

MONTHLY NEWS REPORT FEBRUARY 2023



E-Newsletter Issue 2/2023
Cogenhoe WI Queens Green Canopy (QGC) tree planting
York Avenue side of the Playing Fields, Cogenhoe
Monday, 26 January 2023

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NEWS REPORT FEBRUARY 2023

Monthly Highlights

On 16 January 2023, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) published Homes for Ukraine: sponsor guides. The Guides for sponsors on the Homes for Ukraine scheme, covers eligibility criteria, how to apply as a sponsor, advice about how to make your guests welcome in the UK and ending sponsorship or re matching.

I am still working on a replacement for the Stagecoach 41 Bus Service. Britannia announced the operation of a new service between Northampton and Bedford, via Olney and Lavendon on 16 January 2023 and has applied to the Traffic Commissioners for approval for the route. The 350 Northampton to Olney/Milton Keynes Bus Route is referred to on their website. Britannia is consulting local resident groups, elected officials, and others with a view to offering a partial replacement for the newly defunct 41 service operated by Stagecoach. Britannia said, "If the consultation and regulatory application are successful, then we envisage starting early March due to the 10-week delay between application for registration and commencement." The route will cover Northampton, Booth Lane, Brafield on the Green, Denton, Yardley Hastings, Olney and Lavendon.

I am looking into Concessionary Fare Reimbursement. See my Monthly Report. We need to understand what needs to be done to make the bus routes sustainable.

WNC plans to undertake works on the drain on Ashton Road, Hartwell week commencing 30 January. This will be to remove the tree roots in the drain and unblock the system. They are hopeful that this will alleviate the drainage issues that have been occurring on Blacksmiths Way, Hartwell. I will of course keep you updated in this matter.

SEGRO is seeking a change to the Northampton Gateway Rail Freight Interchange Development Consent Order 2019. The Application was published on 10 August 2022 and the Secretary of State initiated a consultation on the Application on the same day. The deadline for representations on the Application was 26 September 2022. The 1,094 representations submitted in response to the consultation were published on 11 November 2022.

The Secretary of State has now invited comments from any Interested Party on the representations received. The Secretary of State has published a submission from the Applicant dated January 2023 which sets out their response to the representations on the Application. The Secretary of State now invites any Interested Party to respond to any of the points raised in this submission. Please note that the deadline for any response is 10 February 2023.

I have several issues with Grand Union Housing Group (GUHG). As a result, I have arranged a meeting with Aileen Evans, CEO, GUHG on 2 February 2023 so that we can determine the best way to resolve the outstanding 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.

All Budget consultation feedback is being analysed and considered and will help councillors make a final decision on the budget at the West Northamptonshire Council Full Council meeting on 22 February 2023. This meeting is held in public.

West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) will not currently be pursuing plans to introduce parking charges at Northampton's Racecourse for the time being after listening to the concerns raised by residents. Parking charges at Daventry and Brixworth country parks will also be reviewed so that further options and possible solutions can be explored.

You are being invited to have your say as West Northamptonshire Council launches an eight-week consultation on the Draft West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Policy. If adopted, the draft WNC policy will replace the current policies for the former local authority areas of Daventry, Northampton, and South Northants. The consultation will be until 26 March 2023.

West Northants Council manages over 190 parks and open spaces, the majority being situated within Northampton Town. There is a feedback survey about 22 of these parks. We would like to hear about the park you visit the most. The information you provide will help us to improve our parks and open spaces and to prioritise work plans. Your responses are completely anonymous. The Consultation runs until 31 March 2023.

WNC Trading Standards Team is encouraging everyone to register all appliances in their home - whether they are new, old, or second-hand. That way, you never miss out on a safety notice & recall. It's a free and easy way to improve safety in your home.

I have been asked to provide details on how to make a request for any recorded information held by the Council. You should do so by using the online form (details can be found in my monthly report).

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.

We are reminding residents to use our network of warm spaces if they need to over the Winter period. The Council can award a Warm Welcoming Spaces Grant to support the creation and / or development of Warm Welcoming Spaces across West Northants to support residents struggling with fuel costs. These awards can be made to parish and town councils, community and voluntary organisations, registered charities and to other qualifying bodies. The funding round will be open to all applications seeking a Warm Welcoming Spaces Grant (WWSG) from the value of £500 up to £1500. More information is available on our warm spaces webpage. The grant process closes on 1 March 2023.

People living in rural areas are being urged to complete a survey on the cost of living. The Rural Services Network (RSN), in partnership with the Citizens Advice Rural Issues Group, has launched the Rural Cost of Living Household Survey to understand more about rural household budgets during what is a very difficult time for many. The survey closes on 31 March 2023.

You may like to read the report, Rural cost of living, by Kovia Consulting for the Rural Services Network (RSN), which discovered people living in rural areas are facing 'dual energy vulnerability' with costs of energy, house prices and transport higher than in other areas. RSN also discovered that rural households

spend 50% more on transport a week due to a reliance on a car. Bus routes in these areas are continuing to be cut, with a 27% decrease in bus services across England in the past 10 years. In summary, RSN concluded that rural areas are facing a triple burden of higher heating and transport costs, while also earning a lower income.

The aim of the Platinum Jubilee Village Halls Fund is to support the modernisation and improvement of village halls, so that they are fit for purpose and can provide activities which seek to achieve one or more of the following outcomes for their communities:

- 1) Improved health and/or wellbeing and/or reduction in rural loneliness,
- 2) Positive impact on the local environment, contributes towards net zero,
- 3) Support for the local rural economy,
- 4) Promotion of community cohesion.

Grants are for capital improvements only, where projects aim to either upgrade, extend or improve facilities, or where capital items need to be purchased. They cannot be used for maintenance, repair or renewal work.

The initial deadline for Stage 1 applications was 20 January 2023. The fund will re-open for Stage 1 applications in mid-February 2023. Demand on the fund will then dictate how long ACRE is able to accept Stage 1 applications.

Building Control Services is being brought back in house for all of WNC. See my Monthly Report.

Private Landowners can apply for a grant of up to £1,500 towards the cost of having fly-tipped waste cleared away and to help them establish prevention measures.

Check out the school term dates and holiday dates for 2023 in my Monthly Report.

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 shortly. 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.

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.

WNC have launched its ICN 10-year strategy. See my Monthly Report

Government has given the green light for the Oxford Cambridge Arc. The initial programme is to:

- Develop a set of propositions to attract international investment and profile the region on a global stage
- Continue the work underway to embed shared environment principles

A new energy scheme for businesses, charities, and the public sector has been confirmed, ahead of the current scheme ending in March. The new scheme will mean all eligible UK businesses and other non-

domestic energy users will receive a discount on high energy bills until 31 March 2024. This will help businesses locked into contracts signed before recent substantial falls in the wholesale price manage their costs and provide others with reassurance against the risk of prices rising again.

Find out more about the plans for the Coronation such as Big Help Out on 8 May 2023 and the Coronation Big Lunch 6-8 May 2023.

All the Best, Steve

PARISH MEETINGS, VISITS AND CASEWORK

Update on 41 Bus Service

New route Northampton - Olney - Bedford

Britannia announced the operation of a new service between Northampton and Bedford, via Olney and Lavendon on 16 January 2023 and has applied to the Traffic Commissioners for approval for the route. The 350 Northampton to Olney/Milton Keynes Bus Route is referred to on their website. Britannia is consulting local resident groups, elected officials, and others with a view to offering a partial replacement for the newly defunct 41 service operated by Stagecoach.

Britannia said, "If the consultation and regulatory application are successful, then we envisage starting early March due to the 10-week delay between application for registration and commencement."

The route will cover Northampton, Booth Lane, Brafield on the Green, Denton, Yardley Hastings, Olney and Lavendon.

Cogenhoe Village Hopper

The Cogenhoe Village Hopper covers Wollaston, Bozeat, Easton Maudit, Grendon, Whiston, Cogenhoe, Brafield on the Green, Little Houghton, Great Houghton, Northampton on Mondays to Fridays and Wellingborough on Saturday.

The Cogenhoe Village Hopper considered adding a shoppers' service to and from Denton. However, I understand from Deborah Rush, Clerk to Cogenhoe & Whiston Parish Council, that they have not gone any further with changing the Village Hopper route as it seemed pointless if a new operator is setting up.

Long term outlook for community transport in rural West Northamptonshire

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 has contacted 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. 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. This team has yet to report its findings.

Concessionary Travel

At the public meeting arranged by Olney Town Council held on 28 October 2022, attended by me and others, David Boden, Business Development Director, Stagecoach explained why they had taken the decision to effectively axe the 41 service at relatively short notice. He also said: that, typically, when a concessionary pass holder makes a "free to the user" journey, for which the full fare would be charged at, say, £3.00, Stagecoach only receives £0.80 by way of reimbursement. If this calculation is correct and the mix of full paying to concessionary paying passengers remains unchanged, then it won't matter who provides the service on this route it will be extremely unprofitable.

