

MONTHLY NEWS REPORT DECEMBER 2022



E-Newsletter Issue 13/2022

With Doug Littler

Opening the Second Advent Window

St Margaret's Church, Denton

Friday, 2 December 2022

Contents

NEWS REPORT DECEMBER 2022	4
Monthly Highlights	4
PARISH MEETINGS, VISITS AND CASEWORK	7
Update on Highways A428, Denton and Billing Road, Brafield.....	7
Stagecoach 41 Bus Services.....	7
Hartwell Flooding and Blocked Drains	7
Proposed changes to Northampton Rail Freight Order.....	8
Mud Kitchen Café Farmers’ Market and Craft Fair.....	8
Progress following the Meeting with Cogenhoe United Football Club.....	8
Community Lunch, Cogenhoe 23 November 2022.....	9
Dick Whittington, Group 8 Theatre Company Pantomime, Hackleton.....	9
St Margaret’s Church, Denton 2 December 2022.....	10
Peter’s Coffee Morning 26 November 2022.....	10
Caring and Sharing Trust, Cogenhoe 25 November 2022	10
Grand Opening of Outdoor Gym and Running Track, Hackleton.....	11
Christmas Musical Extravaganza at the Church of St Mary the Virgin, Little Houghton	11
Brafield Christmas Fayre.....	12
Fayre at St John the Baptist Church in Hartwell.....	12
CONSULTATIONS	12
Upper Nene Valley Consultation expires end of December 2022	12
COVID-19 Impact Assessment Questionnaire.....	13
Plans to Gate Francis Jetty using Public Spaces Protection Order	13
One-off proposed arrangement fee for those who self-fund their own care	14
Moving Traffic Offences	15
2024-2025 School Admission Arrangements	15
On line survey about what people with disabilities want from Leisure Centres	15
FINANCE AND TRANSFORMATION	16
Mitigations to address Financial Position.....	16
Cost of Living Online Support Hub	16
Northamptonshire Community Foundation Webinar Training for Organisations.....	17
Energy Saving Grants Available.....	17
REGULATORY SERVICES	17
WNC supporting NNC with Bird Flu Prevention Measures	18
Food Standards Agency Recall.....	18
WNC to look PSPO in relation to the walking of more than four dogs	18
Changes to Elections Act.....	19
Give the gift of food safety this Christmas	19
RURAL SERVICES NETWORK (RSN)	20
RSN AGM & Rural Assembly 14 November	20
RSN Seminar: Rural Health & Social Care	20
RSN Seminar: Rural Economies	20
PLANNING MATTERS	20
Planning Appeals.....	20
Six Week Public Consultation Northampton Local Plan Part 2	21
West Northamptonshire Strategic Plan, Spatial Options Consultation	21
Michael Gove is to be ‘radical’ on national planning policy framework	22

HOUSING	23
Affordable Apartments-Riverside House, Northampton	23
West Northamptonshire Housing Strategy	23
ENVIRONMENT	23
Cleaner Communities.....	23
Waste & Recycling Collections over Christmas and New Year	24
Real tree collections	25
Additional recycling.....	25
Four residents fined a total of £5,681 after dumping their waste on the street.....	25
HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE	26
My Appointment to Daventry and South Northants LAP (DSN4)	26
Grow, Cook, Eat	26
Consultation re potential closure of Spinneyfields in Rushden	26
More Warm Spaces in West Northamptonshire.....	27
Help Bring Christmas Cheer to Patients in Hospital	28
Invitation to provide comfort and joy to vulnerable people	29
Shared Lives Caring.....	29
EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES	30
School Admissions	30
Three Year Strategy to meet the needs of SEND children and their families.....	31
Improvement in Ofsted Report for Children's Services	31
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & GRANT FUNDING	32
Platinum Jubilee Village Hall Improvement Grant Fund.....	32
Community Transport Grants – Motability	32
UK Shared Prosperity Fund.....	33
Frost Fair Traders Needed.....	33
New ExploreWN App	33
Major New Cultural Centre at 24 Guildhall Road.....	34
Northamptonshire Community Foundation Webinar Training.....	34
Alternative sources of Funding	34
Kick off Small Business Saturday 3 December 2022	35
Bid to provide Maths Skills for Adults.....	35
TRANSPORT & HIGHWAYS	36
Moving Traffic Offences	36
Uber for the Countryside.....	37
Review of West Northamptonshire Bus Services	37
POLICE FIRE & CRIME COMMISSIONER	38
Northamptonshire Crime rates fell in year to June 2022	38
The Knife Angel App has been re-launched	39
Reclaim the Night, Northampton 2022.....	39
CULTURE, HERITAGE & SPORT	40
Northampton Museum and Art Gallery awarded £450k from Arts Council England.....	40
Plant trees in memory of Queen Elizabeth II.....	40
International Women's Day 2023 to honour the late Queen Elizabeth II	41
Christmas Events.....	41

NEWS REPORT DECEMBER 2022

Monthly Highlights

We are still seeking sponsors to support families and individuals fleeing the war in Ukraine.

Dame Andrea Leadsom MP for South Northamptonshire has presented a petition on behalf of residents in Brafield-on-the-Green, Denton, Yardley Hastings, Cogenhoe, Castle Ashby, Grendon, Wollaston, and Piddington who are affected by changes to the Stagecoach 41 route. Over 160 residents have signed the petition calling for further support for rural bus routes. She has requested that the government allocates further support for rural bus routes and safeguards against any future reductions in services that keep our communities connected." The planned multi partner meeting which was due to take place following the meeting with Stagecoach has needed to be rescheduled as Milton Keynes Council were unavailable.

I am making some progress with the ongoing issue of flooding in Blacksmiths Way, Hartwell. Kier Engineering and Highways are dealing with this as a priority with their Drainage Manager. The drainage manager is arranging a full CCTV of the drainage system in the area and once we have the full information, we will be able to prepare an action plan. The residents have been advised that the best way to record and report any concerns is via our Street Doctor service, this records every defect and allows us to monitor all actions taken. However, in the current period of inclement weather they have been advised that if there are any concerns about risk of flooding, they should contact the emergency number 0300 126 7000 during the working day (9am to 5pm) or outside of these hours 01604 651074. I am expecting a full response by 6th December on the many and various issues.

I have attended several community events this month, which has given me lots of opportunities to catch up with so many of you. Please read about them all in my Monthly Report.

There have been 1,094 consultation responses on the application for a non-material change to the Northampton Gateway Rail Freight Interchange and they were published on 17 November 2022. We are still awaiting the outcome of the consultation.

Regarding the Cogenhoe United Football Club, I have since heard from Peter Worth, who can't give us a definitive answer on whether there will be another Community Funding Grants round this financial year. If the Community Funding Panel can fund the applications that need immediate support, we are unlikely to have budget left for any more funding rounds this financial year. However, there may be the possibility of another round if additional funding becomes available and that it is approved by the Spending Restrictions Panel. I had explained to Peter, that the Cogenhoe United Football Club wished to improve the club and its facilities, and to make football accessible to all including girls' football. Peter has said that the project, as outlined, is one that the Community Funding Panel would be able to consider for funding. So, under the circumstances, I have recommended that Nigel Wagstaff, CEO calls Peter on 01327 322227 to discuss his proposal or complete an expression of interest form available on the website

The Consultation on the one-off proposed arrangement fee for those who self-fund their own care closed on 6 December 2022.

You are invited to give your views on new regulations, which will enable the Council to use enforcement powers on drivers who commit moving traffic offences. The Consultation closes on 21 December 2022.

Several “budget mitigations” have been made to address the financial position. These consisted of “holding vacant posts, seeking ways to deliver services in a more efficient manner and maximising income opportunities. WNC was reporting a potential £7.6 million overspend. However, period five has improved to £5.6 million and period six is about to be published suggesting that the figure is approximately £4.9 million. Although we have made progress on a month-by-month basis there’s still a way to go because we are only at the half-year. The council faces a £15 million overspend in 2023-24.

WNC has a new Cost-of-Living Online Support Hub. This together with our customer services team is there to help our residents access information and advice about the rising cost of living and find the support that is available to them. Please access advice and information, including a directory of warm spaces, on our Cost-of-Living Online Support Hub. All the various links are in my Monthly Report. For those who can't access the Internet then please call WNC’s customer services team and speak to somebody directly about the support available between the hours of 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. Please call us on 0300 126 7000.

WNC is helping to promote a new Government scheme to help people make energy-saving improvements to their homes. Across the UK, many households will see the cost of gas and electricity rise by more than 50% from April 2022 as the energy price cap – the limit on what energy suppliers can charge – increases. Sustainable Warmth is a new Government grant scheme designed to fund energy-efficiency upgrades to residents who are most likely to be impacted by the high cost of rising bills. These improvements will help residents to use less energy and spend less on their energy bills.

The energy-efficiency grants will cover a range of energy-saving home improvements designed to balance the needs of residents with carbon reduction and grant availability. More Information in my Monthly Report.

WNC is in the process of arranging a meeting with representatives for professional dog walkers to discuss the options going forward to support these groups. Until these talks have taken place, the Council will not be taking enforcement action where more than four dogs are being walked in public open spaces, if dog walkers adhere to the other requirements of the Public Space Protection Orders.

On Thursday 01 December 2022, the Food Standards Agency recalled Nestlé UK & Ireland r AERO Hot Chocolate products because they may contain small pieces of food-grade silica beads.

We are advising residents of the arrangements for waste and recycling collections over the Christmas and New Year period. With no printed calendars being sent out to residents, we are asking you to pass on information to any friends, family, or neighbours who might not have online access. Downloadable bin calendars with information about waste and recycling arrangements are available. Please see my Monthly Report.

We are providing a network of warm spaces to support anyone struggling with the cost of living this winter. The council is targeting community groups and organisations able to provide warm, welcoming spaces and would like to help the community. The groups are invited to sign up to a register of interest on the council's website. Northampton Hope Centre offers one of the 67 warm spaces across the county, which give a safe environment to the homeless and those who cannot afford to heat their homes this winter.

A service which sees carers across Northamptonshire share their lives and homes to support others has been rated ‘outstanding’ by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The Shared Lives Service, which is managed by our Council, has achieved the highest rating following its first inspection this autumn which

found that “people received exceptional care and support from dedicated carers who considered them to be part of their family and vice versa.”

Parents and carers can still apply for a reception place in a primary or infant school or a year 3 place in a junior school. They can apply for a place in reception if their child will be four years of age on or before 31 August 2023. The closing date for applications for places in reception and year 3 (junior school) is 15 January 2023 at midnight.

Parents, families, and school workers are being invited to help shape a new strategy for improving outcomes for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in West Northants. WNC plans to co-produce a new three-year joint strategy to address the current shortfall of specialist school places in the area and plan resources more effectively to better meet the needs of SEND children and their families. To help shape the new strategy, children, parents, school-based staff, health and care professionals and other interested organisations will be involved in the development of a new Co-production Charter.

An Ofsted report shows significant improvements to services that protect and support children across the area. At the end of September, Ofsted undertook a full Children's Services ILACS inspection (Inspection of Local Authority Children Services). In the findings published on 23 November 2022, Ofsted has rated our children's services as 'Requires Improvement to be Good', having previously been judged as 'Inadequate' since 2019.

WNC has appointed specialist consultants, SCP, to carry out a review of the way that bus services are currently provided across West Northamptonshire. As part of this process, SCP will bring forward alternative models that would serve our communities better. In doing this work SCP will be contacting several key stakeholder groups, including bus operators and parish councils. It is anticipated that SCP will present their findings and report to WNC in January 2023. This report will inform our West Northants Transport Strategy that will be developed over the coming period in full consultation with Members and residents. The project team will be engaging with stakeholders to discuss the current situation and potential solutions.

Northamptonshire is the only police force in England and Wales where overall crime fell in the year to June 2022. Figures from the Office for National Statistics showed crime nationally rose by an average of 12.9 % but dropped by 0.6 % here.

