

MONTHLY NEWS REPORT MAY 2023



E-Newsletter Issue 5/2023
A new Coat of Arms
granted to West Northamptonshire Council
at the Annual Council meeting
on 18 May 2023

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NEWS REPORT MAY 2023

Monthly Highlights

Due to more visa applications being approved, further hosts are needed as new arrivals from Ukraine are looking to make West Northamptonshire their temporary home.

On Sunday 4th June 2023, Stagecoach East will be making changes to the 41 service within the Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire network. This has been the result of considerable influence being exerted on Milton Keynes Council by Councillor Deborah Whitworth supported by others and me. The importance of this transport link for the communities who live alongside the A428 between Bedford and Northampton cannot be underestimated. It is a lifeline to those who have no other form of transport. Many of you have spoken out at various events about the need for this important service to be reinstated. Thank you to all of you who have played a part in achieving these changes. So, lets see what we can do to market and encourage an increase in bus patronage along this route so that we can secure it for the foreseeable future.

Kier intends to carry out carriageway resurfacing works along the A428 through Yardley Hastings. To undertake this work safely the road needs to be closed with the initial patching works due to commence on the 14 June until the 27 June at off peak times. The closure and diversion can be viewed on one network.

Look out for the following live WNC Consultations:

- West Northamptonshire Parks Visitor's Feedback survey closes 30 June 2023.
- The Home to School Transport Consultation closes at the end of May 2023.
- The deadline for the Short Breaks for Children with Disabilities closes on 29 May 2023.
- The Sexual Health Services Survey closes on 11 June 2023.
- The deadline for comments on Healthwatch Northamptonshire closes on 18 June 2023.

Families with schoolchildren experiencing hardship across West Northamptonshire will receive a voucher to support them with food costs during the May half-term holiday. A Grant was provided by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) will be distributing over £187,000 in vouchers to help up to 12,500 of the most vulnerable families with the ongoing cost of living challenges. WNC's Cabinet will meet on 13 June 2023 to determine the best use of Household Support Fund 4 within the scope set out by government over the next 9 months, which will support struggling residents and deliver better outcomes as part of its anti-poverty strategy.

A new Coat of Arms for West Northamptonshire was unveiled on 18 May 2023 at the Annual Council meeting to officially symbolise and celebrate civic pride across our area. The heraldic design has been officially granted to West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) and will promote the new authority area, which was created on 1 April 2021 as part of the biggest reorganisation of local government in the county for nearly 50 years.

Local assets such as sports clubs, music venues and historical buildings will be able to apply for government funding as part of the third round of the Community Ownership Fund, with £150 million worth of allocations available.

A survey of rural households out today by the Rural Services Network (RSN) shows that more than 75% of respondents say that their financial situation has got worse over the last year. Find out more in my Monthly Report

From June, two new committees will determine planning applications across West Northamptonshire, as our Council continues to work to improve planning services. Since vesting we have operated three Local Area Planning Committees, covering the former Daventry District, South Northamptonshire and Northampton Borough council areas.

Proposals to abolish those committees and replace them with two new committees – one covering the north of West Northants, and one for the south – were agreed at Annual Council on Thursday 19 May. The Strategic Planning committee will remain unchanged.

The Planning Committee – North will be composed of eleven members and be constituted to deal with planning applications falling within the following wards:

Braunston & Crick, Brixworth, Moulton, Long Buckby, Daventry West, Daventry East, Woodford & Weedon, Duston West & St Crispin, Duston East, Dallington Spencer, Abington & Phippsville, Kingsthorpe North, Kingsthorpe South, Boothville & Parklands, Headlands, Talavera and Billing & Rectory Farm;

The Planning Committee – South will be composed of eleven members and be constituted to deal with planning applications falling within the following wards:

Bugbrooke, Towcester & Roade, Hackleton & Grange Park, Silverstone, Deanshanger, Middleton Cheney, Brackley, St George, Sixfields, East Hunsbury & Shelfleys, Delapre & Rushmere, Castle, Riverside Park and Nene Valley.