I have consulted the Government guidance on 'Concessionary travel for older and disabled people: guidance on reimbursing bus operators (England)'.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1121607/Reimbursement_Guidance_2023-24__ACCESSIBLE_Final_V2.pdf

The objective of reimbursement is described as "No Better, No Worse Off". The definition of which is in relation to what the situation would have been in the absence of the scheme, not in relation to last year or to the year prior to the introduction of the scheme. Indeed, European regulations prevent concessionary travel schemes being used to provide hidden subsidy (or state aid) to operators.

Operators are reimbursed based on:

TOTAL REIMBURSEMENT DUE = Revenue Forgone [R] + Net Additional costs [A].

The revenue forgone is an estimate of the revenue that would have been received in the absence of a scheme – it is therefore dependent on

The number of journeys that would have been made by concessionary travellers in the absence of a scheme. These journeys are also known as non-generated journeys: they would have happened anyway.

The fares that operators would have offered, and concessionary travellers paid in the absence of a scheme.

The recommended approach to estimate the number of journeys that would have taken place in the absence of the concession is to apply an adjustment factor – the reimbursement factor – to the number of observed concessionary journeys made using the free fare concession. The reimbursement factor depends on the sensitivity to fare changes of passengers' desire to travel by bus.

Non-generated journeys [N] = Total concessionary journeys at free fare [J] X Reimbursement factor [RF]

The Government give an example of this calculation and the net additional costs towards the end of the document referred to above.

The guidance allows for Travel Concession Authorities (TCAs) to consider making special arrangements for the reimbursement of infrequent bus services. The reason for making this provision is that concessionary passengers using infrequent bus services may not have the same incentive or opportunity to increase the number of journeys with free fares compared with a situation of no concessionary scheme as would be the case with users of more frequent bus services. The users of infrequent bus services are relatively small so do not show up in national surveys or datasets. However, such services are an important link for rural communities and can be an important part of the business of small bus operators. This guidance recommends that the definition of infrequent services is a service of once a day or less, and the same principle applies to community bus services which are eligible for the national travel concession.

In addition to the mandatory bus concession, which is administered locally by TCAs. TCAs are also able to offer discretionary concessionary travel schemes, i.e., schemes which go beyond the statutory minimum in one or more respects under the provisions of the Transport Act 1985.

In ANNEX D there is a worked example of a Reimbursement:

200 concessionary journeys are observed to be made by concessionary passholders.

Of those, 90 journeys would have been made even if passengers had to pay a full fare in the absence of the scheme. There are therefore 90 non-generated journeys for which the operator needs to be reimbursed fully (i.e., at full fare)

The reimbursement factor (RF) is $90/200 = 45\%$. These 90 journeys would have been made at an average fare of £1.50 (the average fare forgone). The revenue forgone by the operator (that she/he would have received in the absence of the scheme) is thus $45\% * 200 * £1.50 = £135$. The remainder (110) of the observed journeys are generated journeys, journeys being made because travel is free. The generation

factor is $110/200 = 55\%$ (i.e., 100%-RF). For these journeys, operators are reimbursed the additional costs they have incurred because of passengers travelling because it is free.

Total reimbursement due is the sum of the revenue forgone and additional costs: $£135+£6.71+£11 = £152.71$.

This represents an average reimbursement of $£152.71/200 = £0.76$ per observed concessionary journey.

So, in this example the Operator is receiving $£0.76$ for every concessionary fare holder, where the full fare is $£1.50$ i.e., 50.7%

In the Stagecoach example we were advised that it was only 27% of the full fare.

Then as I said earlier if this calculation is correct and the mix of full paying to concessionary paying passengers remains unchanged then it won't matter who provides the service on this route it will be extremely unprofitable.

Since gaining an understanding of the issues facing operators with this route, I have sought further clarity from West Northamptonshire Council about the background to Stagecoach's reimbursement and whether WNC as a TCA has at any time offered discretionary concessionary travel schemes, i.e., schemes which go beyond the statutory minimum in one or more respects under the provisions of the Transport Act 1985. I need to understand the reimbursement figures from Northamptonshire County Council and now West Northamptonshire Council as a Unitary on the same route.

To make this route viable for a rural community transport provider then the villages affected together with WNC need a better understanding of what needs to be done to make the route sustainable and how best to encourage take up.

Hartwell Flooding and Blocked Drains

WNC is planning to undertake works on the drain on Ashton Road week commencing 30 January. This will be to remove the tree roots in the drain and unblock the system. They are hopeful that this will alleviate the drainage issues that have been occurring on Blacksmiths Way. I will of course keep you updated in this matter.

In an emergency residents have been advised to call 0300 126 7000 between 9.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday and outside of these hours to call 01604 651074.

Comments from Interested Parties on Northampton Rail Freight Order Changes

SEGRO (Junction 15) Limited (previously Roxhill (Junction 15) Limited) ("the Applicant") dated 8 August

National Infrastructure Planning

Cymraeg FAQs Contact Sitemap
Enquiries: 0303 444 5000

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Rail Freight Interchanges:
Northampton Gateway Rail Freight Interchange Decision **Decided** Withdrawn
by Roxhill Developments Limited [Find out more about the process >](#)

i The Secretary of State has published a letter (PDF, 126 KB) inviting comments from any Interested Party on the consultation responses received in relation to the application for a Non-Material Change to the Northampton Gateway Rail Freight Interchange Development Consent Order 2019.

The deadline for any response is 10 February 2023

The Applicant's response to the consultation responses received (PDF, 323 KB) in relation to the Non-Material Change Application has been published. 27 January 2023

2022 is seeking a change to the Northampton Gateway Rail Freight Interchange Development Consent Order 2019 ("the Application"). The Application was published on 10 August 2022 and the Secretary of State initiated a consultation on the Application on the same day. The deadline for representations on the Application was 26 September 2022. The 1,094 representations submitted in response

to the consultation were published on 11 November 2022.

The Secretary of State then invited comments from any Interested Party on the representations received. The Secretary of State has published a submission from the Applicant dated January 2023 which sets out their response to the representations on the Application. The Secretary of State also invites any Interested Party to respond to any of the points raised in this submission.

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/...>

Please note that the deadline for any response is 10 February 2023.

Responses to the matters outlined in this letter should be submitted by email to:

NorthamptonGateway@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Warm Spaces Little Houghton Village Hall

I sampled the delights of the Winter Warmer facility at the Little Houghton village Hall yesterday afternoon. It has



been set up to ensure all residents have a place to keep warm this winter. A special thank you to Julia and Peter Harrison for such a warm welcome. Whilst it was very cold outside it was

warm and cosy inside.

As the weather gets colder and energy bills increase significantly for many households its a great idea to have warm safe places that you can visit. If you have a community space that can be used, please let WNC know by registering your interest: <https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx...>

The Warm Spaces Initiative was launched by West Northamptonshire Council in October and has so far seen 70 spaces open their doors to members of the public. The Council can award a grant to support the creation and / or development of Warm Welcoming Spaces across West Northants to support residents struggling with fuel costs. These awards can be made to parish and town councils, community and voluntary organisations, registered charities and to other qualifying bodies. The funding round will be open to all applications seeking a Warm Welcoming Spaces Grant (WWSG) from the value of £500 up to £1,500. More information is available on our warm spaces webpage. The grant process closes on 1 March 2023.

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

Little Houghton Village Hall, 50, Bedford Road, Little Houghton, NN7 1AB in the centre of the village is open from 2.00pm to 5.00pm every Wednesday until the end of February 2023, and there is a warm welcoming space for a chat or quiet time with refreshments available. We look forward to seeing you there.

Damaged Grit Bin Bramley Close/Orchard Way, Cogenhoe

I have escalated the problem with the damaged Grit bin on Bramley Close/Orchard Way, Cogenhoe with Fix My Street on 5 January 2023. The Cogenhoe Parish Council raised this matter on 4 January 2023. I will keep you informed regarding progress.



Cogenhoe WI plant their Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) tree

I was thrilled to be asked by Margaret Irvine on behalf of the past members of the Cogenhoe WI to help plant their Queen's



Green Canopy (QGC) tree. When the WI closed recently, they used their remaining funds to purchase a tree & plaque. Since the QGC initiative was extended to the end of March 2023, to enable people across the country the opportunity to plant trees in

memory and honour of her Majesty the Queen, it was thought fitting that the WI who at the time of the Coronation in 1952 had donated the poplar trees that you can see along the edge of the Cogenhoe Playing Fields, should plant a tree in memory of her Majesty the Queen. Before I planted the tree today, Maggie said a few words of thanks to all who had helped get the tree ready for planting. A special thank you to Deborah, Jim, Jon and Colin for helping where needed. Without their involvement, I would have had lots more to do today. Instead, I was able to help celebrate the occasion by saying a few words of thanks too. I was proud to support this initiative and I trust that this tree will bring lots of enjoyment to others in the future. Just as the Poplar trees have done since the Coronation. I closed my short speech by using a Robert Louis Stevenson quote:

“Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds you plant.”

Well done to the past members of the Cogenhoe WI.

The tree was planted on the York Avenue side of the playing field and Deborah has already added the details to the national map that includes all of the trees planted as part of the QGC scheme.

Denton Food Larder

In case you didn't know, the Denton Food Larder reopened in the Village Hall, Denton on 9 January 2023. It is now open every Monday at 5.15pm.