People across West Northamptonshire are being urged to plant trees in memory of Her Late Majesty, the Queen II, 1926 – 2022. Following the wishes of His Majesty the King, The Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) initiative has been extended to the end of March 2023 to enable people across the country the opportunity to plant trees in memory and to honour the late Queen Elizabeth II.

I wish you peace, joy, and prosperity throughout the coming year. Thank you for your continued friendship and support and I look forward to supporting you in 2023.

Enjoy the Christmas break with your families.

All the Best, Steve

PARISH MEETINGS, VISITS AND CASEWORK

Update on Highways A428, Denton and Billing Road, Brafield



We have taken the decision to progress with the speed limit reduction up to the county boundary as Milton Keynes have not engaged with us at all on imposing the limit along the A428 in its entirety.

The paperwork is being finalised with a view to starting the formal consultation process in January.

WNC have expressed apologies for the time taken to progress this. The highways service has seen a lot of change with disaggregation of the service between

North and West Northants and the change of contractor in October. Kier was appointed as the preferred supplier of Highways services and the new contract commenced at the beginning of October.

Stagecoach 41 Bus Services

Dame Andrea Leadsom MP for South Northamptonshire has presented a petition on behalf of residents in Brafield-on-the-Green, Denton, Yardley Hastings, Cogenhoe, Castle Ashby, Grendon, Wollaston, and Piddington who are affected by changes to the Stagecoach 41 route. Over 160 residents have signed the petition calling for further support for rural bus routes.

Presenting the petition on behalf of residents, Andrea Leadsom MP said: “Bus services are a lifeline for my constituents, particularly those that live in rural areas and are unable to drive or walk. A reduction in this service will severely curb independence for those that want to use the service, and along with the petitioners, I am requesting that the government allocate further support for rural bus routes and to safeguard against any future reductions in services that keep our communities connected.”

The planned multi partner meeting which was due to take place following the meeting with Stagecoach has needed to be rescheduled as Milton Keynes Council were unavailable. I will provide you with an update as soon as I hear any more.

Hartwell Flooding and Blocked Drains

I am making some progress with the ongoing issue of flooding in Blacksmiths Way, Hartwell. Kier Engineering and Highways are dealing with this as a priority with their Drainage Manager. The drainage manager is arranging a full CCTV of the drainage system in the area and once we have the full information, we will be able to prepare an action plan. The residents have been advised that the best way to record and report any concerns is via our Street Doctor service, this records every defect and allows us to monitor all actions taken. However, in the current period of inclement weather they have been advised that if there are any concerns about risk of flooding, they should contact the emergency number 0300 126 7000 during the working day (9am to 5pm) or outside of these hours 01604 651074. I am expecting a full response by 6th December on the many and various issues.

Proposed changes to Northampton Rail Freight Order

On 11th August 2022, SEGRO issued a letter regarding the Northampton Gateway development. The letter serves as a notification of the consultation period for the proposed changes to the Northampton Gateway Rail Freight Order, which may allow the developers to begin using the warehousing units ahead of the completion of the rail/freight interchange. This is a significant change to their original order.

Rt Hon. Dame Andrea Leadsom DBE MP has issued a copy of her response to the non-material change to Northampton Gateway, Rail freight Interchange project consultation. It can be found on her website.



On 26 September 2022, West Northamptonshire Council wrote to the Planning Inspector about the Consultation to the Development Order Ref. TR050006 regarding SEGRO (Junction 15) Ltd.'s proposed change to the Northampton Gateway Rail Freight Interchange Order 2019 (S.I. 2019 No. 1358).



Stuart Timmiss, Executive Director Place, Economy & Environment stated:

“For the reasons set out below, the Council cannot support this proposed variation to the Northampton Gateway Rail Freight Interchange Order 2019 and would therefore request the application is not approved.”

- A. Uncertainty over when the rail freight interchange will become available
- B. Ambiguity with the warehouse floor space figure specified for prior occupation
- C. Any further variations must be a matter for the Secretary of State not the Planning Authority as it would be considered ultra-vires.

There have been 1,094 consultation responses on the application for a non-material change to the Northampton Gateway Rail Freight Interchange and they were published on 17 November 2022

We are still awaiting the outcome of the consultation.

Mud Kitchen Café Farmers’ Market and Craft Fair

I supported the Farmers Market on Sunday 11 December 2022 from 10.00am-3.00pm, when there were even more Christmas goods on sale. The market offered the best in fresh, local, homemade, and handmade produce from a variety of local traders. The Mud Kitchen Café is committed to encouraging residents and visitors into the Cogenhoe and Whiston Village Hall to help support the local economy and showcase some amazing local independent businesses.



Progress following the Meeting with Cogenhoe United Football Club

Further to my November Monthly Report, I have since heard from Peter Worth, who can't give us a definitive answer on whether there will be another Community Funding Grants round this financial year. If the Community Funding Panel can fund the applications that need immediate support, we are unlikely to

have budget left for any more funding rounds this financial year. However, there may be the possibility of another round if additional funding becomes available and that it is approved by the Spending Restrictions Panel. I had explained to Peter, that the Cogenhoe United Football Club wished to improve the club and its facilities, and to make football accessible to all including girls football. Peter has said that the project, as outlined, is one that the Community Funding Panel would be able to consider for funding. So, under the circumstances, I have recommended that Nigel Wagstaff, CEO calls Peter on 01327 322227 to discuss his proposal or complete an expression of interest form available on the website:

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/community-safety-and-emergencies/community-funding-grants>

Once Peter has a little more detail, he can then add Cogenhoe United Football Club to the Community Funding Grants wait lists for pre / post April 2023 and establish if any other suitable funding is available, such as Section 106, Community Infrastructure Levy, etc. I will leave Nigel to contact Peter and progress his request for a Community Funding Grant.

Community Lunch, Cogenhoe 23 November 2022

I attended a most enjoyable Community Lunch at the Mud Kitchen Café, Cogenhoe on 23 November 2022. Unfortunately, Maddie was unwell, so we missed her. I hope she gets better soon.

Nevertheless, Deborah helped to put on a great show as we wished Peggy 'Happy 90th Birthday' and made paper chains to decorate the Hall for the Christmas Lunch on 19 December! If you haven't booked your Community Lunch on 5 December with afternoon tea and the school choir or Christmas Lunch on 19 December, then please let Maddie or Deborah know.



Dick Whittington, Group 8 Theatre Company Pantomime, Hackleton

On 1 December 2022, I attended the Group 8 Theatre Company Pantomime at Hackleton Village Hall, Hackleton. This was the first of their traditional pantomime performances for 2022. It had all the usual slapstick humour, which resulted in lots of shouting out from the audience.

We started with a scourge of rats led by 'Queen Rat', Vicki Pankhurst and 'Squeaky Blinders' Amelie Burbridge, Seren Halton, Anisa Razzaq and Leila Razzaq plaguing Alderman Fitzwarren's Shop. They were tackled by Tiddles the cat, Millie Finnis and of course Dick Whittington, Gerry Gibson. Dame Dolly Dumpling, Hugh Jones entertained us with her love interest in the Alderman or was it Captain Barnacle or the Sultan of Morocco all played mysteriously by Mark Collier.

The cast entertained us with songs like "We had better have a look then" and others. But it wasn't long before Dick got accused of "Nicking a nice little nickel necklace", which all members of the cast were able to say word perfect! As a result of the stolen necklace, poor old Dick had to leave London.



Fortunately, Fairy Bowbells, Sally Hadland and the audience were ready to help 'Turn again Whittington worthy citizen'. This took place after we all took the Fairy Pledge. Dick becomes the hero of the show and eventually Lord Mayor of London before living happily ever after with Alice Fitzwarren, Sue Pennington.

The Squeaky Blinders together with the East Enders, Jennie Campbell, Michelle Finnis,

Heather Smith and Arabella Utteridge entertained us with their singing and dancing throughout. Many thanks to Maz Woolley, Sound; Alan Campbell, Lighting and Jennie Campbell and Brent Klegeris for directing the entire performance. They together with others fulfilling the roles of Stage Crew, Prompter, Choreography and Photography had worked hard to produce Dick Whittington.

Next Year is Group Eight's 50th Anniversary and they plan to hold at least one special event as well as their spring play and panto. So do support them and their future events.

St Margaret's Church, Denton 2 December 2022

I attended the weekly Coffee Morning at St Margaret's Church, Denton on 2 December 2022. It was good to catch up with Pat, Sheila, Doug, John, Alison, Susan, Miranda, and others. Today, I noticed the Advent Calendar on display in the church.



The craft group had been working on this for some time. So here we were Advent - Day 2 and Doug Littler was nominated to open the door! After we chatted, drunk our coffee and ate our croissants we joined Doug to celebrate Advent Day 2. We were able to discuss progress with the Community Larder, Buses and other important issues facing Denton. See you all soon, Steve.

Peter's Coffee Morning 26 November 2022

I attended Peter's coffee morning on 26 November 2022 at Little Houghton, Village Hall. He and Julia were celebrating positive news and raising money for a good cause. All funds raised were in aid of Cancer Research (Haematology).



Cancer Research UK was formed 20 years ago, in 2002. However, their history goes back much further, to 1902, with the founding of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund. Thanks to supporters, their work into how to prevent, diagnose and treat cancer has benefitted millions of lives over the past 120 years.

<https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer>

The hot sausage rolls I had on arrival were delicious and for good measure, I sampled the Chocolate cake afterwards. I just remembered to get my raffle tickets before rushing off to Hackleton for another event. I was so pleased to chat to Peter and hear his good news.

Try and come along to the Warm Spaces Scheme at the Village Hall on a Wednesday afternoon.

Caring and Sharing Trust, Cogenhoe 25 November 2022

On Friday, 25 November 2022, I joined everyone at the Caring and Sharing Trust, Cotton's Farmhouse, Cogenhoe for the Launch of "The Art of Caring and Sharing" Exhibition. They were honouring the past, looking forward to the future and being grateful for the here and now.

I had a great couple of hours hearing more about their hands on care and support for people with learning disabilities and their families and carers.



Well done Lena Davis, Caroline Scattergood and John Bishop for all the work they do with Arts based therapies to help people with learning disabilities to grow and flourish.

The excellent work at Cottons Farmhouse relies on donations and if you would like to provide your support then you can do so via their web site:

<https://www.cottonsfarmhouse.org>



Grand Opening of Outdoor Gym and Running Track, Hackleton

On Saturday 26 November 2022, I attended Hackleton Parish Council's 'Grand Opening of the outdoor gym and running track'. It took place at 11.00am to tie in with the School Christmas Fayre, which started at noon. This is a great new free resource, which can be used by all members of the community. Many of whom had come along in suitable clothing and appropriate footwear to try out the equipment and running track.

Caloo started this project on the 12 September 2022, and they were there at the finish line with balloons and a ribbon to make it a memorable occasion. The Parish Councillors were on hand to cut the ribbon individually but ceremoniously. Having had instructions on how to use the equipment the excited families were off to try it all out. Some had already used the running track earlier in the day. Team Thomas Outdoor Fitness were all raring to go!

The Hackleton Neighbourhood Development Plan, states that the recreation facilities identified under Policy HNPD 10 will be protected and that proposals to enhance and improve these facilities will be supported. The opening of the Gym on Saturday was the culmination of much work by the Parish Council to identify, within existing community assets, places for Adult Exercise recognising that by providing such a facility it would help promote a more active and healthier community, which would be accessible to all.

The school will have exclusive use of the outdoor gym from noon until 3pm Monday to Friday term time only.

Christmas Musical Extravaganza at the Church of St Mary the Virgin, Little Houghton

On Saturday evening, 3 December 2022 we enjoyed a superb Christmas Musical Extravaganza at the Church of St Mary the Virgin, Little Houghton. We were entertained with a series of festive songs, music, and carols. As Maestro Ken Starry said, the concert would include 'something for everyone'.

It was an evening in two parts with a surprise introduction from Father Christmas against a background of illuminated snowflakes falling in a darkened church.



Once the evening commenced, we started the first segment with 'Polar Express' and closed with 'Nutcracker Jingles'. We had several soloists perform throughout the evening including a very entertaining musical interlude from Ed Tomlinson.

