



'Give break to posties'

AN MP is campaigning for postal workers to be allowed to put their feet up after the Christmas rush.

David Taylor, MP for North West Leicestershire, wants posties to retain their traditional rest day on the Saturday after Christmas.

The Post Office is telling staff to report to sorting centres as usual on Saturday, December 27.

Mr Taylor said postal workers should be allowed to spend a little time with their families.

An Early Day Motion, signed by the MP said: "This House believes Royal Mail's requirement for postal workers to work on Saturday, December 27 is wholly unreasonable when they are exhausted from the extra demands placed on them by the Christmas post."

"It calls on Royal Mail to show Christmas spirit and allow December 27 as a holiday, as has been the case in previous years."

Mr Taylor said: "They do an excellent job in trying circumstances and deserve the break."

"I hope the Post Office will think again on this one."

Empty school set on fire

A DERELICT school has suffered another attack by arsonists.

A fire was started at Bendbow Rise Infant School, which has been the target of several similar attacks over the past year.

The school, in Bendbow Rise, Braunstone, Leicester, was replaced by Queensmead Community Primary School last September.

The latest fire happened at around 10pm on Friday night and two crews from Leicester's Western Fire Station were sent to put it out.

They reported severe damage had been caused to around 10 per cent of the school building.

Anyone with information about the incident is asked to call Leicestershire police on 0116 222 2222.

Alternatively, you can call Crimestoppers, which is free and anonymous, on 0800 555 111.

Two held over injured child

TWO people were arrested after a child was admitted to hospital with "unexplained injuries", the police have revealed.

Officers in north west Leicestershire were alerted after the child was taken to Burton Hospital by its parents.

A spokesman for Leicestershire police said: "We are investigating the circumstances after a child was admitted to hospital with unexplained injuries."

"The child was taken to Burton Hospital by its parents on Friday, December 5, after it had taken ill."

"Investigations continue to determine how the child became ill and extensive medical tests are being undertaken."

PEDAL POWER: 15 PODS TO RUN ON FIXED ROUTES BY END OF NEXT YEAR



GETTING A FREE RIDE: A rickshaw driver takes passengers through Town Hall Square, in Leicester, during the previous attempt to introduce the cycle taxis, last year

PICTURE: SARAH SALOTTI / 176225-8

Fleet of rickshaws set to make return to the streets

A fleet of up to 15 rickshaws could be taking to the streets by the end of next year.

by **MARTIN ROBINSON**
POLITICAL REPORTER

lied on advertising to meet its costs.

Egocabs, which was then known as e-go, said it wanted to try again.

It said there would be a fleet of five in Leicester by February and a further 10 by Christmas 2009.

They will travel on set routes across the city – many with the Clock Tower as a terminus – from locations such as Highcross Street, Curve, Town Hall Square and close to the railway station.

Egocabs said it was in talks

with the council to get permanent stops in the city centre.

Director Paul Grundy said: "It will make it easier and more fun for people to travel around the city centre."

"We would like permanent stops because previously people weren't sure where they could pick one up."

"We would also be able to drop people off where they liked in the city centre, but not pick up everywhere."

"It will be free as we will rely on advertising, so passengers can just sit back and enjoy the ride."

The vehicles are powered by cycles, with an electric motor as

back-up. They will be sponsored by companies which will have their logos displayed on the sides.

Leicester City Council said it was in favour of such a scheme.

Cabinet member for regeneration, Councillor Patrick Kitterick said: "I would be quite keen to see a rickshaw scheme in the city."

"It would promote cycling and be a good way of transporting people around the city centre."

An organisation supporting businesses has also supported the initiative.

James Bancroft, development manager for City Watch, the business equivalent of Neigh-

bourhood watch, said: "City Watch fully supports Egocabs and the vital role the rickshaws will play within the city of Leicester, not just helping people commute but also helping in crime prevention."

"It is hoped each egocab will have a radio link to all the retailers and leisure venues that are part of City Watch as well as the police and city council CCTV control room."

In 2006, environmental organisation Groundwork Leicester bid for £76,000 from the European Regional Development Fund to set up a similar scheme. The application was unsuccessful.

Washing up can be greener

VISITORS to an environmental showcase can learn about greener ways to wash their dishes.

The EcoHouse, run by Groundwork Leicester and Leicestershire, has installed new displays in the building.

The latest looks into the use of dishwashers – which can use less water and energy than washing up by hand.

A dishwasher has been donated by John Lewis's Leicester store.

Caroline Harmon, manager of the EcoHouse, in Hinckley Road, said: "We often get asked if dishwashers are more or less eco-friendly than washing by hand."

"People often don't realise a dishwasher can use one sixth of the energy used to heat water to hand wash. Some people use more water than a dishwasher in washing by hand."

The EcoHouse is open between 11am and 4pm at weekends during the winter.

Councillor apologises for his debts

A CITY councillor has apologised after incurring almost £5,500 of business debts which led to legal action.

Stoneygate Councillor Iqbal Desai has accepted liability on two county court judgements against him.

Coun Desai, who is part of Leicester City Council's Labour group, owes £3,267 and £2,080, but will not stand down as a councillor, saying the problem is a personal matter.

According to Coun Desai, both

claimants have waited around four months for their money.

He said today that he would settle his debts, and blamed a delay in receiving funds from abroad for the situation.

He said much of his business is tied up outside Britain but he hoped to settle the debts by today or tomorrow.

He said: "I am sorry for this unfortunate situation."

"I needed funds but this is a personal matter and nothing to do with my role as a councillor."

"I have lived in Leicester for 35 years and this is my home. I am an honourable person."

Colleagues have offered their support to Coun Desai.

City council leader Councillor Ross Willmott said: "It is not an issue for the Labour Party apart from the fact that we would urge him to settle his debts as quickly as he can."

"My hope is that this is a temporary situation and he can sort it out in a reasonable amount of time."