YHB LARDER @ DENTON



We visited it earlier this evening to see how things were progressing. Sandra Osmond and Andrea Treeby were manning the front desk and welcomed us as we arrived tonight. As word of its existence is spreading fast, it was exceptionally well attended. There was quite a long queue forming from about 5.00pm.

You can purchase 10 items for £5 and then add free bread, fruit and vegetables to your purchase. They now have a card machine too.

Community larders operate a membership programme that provides access to surplus groceries (store cupboard

and refrigerated items, fruit and vegetables) at heavily discounted rates. The food rescued is saved from landfill and helps stop food waste. The larders are run by volunteers who are committed to getting affordable food to our communities and are open to everyone.

A special thank you to all of the volunteers.

Why not come along, meet the team and find out more about how to make your money go further?

Cogenhoe Primary School

I am meeting Mrs Blackwell, Acting Headteacher at the Cogenhoe Primary School on 8 February 2023 to discuss their Road Safety Plans. Their Newsletter of 13 January 2023 included a reference to the fact that WNC had been in touch with the school to make them aware of some potentially unsafe crossing of the road. They have asked parents to be extra vigilant upon pick up and drop off ensuring that children are not running near the roads and remain accompanied by an adult.



Low Water Pressure Lodge Road/Close Little Houghton

On 14 January 2023, I spoke to Anglian Water who confirmed that the low water pressure problem in Lodge Road and Lodge Close, Little Houghton needed to be addressed by Grand Union Housing on behalf of their tenants together with the owners of private properties.



Following my conversation with Anglian Water, I sent an email to the CEO of Grand Union Housing Group (GUHG) asking them to make contact with me as soon as possible with a view to determining the best way to proceed. I have also reminded them that unless this issue was resolved within a reasonable time, I understood that it could become an enforcement matter on behalf of Anglian Water and require resolution within seven days.

Peter Harrison, agreed to be the liaison person from Little Houghton Parish Council and he co-ordinated with those affected.

As I am working on a number of matters involving GUHG, I made contact with Aileen Evans, CEO requesting a meeting so that we can determine the best way to resolve the outstanding issues. She has agreed to meet me together with Phil Hardy, Grand Union Executive Director of Operations on 2 February 2023 at their offices in Milton Keynes so that we can discuss all of my casework in Hackleton and Grange Park

On 19 January 2023, GUH were on site to make some repairs.

Then, there was further flooding in Lodge Road on 27 January 2023. Having spoken to Anglian Water they told me it was resolved the same day.

I was informed that it was unrelated to the previous problem in Lodge Close as it was the Anglian Water main at the top of Lodge Road that sprung a leak. It was like a river flowing down the road with the whole village having low pressure for a few hours.

I will keep you informed as to all actions taken and progress made with GUHG. In the meantime, please let me know if you have any current issues with GUHG.

HOMES FOR UKRAINE

New Sponsor Guides

On 16 January 2023, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) published Homes for Ukraine: sponsor guides. The Guides for sponsors on the Homes for Ukraine scheme, including eligibility criteria, how to apply as a sponsor, advice about how to make your guests welcome in the UK and ending sponsorship or re matching.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homes-for-ukraine-sponsor-guides>



CONSULTATIONS

Consultation on draft Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Policy

Residents, businesses and professional drivers are being invited to have their say as West Northamptonshire Council launches an eight-week consultation on the Draft West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Policy. If adopted, the draft WNC policy will replace the current policies for the former local authority areas of Daventry, Northampton, and South Northants.

The policy sets out the driver, vehicle and operator standards for hackney carriages and private hire vehicles for current licence holders and all new licence applicants. The consultation specifically focuses on continuing to increase standards and robust measures to ensure public safety at all times and is carried out under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

The consultation will be until 26 March 2023 and can be found online at

<https://westnorthants.citizenspace.com/.../draft-taxi...>

Once the consultation closes, all responses will be evaluated and considered. The evaluation will then be presented along with the policy to WNC's Licensing Committee for consideration before the policy is adopted and comes into force.

West Northamptonshire Parks Visitors Feedback Survey

West Northants Council manages over 190 parks and open spaces, the majority being situated within Northampton Town. This feedback survey is about 22 of these parks. Parks and open spaces provide vital opportunities for recreation, contributing to the physical and mental health of the people of West Northamptonshire as well as being important for habitats, supporting local wildlife and biodiversity.

We would like to hear about the park you visit the most. The information you provide will help us to improve our parks and open spaces and to prioritise work plans. The survey should only take 5 minutes, and your responses are completely anonymous. Please complete one questionnaire for the park you visit the most but if you'd like to comment on more than one park, please answer separately for each one.

Have your say

Please tell us your views by completing the online feedback survey using the link below.

<https://westnorthants.citizenspace.com/place/wnc-parks-visitors-survey/consultation/subpage.2022-02-25.8637773784/>

If you need assistance to complete the online questionnaire or would like a copy of it in another format (including paper, easy read or large print) you can contact us by email, post or telephone. Our contact details are as follows:

Our email address: parcs.ddc@westnorthants.gov.uk

Our postal address:

Environment, Countryside and Parks Team

West Northamptonshire Council

Lodge Road

Daventry

NN11 4FP

Our telephone: 0300 126 7000

The consultation runs until 31 March 2023.

FINANCE AND TRANSFORMATION

2023/24 Budget

People had until the end of January to have their say on the Draft 2023/24 Budget.

The draft budget featured a broad range of proposals to bridge the funding gap, including:

- Increasing fees and charges for services such as garden waste collections and car parking, aligning them with the national average to fairly reflect today's operating costs, and allowing the Council to meet the demand in critical services protecting vulnerable adults and children.
- Reviewing services to make them more efficient while saving hundreds of thousands of pounds. The proposals include reviewing the policy, processes and systems for the Home to School Transport service to reduce running costs, and the introduction of three-weekly waste collections in South Northants and some parts of Northampton, to bring the service in line with the Daventry area.
- Raising Council Tax by 4.99%, in line with the Government's allowance, generating additional funding of around £11.5 million - with 2% of the increase going towards adult social care.
- Restructuring service areas within the organisation and introducing new, more efficient ways of working to make back-office savings without impacting on how services are delivered to residents.
- Investing significant extra funding to meet the increasing demand for adult and children's services, providing more cost effective and better preventative care for vulnerable residents.



During the next financial year, we plan to carry out a capital investment programme of more than £12.2million to improve local roads, and public health funding will go to a range of schemes to improve residents' wellbeing, reducing health inequalities and support communities through this period of high

inflation. We will also continue to drive economic growth in West Northants, with further progress expected on the multi-million-pound regeneration of Northampton through the Government's Towns Fund.

The challenge of bridging the £60 million funding gap left us with some very tough decisions, so we produced a set of proposals that address the pressures we are under, while allowing us to continue to protect the most vulnerable in our society and deliver services to residents across our communities. All consultation feedback is being analysed and considered and will help councillors make a final decision on the budget at the West Northamptonshire Council Full Council meeting on 22 February 2023. This meeting is held in public.

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.

REGULATORY SERVICES

WNC Bird Flu Prevention Measures

From Tuesday 13 December you can now report dead wild birds by using an online service. It's quick & easy to do. See GOV.UK to access this service <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/report-dead-wild-birds>



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.

Register My Appliance

WNC Trading Standards Team is encouraging everyone to register all appliances in their home - whether they are new, old or second hand. That way, you never miss out on a safety notice & recall.



It's a free and easy way to improve safety in your home www.registermyappliance.org.uk/registration/

Changes to the Electoral Boundary Commission Review Dates

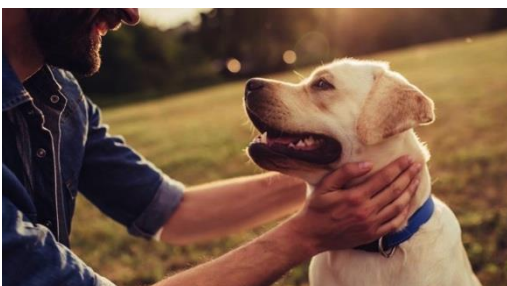
WNC has been advised of changes to the proposed consultation dates for the West Northamptonshire Electoral Boundary Review. The consultation on the Commission's ward pattern proposal was due to start on 6 February. However, due to capacity issues at the Commission, it will now start on 7 March and will run until 15 May. The Commission's final recommendations will now be published on 1 August 2023.

<https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/east-midlands/northamptonshire/west-northamptonshire>



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, as long as dog walkers

adhere to the other requirements of the PSPOs.

WNC Reconsidering Revised Parking Charges

West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) will not currently be pursuing plans to introduce parking charges at Northampton's Racecourse for the time being after listening to the concerns raised by local residents.

Parking charges at Daventry and Brixworth country parks will also be reviewed so that further options and possible solutions can be explored.



The Council will also be engaging with town centre businesses over plans to revise parking charges in Northampton town centre and working with the Business Improvement District (BID) to explore options around the future structure of parking charges.

The proposals to review parking arrangements in Northampton town centre, the Racecourse and at Daventry and Brixworth country parks form part of WNC's draft budget proposals for 2023/24, as the authority seeks ways to address a significant funding gap whilst continuing to protect and deliver vital services. Public consultation is currently under way on the draft budget and residents are encouraged to give their views before its closes next week (Tuesday, 31 January).