After a delightful interval we started the second and final segment with 'On a Saviours Day' and we sung along to 'Wonderful Christmas Time'.

In the final section the pace and ambience changed as the lights were turned off and through candlelight we saw and heard 'Lovely is the Dark Blue Sky', 'O Magnum Mysterium', and 'The Very Best Time of Year' before finishing with 'Have yourself a Merry Little Christmas'.

Once outside we noticed that the Church Christmas tree lights had been mysteriously turned on for us as we headed home. Well done to all those who had made it such a special evening.

Brafield Christmas Fayre

The Third of December 2022 was a day for Christmas Events throughout Hackleton and Grange Park. I managed to make it to the Brafield Christmas Fayre by about midday. It was good to catch up with some folks in Brafield.

There were several stalls at the Brafield WMC loaded with Christmas gifts. The WI had quite a collection of Handmade Christmas Bunting Flags and there were lots of sweet and toy stalls as well as a tombola and a great raffle. Miranda, I did manage to get some of that Lemon Drizzle Cake with a cup of coffee.



Fayre at St John the Baptist Church in Hartwell

On 3 December 2022, as we were heading back from the Brafield Christmas Fayre, I managed to go to another Fayre at St John the Baptist Church in Hartwell. I said that we would go when we last met everyone at the Coffee Morning. So, it was good to be able to make it and join Judy and others on Saturday in support of their fund-raising efforts.

The church was very cold as it was late afternoon, and they were waiting for the boiler to be repaired. Nevertheless, we soon warmed up with a warm drink and a tour around the various stalls brimming with Christmas gifts in aid of church funds. Well done to everyone who organised the event.



CONSULTATIONS

Upper Nene Valley Consultation expires end of December 2022

People who visit the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area are being asked to complete a survey to understand their impact on wildlife habitats. Footprint Ecology on behalf of WNC, and colleagues at North Northants Council, Bedford Borough Council, and the Beds, Cambs and Northants Wildlife Trust is undertaking the survey.

The Upper Nene Valley refers to the specific washlands and lakes either side of the River Nene between Northampton and Thrapston in Northamptonshire. Anyone who uses the valley to walk, run, cycle, fish, bird watch, row or indeed undertake any other activity, is asked to complete the survey. We are lucky to have some diverse habitats right on the doorstep of our major urban centres, which provide a great place to stay healthy and to remain in touch with nature. So, it is important that to make the most of these areas, we understand the impact on these habitats. The survey will be open



until the end of December 2022 and takes less than 10 minutes to complete. People can complete the Survey of the Upper Nene Valley here:

<https://westnorthants.citizenspace.com/.../visitor-use.../>

COVID-19 Impact Assessment Questionnaire

The health protection team in Public Health are carrying out a COVID-19 impact assessment on behalf of the local system partners. Six sets of questionnaires have been developed which will go out to businesses and other private sector agencies, parents of children through educational settings, healthcare providers, social care providers, voluntary and charity organisations, and residents. The surveys look to find out how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted people's lives and in what ways. The team will also analyse its wider impact on the public, private and voluntary sectors.



As part of the questionnaires being shared, the team are asking for feedback from residents about their experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Please help promote this survey. It takes around 20 minutes to complete and closes on 12 December 2022.

People can complete the questionnaire here:

<https://northnorthants.citizenspace.com/public.../4107c04c/>

Plans to Gate Francis Jetty using Public Spaces Protection Order

The views of residents and businesses are currently being sought after a proposal for gating a Northampton Town Centre alleyway was put forward earlier this year. Francis Jetty is located off Bridge Street, Northampton, and provides a short cut to Kingswell Street and nearby St Peters Way carpark.

However, for many years the jetty has attracted persistent illicit activities and anti-social behaviour such as drug dealing and sexual assault. To tackle these behaviours, West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) is proposing to make a Public Spaces Protection Order to gate the public highway, using its powers under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. However, before it makes its decision, the Council is consulting on the proposal. If the plans are approved, Francis Jetty will be gated 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with access to Kingswell Street still available via alternative routes. The initial cost of the gates and installation will be covered from the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner as part of the Safer Streets project, funded by the Home Office. Public Spaces Protection Orders are used in public spaces to help address a range of anti-social behaviour issues and prevent future problems.



An Environmental Audit undertaken by Northants Police in 2022 found that Bridge Street accounted for nearly 20 per cent of crime data for violence against women and girls in the Nighttime economy between April 2017 and March 2021.

The street also has the highest number of recorded rapes and other sexual offences committed in the Nighttime Economy than anywhere else in West Northamptonshire and is the second highest for violent offences. The consultation will last six weeks and will be carried out via the Council's Consultation Hub. Anyone who would like to share his or her views about gating Francis Jetty can take part in an online survey at the WNC Citizen Space. The Consultation closes on 19 December 2022.

<https://westnorthants.citizenspace.com/.../pspo.../>

One-off proposed arrangement fee for those who self-fund their own care

West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) wants to hear residents' views on the introduction of a proposed one-off fee for those who entirely self-fund their own adult social care, either in their own home or in a residential setting. The proposed fee is to support WNC's admin costs when arranging care on behalf of someone who self-funds when the Council acts as a conduit between the self-funder and the care providers. The proposed fee will apply to those who self-fund their own care and have capital assets above the current upper care limit of £23,250. This threshold is set to increase in autumn next year following the government announcement, introducing a new upper care limit of £100,000, meaning that those who self-fund will have capital assets above this new threshold.

Although not compulsory, a person who meets this self-fund threshold can ask WNC to arrange their adult social care on their behalf due to reasons such as the person finding the system too difficult to navigate or wishing to take advantage of the Council's knowledge of the local market of care and support services.

Therefore, this admin fee will only apply to individuals who wish the Council to provide this service for them and will be charged at the point of care being arranged. If the person chooses for their care or care provider to be changed, the arrangement fee may apply again.

WNC is now inviting residents to have their say on the proposed self-funder fee and subsequent amends to the Adult Social Care Fees and Charging Policy.

Residents can put forward their views, ask questions and receive feedback at several consultation events which will take place across West Northamptonshire below:

15 November, 3pm to 5pm: Committee room, The Forum, Moat Ln, Towcester, NN12 6AD

16 November, 5pm to 7pm: Gladstone Road Resource Centre, Northampton, Northampton, NN5 7EJ

17 November, 6pm to 8pm: Council Chamber, Lodge Road, Daventry, NN11 4FP

If residents are unable to attend the sessions above but would like to share their views and feedback on the proposed fee, they can do so via the online survey form here: <https://westnorthants.citizenspace.com>

which will close at midnight on 6 December 2022.

Or:

email Financehelpdesk.NCC@westnorthants.gov.uk

call 01604 367650.

To find out more about the wider adult social care charging reform, including the new thresholds and payment limit please visit the WNC website <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/.../social-care-charging...>

or view these frequently asked questions that the Government has put together some to explain the upcoming changes.

<https://engage.dhsc.gov.uk/socia.../your-questions-answered/>



Moving Traffic Offences

You are invited to give your views on new regulations, which will enable the Council to use enforcement powers on drivers who commit moving traffic offences.

Have your say at <http://ow.ly/fJ0z50LAW8z>

The Consultation closes on 21 December 2022.



2024-2025 School Admission Arrangements

Have your say on the 2024-25 school admission arrangements

The West Northants community is being asked for its opinion on the admission arrangements for schools run by academies and trusts which are planning changes.

Every year, institutions which act as their own school admission authorities must review the process by which parents and guardians apply for places at their schools. If changes are planned, they must first be consulted on.



On Monday, 14 November West Northants Council's (WNC) School Admission Team opened a formal consultation on the admissions arrangements for any mainstream schools whose admission authorities have asked us to co-ordinate their consultation for them.

The consultation takes place between Monday, 14

November and Saturday, 31 December 2022.

Following the consultation period, admission authorities will review their proposed admission arrangements for 2024 and determine them by 28 February 2023, ensuring they are published on the schools' websites by 15 March 2023.

To view the list of schools consulting this year and to respond to the consultation, please visit the WNC Citizenspace - <https://westnorthants.citizenspace.com/.../school.../>

Alternatively, you can email responses to schooladmissionsconsultation@westnorthants.gov.uk

Online survey about what people with disabilities want from Leisure Centres

Our Disabled People's Forum is working with Leisure Centres across West Northants, as well as Northamptonshire Sport, to find out more about what people with disabilities want from their local leisure centre. The survey aims to find out what sports or sports facilities those with disabilities use or would like to use, and what barriers they face when accessing these.

The information will be used to provide detail about the suitability of current local area sport and leisure facilities and will be fed back to the local leisure providers.

In addition to an online survey, drop-in



sessions will be held at certain leisure centres for people with disabilities to take a tour and ask questions.

These will be held at:

- Daventry Leisure Centre (NN11 4FP) on 3 December from 1pm to 4pm
- Danes Camp Leisure Centre (NN4 0RX) on 3 December from 1pm to 4pm
- Towcester Leisure Centre (NN12 6UW) on 4 December from 10am to 2pm
- Brackley Leisure Centre (NN13 6JJ) on 4 December from 10 to 2pm

The subject will also be discussed at the International Day of People with Disabilities event on Thursday, 1 December. The online survey is published on our Consultation Hub:

<https://westnorthants.citizenspace.com/.../accessing.../>

and will close at midnight on Friday, 16 December 2022.

Anyone with questions, or who requires the information in an alternative format, is asked to email: forums.nbc@westnorthants.gov.uk or phone 07826 993847.

FINANCE AND TRANSFORMATION

Mitigations to address Financial Position

Several “budget mitigations” have been made to address the financial position. These consisted of “holding vacant posts, seeking ways to deliver services in a more efficient manner and maximising income opportunities. WNC was reporting a potential £7.6 million overspend. However, period five has improved to £5.6 million and period six is about to be published suggesting that the figure is approximately £4.9 million. Although we have made progress on a month-by-month basis there’s still a way to go because we are only at the half-year. The council faces a £15 million overspend in 2023-24.



Chancellor Jeremy Hunt’s autumn statement gave local authorities the green light to increase its share of council tax bills next year by up to five percent without needing a referendum.

Council tax can currently go up by 2.99 percent a year. That is 1.99 percent on the general charge and another one percent to cover social

care. The Chancellor glossed over the change in his Commons speech promising only “greater flexibility” for authorities, but the full budget text published later confirmed maximum general increases of three percent plus two percent on the social care precept from April 2023. That would add around £50 a year to average bills for band D properties in Northampton before considering precepts from parish and town councils and the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.

A three-year plan to harmonise council tax with the old Northampton Borough and South Northamptonshire areas means bills in Daventry will rise by more while South Northants will see a smaller increase because charges there are higher. But residents will also have to pay an extra £42 a year if they want to continue garden waste collections under the council’s new subscription scheme.

Cost of Living Online Support Hub

WNC has a new Cost-of-Living Online Support Hub: <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/cost-living-support>

This together with our customer services team is there to help our residents access information and advice about the rising cost of living and find the support that is available to them.



Please access advice and information, including a directory of warm spaces, on our Cost-of-Living Online Support Hub

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/cost-living-support>

For those who can't access the Internet, residents can also call WNC’s customer services team and speak to somebody directly about the support available between the hours of 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. Please call us on 0300 126 7000.

Northamptonshire Community Foundation Webinar Training for Organisations

NCF have some free training webinars coming up in the New Year, these are open to all, and are free of charge to attend. Please email Ryan at ryan@ncf.uk.com for the zoom link and confirm attendance on Tuesday 10th January 2023 at 10:30am.



Programmes Officer Ryan will be hosting a webinar on Alternative sources of Funding. This workshop is designed to raise community groups awareness that Northamptonshire Community Foundation is just one of many sources of funding and how to go about accessing other sources of funding in addition to the Foundation. Looking at what you want to deliver and why and how best this can be resourced. This workshop will provide you with a toolkit on how to go about researching alternative

sources of funding and information on additional support and resources available.

