested adaptations to your home are required for your needs. Please enquire about a grant with Tenancy Services if you are a council tenant.

Request a referral

Contact the Adult Social Care Team

at Lincolnshire County Council Social Services or telephone 01522 782155.

After you have been assessed and if you are considered eligible, a recommendation will be forwarded to us based on your needs. The Lincolnshire Home Improvement Agency (LHIA) will contact you on our behalf to collect some initial financial information and carry out a means test. This is used to assess the level of contribution the disabled person would have to make towards

the cost of the works. If you do not qualify for a DFG, the LHIA may be able to help you find alternative funding.

For further information visit the Lincolnshire Home Improvement Agency website or call 0845 450 9115.