On 17 January 2023, Cabinet members withdrew their decision to proceed with the proposals until further work is carried out to evidence the issues involved and the Council arrives at the best range of solutions. At the meeting, members listened to concerns from residents that introducing fees at the Racecourse could exacerbate local parking problems.

As part of its draft budget for next year, WNC is also considering proposals to increase parking charges in Northampton town centre by the equivalent of around 10p an hour along with the possibility of removing the two-hour free period on Saturdays and introducing a Sunday charge. With public consultation on the budget already under way, there are also plans to engage with local business representatives to look at future options for these pricing structures.

Changes to Elections Act-Voter ID legislation update

During December, Legislation mandating voter ID for elections in Great Britain passed through the House of Lords. The voter ID provisions are due to be in place for local elections in England May 2023 and at any UK Parliamentary election held after that date. This week, DLUHC published guidance, which outlines the methodology taken to calculate the value of new burdens funding to be paid to councils to implement the introduction of voter identification and accessibility. The guidance sets out the modelling approach undertaken to estimate these costs and allocate funding to councils to support the delivery of elections and electoral registration activities. Read more about Voter ID legislation and DLUHC new burdens guidance.



Read more about Voter ID legislation and DLUHC new burdens guidance.

Food Crime

When you think of illegal activity, food crime might not be the first thing that comes to mind, but it is something that it is happening in West Northamptonshire and across the country. Food crime is where food and drink are sold illegally and is often unsafe or isn't what it claims to be. It can range from isolated acts of dishonesty by an individual to organised illegal activities planned by criminal networks and is



estimated to cost £1.17 billion a year in the UK.

There are many types of food crime, which the most common being:

- Theft - dishonestly obtaining food, drink or feed products to profit from their use or sale
- Illegal processing - slaughtering or preparing meat and related products in unapproved premises or using unauthorised techniques
- Waste diversion - illegally diverting food, drink or feed meant for disposal, back into the supply chain
- Adulteration - including a foreign substance which is not on the product's label to lower costs or fake a higher quality
- Substitution - replacing a food or ingredient with another substance that is similar but inferior
- Misrepresentation - marketing or labelling a product to wrongly portray its quality, safety, origin or freshness
- Fraud - making, using or possessing false documents with the intent to sell or market a fraudulent or substandard product.

Unfortunately, there are individuals and businesses that continue to exploit consumers by illegally selling and distributing counterfeit items which can be seriously harmful to consumers, food businesses and the wider food industry.

What to look out for:

- Food or drink, which is significantly cheaper than you would expect it to be.
- Concerns at a food business where they could be extending durability date, using poorer quality products or making false claims.
- You see food being delivered to a business in a non-business vehicle.

If you have concerns about food crime, please contact West Northamptonshire Council Environmental Health Team: environmentalhealth@westnorthants.gov.uk

To find out more information visit the National Food Crime Unit (NFCU) webpage, which is part of the Food Standards Agency: <https://www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene/food-crime>

Freedom of Information Requests

I have been asked to provide details on how to make a request for any recorded information held by the Council. You should do so by using the online form:

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/.../make-freedom...>

Alternatively, you can put your request in writing via email to datarequests@westnorthants.gov.uk or by post.

For an information request to be valid it must:

- be made in writing (typically letter, email or online form)
- include contact details (full name and contact address or email)
- describe the information being requested in enough detail to allow it to be located
- be specific enough to allow the response to be made within the Appropriate Limit and Fees Regulations (18 hours of officer time to collate, prepare and respond)



However, you do not have to mention the Act or direct your request to a designated member of staff. West Northamptonshire Council is a newly established organisation combining the former district and borough councils of Daventry, Northampton and South Northamptonshire along with Northamptonshire County Council. If your request relates to a prior district/borough council service, please indicate which geographic area your request relates to in order to help us respond promptly with the relevant information. If you do not state either the geographic area or West Northamptonshire as a whole, we reserve the right to clarify this before proceeding with your enquiry. You should then expect to receive a response within 20 working days. Only in exceptional circumstances will a request be extended and then only because of complex exemption considerations or deliberations.

RURAL SERVICES NETWORK (RSN)

Rural Cost of Living Survey

People living in rural areas are being urged to complete a survey on the cost of living. The Rural Services Network (RSN), in partnership with the Citizens Advice Rural Issues Group, has launched the Rural Cost of Living Household Survey to understand more about rural household budgets during what is a very difficult time for many.

Independent research commissioned by the RSN, in the summer last year showed rural areas are suffering more acutely from the cost-of-living crisis compared to urban areas. To lend more weight to the argument for more funding for rural areas the RSN is calling on as many rural residents as possible to complete a Rural Cost of Living Household Survey. Research has shown that those living in rural areas face extra costs and the RSN wants to explore the impacts for households. People are encouraged to help by completing the survey by the closing date of 31 March.



The results will help the RSN engage more effectively with Government Departments, MPs and other policy makers. Please help spread the word by forwarding the survey link to contacts, networks, family and friends living in rural areas.

Rural Households Survey on the Cost of Living

https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/.../Rural_Households_Cost...

Kovia Consulting Rural Cost of Living Report

You may like to read the report, Rural cost of living, by Kovia Consulting for the Rural Services Network (RSN), which discovered people living in rural areas are facing 'dual energy vulnerability' with costs of energy, house prices and transport higher than in other areas. RSN also discovered that rural households spend 50% more on transport a week due to a reliance on a car. Bus routes in these areas are continuing to be cut, with a 27% decrease in bus services across England in the past 10 years. In summary, RSN concluded that rural areas are facing a triple burden of higher heating and transport costs, while also earning a lower income. <https://rsnonline.org.uk/images/publications/rural-cost-of-living.pdf>

RSN are asking Government to overcome policy silos and develop an integrated approach that recognises the multiple forms of disadvantage rural areas face.

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.

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.

Government Consultation Document issued on reforms to NPPF

The Government's consultation document on proposed reforms to national planning policy and indicative mark-up of the NPPF arrived on 22 December 2022.

Government has begun the consultation process for key elements of the planning system. The Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: Reforms to National Planning Policy is due to close on March 02, 2023 and is now open for submissions.

It includes proposals on immediate changes to planning policy, offers proposals for how the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill should be implemented and references potential longer-term changes to national planning policy.

The consultation document lists 58 questions and it's 32 pages long and it closes 3 March 2023. This new document includes the actual proposed wording of the revised NPPF itself. The changes are easy to spot, for instance:

1. watering down of the paragraph 11 (d) tilted balance and of the requirements on local planning authorities to



- maintain an adequate housing supply and meet housing delivery targets
2. watering down of the local plan “soundness” test
 3. references to the standard method as only an “advisory starting point “
 4. express references to the needs for retirement housing, housing with care and care homes
 5. References to “beauty” and a weirdly specific passage extolling the virtues of mansard roofs
 6. “Green Belt boundaries are not required to be reviewed and altered if this would be the only means of meeting the objectively assessed need for housing over the plan period “
 7. Changes in relation to climate change and renewable energy
 8. “The availability of agricultural land used for food production should be considered, alongside the other policies in this Framework, when deciding what sites are most appropriate for development “.
 9. Important transitional arrangements in paragraph 225 and 226

But what is being consulted upon does not stop at the proposed changes to the NPPF but also covers various other longer - term aspects of the reform agenda.

The re-construction of the system is going to be underway for some years. An indicative timeline:

- Consultation closes: 3 March 2023
- Government response to consultation and publication of revised NPPF: Spring 2023
- Changes to take effect that are being consulted upon in the current document as to:
 - Increasing the emphasis on provision of social rented housing
 - More older people’s housing
 - More small sites for small builders
 - Greater emphasis on the role that community-led development can have in supporting the provision of more locally led affordable homes
 - Consultation on proposed changes to the rest of the NPPF and on more detailed policy options and proposals for National Development Management Policies (supported by environmental assessments), once the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill is passed through all its Parliamentary stages: from Spring 2023 Three further measures to be introduced, via changes to the NPPF to encourage developers to build out “as soon as possible”:
 - We will publish data on developers of sites over a certain size in cases where they fail to build out according to their commitments.
 - Developers will be required to explain how they propose to increase the diversity of housing tenures to maximise a development scheme’s absorption rate (which is the rate at which homes are sold or occupied).
 - The National Planning Policy Framework will highlight that delivery can be a material consideration in planning applications. This could mean that applications with trajectories that propose a slow delivery rate may be refused in certain circumstances.”

There will be “a separate consultation on proposals to introduce a financial penalty against developers who are building out too slowly”.

Changes to the soundness test will apply to local plans, which have not reached pre-submission consultation stage within 3 months of the revised NPPF: summer 2023

Further updates to the NPPF: later in 2023

Whilst flexibility as to the use of the standard method will be in place from Spring 2023 as part of the revised NPPF, there will be a review of standard method for calculating local housing need, once 2021 census is published: 2024 (NB “It remains our intention to publish the 2022 Housing Delivery Test results. However, given our proposed changes and consultation on the workings of the Housing Delivery Test, we would like to receive views on whether the test’s consequences should follow from the publication of the 2022 Test or if they should be amended, suspended until the publication of the 2023 Housing Delivery Test, or frozen to reflect the 2021 Housing Delivery Test results while work continues on our proposals to improve it. We will take a decision on the approach to the Housing Delivery Test and the implementation of any the proposed changes in due course, once we have analysed consultation responses”).