Energy Saving Grants Available

WNC is helping to promote a new Government scheme to help people make energy-saving improvements to their homes. Across the UK, many households will see the cost of gas and electricity rise by more than 50% from April 2022 as the energy price cap – the limit on what energy suppliers can charge – increases. Sustainable Warmth is a new Government grant scheme designed to fund energy-efficiency upgrades to residents who are most likely to be impacted by the high cost of rising bills. These improvements will help residents to use less energy and spend less on their energy bills.

The energy-efficiency grants will cover a range of energy-saving home improvements designed to balance the needs of residents with carbon reduction and grant availability.

How it helps:

- 1) Energy saving tech and upgrades installed by approved installers
- 2) Creating warmer, healthier homes
- 3) Helping to cut carbon emissions
- 4) Funding available for homes on and off the gas grid.

Information about the scheme has been added to our website, and we will be promoting the scheme across our social media channels. People can find out more information and check their eligibility by visiting our energy efficient grants webpage:

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/.../energy-efficiency...>

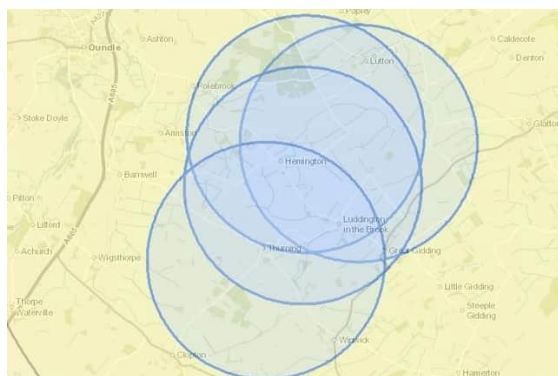
REGULATORY SERVICES

WNC supporting NNC with Bird Flu Prevention Measures

Our Trading Standards and Emergency Planning teams have been supporting colleagues in North Northants following the confirmation of avian flu outbreaks on poultry farms near Oundle.

The first case was identified on 9 November, when the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) put a 3km protection zone in place. Officers visited all homes within the area to speak to residents and identify whether anyone in the area keeps poultry. North Northamptonshire Council has now been informed of a further three cases of avian flu on separate farms. Two of these have been confirmed as positive and one as suspected.

The premises are under restrictions and required to comply with measures put in place. Separate orders have been issued,



imposing a 3km Avian Influenza Protection Zone and a 10km Avian Influenza Surveillance Zone. Details of these zones have been published on the Government website and Trading Standards teams will be responsible for enforcing the orders imposed.

On confirmation of disease Trading Standards officers will carry out foot patrols to identify all captive poultry premises or people keeping pigs within the 3km zone. Where poultry or pigs are identified, the officers will issue guidance to the keeper regarding the current restrictions. The collected information is passed to the APHA as soon as possible after completion. If a member of the public

regarding suspected avian flu in the area contacts WNC, the caller will be directed to the appropriate helpline.

Those who suspect this in their own birds must notify DEFRA on 03000 200 301 – it is a notifiable disease therefore this is a legal requirement.

Those who spot a dead wild bird can call DEFRA on 03459 33 55 77.

Trading Standards will respond to complaints in relation to poultry keepers who may not be complying with the requirements.

Please email tradingstandards@westnorthants.gov.uk

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) has said the risk to public health from the virus is very low.

The Food Standards Agency said avian influenza pose a very low food safety risk for customers and advised that properly cooked poultry and poultry products, including eggs, are safe to eat.

Food Standards Agency Recall

Thursday 01 December 2022 - [Nestlé UK & Ireland](#) recalls AERO Hot Chocolate products because they may contain small pieces of food-grade silica beads [#FoodAlert https://bit.ly/3gOekgD](https://bit.ly/3gOekgD)



WNC to look PSPO in relation to the walking of more than four dogs

Key representatives for those who make a living by walking dogs are being invited to meet with Council and service leads at WNC following the implementation of new rules relating to public open spaces. As you will recall, on Tuesday, 1 November a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) was formally adopted across the Daventry and South Northants areas. The PSPO aims to keep members of the community safe while

enjoying public spaces and includes a ban on people smoking in children's playgrounds, as well as a requirement that dog walkers pick up after their pets do not walk more than four dogs at the same time in public spaces. More than four dogs can be walked on private land with permission of the landowner, and dedicated dog walking areas. Promotion of the proposed new rules started in August, with further publicity around the decision-making at a Council meeting on 11 October.



However, since the Order came into force on 1 November, professional dog walkers have contacted the Council to request alternative options are considered to allow the walking of more than four dogs in public open spaces. WNC is in the process of arranging a meeting with representatives for professional dog walkers to discuss the options going forward to support these groups. Until these talks have taken place, the Council will not be taking enforcement action where more than four dogs are

being walked in public open spaces, if dog walkers adhere to the other requirements of the PSPOs.

Changes to Elections Act

The Department has released an update on the timetable for putting in place changes to the Elections Act for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities recently. The new Act brings in several changes to the way we vote, as well as to campaigning and the rules on campaign spending and funding. WNC elections team is working with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to ensure these changes are put in place in West Northamptonshire, and was recently advised of several updates to the implementation plan, which are summarised below:



- 1) The introduction of voter identification has been moved from December 2022 to January 2023. This requires voters to present some form of photo ID at polling stations to receive their ballot paper. Voter Card application service is expected to go live in January 2023 and will be first used in any elections from May 2023.
- 2) Postal Vote Handling and Secrecy measures will now be put in place after May 2023. These rules, which will place added restrictions on who can hand in completed postal votes, will most likely come into force in Autumn 2023.
- 3) A new Voter Card, or Electoral identification Document, could include added security features. This will be based on market testing and input from government experts, balanced with the need for a secure document that can be quickly produced and dispatched in potentially high volumes. More information will be available in due course.
- 4) The Voter Card application deadline will be six working days ahead of a poll. This will enable central production and delivery management, removing pressure on local authorities in the immediate lead-up to a poll.

More information about the changes being brought in as part of the new Election Act can be found on the Electoral Commission website

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/.../elections-act>

Give the gift of food safety this Christmas

Many of us will be heading to eat over the festive period as we celebrate with colleagues at work parties, meet up with family and friends or head to our favourite local eatery to start off the holidays.

There may be lots of decisions on where to meet and eat; trying to coordinate everyone's diaries and finally agree on what cuisine.



Did you know you can check your local restaurants food hygiene rating to ensure you're staying safe this Christmas? It is quick and easy to check online and could save you or your colleagues or relatives having a miserable Christmas.

All food businesses selling to the public are given a Food Hygiene Rating after their unannounced inspection from West Northamptonshire Council's (WNC) Environmental Health Team. Scores are often displayed on the doors, but you can check it out quickly here:

<https://ratings.food.gov.uk/>

All businesses are rated on a scale ranging from 0 (urgent improvement necessary) to 5 (very good). During the inspection, officers check how well the business is meeting the law by looking at:

- How hygienically the food is handled – how it is prepared, cooked, re-heated, cooled and stored.
- The condition of the structure of the building – the cleanliness, layout, lighting, ventilation etc.
- How the business manages and records what it does to make sure food is safe, and staff knowledge & training.

The owner is given feedback on any improvements they may need to make and how they can achieve a 5 (all businesses can achieve the top rating).

<https://ratings.food.gov.uk/>

RURAL SERVICES NETWORK (RSN)



RSN AGM & Rural Assembly 14 November

As the WNC Member Representative on the RSN, I attended the RSN AGM & Rural Assembly on 14 November online.

RSN Seminar: Rural Health & Social Care

I attended the Rural Health and Social Care Seminar on

Wednesday, 16 November 2022.

RSN Seminar: Rural Economies

I attended the Rural Economies Seminar on Wednesday 30 November 2022.

I will provide an update on the Rural Economy in my next monthly report.

PLANNING MATTERS

Planning Appeals

Since my appointment, I have kept you informed as to the progress of the major Appeals in South Northamptonshire. The update for this month is as follows:

- Hartwell, land North of Ashton Road-Dismissed
- Blisworth, land South of Station Road-Dismissed
- Blakesley Hill, Greens Norton-Dismissed

- Greens Norton, land off Mill Lane-Withdrawn
- Milton Malsor, land East of Lower Lane-Dismissed
- Blisworth, land off Northampton Road -Dismissed.
- Yardley Gobion, land at Asana Lodge Appeal-Inquiry 8 February 2022 for 3 days-Cancelled
- Yardley Gobion, land East of Northampton Road-Allowed.

Six Week Public Consultation Northampton Local Plan Part 2

A six-week public consultation on further main modifications to the Northampton Local Plan Part 2 is proposed to start on Monday, 7 November 2022.



In July 2022, West Northants Council (WNC) consulted the public on Proposed Modifications to the Plan as Planning Inspectors considered that these modifications were necessary to make the plan sound.

Having reviewed the comments received on the proposed modifications, the Inspectors recommended that further Main Modifications should be consulted on.

Main Modifications involve changes or insertions to policies and text that are essential to enable the plan to be

adopted.

This consultation relates to two sites. The further main modification proposed for the site at The Green, Great Houghton provides additional details on access and connectivity arrangements.

The further main modification proposed for the site at Ransome Road reduces the number of dwellings to be provided on the site.

At this stage in the plan-making process, the Planning Inspectors can only consider representations relating to these further main modifications.

Documents relevant for this round of consultation can be found at:

<https://www.northampton.gov.uk/.../northampton-local-plan...>

While previous documents can be found at:

<https://www.northampton.gov.uk/.../northampton-local-plan...>

Both will be useful while considering responses to the consultation which ends at midnight on Monday, 19 December 2022.

If approved on 25 October, a link to complete the consultation online will be published and hardcopies of the documentation and response forms will be available at the One Stop Shop at the Guildhall in Northampton and council-owned libraries, Northampton Town Council and some parish council offices across the town.

The Local Plan Part 2 is a major planning policy document that will help guide planning decisions throughout Northampton up to 2029.

West Northamptonshire Strategic Plan, Spatial Options Consultation

The council is preparing a new local plan, known as the West Northamptonshire Strategic Plan (WNSP), to review and replace the strategic policies in the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) (Local Plan Part 1), which was adopted in December 2014. A consultation on potential spatial options was undertaken between October and December 2021 and at the Planning Policy Committee 28 June 2022, when the Committee considered a report which provided a summary of the responses received to the consultation.

The spatial options consultation envisaged a plan period extending up to 2050 to reflect the time covered by the anticipated spatial framework for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc. In response to representations received and in the light of increased uncertainty regarding the production of a spatial framework for the Arc, the committee agreed to reduce the plan period for the WNSP to 2041. In addition, the timetable for the preparation of the WNSP was updated and this was addressed by a revised Local Development Scheme. It envisages the approval of a draft plan for public consultation by the end of the calendar year to enable completion of further technical work and further member engagement. The Plan is expected to be adopted by March 2024.

Michael Gove is to be ‘radical’ on national planning policy framework

The levelling up secretary will be “radical” on net zero elements of the national planning policy framework and there will be more support for stretched planning departments, a senior civil servant said yesterday.

Speaking at LGC Future Places on 30 November, David Waterhouse, the head of design and planning reform at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities, said: “Specifically on the net zero question, I know the secretary of state wants to...be fairly radical on what we write within the NPPF.” Mr Waterhouse said that national development management policies, which will be introduced as part of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, would help to inform the framework by which planning inspectors can judge planning applications. He added that the department will look to maintain flexibility within the framework ensuring the “ability for authorities to go further and faster” on planning.



However, DLUHC will also look at tightening up the role of the inspector in determining “applications and local policy plan in accordance with the NPPF” and how much “flexibility” local authorities will be given. He said the department would “engage with the sector to make [the] framework”. Mr Waterhouse also pointed to the ongoing resourcing pressures on planning departments. Research mentioned during LGC Future Places and conducted by the Royal Town Planning Institute recently revealed that funding for planning departments in England has dropped by 43% since 2009-10.