At the Annual Meeting of Council, 18 May 2023 I was appointed as Chairman of the West Northamptonshire Council Planning Committee South.

It's clear that all our residents do a fantastic job by recycling, with about half of all household waste being recycled each year. To help ensure that the right stuff, goes in the right bin – we have created a series of videos to help reduce contamination and improve these recycling rates.

To help people with cost-of-living pressures and save on everyday travel costs, the government will continue to cap single bus fares at £2 outside London until the end of October 2023 and then at £2.50 until 30 November 2024 –when the government will review their effectiveness and future bus fares.

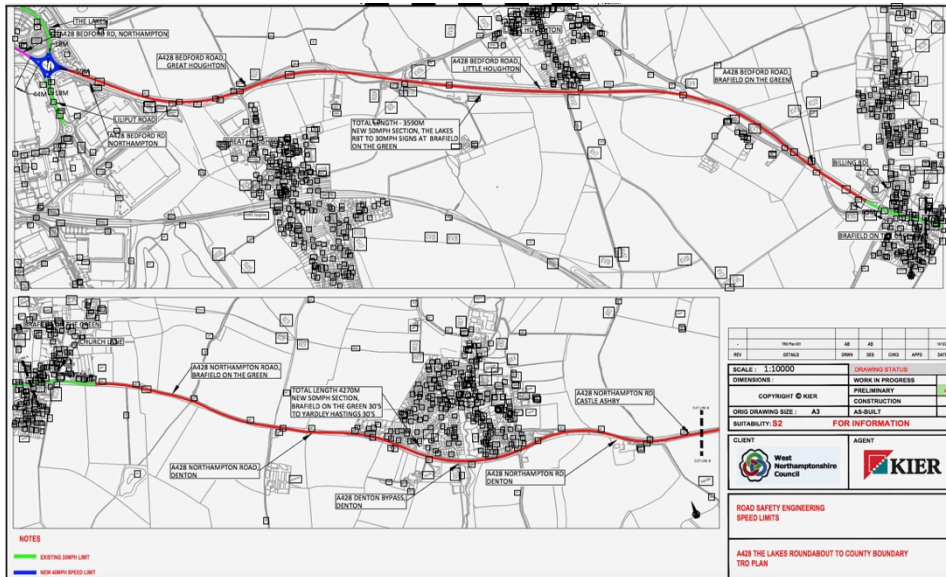
The Virtual Wellbeing Festival 2023 (VWBF23) is taking place from Monday 3 to Friday 7 July 2023.

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 in my Monthly Report.

