Leicester Mercury 23-8-1995 p.20.

replaced by a president.

The Queen and I, a book about the royal family being abolished and living on Leicester's Saffron Lane Estate, is one of her works and is being staged at the Haymarket Theatre at the moment.

But what do YOU think?

The question to vote on is:

'Is it time to abolish the royal family?'

YES



0839 161 695

NO



0839 161 696

The voting lines are open until midnight on Wednesday and calls cost no more than 10p.

Lifetimes

PERSON TO PERSON – THE PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

See Friday's Lifetimes in your Leicester Mercury for the result of the vote.

Stardom calls for drinkers

OPPORTUNITY knocks for Leicester drinkers bursting with Barrymore-like talent. Brewers Greenalls have announced the first rounds of their Entertainer of the Year talent show. Using the same formula as Des O'Connor's Pot of Gold programme, Leicester drinkers will be able to let their star quality shine through. Greenalls events co-ordinator Anita Walker said: "Discovering talent is always exciting. We could find another Michael Ball or Jack Dee."

Heat winners will receive £50 and could win £500 if they make the grand final at a Derbyshire nightclub.

by Kay Wright
Political Correspondent

LEICESTER City Council claims it is bucking a national trend by pulling out all the stops to ensure people eligible to vote are registered.

According to new figures released by the Labour Party, millions of people throughout Britain are missing from the electoral register.

A Labour survey shows that more than 32,000 voters have "vanished" from records covering Leicestershire.

Abolition

Party leaders have blamed the controversial poll tax for the gaps in the records.

They claim that registration of those eligible to vote dipped dramatically when the right to vote was linked to payment of the unpopular tax.

And, because of that, thousands of people, in particular first-time voters, took themselves off the register so that they could avoid being traced by tax collectors.

They have never returned, despite the abolition of the community charge, claims Labour.

It wants a high-profile campaign nationwide to rectify the deficit and boost voter sign-up rates before the next General Election.

But the city council claims it is one step ahead of the Labour Party's calls.

The authority says it uses a number of strategies to encourage people to register, such as poster campaigns in post offices and community centres plus door-to-door calls from officers trained to help people understand and complete registration forms.

"We have a duty to make it as easy for everyone eligible to vote to register.

"And so far we seem to have been successful in doing this as we have substantially reduced the number of names not included on the electoral register in recent years," said the spokeswoman.

COMMUNITY HELPED REBUILD ST PAUL'S

NEWBOLD VERDON



PRESIDENT: Mrs Hazel Webb

COUNCILLOR: Mr Mick Mensley

LEADER: Villager Mrs Sue Barker

Village with history of caring

VILLAGERS at Newbold Verdon have always had a strong sense of community spirit.

They subscribed towards the reconstruction of St Paul's Cathedral in 1666 after the Fire of London, rebuilt their own parish church at St James in 1898 to mark Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee and added its tower in 1960.

Two and a half years ago, a community centre was created within the village primary school.

Premises officer Mrs Sue Barker, who is also a youth leader and community support worker, said that it had brought the village together.

Every Wednesday VILLAGE VOICE puts a local community in the spotlight. Today Christine Slomkowska looks at Newbold Verdon.

"Firstly, people got together in fund-raising. It cost nearly £90,000, of which the village itself had to find around half.

Newbold's Neighbourline service helps people who have difficulty with shopping, transport, form filling and other everyday tasks, she adds.

Mrs Hazel Webb, said that Newbold Verdon WI, of which she is president, is celebrating its diamond jubilee this year.

They will plant a maple tree in the village's Mallory Close this autumn to mark the anniversary.

"The village also has a Verdon in Bloom Committee to encourage people to have tubs and baskets of flowers on show. "This has been a great success, and as well as having their own flowers, some people have sponsored those in public areas."

Parish councillor and chairman of the school governors Mr Mick Mensley said that the council recently spent £20,000 on new equipment and a safety surface in the children's area of the village playing field.

"The school is very active and has after-school clubs every weekday until 4pm in term time, with well-supported activities such as sports and art."