“We know we’re loading change into an already stressed, almost broken system. We absolutely recognise and get that. I think it’s important that central government do. “And actually we need to make sure we’re funding, supporting and enabling local government to deliver what is a change programme,” Mr Waterhouse said. During the session, Mr Waterhouse said DLUHC would be focusing on addressing the skills shortage in the sector. “The elephant in the room for me is the skills, capacity and resources within local government to deliver not just any [of the reforms] but the current system” Mr Waterhouse said.

He said “there is so much more central government can and should be doing” to fund initiatives such as apprenticeships and recruitment campaigns to bring more planners into the system. Mr Waterhouse told attendees that in order to support local authority planning departments, DLUHC has set up “a skills and capacity hub” with a “relatively healthy budget” of around £30m and which will look at helping to develop new ways of recruitment and resourcing. The department has established a working group of several local and combined authorities, including the West Midlands CA and the chief planner, Joanna Averley, to help co-design programmes to better support planning departments.

“This programme underpins the totality of the reform agenda,” Mr Waterhouse added.

HOUSING

Affordable Apartments-Riverside House, Northampton

Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH), which runs the council's housing stock, is converting part of Riverside House in Bedford Road into flats. Work is well underway to convert most of this former office building into 60 affordable apartments. We expect completion of the main development in autumn this year. NPH has this month submitted another planning application for the ground floor of the same building, which has recently become available. The ground floor of the building was not included in the original plans. WNC are reviewing options for the ground floor accommodation. The recently submitted planning application is intended to establish a feasibility option, which in turn will help to inform a full options appraisal of the ground floor use. No decision on the future use of the ground floor has been made as the option appraisals are at an early stage.

West Northamptonshire Housing Strategy

Councillors have approved a fresh strategy for improving housing for residents across West Northamptonshire whilst tackling issues including homelessness and the cost-of-living crisis.

At a meeting on Friday, 23 September members of the Council's Cabinet agreed to progress proposals for the new strategy which sets out plans for the next three years and supports the Council's vision.

The strategy focuses on four themes which plan to tackle a number of key issues including a need for more affordable housing, reducing homelessness, addressing cost of living increases and recognising a need for more housing to meet the needs of our growing aging population.

The themes set out in the strategy are:

Deliver homes people need and can afford

Improve the quality, standard and safety of homes and housing services

Support residents to live healthy, safe, independent and active lives

Support thriving and sustainable communities

The strategy was developed following a public consultation earlier this year involving local community members, voluntary and charitable organisations and wider stakeholders, with overall feedback presenting strong support for the themes and priorities.

West Northamptonshire is a growing area, with a population of 425,700 (2021 Census) residents, it is anticipated that the population will grow by 7% up to 2030, and the number of households is set to grow by 12% by 2030.

Within that, the population aged 65 year and over is expected to grow by 9% which represents 76% of total population growth.

The full Housing Strategy can be viewed on the WNC website.

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/housing/housing-strategy>



ENVIRONMENT

Cleaner Communities

Since adopting the fly-tipping charter earlier this year, which complements the previously launched litter charter, I wanted to provide you with an update on the progress to formally launch and embed this.

There were five key actions drawn together for the plan to implement this, and work has been on going over the last few months to implement these actions, alongside the continued enforcement duties undertaken by the environmental crime team.

The progress against these key actions is as follows:

- Our camera deployment policy, setting out where and when we will deploy enforcement cameras, has been finalised and adopted by our teams.
- A communications strategy is in place, in the form of our new Cleaner Communities campaign. A new web area has been launched at www.westnorthants.gov.uk/cleanercommunities and we are in the process of developing new content, including a video case study showing the work carried out by our wardens to tackle fly-tipping and advising people how they can help support that work.
- The next step is to formally launch our Fly-tipping Charter to the public and the media. Please look out for our [#cleanercommunities](https://twitter.com/cleanercommunities) posts and share the content where you can.
- A comprehensive review of the use of CCTV and its effectiveness has been carried out, and we are in the process of obtaining additional CCTV cameras to assist with evidence gathering across our communities. I will keep you updated as to when the new cameras are in use, and we will also be issuing press releases at the appropriate time.
- We are working with partners to identify the best method of sharing data about fly-tipping hotspots. While a common method is not yet in place, the data is being shared effectively, allowing us to target enforcement activity.
- Assessment of the use of external contractor: Kingdom continues to provide external services to the Council for the current time. A procurement exercise will be undertaken to identify the most appropriate way of delivering this service once the contract expires.



As part of the Cleaner Communities campaign, we will keep working with businesses, landowners and residents to educate them on their responsibilities to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and reduce fly-tipping. We will also continue to develop our social media content and engagement, encouraging and supporting people to help us tackle fly-tipping in their neighbourhoods

Waste & Recycling Collections over Christmas and New Year

With the festive season fast approaching, we are advising residents of the arrangements for waste and recycling collections over the Christmas and New Year period. With no printed calendars being sent out to residents, our communications campaign will harness people's community spirit over the Christmas period by encouraging those in the know to pass on information to any friends, family, or neighbours who might not have online access.

Downloadable bin calendars with information about waste and recycling arrangements are available, and we have also contacted Parish Councils for their support in helping spread the message.

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/bins-recycling-and-waste>

The main messages for residents to remember are:

- Waste and recycling collection days in the South Northamptonshire and Northampton areas will not change over Christmas and New Year.



- Collections in the Daventry area which are due to take place on Monday 26 December, will be collected on Saturday 24 December instead.
- Bin hangers explaining this change will be placed on the bins of the residents affected in the run-up to the Christmas period.
- Garden waste collections will be suspended from 24 December until 6 January across West Northants.

Real tree collections

- Crews will collect real Christmas trees between 9 and 20 January.
- Residents in the Daventry and South Northants areas should put real Christmas trees out on the day that garden waste is due to be collected in their area.
- In the Northampton area real trees should be put out next to recycling bins, and those on sack collections can present trees beside their recycling boxes and green sacks on their collection day.

Please ensure any trees over 6ft tall are cut in half, so they will fit into the lorries safely. People do not need a garden waste subscription to put out their real Christmas tree for collection.

Additional recycling

Additional recycling can be put out in clear plastic bags or boxes alongside recycling bins and boxes or can also be taken to the nearest Household Waste Recycling Centre.

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/household-waste...>

These are open as usual throughout the festive period except for Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day, when they will be closed. Centres will also close early on Christmas Eve, at 2pm.

Find out more information about waste and recycling collections this Christmas

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/bins-recycling-and-waste>

Four residents fined a total of £5,681 after dumping their waste on the street

On Tuesday, 16 August this year West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) Neighbourhood Wardens found a



pile of refuse sacks outside a property in St Paul's Road, Semilong, two days before the collection for that area. Upon investigation it was found the waste belonged to 25-year-old Sher Ali of St Paul's Road and he was issued with a £150 Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN), which he did not pay.

Then on Wednesday 17 August, Neighbourhood Wardens came across a refuse sack discarded in bushes on the corner of Longland Road and Broadmead Avenue which belonged to 36-year-old Anselika

Laskova, of Broadmead Avenue. Properties in that area have wheelie bins and refuse sacks are not collected by collection crews, and she too was issued with a £150 FPN which she failed to pay. Neither appeared at Wellingborough Magistrates on Tuesday, 8 November and in their absence, they were each fined £350 and ordered to pay £1,000 in council costs and a £140 victim surcharge.

Laura Suki, aged 30, of Louise Road, Northampton was also ordered to pay £400 after waste which belonged to her was found dumped in the vicinity of Bat & Wickets Pub at the entrance to the Racecourse Park on Bailiff Street. In a fourth case, which happened in January 2020 but due to Covid was not heard in court until 15 November, 25-year-old Daniel Moisa, then of Marshleys Court, Overstone Lodge was fined £660 and ordered to pay cost of £1,575 and £66 victim surcharge.







After pleading not guilty at a previous hearing to dumping refuse sacks near to the Eastern District Northern Social Club in Crestwood Road, he failed to appear in court and was found guilty in his absence.

To find out more about disposing of waste in West Northants, visit:

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/bins-recycling-and-waste>

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

My Appointment to Daventry and South Northants LAP (DSN4)

Finding your way around this Local Insight profile:			
Population 	There are 54,816 people living in DSN4† <small>See pages 4-8 for more information on population by age and gender, ethnicity, country of birth, language, migration, household composition and religion†</small>	Education & skills 	18% of people have no qualifications in DSN4 compared with 22% across England† <small>See page 10-11 for more information on qualifications, post-16 education and early years educational progress†</small>
Vulnerable groups 	9% of children aged 0-19 are in relative low-income families in DSN4 compared with 15% across England† <small>See pages 12-13 for more information on children in poverty, people out of work, people in retained areas, disability, pensioners and other vulnerable groups†</small>	Economy 	41% people aged 16-74 are in full-time employment in DSN4 compared with 39% across England† <small>See pages 14-15 for more information on people's jobs, job opportunities, income and local business†</small>
Housing 	2% of households lack central heating in DSN4 compared with 3% across England† <small>See pages 16-17 for more information on heating types, housing tenure, affordability, overcrowding, age of housing and communal establishments†</small>	Access & transport 	9% of households have no car in DSN4 compared with 26% across England† <small>See pages 18-19 for more information on transport, distance services and digital services†</small>
Crime & safety 	The overall crime rate is lower than the average across England† <small>See pages 20-21 for more information on recorded crime and crime rates†</small>	Communities & involvement 	The % of people 'satisfied with their neighbourhood' (89.4%) is higher than the average across England (79.3%)† <small>See pages 22-23 for more information on neighbourhood satisfaction, the types of neighbourhoods being best perceived and the reasons for this†</small>
Health & wellbeing 	14% of people have a limiting long-term illness in DSN4 compared with 18% across England† <small>See pages 24-25 for more information on limiting long-term illness, life expectancy and mental, general health and healthy lifestyle†</small>	Appendix A† 	Page 6† for information on the geographies used in this report, publication dates for new releases and background information†

Local Area Partnerships (LAPs) will play a key part in the Integrated Health agenda, and I have been appointed to represent Hackleton and Grange Park on the pioneer LAP in Daventry and South Northants (DSN4). The Pioneer LAP covers the areas of Towcester, Deanshanger, Bugbrooke, Hackleton and Grange Park. WNC are testing its emerging LAP model with two Pioneer sites, DSN4 and another site in Northampton. We will be exploring how we might work in a collaborative way to improve outcomes for our patients and constituents within our local area.

We are currently engaging with GPs in the area who have registered patients in the LAP footprint. Our next meeting is arranged for the 6 December 2022.

Grow, Cook, Eat

WNC is working with two Northampton charities on a new scheme to champion the benefits of growing and cooking food. The Grow! Cook! Eat! is a partnership between our public health team, Northampton Hope Centre, and Community Health-Works UK CIC. It offers support and training to community organisations across West Northamptonshire to enable them to become local experts in how to grow and cook food and to share knowledge in their communities – improving people's health across our communities.

The Grow! Cook! Eat! Team can:

Offer training in growing and cooking new, tasty, low-cost recipes
 Give groups the skills that allow them to train others

Help develop local projects and spread the word in communities

Provide access to funding for local organisations to help them get projects started and keep them going.



The key target areas in West Northamptonshire are:

Castle Ward, St David's, Kingsley, Spencer, Billing, Westone, Brookside, St James', Headlands and Talavera.

For more information contact the scheme coordinator: Kathleen@northamptonhopecentre.org.uk or call 01604 214300.

Consultation re potential closure of Spinneyfields in Rushden

Consultation is under way on proposals to close one of the short-term Specialist Care Centres (SCCs) no longer effectively serving the needs of West Northamptonshire residents. Spinneyfields in Rushden, North Northamptonshire is one of four specialist short-term care centres transferred to NCC in 2020, which were subsequently taken on by WNC on Vesting Day. As part of the transfer NCC took over the care and staffing elements of the contract and the PFI provider only charges for the property and facilities management elements of the contract, which ends in 2029. Our Council is now responsible for all the running costs of all

four centres, even though two centres (Thackley Green and Spinneyfields) and 102 beds in total are in North Northants.