All the Best, Steve

PARISH MEETINGS, VISITS AND CASEWORK

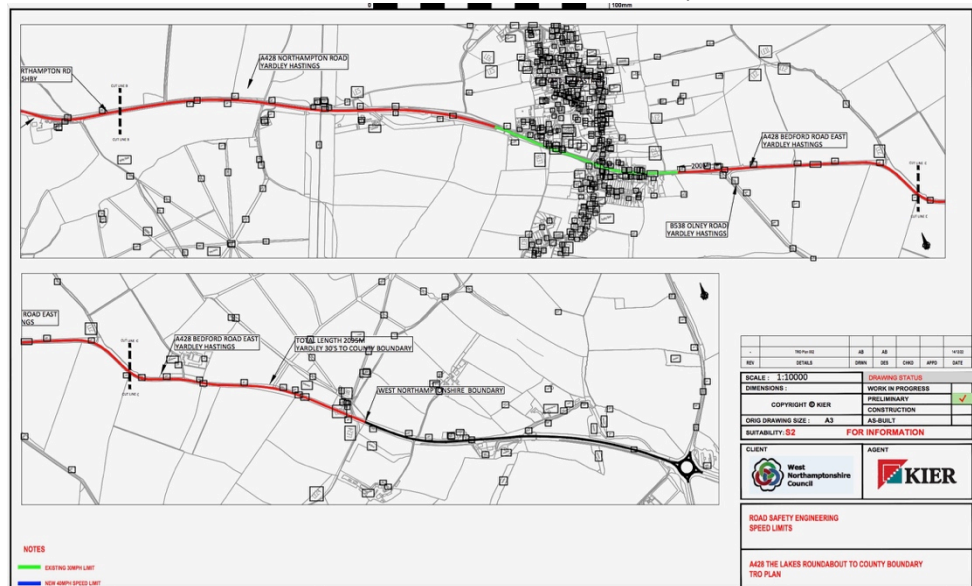
Reduction of Speed Limit on the A428



Many of you have written to me expressing your concerns about the numbers of accidents, some fatal that have taken place over the years on the A428 through Northamptonshire. Over the last two years, I have worked on the need to reduce the speed limit on the A428 from Brackmills to Yardley Hastings. The first hurdle was to provide evidence and then convince members

of the Road Safety Panel of the need for a change to the speed limit on this stretch of road. Agreement was reached last year, and I was advised of the Council's intention to reduce the speed limit between The

Lakes Roundabout, Northampton & the West Northamptonshire Boundary. On 2 March 2023, WNC finally wrote to several interested parties informing them of proposals to introduce a 40mph speed limit Order on Bedford Road, Northampton and a 50mph speed limit on A428 Northampton Road, through Great Houghton, Little Houghton, Brafield on the Green, Denton, Castle Ashby, and Yardley Hastings. The existing 30 mph stretches through Brafield on the Green and Yardley Hastings remain unchanged. The proposals have been put forward for maintaining safety and have been agreed through the Speed Limit Review Panel. The consultation closed on 23 March, and I can confirm that no objections were raised during the statutory consultation phase of the process. I await confirmation that the changes to the speed limit on the A428 went out to Public Consultation on 20th April.



Thank you to all those residents who provided evidence of the need to make these changes and supported me with this campaign from the outset.

Changes to the 41 Bus Service

On Sunday 4th June 2023, Stagecoach East will be making changes to the 41 service within the Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire network. This has been the result of considerable influence being exerted on Milton Keynes Council by Councillor Deborah Whitworth supported by others and me. The importance of this transport link for the communities who live alongside the A428 between Bedford and Northampton cannot be underestimated. It is a lifeline to those who have no other form of transport. Many of you have spoken out at various events about the need for this important service to be reinstated. Thank you to all of you who have played a part in achieving these changes. Rural areas, like urban areas, should be able to plan bus networks that meet people's needs. If bus patronage is going to grow, the bus user must be prioritised, whether that bus user is in a city or in the countryside. Rural local authorities need to have a range of options for creating high quality networks in their areas including the pooling of existing bus funding.



Rural areas have a lot of different transport services commissioned and run by different bodies: social services, education, health, youth service etc. If these were brought together, better rural transport services could be provided with no extra cost. I want to see more authorities co-ordinating their transport services and funding, and the Government promoting this through local area agreements.

In the meantime, as Councillor Debbie Whitworth and others say you will need to use the 41 service or it will be lost. So, lets see what we can do to market and encourage an increase in bus patronage along this route so that we can secure it for the foreseeable future.

Stagecoach published the changes to the 41 service on 18 May. The link and timetable information is as follows:

<https://www.stagecoachbus.com/service-updates/serviceupdatesarticle?SituationId=ID-18/05/2023-14:18:59:593>

<https://tison-maps-stagecoachbus.s3.amazonaws.com/...>

Northampton Concert Band Cogenhoe 22 April 2023

On 22 April 2022, I attended the Northampton Concert Band event at St Peter's Church Cogenhoe. It was very well attended with wide support from the local community. Thank you to those who organised such a great evening.

Graham Tear, Musical Director, conducted the band and led us through a series of English Musical Icons for St Georges Day.