Implementation of the LURB plan-making reforms: late 2024

Transitional arrangements will mean that for the purposes of decision-making, “where emerging local plans have been submitted for examination or where they have been subject to a Regulation 18 or 19 consultation which included both a policies map and proposed allocations towards meeting housing need, those authorities will benefit from a reduced housing land supply requirement. This will be a requirement to demonstrate a 4-year supply of land for housing, instead of the usual 5: two-year transitional period, so until Spring 2025

Deadline of 30 June 2025 for plan makers to “submit their local plans, neighbourhood plans, minerals and waste plans, and spatial development strategies for independent examination under the existing legal framework; this will mean that existing legal requirements and duties, for example the Duty to Cooperate, will still apply.

We are also proposing that all independent examinations of local plans, minerals and waste plans and spatial development strategies must be concluded, with plans adopted, by 31 December 2026. These plans will be examined under the current legislation.”

Latest date for any old-style local and minerals and waste plans to be adopted (or in the case of Strategic Development Strategies, published): April 2027

Latest date when LPAs must begin the new style plan-making process (if their previous plan was adopted on 31 December 2026): 31 December 2031

Changes to National Planning Policy on Onshore Wind Development

The government will consult on proposed changes to national planning policy on onshore wind development to explore how local communities can show support. The government commits to launching a technical consultation to explore how local authorities demonstrate local support and respond to views of their communities when considering onshore wind development in England. Decisions on onshore wind sites will continue to be made at a local level as these are best made by local representatives who know their areas best and are democratically accountable to the local community. To deliver a more localist approach, and its commitments in the British Energy Security Strategy, the government will consult on proposed changes to national planning policy. Under the proposals, planning permission would be dependent on a project being able to demonstrate local support and satisfactorily address any impacts identified by the local



community. Local authorities would also have to demonstrate their support for certain areas as being suitable for onshore wind, moving away from rigid requirements for sites to be designated in local plans. Today's announcement builds on previous Government action to make sure local communities are at the heart of decisions on onshore wind. Changes introduced in 2016 that made local councils responsible for onshore wind applications, instead of the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project regime, will remain in place.

The Government will make sure strong environmental protections first brought in by the Government in 2015 remain, so that valued landscapes such as National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Green Belt are protected. The government will also seek views on developing local partnerships for supportive communities, so that those who wish to host new onshore wind infrastructure can benefit from doing so, such as through lower energy bills. New digital engagement techniques during the planning process will ensure people across the local community can continue to make their views known. The government will also consider how the planning system can support communities to have a say on the necessary infrastructure to connect wind farms to the grid and encourage the upgrading of existing wind farm sites.

The government will be inviting views from local authorities, communities and businesses. The technical consultation on changes to the National Planning Policy Framework was launched on 22 December 2022 and it will be concluded by the end of April 2023.

Sustainable Drainage Systems Mandatory for new developments

A consistent approach to sustainable drainage systems is set to be incorporated into new developments in England. The recommendation to make sustainable drainage systems mandatory to new developments in England is the result of the Government's review – published this week.



This will reduce the risk of surface water flooding, pollution and help alleviate the pressures on our traditional drainage and sewerage systems. The Government will now devise regulations and processes for the creation of sustainable drainage systems at new developments through the implementation of Schedule 3 to the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and will hold a public consultation later this year. Implementation of the new approach is expected during 2024.

Building Control Services Back in House

Plans are progressing to bring Building Control services back in-house to West Northants Council from the



beginning of April 2023. Back in 2015 the Building Control function for the former Daventry District Council was transferred to a shared service with Warwick and Rugby Councils.

Following the establishment of West Northants Council, work has been ongoing with partners, officers and stakeholders to bring this service back in house to enable a single consistent service to be provided across the whole of West Northants. These plans are well underway and are now nearing completion, as part of this work we are in the process of recruiting for new colleagues to join the new structure.

WNC will continue to keep you updated on the progress of this work and I anticipate that contact details and more information about the service will be shared during February.

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/.../building-control...>

HOUSING

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 was 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.

Funding for Landowners to prevent Fly Tipping

Landowners across West Northamptonshire can apply for funding to clear and prevent fly-tipping on their land under a scheme delivered by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.



When fly-tipping takes place on public land, the taxpayer pays for the removal and disposal of the waste. However, if a fly-tip occurs on private land, the landowner pays for the clean up and removal.

The scheme was initially launched as a pilot last year by Stephen Mold, the Police, Fire, and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire (PFCC), and was extended in October 2022 for a further 12 months.

Private landowners are able to apply for a grant of up to £1,500 towards the cost of having the fly-tipped waste cleared away and to support them in establishing prevention measures, which will make the land less vulnerable to fly-tippers in the future. Funding is only available for private landowners.

West Northamptonshire Council is committed to tackling fly-tipping and deterring people from blighting communities. The Council's Cleaner Communities campaign aims to provide guidance on how people can ensure they only use licensed waste removal companies, highlight when people have been prosecuted for fly-tipping, and gather intelligence on dumped waste to lead to a prosecution.

Apply for a grant to remove fly-tipping on private land:

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/.../funding-remove-fly...>

Find out how you can support West Northamptonshire's campaign to create Cleaner Communities

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/cleaner-communities>

Fly-tipping in the countryside costs £1 billion every year

Countryfile reports that fly-tipping and illegal dumping in the countryside is costing £1 billion every year, as a recent report by MPs accuses DEFRA and the Environment Agency (EA) of making slow and piecemeal progress in tackling the “antisocial, polluting and costly impacts” of waste crime.



Figures from 2020/21 show that in England alone there were 1.13 million cases of fly-tipping a year (a rise of 16% on the previous year) and just under two-thirds involved household waste. But only around a quarter of waste crime gets reported and there is still no strategy for achieving the Government’s target of eliminating it by 2043.

According to the House of Commons cross-party public accounts committee report, the cost-of-living crisis is potentially increasing incentives for people to get rid of waste inappropriately.

Full article:

Countryfile - John Craven: Countryside waste crime has reached crisis point

<https://www.countryfile.com/.../john-craven-countryside.../>

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

My Appointment to Daventry and South Northants LAP (DSN4)

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.

Finding your way around this Local Insight profile ¹		
<small>• Introduction: Page 6 for an introduction to this report.</small>		
Population <small>See pages 14-15 for more information on population by age and gender, ethnicity, country of birth, language, migration, household composition and religion.</small>	There are 54,818 people living in DSN4 ¹ <small>See pages 14-15 for more information on population by age and gender, ethnicity, country of birth, language, migration, household composition and religion.</small>	Education & skills <small>See pages 46-48 for more information on qualifications, post attainment and early years educational progress.</small>
Vulnerable groups <small>See pages 19-22 for more information on children in poverty, people out of work, people in hospital beds, disability, pensioners and other vulnerable groups.</small>	9% of children aged 0-19 are in relative low-income families in DSN4 compared with 19% across England ¹	Economy <small>See pages 49-51 for more information on people's jobs, job opportunities, income and start businesses.</small>
Housing <small>See pages 56-59 for more information on housing types, housing tenure, affordability, overcrowding, age of housing and communal establishments.</small>	2% of households lack central heating in DSN4 compared with 3% across England ¹	Access & transport <small>See pages 58-60 for more information on transport, distance services and digital services.</small>
Crime & safety <small>See pages 66-68 for more information on recorded crime and crime rates.</small>	The overall crime rate is lower than the average across England ¹	Communities & environment <small>See pages 69-80 for more information on neighbourhood satisfaction, the types of neighbourhoods locally, local participation and the environment, or pollution.</small>
Health & wellbeing <small>See pages 86-88 for more information on linked long-term illness, life expectancy and mental, general health and healthy lifestyles.</small>	14% of people have a limiting long-term illness in DSN4 compared with 18% across England ¹	Appendix A <small>Page 81 for information on the geographies used in this report, publication dates for new releases and acknowledgements.</small>

We met with the Private Housing Sector Team on Tuesday 7 February 2 – 3 pm at the Forum. We discussed the priorities for The Hub and how best to tackle social isolation. James Gillespie-Allan, Head of Public Engagement for the ICS attended the DSN Health & Wellbeing Forum on 7th February. He is setting up a central (countywide) repository to collect all the public engagement feedback from all partners (e.g., statutory and VCSE) into one place and then start to run reports on the data which will be useful for us to use.

Integrated Care Northamptonshire 10 Year Strategy

This week, WNC launched its Integrated Care Northamptonshire (ICN) 10-year strategy to support people in Northamptonshire. This strategy has been developed by NHS providers, local councils, voluntary and community organisations and other partners, with a focus on enabling residents to benefit from equitable opportunities to live their best life, whoever they are and wherever they live in the county.