North Northants has agreed to pay for the beds that it uses in the centres, but these are recharged on a



case-by-case basis and don't currently cover the full running cost of the service. The specialist care centres provide short-term step-down care and social care therapy and rehabilitation following a hospital stay.

Good practice in providing step down care for people in hospital is about placing the person as near to their home as possible, so that family and friends can continue to visit with ease and community connection is not lost. As Spinneyfields is in Rushden it has typically

taken patients from Kettering General Hospital and North Northants. However North Northamptonshire Council has indicated to WNC that it currently does not need all the rehabilitation spaces at the Spinneyfields centre in Rushden, as well as those already in use at Thackley Green in Corby, therefore the service at Spinneyfields is significantly underutilised at a significant cost to West Northamptonshire taxpayers. The Council has been in active conversations about the transfer of one or all of the services on a sublet basis and is talking to wider partners about how the centres might be effectively used across health and care. But none of these conversations have indicated a solution to the challenge of the under use of beds at Spinneyfields, and our Council cannot continue to pay for the provision of beds not being used in the short term. So pending ongoing conversations with partners about intended future use, it is with this in mind we have taken this decision to start consulting with staff on the closure of the centre. We are however keen to retain the staff and we have plenty of similar roles in our reablement or other services in Adults that we would be happy to welcome them into. We have already established a different model at our specialist care centre, Turn Furlong in Northampton, to better meet the needs of West Northamptonshire residents and support discharge from hospital. This has included increasing service provision within our Reablement West Service, as well as partnering with Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (NHFT) on Turn Furlong, to provide a new Recovering Independence Bed Unit providing short-term health and care services for patients who are not quite ready to return home after a hospital stay. This enables patients in West Northants to access the right care, at the right time in the right place, to better support their recovery journey either closer to home or in their own home where suitable. WNC is committed to providing the best possible care for residents and supporting people to live confidently and independently in their own homes and helping them recover after a hospital stay or fall is vital to this aim. But we also have a duty to deliver value for money and ensure we are efficient in the use of all our resources and it is with this in mind we have had to take this decision. We are working closely with colleagues, patients and partner organisations to ensure that they are kept well informed on the anticipated closure and ensuring the appropriate support is in place during this time.

More Warm Spaces in West Northamptonshire

Northampton Hope Centre offers one of the 67 warm spaces across the county, which give a safe environment to the homeless and those who cannot afford to heat their homes this winter. The transformation of their office space in Ash Street began around six weeks ago and it has now been open to the public for just over a month. It is open from 9am until 3pm from Monday to Friday, and they aim to open on weekends in the near future and expand the hours further as the weather gets colder and wetter. The team wants to reiterate this is open to anyone, not just for homeless individuals or those who live in Oasis House. Anyone who turns up will be welcomed in with open arms.

The space is about more than just keeping warm and offering affordable food and drink to all. It's about creating a community environment and for people who are isolated to know they can come and help one another. Not only is a cup of tea as cheap as 30 pence, which is only if the person can



afford it, but the organisation offers additional welfare support for challenges including mental health and addiction. They provide training and currently have 120 different classes, which vary from gym sessions on the top floor, to DIY and life skills, art and music, and employability. Organisations like the Hope Centre and other communities across the whole of West Northamptonshire are coming together to create 67 warm spaces now. If you have a spare room or space that you would like to open up as a warm space, then please contact West Northamptonshire Council to be added

to the growing list. If you are looking for a warm space to visit with no fear of judgement, you can find the nearest location on the council's online map.

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/cost.../looking-warm-spaces>

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?hl=en...>

Help Bring Christmas Cheer to Patients in Hospital

The NHS Health Charity is seeking your help to bring some festive cheer, to patients in hospital at Christmas this year.



If you would like to donate, items that patients love to receive include, toiletries, slippers & bed socks, playing cards & dominoes, lip balm & handkerchiefs, hair brushes & combs, gloves, hats, scarves, biscuits & chocolates, sweets etc.

They can only accept new items in their original packaging. Food products must be in sealed original packaging and in date. Gifts can be placed in a gift bag but please do not wrap them up, as they need to determine whom the presents would be appropriate for.

The latest that they would prefer to accept gifts in by is Friday 16th December as this gives them time to sort through everything and to allocate to the different areas, and deliver them to the wards

at different hospitals.

You can drop your donations at the charity office, Springfield, Cliftonville, a short walk out from A&E at the hospital and open Monday-Friday 09:00 to 16:00. Northamptonshire Health Charity, Springfield, Cliftonville, Northampton, NN1 5BE. Alternatively, you can leave gifts with the volunteers on the desk at the South Entrance and out of hours leave them with the Switchboard team. If you are buying gifts online that are not from their Amazon Wish List you can also get them delivered straight to the Charity office at the above address but please do let them know that you have done this as they don't get any details with the parcels. You can make a donation to the charity online via the Enthuse page. Donations to the appeal will be used to



purchase appropriate gifts or used to support areas, like the Children's Short Break Respite Centres, with their Christmas celebrations.

If you'd like to donate a gift for a patient in hospital on Christmas day all the details are on the website.

<https://northamptonshirehealthcharity.co.uk/.../christma.../>

Invitation to provide comfort and joy to vulnerable people

The annual campaign to bring comfort and joy to those staying in West Northamptonshire refuges, including those experiencing domestic abuse, starts this week. Organised by the Community Safety team at West Northamptonshire Council (WNC), its aim is to provide them with a few gifts and treats, as well as food, toiletries and other essential items. The project also raises awareness of domestic abuse, incidents of which tend to increase over the Christmas period.



CLlr David Smith, WNC's Cabinet Member for community safety and engagement and regulatory services, said: "It's a sad fact that not everyone is going to have a merry Christmas. In fact, the season can heighten the anguish of a family break-up or life crisis. "The donations can be practical, they can be whimsical, but most of all I want them to send a message – in your darkest hour, your community has not forgotten you."

Gifts for men, women and children as well as Christmas food and essential items are being put together and a

list of suggested donations can be found below. Donations can be made at West Northamptonshire Council's offices at Lodge Road in Daventry and The Forum in Towcester, as well as at Daventry Fire Station, in Staverton Road. The deadline to donate items is 12pm on Friday, 16 December. All of the items donated will go directly to local people living in refuges as well as other vulnerable families in West Northamptonshire this Christmas. These donations will be distributed between the Northamptonshire Domestic Abuse Service (NDAS), Home Start and the domestic abuse charity Eve.

Anyone who is experiencing domestic violence is urged to call the Northamptonshire Domestic Abuse Service helpline - 0300 0120 154.

People can also access support at Domestic Violence UK - a not-for-profit organisation, which is trying to raise awareness of domestic and emotional abuse through its Love Doesn't Hurt campaign.

All donations to be brand new and unwrapped. Suggested donations:

Comfort donations

Soap, body wash, shampoo and conditioner (for adults, children and babies) Deodorant, sanitary products, nappies and wipes, toothbrush/paste for adults and children

Joy donations

perfume/aftershave, hats and scarves, make-up, toys, books, arts and crafts

Food donations

mince pies, tea and coffee, chocolates, cereal, dry pasta, baby food

Shared Lives Caring

A service which sees carers across Northamptonshire share their lives and homes to support others has been rated 'outstanding' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

The Shared Lives Service, which is managed by our Council, has achieved the highest rating following its first inspection this autumn which found that "people received exceptional care and support from dedicated carers who considered them to be part of their family and vice versa."

In their recently published report:

<https://www.cqc.org.uk/location/1-10490558733>

CQC inspectors also said that “with the right support, people flourished in all aspects of their lives, growing in self-confidence, developing skills and being able to grasp opportunities which would not otherwise have been available to them.”



The service currently provides personalised support to around 78 people countywide, with most living in carers' own homes 24/7 in long-term placements, and others receiving respite care for shorter periods to help give families a break. Carers provide comfortable family homes for younger adults, adults with a learning disability and older people. The idea is to give them as much independence as possible, while having a safe and secure home environment within the community.

A careful matching process makes sure individuals are paired with suitable carers who will treat them as members of their family, meet their needs and provide the right support. The report, which can be read on the CQC's website, rated the service as outstanding overall and for care and safety, with good ratings for its effectiveness, responsiveness and for being well-led.

It summarised that people were 'supported to achieve their aspirations and goals', were 'enabled to access specialist health and social care support when needed' and were 'supported to play an active role in maintaining and improving their health and wellbeing'.

Carers are paid according to the type of support they are required to provide. Most are covered by special tax arrangements with HMRC, and many do not have to pay income tax on their earnings.

To find out more about becoming a Shared Lives Carer, visit:

<https://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/.../Pages/default.aspx>

EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

School Admissions

Parents and carers can still apply for a reception place in a primary or infant school or a year 3 place in a junior school.

They can apply for a place in reception if their child will be four years of age on or before 31 August 2023. The closing date for applications for places in reception and year 3 (junior school) is 15 January 2023 at midnight.



We hope the new midnight deadlines mean that it will be easier for families to submit their application before the deadline, giving them the best chance of getting a place at their preferred school and avoiding any disappointment. All applications, whether postal or online, must be received by the closing date to be considered as on time. Late applications will not be processed until after the National Offer Day and will be processed in monthly rounds. All on time applicants will receive an offer of a school place on the National Offer Days – 1 March 2023 for secondary places and 17 April 2023 for reception places.

Applicants will then be provided with information on the next stage of the process. There is a separate application process for children who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plan, details of which can be found on the SEND admissions page.

<https://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/.../Pages/default.aspx>

An independent admission appeals process is available for families who wish to appeal against refusal of a place at any school for which they have applied. More information can be found on the school admissions page.

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/school-admissions>

Three Year Strategy to meet the needs of SEND children and their families

Parents, families and school workers will be among those encouraged to help shape a new strategy for improving outcomes for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in West Northants. At the meeting on Tuesday 8 November, Cabinet will discuss plans to co-produce a new three-year joint strategy to address the current shortfall of specialist school places in the area and plan resources more effectively to better meet the needs of SEND children and their families. To help shape the new strategy, children, parents, school-based staff, health and care professionals and other interested organisations will be involved in the development of a new Co-production Charter.

This will be developed during a series of events set to take place between Nov and Feb 2023, supported by the Northamptonshire Parent Forum Group, which represents parents' voices in West Northants. All young people deserve access to the best available education and learning that meets their individual needs. We recognise and hear the impact that the current shortfall of special school places is having on children and their families and we are committed to addressing this challenge.



<https://westnorthants.moderngov.co.uk/.../Item%2007%20...>

Improvement in Ofsted Report for Children's Services

WNC has welcomed and is reassured by this week's Ofsted report, which shows significant improvements to services that protect and support children across the area. At the end of September, Ofsted undertook a full Children's Services ILACS inspection (Inspection of Local Authority Children Services). In the findings published on 23 November 2022, Ofsted has rated our children's services as 'Requires Improvement to be Good', having previously been judged as 'Inadequate' since 2019.



Inspectors have highlighted the good work of Northamptonshire Children's Trust (NCT), which was established in 2020 against the backdrop of the pandemic, and the creation of the new unitary councils. They also recognised a number of achievements, including the strengthening of early help support, the reduction in caseloads, the stabilisation of the workforce and the work to embed a more positive culture. They highlighted that when children were at risk of very serious harm, social workers acted quickly to make sure they were as safe as possible and social workers completed assessments

so that they could plan the best ways to help children and families.

Social workers were praised for finding the right families for most children who cannot live with their own families, and that they are well cared for. The report also recognised that more improvements were still required to make the service good and there had been insufficient progress and slow change in some areas, but that leaders knew what needed to be done and had comprehensive plans in place.