Greensleeves

www.traditionalmusic.co



The Northampton Concert Band has a huge library of music from which they put together almost any type of concert or musical event. The evening started with the English Composer, William Walton then we heard from Nigel Hess and the March Barnes-Wallis. Afterwards we delved into English Eccentricity with a piece from Derek Bourgeois, which was described as a 'Waltz with a Limp'.

We were then entertained with Gustov Holtz and the last movement in F of Greensleeves. But the next tune Barwick Green which is a "maypole dance" from the suite My Native Heath written in 1924 by the

Yorkshire composer Arthur Wood, the unmistakable theme tune for The Archers since the very first episode, was no surprise to us.

We had a melody of tunes from Phantom of the Opera, Andrew Lloyd Webber and with the Coronation being topical we enjoyed a Coronation March from George VI's Coronation on May 12 1937. This was followed by the theme tune from Keeping up Appearances by Nick Ingman.

Our next English Composer was Gilbert Vintner, who wrote Hunter's Moon for horn and orchestra. John Burden – for whom it was written – in Torquay in 1942, premiered this piece. We were told that Hunters Moon was just the name of Gilbert's local pub he frequented whilst playing with the RAF Central Band.



We then celebrated Shakespeare's Birthday, with Nigel Hess. Who whilst Music Director and House Composer for the Royal Shakespeare Company, wrote music for over twenty productions. Hess has taken music from three works to form a 12-minute suite



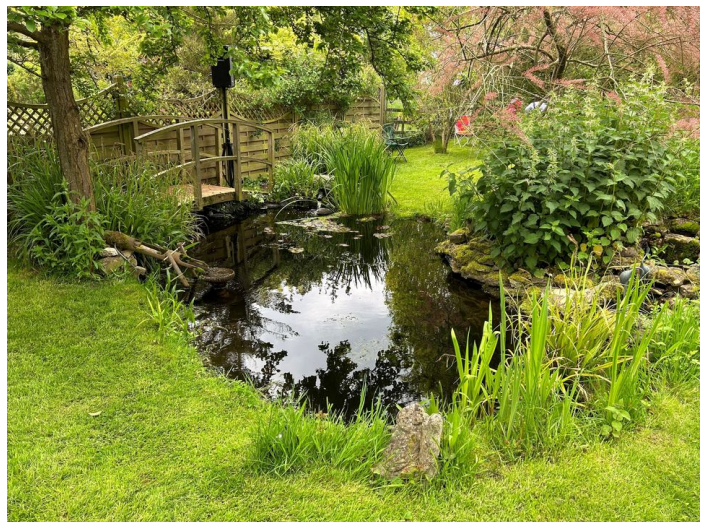
called Shakespeare Pictures. It begins with the boisterous overture to Much Ado About Nothing, followed by a contrasting slow movement depicting the beautiful statue from A Winter's Tale before displaying huge pomp from Caesar's Rome with The Entry to the Senate. We were entertained with the Much Ado About Nothing overture followed by Caesar's Rome and his entry into the Senate, which was full of surprises.

Our evening ended with memories of Jerusalem and the WI together with Edward Elgar: Pomp and Circumstance March No. 1 in D major, 'Land of Hope and Glory' at the BBC Proms.

During the evening we had two wonderful soloists on the Trumpet and the French Horn. As the evening came to a close we had a rousing encore of Land of Hope and Glory and we were invited to experience another Northampton Concert Band event on 25 June in Abington Park, Northampton.

Brafield on the Green Open Gardens 14 May 2023

On Sunday 14 May 2023, I attended the Brafield on the Green Open Gardens. I started at the Brafield Club, paid my entrance fee, collected my map of the open gardens, and had some refreshments before setting out across the village. My first port of call was Number 3, which was a tranquil haven for wildlife-with a pond, area of woodland, meadow, and lawns with shrubs. Then it was on to Number 5, a medium sized country garden, which has been designed for easy maintenance with large tubs with mixed planting as well as borders and ponds.