ICN's work to develop this strategy shows the commitment from organisations to improve outcomes for residents in Northamptonshire and deliver change through shared working and community involvement. As we move forward, plans are under way to engage and involve our local communities with the delivery of the strategy, to ensure the voice of our

people remains at the centre of all we do.

Our new Local Area Partnerships (LAPS), representing neighbourhoods and localities of between 30,000 and 50,000 people across the county, will give a voice to residents, involving them in new services and solutions for their local area. This will be guided by a Community Engagement Framework (CEF), which sets a blueprint for how we will engage with the public. The launch of this strategy is a really exciting time for the people of Northamptonshire. It is truly collaborative and showcases the commitment from health, local authorities, VCSE and community organisations to improve health and wellbeing outcomes at all stages of a person's life. We know the strategy is ambitious, however by working together in this way we believe we can make a positive difference and bring needed change to help people live their best lives. The steps we take next are important to help us meet our shared ambitions and aims, and community feedback will be essential.

You can view the Strategy in full here

<https://www.icnorthamptonshire.org.uk/icp#IntegratedCareNorthamptonshireStrategy2023-IntegratedCareNorthamptonshireStrategy2023>

Warm Spaces in West Northamptonshire

We are reminding residents to use our network of warm spaces if they need to over the Winter period.

WNC has worked with partners to establish a network of over 70 Warm Spaces, where people can enjoy a warm, safe, welcoming space in which to stay cosy, meet others, and perhaps enjoy a hot meal or a cup of tea and a biscuit. The centres are open to everyone and include libraries, community centres, community hubs and



other places. Some venues will also offer hot drinks, activities, and other services such as free Wi-Fi. The Council can award a Warm Welcoming Spaces Grant to support the creation and / or development of Warm Welcoming Spaces across West Northants to support residents struggling with fuel costs. These awards can be made to parish and town councils, community and voluntary organisations, registered charities and to other qualifying bodies. The funding round will be open to all applications seeking a Warm Welcoming Spaces Grant (WWSG) from the value of £500 up to £1,500. More information is available on our warm spaces webpage.

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...>

Suspending Hospital Visiting

From Thursday 29 December, Northampton and Kettering General Hospitals are suspending visiting for adult inpatient wards and are asking patients and any visitors to the hospital to wear a mask, due to a significant increase in COVID and flu infections.

These measures aim to reduce infection risk to vulnerable patients, prevent the spread of infections and help to prevent staff absences.

Read more here: <https://bit.ly/3i4dqNo>

Integrated Care Northamptonshire



Action for Asperger's AGM & Annual Conference 2023

Action for Asperger's AGM & Annual Conference 2023 will be held on Saturday, 22nd April 2023.

Venue: Priors Hall Park Community Centre 1st Floor, Corby, NN17 5EB

Time: 11:00am - 14:30pm

Details: No booking necessary – simply turn up – all welcome – seats allocated (80-100) on a first come basis. Free lunch provided.

Winter Wellbeing

As we enter 2023, it is a time to reflect on the year we have had with many of us, making goals or setting achievements for the New Year – whether it be to stop smoking, achieving your healthy weight, moving more, or improving your mental wellbeing. These are all important factors for you to live a healthier you in 2023. If you are motivated to achieve one of the above or more, but are not sure where to start, then West Northamptonshire Council Public Health Team have several services that are on hand to help you.



Stop smoking service

With support, you are three times more likely to quit smoking for good and the West Northamptonshire Stop Smoking Service is here to help you achieve just that. The service offers a 12-week programme of telephone support, as well as e-cigarettes, 12-week supply of e-liquid and nicotine replacement therapy sent straight to your door at no cost to you. The health benefits to quitting smoking are well known, however an often-overlooked benefit, is the positive impact it can have financially. The average cost of a pack of premium cigarettes now totals £12.71 and smokers in Northamptonshire spend on average £1,945 per year on the habit. The increase in the cost-of-living has made many of us reflect on what we spend our money on, and try to determine what we can, or cannot, live without. For smokers, starting the New Year with a goal to stop smoking could ease some of the financial pressure too.

So, start your New Year smoke free with the help of our stop smoking service and get in touch today to find the right tools and support for you.

If you live in West Northamptonshire, call us on 0300 126 5700 or visit us at:

www.westnorthants.gov.uk/stopsmoking

Weight management service

The West Northamptonshire Council Public Health Weight Management Service offers a free 12-week course to help you meet your goal with in-person and online options for you to choose from, such as Slimming World, Northampton Town Football Club, Trilogy Active, Northampton Saints (Shred7) or ShapeUp4Life Digital programmes available. To be eligible for the service you must be 18 years old or over, live in Northamptonshire, have a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 28 or above, not be pregnant and not have been a paying member of a weight management service in the last 3 months. For more information about the weight management service or to find out if you are eligible, please visit:

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/keepin.../weight-management>



There is support and advice on hand to help you if you are feeling low in mood, struggling with your mental health or need some friendly advice.

West Northamptonshire Council has created a 'Winter Wellbeing Webpage' which brings together local advice, top tips and guidance so you have all the information you need, in one place, to stay safe and healthy over this winter period:

www.westnorthants.gov.uk/winter-wellbeing

EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

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...>

Are you thinking about Holiday Dates in 2023?

According to West Northamptonshire Council, these are the term dates and holiday dates for 2023:

Spring term 2023

Tuesday 3 January to Friday 31 March

Bank holiday: Monday 2 January

- Half term holiday: Monday 13 February to Friday 17 February

Easter holiday: Monday 3 April to Friday 14 April

Summer term 2023

Monday 17 April to Friday 21 July

- Bank holiday: Monday 1 May

- Half term holiday: Monday 29 May to Friday 2 June

- Summer holiday: Monday 24 July to Thursday 31 August



Autumn term 2023

Monday 4 September to Wednesday 20 December

- Half term holiday: Monday 23 October to Friday 27 October

- Christmas holiday: Thursday 21 December to Wednesday 3 January 2024

Cost of living boost for students

Students in need are to benefit from additional financial support designed to ease cost of living pressures and help them to meet everyday costs whilst they are completing their studies. In recognition of the challenges some students have faced due to the global rise in inflation, the government has announced that it will provide an additional £15 million in hardship funding this financial year so that universities can provide extra support to students that need it most.



It builds on the £261 million that the government has already provided to the Office for Students (OfS) for the 2022/23 academic year which universities can draw upon to boost their own hardship funds. Universities are responsible for ensuring students who need help get the support they need, including through their own hardship funds, or through bursaries and scholarships.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & GRANT FUNDING

Vulcan Works is Gearing Up to Open its Doors

The new £14 million hub for creative businesses at the Vulcan Works is gearing up to open its doors. Vulcan Works has been created by transforming a Grade II listed ironworks factory in the heart of Northampton's Cultural Quarter into a space that will support start-up businesses in the creative industries through the provision of lettable office space, workshops, meeting rooms and co-working spaces.

WNC and Southeast Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP), who facilitated a Local Growth Fund contribution of £6.3 million, together with £3.06 million from the European Regional Development Fund, have funded the construction and refurbishment works.

Vulcan Works has already attracted lots of interest from prospective tenants and viewings have been planned for the New Year. Key stakeholders joined representatives from WNC for a first look in August once construction was completed. This was followed in September by the announcement that Oxford Innovation Space would take over as the management company for the new hub.



Since Oxford Innovation Space started managing Vulcan Works in September, work has progressed, and support staff and local suppliers are currently being appointed with a view to Vulcan Works officially opening in February 2023.

Among the newest recruits are Commercial Manager Kelly Boosey, Centre Manager Garrick Hurter and Assistant Centre Manager Gail Haddon. It is estimated that Vulcan Works will support around 150 start-up businesses in its first 10 years, creating around 500 jobs in the area. The centre has also pledged to work with local contractors and agencies, ploughing more money back into the local economy.

We are thrilled with how Vulcan Works has turned out. The space has been finished to an exceptionally high standard, whilst retaining a number of period features which provide a nod to our local history here in Northampton. The project is really gaining momentum now and is close to opening its doors.

As part of the Vulcan Works' unique offer, Oxford Innovation Space will also provide access to a programme of workshops, seminars, 1:1 coaching and networking.

To find out more about Vulcan Works, request a show around or be added to the invitation list for an Open Day, email info@vulcanworks.co.uk

Queens Award for International Trade

In April 2022 Diamond Hard Surfaces Ltd at Caswell Park near Towcester won the International Trade category in the prestigious Queen's Awards.



On Wednesday, 18 January 2023, the Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire, James Saunders Watson Esq, presented the award to the firm.

He said: "The late Queen reigned through a period which saw giant leaps in technology, so it is fitting that in her last year she recognised a small local company making international waves with its cutting-edge technology."

Employing six people, Diamond Hard Surfaces Ltd was established in 2004 and produces high performance, high endurance diamond-based engineering materials and coatings for advanced engineering markets such as aerospace and electronics.

Chris H Walker, Director and CEO of the company who has led the business from start up to production said "We are thrilled to receive this incredible accolade and we want to inspire as many local businesses as possible to enter these awards.

"West Northamptonshire has thousands of fantastic businesses that are all worthy of this prestigious award; we are so proud to have won and we look forward to growing our business even more."