The new rating shows how far we have come and the report provides us with renewed focus on what further improvements need to be made. The letter to WNC is now available to view in full on the Ofsted website. <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/44/941>

You can also read more about the findings on our website <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/.../council-reassured...>

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & GRANT FUNDING

Platinum Jubilee Village Hall Improvement Grant Fund

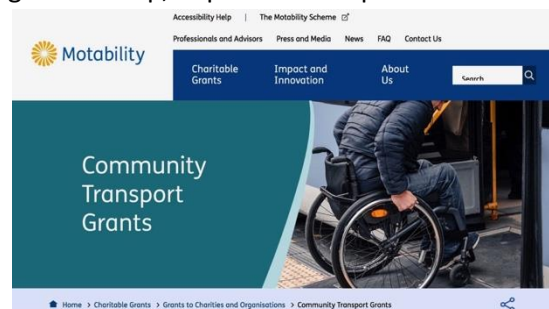
A new £3 million fund to upgrade and renovate England's village halls has been announced by the Government to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Over a three-year period, the Platinum Jubilee Village Hall Improvement Grant Fund will provide money for projects such as installing Wi-Fi, extending buildings, and modernising facilities. The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) said village halls are at the heart of rural life, hosting fitness classes, community groups and post office services, and the grant will allow them to attract more people by creating more contemporary spaces. A total of 125 village halls will receive money from the fund, which Defra said will be a "lasting legacy" from the Jubilee for rural communities. Rural affairs minister Lord Beynon said: "Village halls are the centrepiece of rural life and funding their renovation to mark the Jubilee is a fitting tribute to The Queen's Service. "In a changing world, they are important facilities for community groups, social clubs and local services." "This funding will ensure they are central to the fabric of our villages for many more years to come." Defra said the grant will build on the success of schemes to commemorate both Queen Victoria and King George and "demonstrate that almost 200 years on, we continue to build on the legacy of the monarchy, both past and present". Details on how the funding will be administered will be announced later.



Community Transport Grants – Motability

Through this new grant programme Motability aim to help charities and organisations to make an immediate impact for disabled people, by awarding funding to develop, expand and improve community transport options. The programme is focussed on:

- Funding support for staff or volunteer training and costs.
- Funding to increase the number of vehicles available in the community to help organisations support disabled people.
- Funding local, regional, or national initiatives to increase awareness of community transport and influence its inclusion in transport strategy and policy.
- Funding to schemes, programmes and initiatives that already exist, and who provide best practice solutions, but need further support to remain operational or scale up the service they can provide to help more disabled people.



Charities and organisations working in the community transport sector can apply for grants from £100,000 to £4 million at any point over the next three years until March 2025.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

A £5.4million allocation from the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund to West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) will help significantly boost the area's economy. WNC has submitted its investment plan for the allocated funds, and these include aspirations to reduce the cost of living, provide funding to support businesses, address local skill needs and boost employment. The investment plan was developed following comprehensive consultation with local organisations from the public, private and third sectors, including MPs and councillors.



The funding has been split across three priority areas: Communities and place, supporting local business and people and skills.

Expected outcomes from the programme include:

- New and improved cycleways to boost active travel
- Increased engagement in volunteering
- Greater take-up of energy efficiency measures
- New start-up businesses, creating new jobs
- Improved skills

<https://westnorthants.moderngov.co.uk/.../UK%20Shared...>

Frost Fair Traders Needed

The popular Frost Fair will be returning to Northampton's Market Square on Sunday 4 December and traders who would like a stand are being invited to get in touch. Organised by West Northamptonshire Council (WNC), the event is aiming to celebrate the town's creative makers, artists and traders and promote their unique or seasonal offer, including food, drink, arts and crafts, Christmas gifts and stocking fillers.



Taking place between 11am and 3.30pm, the Christmas themed market will provide a festive showcase of the town's local producers and crafters during December's busy shopping period. The market is part of wider Christmas celebrations taking place that day, including on stage festive entertainment throughout the day from a variety of acts TBC.

The price for a stall is £30. Local traders and craft people who would like to have a stall at this year's Frost Fair can book now, at <https://www.northampton.gov.uk/.../190/en/market-request>

New ExploreWN App

Have you downloaded the ExploreWN App? You can shop online, view exclusive deals from 120+ local businesses and find out about amazing events that are happening in your area. Get it on App Store and Google Play

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/culture-and-tourism/explore-west-northants-app>

Major New Cultural Centre at 24 Guildhall Road

NN Contemporary Art, in partnership with our Council, has revealed plans for a major new cultural centre at 24 Guildhall Road, in the heart of Northampton's cultural quarter. The £4.7 million project, which is about to enter its second stage of works, will see the five-storey redundant heritage building transformed into a vibrant creative community, with a contemporary art gallery, affordable creative studios and public spaces.

With a phased opening planned from late 2023 / early 2024, the 2000 sq metre Georgian building will become the new home of lead tenant and founding partner, NN Contemporary Art (NNCA), who will take over the lower three floors, opening a free public gallery space that will showcase the very best of international contemporary art. With a focus on nurturing the town's creative ecosystem, the floors will also encompass 20 affordable creative workspaces and studios, enabling hundreds of artists and creators to grow and develop their practice in the town. Designed to become a major creative hub for Northampton and the wider East Midlands region, the fully-accessible building will also incorporate multi-functional community and event spaces, including a civic reading room and arts library, a retail space and multimedia lab. Further creative and cultural tenants will be invited to lease the upper two floors. Taking inspiration from its original 1920s design, the plans honour the heritage of the building, seeing many of its original features restored, including the stunning terrazzo floor.



Artist Giles Round has been commissioned to design the Civic Reading Room Space. Identified as a key element of Northampton's regeneration, and highlighted as one of the public's preferred priorities through a consultation carried out by Northampton Forward, the £4.7 million project is supported by the government's Towns Fund and part of the Northampton Town Centre Masterplan. Alongside Towns Fund investment, phase one of the project has delivered £1.15 million through South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership's Getting Building Fund.

Northamptonshire Community Foundation Webinar Training

Northamptonshire Community Foundation Webinar Training for Organisations (Free of Charge) are coming up in the New Year, these are open to any and all, and are free of charge to attend. Please email Ryan at ryan@ncf.uk.com for the zoom link and confirm attendance on Tuesday 10th January 2023 at 10:30am

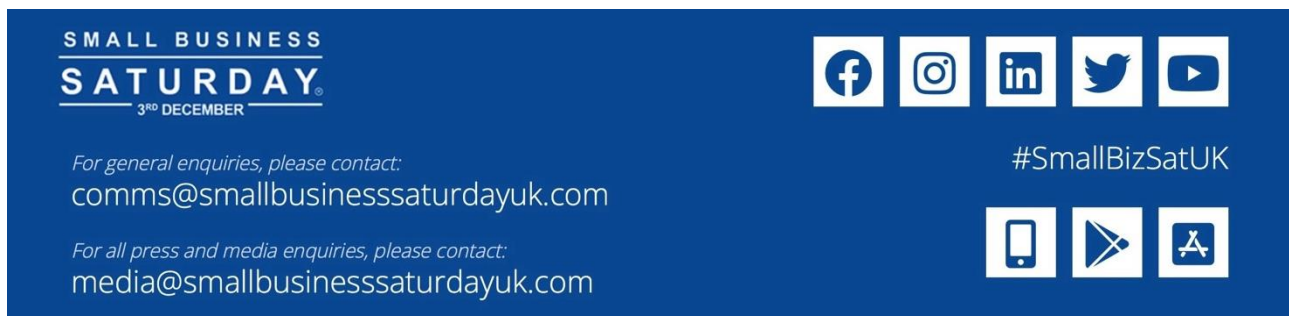


Alternative sources of Funding

Programmes Officer Ryan will be hosting a webinar on Alternative sources of Funding. This workshop is designed to raise community groups awareness that Northamptonshire Community Foundation is just one of a large number of sources of funding and how to go about accessing other sources of funding in addition to the Foundation. Looking at what you want to deliver and why and how best this can be resourced. This workshop will provide you with a toolkit on how to go about researching alternative sources of funding and information on additional support and resources available.

Kick off Small Business Saturday 3 December 2022

You are invited to a networking event to kick-off Small Business Saturday on Saturday 3 December. Metro Bank, in Abington Street, to mark the 10th anniversary of the national campaign, which aims to highlight our small businesses and encourage consumers to shop local, is hosting it. This informal event will bring together business owners, councillors, council officers and key stakeholders to discuss any issues facing businesses in the town centre and how we can work together in the future. It runs from 8.30am until 10am, and you can reserve your place online: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/.../small-business-saturday...>



SMALL BUSINESS
SATURDAY
3RD DECEMBER

For general enquiries, please contact:
comms@smallbusinesssaturdayuk.com

For all press and media enquiries, please contact:
media@smallbusinesssaturdayuk.com

#SmallBizSatUK

Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, Mobile, Navigation, Accessibility icons

As part of this year's event WNC are urging organisations to share videos showcasing their business and expressing why people should shop locally and support small businesses.

We have developed a quick how to guide <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/.../small-business-saturday> to help the most novice of videographers create captivating content to shine a spotlight on their business. We are also promoting local businesses and will share their videos including any events and offers across our social media channels. Business can simply tag the council in their social media posts with @westnorthants on Facebook or Twitter and @WestNorthamptonshireCouncil on LinkedIn along with the hashtag #SmallBizSatUK.

Small Business Saturday offers a range of free webinars <https://smallbusinesssaturdayuk.com/the-tour...> support businesses and our Economy Team also offers year-round support.

Visit our Small Business Saturday page <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/.../small-business-saturday> or contact us at economy@westnorthants.gov.uk or on 01327 322230 to find out more.

Bid to provide Maths Skills for Adults

Education providers are now invited to bid for contracts to help West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) deliver numeracy courses to meet a wide range of needs. In September, the Government confirmed the area will receive £575k for the current financial year to help improve maths skills for adults.



This is the first tranche of a £1.9m bid submitted by the council to introduce support over three years, benefiting more than 3,000 people. A wide range of schemes are proposed including:

- Helping those who have low skills and are unemployed
- Improving career chances by helping people boost their numeracy in the workplace
- Bite-sized maths workshops for families

- Working with the self-employed to ensure they have skills to run their businesses
- Short courses to help people with household budgeting
- Bridging the gap to GCSE for those who don't have the qualification
- Online learning platforms
- Helping parents who wish to support their children with numeracy
- Taking the programme to audiences, particularly in rural areas
- Supporting ex-offenders through the Probation Service
- Development of numeracy champions
- Supporting care experienced young people to access education, employment and training

Primary aims of the scheme will include improved life chances, access to better career options and greater personal wellbeing.

TRANSPORT & HIGHWAYS

Moving Traffic Offences

People are being urged to provide their views on new regulations, which will enable our Council to use enforcement powers on drivers who commit moving traffic offences.

The powers to enforce moving traffic offences are currently only used by the Police.

However, under recent changes in legislation local authorities can apply for powers which will enable them to prosecute those driving in breach of regulations.

Our proposals aim to expand the work we already carry out towards cracking down on illegal and dangerous parking, and the misuse of bus lanes. If we are successful in securing the new enforcement powers, we'll be able to improve road safety for all, including pedestrians and cyclists. We could also improve journey times for public transport and safety around schools. This work could also contribute towards reducing congestion in West Northamptonshire.

Moving traffic offences are where a vehicle does not follow the instruction or direction given by certain road signs and markings. These are usually red or blue roadside signs sometimes accompanied by yellow road markings. Red signs are prohibitions and blue signs are Directions.

Offences include:

- Ignoring no entry or no turning signs
- Ignoring weight limits
- Entering yellow box junctions with no clear exit
- Stopping on school keep clear markings
- Driving where and when motor vehicles are prohibited
- Driving the wrong way up one-way streets or driving on routes for buses and taxis only



In collaboration with Northamptonshire Police, we have examined road safety reports and historical data to identify locations where the powers would be of most benefit. The areas have been identified as:

1. Hermitage Way, Wootton, Northampton
2. Deanshanger Road, Old Stratford

3. Victoria Gardens junction with St Johns Street, Northampton
4. Horsemarket junction with Gold Street and Mare Fair, Northampton
5. Fishponds Road junction with Great Billing Way, Northampton

The consultation launched yesterday and will run until Thursday 22 December. People can have their say on our Consultation Hub

At the end of the consultation period, we will collate and review all the feedback received. All views expressed will be given full consideration, and subject to the outcome of the consultation we will then apply to the Department for Transport to be able to exercise the additional powers. Should the powers be given, our Council will start using its new enforcement measures in the initial locations using Automatic Number Plate Recognition technology.

