

Blitz on trick-or-treat troublemakers launched

OFFICIALS are targeting yobs and vandals who use Hallowe'en and Bonfire Night as an excuse to cause trouble in Charnwood.

Charnwood Borough Council, Leicestershire Police, Leicestershire Youth Offending Service, Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service and Leicestershire County Council are launching a five-pronged operation to stamp out problems before they start.

The campaign involves distributing posters to residents, shops and schools, banning the sale of eggs and flour to under 18s, deploying teams to hotspot areas to speak to local youngsters and carrying out test purchases at firework retailers.

The council is also urging members of the public to name and shame retailers who illegally sell fireworks to young people.

Councillor David Snartt, Charnwood Borough Council's cabinet member for community safety and chairman of the Charnwood Community Safety Partnership, said: "This campaign aims to stamp out trouble before it starts and to ensure that Hallowe'en and Bonfire Night are enjoyable events for all residents in the Borough.

"We recognise there is always a small minority of people who use these events as an excuse to misbehave - but the message we want to send is that we won't tolerate it.

"We also want to urge residents to tell us if they know of any retailers selling fireworks to young people.

"Working with our partners in the police, the county council, the fire service and the Youth Offending Service, we are doing everything we can to reduce the number of nuisance and anti-social behaviour incidents we can sometimes see at this time of year."

Charnwood Borough Council will distribute reversible posters which residents can place in their windows telling Hallowe'en visitors whether they want trick or treaters.

The council and police will also distribute posters to local retailers telling shoppers about a ban on the sale of eggs or flour to under 18s.

The [County Council's](#) Youth Offending Service will deploy teams, under its IMPACT programme, to hotspot areas throughout Charnwood to meet young people face-to-face and direct them to activities and get them off the streets.

Charnwood Neighbourhood Housing will also be writing to its tenants to remind them about firework safety and how to tackle anti-social behaviour.

And the county council's Trading Standards team will carry out test purchases at retailers selling fireworks to ensure they are not being sold to young people. Schools will also be targeted as part of the campaign with firework safety posters displayed and safety-themed assemblies.

Charnwood Borough Council's community safety trailer will be in the town centre in the run-up to both Hallowe'en and Bonfire Night to hand out safety advice.

POLICE QUOTE

Joe Orson, County Council Cabinet Member for Safer Communities, said: "Hallowe'en and Bonfire night should be a fun time of year but we recognise they can sometimes be blighted by antisocial behaviour.

"It is important that agencies work together so this can be a safe and enjoyable time.

“We will be working hard to ensure the minority do not spoil it for others.”

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