Netwalks Pilot Scheme

Small Business Britain and BT are delighted to be launching a 'Netwalks' pilot across the UK.

Do you want to spark connections and opportunities with other local businesses or just take a break? Maybe you are seeking to boost innovation or simply break some of the isolation many small business owners face and talk to others who are travelling a similar path?



Run by local small business leaders, each Netwalk will bring small business owners together, with a gentle, hour-long group stroll finishing with drinks at a local café.

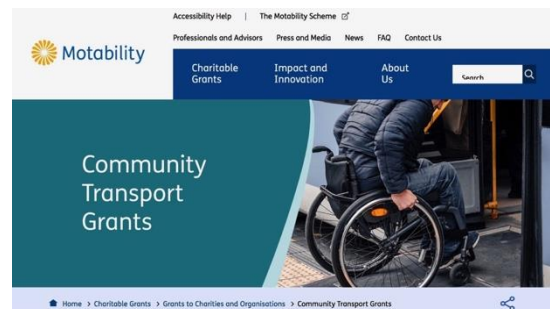
These Netwalks are aimed at being as accessible as possible. If you can't join the walk or would prefer to join for coffee and cake at the end instead, that is absolutely fine. Let us know on sign up any access requirements you have, and we will accommodate everyone.

Upcoming Netwalk: Leighton Buzzard 10.30am, 6th February Rushmere Park, LU7 0EB

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.

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>

Defra Support for Farmers

Defra is increasing money available for farmers and land managers. On the 5th of January, Minister Mark Spencer gave a speech at the Oxford Farming Conference, in which he announced more support for farmers through these difficult times of rising costs.

<https://www.gov.uk/.../government-to-pay-more-to-farmers...>

They are updating payment rates for both Countryside Stewardship revenue options and capital items from the start of this year. They are also introducing a new Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) 'management payment'. In addition to the money already available through the SFI, Defra will pay up to £1,000 for the first 50 hectares to cover the costs farmers incur when entering the scheme.



The payment will benefit all farmers in SFI, but it will particularly benefit smaller farms (up to 50 hectares).

Defra state this is one of a series of actions announced to help farmers face challenges in the current economic climate, including increasing the frequency of Basic Payment Scheme payments to help with cashflow and introducing measures to help limit fertiliser costs this year.

Defra suggests there is something available for everyone in their package of environmental land management schemes and one-off grants. They would encourage all farmers to look closely at what's on offer so they can find what works best for their business. The Farmers' union, NFU, welcomed the rise but warned it could be "too little too late" in the economic climate.

The announcement comes amid rises in the cost of food production, with farmers hit particularly hard by increases in the cost of animal feed, fertilizers and fuel. The increased rates under ELMS will come from existing money, reallocated from the previous direct payment subsidies given to farmers under the EU scheme. NFU vice president David Exwood said it was still unclear what work farmers - who will be losing direct payments - would actually be paid for under ELMS.

<https://www.gov.uk/.../government-to-pay-more-to-farmers...>

Oxford Cambridge Arc

Proposals for a locally led partnership for the Oxford to Cambridge Arc have been given the green light by



the government. The partnership, which includes Northamptonshire, will champion the region as a world leader of innovation and business, acting to achieve environmentally sustainable and inclusive growth. It

will strengthen the cross-boundary collaboration among its partners to focus on tackling the issues that matter to the people who live and work in the region.

The partnership's initial programme is to:

- Develop a set of propositions to attract international investment and profile the region on a global stage
- Continue the work underway to embed shared environment principles

West Northants is right at the heart of the arc and WNC wants to make sure it plays a key role in helping shape its future, to the benefit of its residents.

Following the official commitment from government, the Partnership will begin active recruitment of an independent Chair. In the interim, a Shadow Board has been set up to oversee the Partnership's programme and agree governance and funding.

Small Grant Programme (older people) – Charles Hayward Foundation

Grants are available up to £7,000 for charities with an annual income of less than £350,000.

This programme wishes to fund preventative and early intervention programmes being delivered at the community level, which allow older people to stay in their own homes and remain independent. They are particularly interested in seeking out programmes, which show some creativity in improving the quality of life of older people.



- Programmes aiming to alleviate isolation and depression in older people, including informal day care or social, physical and recreational activities.
- Programmes, which give practical help, assistance and support for older people living in their own homes.
- Programmes addressing the emotional and practical needs of older carers.
- Programmes designed to meet the specific needs of people with dementia.

Applications will be considered every three months (March, June, September and December).

<http://www.charleshaywardfoundation.org.uk/older-people/>

Specialist Grant Programme – Lloyds Bank Foundation

The focus of this programme is to support small, local, specialist charities with an income of £25,000–£500,000 where the Foundation's three-year unrestricted £75,000 grant and support to develop,



can make the greatest impact. They'll support charities that understand the complexity of the issues people face and are best placed to make a genuine difference to people's lives.

Grants are available up to £75,000 and three years. The deadline for applications is 3 March 2023.

A New Energy Discount Scheme for Businesses, Charities and the Public Sector

A new energy scheme for businesses, charities, and the public sector has been confirmed, ahead of the current scheme ending in March. The new scheme will mean all eligible UK businesses and other non-domestic energy users will receive a discount on high energy bills until 31 March 2024. This will help businesses locked into contracts signed before recent substantial falls in the wholesale price manage their costs and provide others with reassurance against the risk of prices rising again.



The new scheme therefore strikes a balance between supporting businesses over the next 12 months and limiting taxpayer's exposure to volatile energy markets, with a cap set at £5.5 billion. This provides long term certainty for businesses and reflects how the scale of the challenge has changed since September last year.

Northampton Market moves to Commercial Street Car Park on an interim basis

Northampton Market will open for business on the Commercial Street carpark on Tuesday, 31 January while its permanent home receives a multi-million- pound makeover.

Only a seven-minute walk from the Market Square, the temporary home for the Market in Commercial Street is connected to the St Peters Way carpark providing easy access and visibility for the Market.

To help encourage people to visit the new location, visitors who spend £5 or more at one market stall throughout February 2023 will be eligible for one hour's free car parking at Commercial St Car Park.



All they will need to do is redeem a QR code from the stall holder, and scan this on the barrier upon exiting the car park.

WNC looked at a range of alternative locations for the Market to continue trading while these essential works take place, and Commercial Street Car Park provided the only viable and accessible option in Northampton town centre. When traders return to the Market Square, they will have 18 high-quality and bespoke fixed stalls which are larger and more structured, along with a number of pop-up stalls. The Market Square revamp also includes an interactive water feature, seating, lighting, and improvement of the cobbled surfaces. When people think of Northampton, we want then to think of a bustling square filled with sounds and smells of a vibrant market, and this revamp will deliver that.

But it's a big change and that's why WNC are appealing to everyone, especially those who haven't been to the market for a while, to get down to Commercial Street, see what they have to offer, enjoy their great produce and genuine service and support them through this transition. WNC hopes the hour's free parking offer will help encourage people to support our market traders, and we will measure this to see how it influences shopper behaviour, as well as continuing to consider other ideas to attract customers.

Northampton Market is open Tuesday to Saturday throughout the year. To find out more about the progress of the work on the Market Square, people can follow the council's Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn accounts, or sign up the WNC e-Newsletter.

Councillor Stephen Clarke
Member for Hackleton and Grange Park
West Northamptonshire Council
stephen.clarke@westnorthants.gov.uk

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/.../sign-our-e-newsletter>

Platinum Jubilee Village Halls Fund

Platinum Jubilee Village Halls Fund – Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs and Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE)



About ACRE ▾ What we do ▾ Who we work with ▾ Our vision for rural communities ▾ In your area News ▾

Find ACRE in your county

Donate



The aim of the Platinum Jubilee Village Halls Fund is to support the modernisation and improvement of village halls, so that they are fit for purpose and can provide activities which seek to achieve one or more of the following outcomes for their communities:

- 1) Improved health and/or wellbeing and/or reduction in rural loneliness,
- 2) Positive impact on the local environment, contributes towards net zero,
- 3) Support for the local rural economy,
- 4) Promotion of community cohesion.

Grants are for capital improvements only, where projects aim to either upgrade, extend or improve facilities, or where capital items need to be purchased. They cannot be used for maintenance, repair or renewal work.

The initial deadline for Stage 1 applications was 20 January 2023. The fund will re-open for Stage 1 applications in mid-February 2023. Demand on the fund will then dictate how long ACRE is able to accept Stage 1 applications.

TRANSPORT & HIGHWAYS

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.

Department of Transport £2 Single Fare Promotion

Many bus fares across West Northamptonshire will be reduced for the first three months of 2023 as part of the Government’s scheme to provide more affordable public transport at a time when many are impacted by the cost of the living crisis. Operators including Stagecoach and Uno are

capping single fares at £2 from the start of next year until the end of the March. This will mean a reduction of more than 60 per cent in the cost of the fare on the longest routes. The scheme seeks to get more people to travel by buses and helps to reduce emissions by taking an estimated 2 million cars off the roads during this period.