<https://westnorthants.citizenspace.com/.../new-powers-to.../>

Uber for the Countryside

The Times reported on 28 November 2022 that a new £50million “Uber for the countryside” is being launched by councils to help rural populations who have become more isolated due to declining bus services. The initiative, backed by the Department of Transport, is intended to tackle rural and suburban isolation and support local businesses. Rather than expect passengers to wait at a bus stop according to a fixed timetable, they will be able to choose the service to suit their needs. Passengers can be picked up from home in minibuses and can book via an app, with tickets costing a little more than a bus fare.



An algorithm performs the trade-off between convenience and price. The first passenger to book through the app is given a guaranteed departure and arrival time. Other passengers are accepted if they can be accommodated without delaying

the first ones. Jack Holland, head of UK business development at Padam Mobility, which provides the technology platform, said the viability of demand responsive transport might in future depend on pricing the rides close to the cost of a minicab. “At present, there is no surge pricing, there is no pricing on demand. You can’t do that under current legislation.”

I would be interested in your thoughts/comments.

Review of West Northamptonshire Bus Services

WNC has appointed specialist consultants, SCP, to carry out a review of the way that bus services are currently provided across West Northamptonshire. As part of this process, SCP will bring forward alternative models that would serve our communities better. In doing this work



SCP will be contacting a number of key stakeholder groups, including bus operators and parish councils. It is anticipated that SCP will



present their findings and report to WNC in January 2023. A report will then be presented to Cabinet. This report will inform our West Northants



Transport Strategy that will be developed over the coming period in full consultation with Members and residents. To further support this work, an internal project has begun by officers to review how best community transport can be supported by WNC in the future with the current financial pressures. The project team will be engaging with stakeholders to discuss the current situation and potential solutions.

POLICE FIRE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

Northamptonshire Crime rates fell in year to June 2022

Northamptonshire is the only police force in England and Wales where overall crime fell in the year to June 2022. Figures from the Office for National Statistics showed crime nationally rose by an average of 12.9 % but dropped by 0.6 % here. Chief Constable Nick Adderley also revealed that there were 9,500 fewer reports of anti-social behaviour, down 8.2 % and a 16 % reduction in knife crime. Arrest rates for domestic abuse have risen steadily year on year to 35.2 %, a significant improvement on the previous 12 months while a proactive strategy to tackle serious organised crime led to more firearms being seized, large

numbers of drug factories closed down and 16 County Lines drugs gangs broken up.

All these crime types were identified as the Chief's Matters of Priority in 2021-22. Mr Adderley said: "I'm really pleased to say that Northamptonshire Police is fast being recognised as one of the most progressive forces in the country. These figures come against a backdrop that we are one of five forces rated as good in terms of our crime data recording, so people can be confident this ONS data is wholly accurate." "I made it clear when I took over in 2018 that I wanted Northamptonshire Police to be a proactive



force that goes out and deals with these issues when they happen and that's exactly what we are now doing."

Significantly, Northamptonshire has climbed from 34th to eighth in a table of forces in terms of its ability to detect crime; a step change from 2018 when inspectors judged the force was unable to investigate crime. Mr Adderley, who is set to continue in his role beyond 2023 when his contract ends, also reported an 11.6 % fall in residential break-ins and a 14.1 % drop in commercial burglaries. The official data shows that residents in Northamptonshire are now less likely to be a victim of crime than most parts of the country despite a 6.3 % population growth, which is significantly higher than the national average. Overall, violent crime accounts for 45 % of all offences, one third of which relates to domestic abuse.

However, the number of violent offences recorded last year fell by 2 % in 2021-22, placing Northamptonshire second in the table of 43 forces. Theft, which continues to fall, makes up around one in every four county crimes. Earlier this year, the Chief Constable announced his 'Matters of Priority' for the next three years tackling violence against women and girls, serious violence, serious and organised crime and drug harm.

He revealed:

- 90 % victim satisfaction levels in domestic abuse cases
- 1,294 knives taken off the streets in the last three months and a high conviction rate for offenders
- Significant numbers of firearms seized and more than 130 people safeguarded from modern slavery
- 1,486 drug seizures linked to criminality during a three-month crackdown.

Mr Adderley added: "I'm more than aware there is still work to be done, but thanks to the hard work of police officers and staff we are absolutely going in the right direction."

The Knife Angel App has been re-launched

The Knife Angel App has been re-launched this week to support Northamptonshire Police's 'Operation Sceptre' knife crime week of action. The Knife Angel statue, the National Symbol Against Violence and Aggression, visited Northampton earlier this year as part of its nationwide tour to highlight the issue of knife crime in the UK. The 27-foot-tall statue is made from over 100,000 knives and blades confiscated by the UK's 43 police forces.



The App will feature new videos, downloadable pdfs and information for parents on how to look out for signs that their child is being drawn into gangs and carrying weapons, and how to recognise if they are a victim of grooming. There will also be links to partner websites such as Community Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV) and Fearless, where people can report information anonymously.

A link to a map of bleed control kit locations, produced by local anti-knife crime organisation Off the Streets, will also be available in the App. The bleed control kits can be used to provide emergency aid to treat patients injured in a serious violent crime and keep them alive until the emergency services arrive.

Knife amnesty bins will also be available around the county – currently in the North and coming soon to the West, where people can surrender weapons in a safe, legal way. Locations of these will be detailed within the app.

Throughout the week of action, which started on Monday, 14 November, police forces and local partners will coordinate activity looking to target the root causes of knife crime.

The augmented reality Knife Angel is still available to see at Northampton Museum until the end of November. Normal Museum opening hours apply and large groups/schools please book in the normal way through the museum booking page.

The Knife Angel App is available via the Explore Northampton App, which is free to download from the App Store and Google Play. Anyone who already has the app will need to refresh the App to view the new features. For more information and resources around knife crime and gangs, please visit the WNC website.

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Reclaim the Night, Northampton 2022

More details of the events and activities being held to mark this year's 16 Days of Activism have been confirmed. The programme, which runs from 25 November to 10 December, will include a range of virtual and face-to-face activities to raise awareness of violence against women and promote the local support services available to women and girls who have experienced physical or sexual violence or domestic abuse. It started with a Reclaim the Night march in Northampton, organised by Northamptonshire Rape Crisis at 6.30pm Friday 25 November. During the 16 days, the Community Safety Partnership will be distributing leaflets, posters and information to venues, workplaces and retailers across West Northamptonshire. Businesses and taxi drivers will be asked to place stickers in their windows, and information will be shared via the WNC Facebook and Twitter pages. There will also be several pop-up



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support stands, where agencies such as Northamptonshire Domestic Abuse Service, Eve, Voice, Serenity and Northamptonshire Rape Crisis will be on hand to provide advice:

- The Grosvenor Centre Hub on Monday, 28 November from 11am-2pm
- The Guildhall on Tuesday 29 November from 9.30am-12.30pm and the Bridge Project, Northampton 1.00pm-3.00pm
- The Forum, Towcester on Tuesday, 29 November from 9.30am-11.30pm
- University of Northampton Learning Hub, Thursday, 1 December from 10am-2pm
- Lodge Road, Daventry on Friday, 2nd December 9am -12.30pm
- Weston Favell Shopping Centre Community Area on Monday, 5 December from 11am-2pm
- The Metro Bank in Northampton on Wednesday, 7 December from 11am-2pm
- Northampton College on Friday, 9 December from 10am-2pm

View the full calendar of events taking place across West Northants here:

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/events/16-days-activism>

CULTURE, HERITAGE & SPORT

Northampton Museum and Art Gallery awarded £450k from Arts Council England

Northampton Museum and Art Gallery has been awarded £450k from Arts Council England. The funding, which was announced today 4 November, will be spread over a three year period and will be used to fund the Museum's 'Histories of Northamptonshire' project. The project will engage with groups and communities across Northamptonshire to develop a series of exhibitions, events, books and digital resources looking at different aspects of Northamptonshire's history through objects, architecture, landscape and personal experiences.



The three-year project will focus on working with diverse communities across West Northamptonshire to enable their creativity and provide opportunities for them to enjoy the widest possible range of arts and culture. It will conclude with a major exhibition - A History of Northamptonshire in 100 Objects, which will include augmented reality trails, digital resources

and a series of linked exhibitions at venues across Northamptonshire. To be eligible for the funding, our Council had to demonstrate it could contribute strongly to the Arts Council England Let's Create strategy.

The 10-year vision aims to allow everyone to experience high-quality cultural experiences in England. Read more about the Museum and Art Gallery funding Royal & Derngate also received a positive outcome today, with Arts Council England confirming the venue would be receiving £862,245 per year from 2023 to 2026. Since reopening after lockdown, the theatre has continued to create exciting new work for its stages, and host a diverse programme of quality entertainment, as well as welcoming back participants to its award-winning creative learning activities, engaging schools, working with the local refugee community, and more.

Plant trees in memory of Queen Elizabeth II

Now that the leaves are falling and the colder weather is drawing in, planting season is upon us. People across West Northamptonshire are being urged to plant trees in memory of Her Late Majesty, the Queen II, 1926 – 2022. Following the wishes of His Majesty The King, The Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) initiative has been extended to the end of March 2023 to enable people across the country the opportunity to plant

trees in memory and to honour the late Queen Elizabeth II. West Northamptonshire Council is proud to continue to support this initiative and are inviting communities to join this programme.

Planting season takes place from now until March 2023. Schools, community groups and clubs are eligible to apply for free saplings from The Woodland Trust, available on a first come first served basis. Find out more and apply by visiting The Woodland Trust.



Two trees that were included in the Queen's Green Canopy 'Tree of Trees' have been gifted to Brackley Wolf Cub Pack (5th Brackley Scout Group) and Northamptonshire Music & Performing Arts Trust. The trees, two of 350 that formed a sculpture outside Buckingham Palace during the Platinum Jubilee celebrations, were

gifted as a 'thank you' for all the valuable and tireless work that volunteers and individuals undertake for the benefit of their communities.

Vice Lord-Lieutenant, Morcea Walker MBE represented the Lord-Lieutenant at the gifting ceremony to Brackley Wolf Club Pack on Sunday, 27 November. Scout Leader, Anna Mezciems, planted the trees in attendance of Paul Parson, Chairman of QGC for Northamptonshire, Cllr Paul Wiltshire, Brackley Town Mayor and Cllrs Bernie Tiller and Sue Sharp, both councillors from Brackley, Bim Prentice (Group Scout Leader), Clive Morse (Chair) and the Cub Scouts themselves. The tree is added to those already planted by 5th Brackley Wolves Cub pack who planted trees in early 2020 as part of their Community Impact Badge. The cubs have enjoyed planting and want to be able to show their children in the future. It also ties in with 5th Brackley Scouts' Platinum Jubilee in September 2023.

Have you already planted a tree? Make sure that you register this on the Queen's Green Canopy website to ensure that this is displayed on the interactive map for West Northamptonshire. You can do this by visiting Queen's Green Canopy. For more information and how to get involved visit Queen's Green Canopy. See the planting advice video from former Northamptonshire High Sheriff, Paul Parsons.

International Women's Day 2023 to honour the late Queen Elizabeth II

To celebrate International Women's Day 2023 we will be creating an exhibition to honour the late Queen Elizabeth II.

We are looking for local stories, photographs and videos from people describing how the Queen was an inspirational woman and what she meant to you. You will have a chance to view the display at the Guildhall on Saturday, 4 March 2023.

Please send submissions to forums.
nbc@westnorthants.gov.uk by 1 February 2023.



Christmas Events

From light trails to Christmas markets, there are lots of things to do across West Northamptonshire in the run-up to the festive period.



Click on the link below to find out what's on where this Christmas:

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/.../christmas-events...>