The bus operators who have confirmed they are participating in the scheme across West Northamptonshire so far are:

- Arriva the Shires
- Cogenhoe & Whiston Parish Council Village Hopper
- Stagecoach East, Midlands and West
- Uno Bus

A5 Safety Improvement Works

National Highways will be carrying out safety improvement works to the A5 near Paulerspury, starting on 14th February until the beginning of March 2023 between the hours of 8pm and 6am Monday to Friday. Details enclosed.

The image shows a notification from National Highways regarding 'AS Gray's Lane Pury Road Safety Improvements'. It states that the work is scheduled to start on 14th February 2023 and is scheduled for completion by the beginning of March 2023. The work includes resurfacing the A5 mainline, installing enhanced high friction surfacing and road markings, and replacing existing signs with new signs and sign bases. The notification also includes contact information for National Highways and a link to the project page.

POLICE FIRE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

New CCTV in Blackthorn and Bellinge

Work has begun to improve safety and security in Blackthorn, Northampton following funding from the Government’s Safer Streets fund.



A new CCTV camera is set to be installed in Spinneyside Walk, just behind Kirton Close, which has been a hot spot for anti-social behaviour and criminal activity.

West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) was awarded £99,000 of funding to improve safety in two areas of Northampton by installing new lighting, introducing more CCTV and creating activities to engage young people and divert them from criminal activity.

Blackthorn and Bellinge have disproportionately high crime levels and part of this is due to the prevalence of alleyways, underpasses and deprivation.

Future plans for the areas include:

- Re-instating CCTV in Blackthorn and Bellinge (three cameras in each around the shop areas)
- Improvements, including improved lighting, in some of the underpasses
- Youth provision for Bellinge

Stephen Mold, the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, said: "Improving and extending CCTV coverage in Blackthorn will help to deter crime and anti-social behaviour, and make it a place where residents can feel safer.

"We have seen first-hand how more than £3 million of Safer Street funding has improved lives for residents across Northamptonshire, and I look forward to continuing our partnership with West Northamptonshire Council to ensure safety continues to be enhanced in public areas."

Operation Revive

An operation which has been successful in the north of the county for two years is coming to Northampton and officers are asking for help and community intelligence to help it on its way. Operation Revive was launched in Wellingborough at the beginning of 2021 in response to an increase in violence across the town, tackling the problem not only by arresting offenders, but by working with partners to divert young people away from crime and safeguard the vulnerable from being exploited.

As a result of this activity, the north of the county has seen a decline in the number of crimes associated with drugs, gangs and serious violence, community intelligence has increased significantly, and safeguarding activity is up by 180%.

Now, the same operation is being launched in Northampton led by the Neighbourhood Policing Team and activity will focus on:

- Identifying the offenders responsible for the majority of serious violence and drug dealing in key areas of Northampton and working to bring them to justice
- Taking enforcement action against these people through warrants and civil injunctions
- Diverting people on the periphery of crime to partners including CIRV (Community Initiative to Reduce Violence) and the ACE (Advisory Centre for Education) team to prevent them from falling further into criminality
- Identifying vulnerable people at risk of exploitation, modern slavery and cuckooing, and protecting them
- Identifying the areas which have high numbers of anti-social behaviour and motorcycle nuisance



and tackling them

- Giving the community the confidence in being able to pass information and intelligence onto us without fear.

This is a great opportunity for partner agencies to work together with the community to tackle crime, protect vulnerable people and help improve the local area for our residents. The Council has recently invested in projects around the Town Centre, such as making our Nighttime Economy safer, that will not only improve the area but also crack down on crime hotspots. We look forward to working closely with all partners throughout this operation.

To contact the officers working on Op Revive with your community intelligence, please call 101 or email OpReviveNorthampton@northants.police.uk

CULTURE, HERITAGE & SPORT

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.



Consultation on Coronation Licencing Laws

Government proposes extension to licencing hours for the Coronation. Pub licencing hours are set to be extended under proposals published by the government to mark His Majesty the King and Her Majesty the Queen Consort's Coronation. The consultation will propose extending licensing hours from 11:00pm to 1:00 am from Friday 5 to Sunday 7 May in pubs, clubs and bars in England and Wales.



Armed Forces Covenant supporting Warm Spaces



Warm Spaces across West Northamptonshire have been issued with an Armed Forces Resource Pack, thanks to our Armed Forces Covenant. The pack includes information, guidance and contact details for a range of Armed Forces support partners across Northamptonshire, including the Department for Work and Pensions, Veterans Community Network, SSAFA (Soldiers', Sailors' & Airmen's

Families Association) and Project Nova, to name just a few. We would like to thank Town and Parish Councils, which have come forward to provide Warm Spaces, offering safe and welcoming places where people in West Northamptonshire can come together to stay warm, and perhaps enjoy a hot meal or a cup of tea and a biscuit. Members of the Armed Forces community in need of some advice – or anyone else who would benefit from a Warm Space - can find out more details on the locations and opening times of our Warm Spaces using the directory on our website. For more information on the support available to the Armed Forces Community in Northamptonshire, please contact Covenant.NCC@westnorthants.gov.uk

Town and Parish Councils, and any Community or voluntary organisations who would like to receive one of the resource packs, are also encouraged to email the team.

Armed Forces Community Hubs

Details of the Armed Forces Community Hubs for January 2023 are as follows:

Thursday 19 January, 2pm to 3:30pm at Kettering Library (Sheep Street, Kettering, NN16 0AY)

Please note that there are currently no public toilet facilities at Kettering Library. Why not support one of our local businesses by popping to the independent café across the street for a coffee and to use the facilities.

Friday 20 January, 12:30pm to 3pm at Weston Favell Library (Weston Favell Centre, Northampton, NN3 8JZ)
This hub is run in partnership with the West Northants Council Customer Service team.

Monday 30 January, 1pm to 2:30pm at Northampton General Hospital (Northampton, NN1 5BD)
You can find us in the main building, near to the Costa Coffee and M&S.



Holocaust Memorial Day

Our Council will mark Holocaust Memorial Day on Friday, 27 January, as we remember the millions of people murdered during the Holocaust, under Nazi persecution and in the genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. The theme of the event this year is 'Ordinary People', highlighting that those who are persecuted have committed no crime, but are persecuted simply because they are ordinary people who belong to a particular group. To mark the day community groups and dignitaries will come together for a ceremony at the Guildhall in Northampton from 1pm to 2.30pm. Residents are invited to commemorate the day through a minute of silence at 11am.



Acclaimed Sculptor reunited with her pottery

A Northampton sculptor has been reunited with one of her rare creations after decades apart, thanks to the Technique Exhibition at Northampton Museum and Art Gallery. Wendy Hoare, an internationally acclaimed sculptor and ceramic artist, who lives in the town,



produced large one-off pieces of pottery throughout her career, which were sold around the globe. As a professional member of the Craft Potters Guild, an association of top potters where a 'recognisable style' was a pre-requisite of membership, she was well known for her particularly beautiful large designs, often purchased for the gardens of stately homes.

Her work was inspired by the rhythm, power and grace of all natural forms with wide and varied influences including the earthenware of ancient Greece and Egypt along with 20th Century sculpture, medieval and renaissance art.

Wendy had a studio in her garden at Billing Road, Northampton and was a member of The Northampton Guild of Designers and Craftsmen.

Now at the age of 79, Wendy has kept just one of the pots she so skilfully created over decades of work, and despite still being celebrated on the social media platforms Pinterest and Flickr, she is no longer producing work due to limited mobility. However, serendipity stepped in when a friend who was visiting the Technique exhibition at Northampton Museum and Art Gallery spotted a large pot with Wendy's name next to it.

International Women's Day

Have you nominated an inspirational woman for our awards yet?

Tell us about someone who inspires you at <http://ow.ly/4ezY50MA2Cj>

Nominations close on Monday, 6 February, with the awards presented at the International Women's Day event at the Guildhall on Saturday 4 March.



Coronation Big Lunch 6-8 May 2023

Get your Pack for the Coronation Big Lunch May 2023.

Big Help Out 5 May 2023

Find out about the Big Help Out on 8 May <https://thebighelpout.org.uk/>



6-8

2023.

Find out More about the Plans for the Coronation

On 21 January, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport announced a programme to celebrate the Coronation of His Majesty the King and Her Majesty the Queen Consort. The Coronation will take place on the morning of 6 May at Westminster Abbey, London, and will be conducted by the Archbishop of Canterbury.



On 7 May, a Coronation Concert at Windsor Castle will showcase the country's diverse cultural heritage in music, theatre and dance. One of the highlights of the concert will be "Lighting up the Nation", in which iconic locations across the UK will be lit up with projections, lasers, drone displays and illuminations. Throughout the UK, Coronation Big Lunches will bring communities together on 7 May. Street parties

will also take place across the weekend. The weekend of celebrations will end with the Big Help Out on 8 May, which will highlight the impact of volunteering. This will encourage people to get involved with activities run by local community groups, organisations and charities. Organisations already signed up include The Scouts, Royal Voluntary Service, National Trust and RNLI. Find out more about plans for the Coronation

<https://www.royal.uk/coronation-weekend-plans-announced?fbclid=IwAR3tI9jUED13ArKIEB79FpzqMktt0MIAxoWwwavYUofTpok06KHoXSrEzk>