Then I visited Number 6 which was a much-loved garden consisting of lawns and borders of informal planting and a huge sycamore tree, surrounding a house built in part of the Old Parsonage grounds, locally known as the Wilderness. Afterwards, I followed the route marked on the map for a stroll around the village. As well as the gardens there were village allotments to visit and the village pond. It was a lovely sunny afternoon, and I enjoyed my time in Brafield on the Green. A special thank you to all who opened their gardens for charity.

Group Eight perform Blithe Spirit by Noel Coward

On 28 April 2023, I went to Hackleton Village Hall to see Group Eight perform Blithe Spirit by Noel Coward. Blithe Spirit was first performed in London's West End in 1941 during the Second World War. The story is about a Novelist Charles Condomine who invites the eccentric medium Madame Arcati to his house to conduct a séance, after which his life is completely changed. Alan Campbell, Group Eight Chair introduced the play and welcomed us to their Spring Play. He then told us that 2023 was an exciting year for them as it is Group Eight's 50th Anniversary. Look out for their Cabaret on 8th and 9th September and their 2023 Panto on 7th, 8th, and 9th December.

There were many funny lines along the way and a few missing ones too. But it was a great evening and special thanks should go to the cast, crew, and the front of house team. Group Eight is a well-kept secret in Hackleton and deserves our support.

Coffee Morning at St Margaret's Church, Denton

On Friday 19 May 2023, I attended the Coffee Morning at St Margaret's Church, Denton. It is just one of the West Northants Warm Spaces and it has become a popular spot for local residents to meet each other in the village.

It was the first time, I had joined everyone since the Coronation of King Charles III and I was delighted to see the beautifully decorated telephone box completed by a group of very talented ladies called the 'Crafty Sew and Sews', who meet in the Church at 2.00pm on a Thursday.



Farewell to Revd Eddie and Jenny Smith

On 15 May 2023 the attendees at Cogenhoe Community Lunch said Farewell to Revd Eddie and Jenny Smith who are both leaving the four churches in the Wymersley Benefice for pastures new. They are moving to King's Cliffe Rectory, where Eddie will be licensed as Vicar to five rural parishes at the North of the county and become Rural Dean of Oundle on 18 June. Jenny will be retiring from her Brackley and Banbury roles on 2nd June, as it is too far to commute.



As a special thank you, the Cogenhoe Community Lunch gave them a great Afternoon Tea send off and thanked them both for their support to the village of Cogenhoe and wished them both all the very best for the future. So, it was an emotional lunch followed by a Quiz about ecclesiastical names for church artefacts. Eddie got all the answers correct and surprisingly, I did too. Things like where would you find the Reredos or what's a Thurible? No access to the Internet allowed.

Good Bye to Revd Eddie and Jenny and in the words of William Shakespeare:

'Farewell—God knows when we shall meet again!

Legal position on any predetermination discussions about Planning Applications

As the Chairman of the South Northamptonshire Local Area Planning Committee, I may be involved in the decision making for any subsequent planning application. Section 25 of the Localism Act 2011 provides that a decision maker is not to be taken to have had, or appeared to have had, a closed mind when making the decision just because:

- (a) The decision maker had previously done anything that directly or indirectly indicated what view the decision maker took, or would or might take, in relation to a matter; and

(b) The matter was relevant to the decision.

This provision does not change the law on bias and pre-determination which means that Committee Members must still take planning decisions with an open mind and having considered all relevant material planning considerations. The safest course is for Committee Members to avoid making public statements (including expressing views in emails) as to their support for or opposition to any application, which would indicate they had made up their minds before the formal consideration of the application at the meeting. If a Committee Member has made such a statement, they must be satisfied that they can still consider the application with an open mind and are prepared to consider any new matters or any new arguments in favour of or against the proposed development until the decision is made otherwise, they should not take part in any decision on the application in question.

On the grounds of the above, it would not be appropriate for me to attend Parish Council or Community events which seek to take a decision regarding the outcome of a planning application as I must keep an open mind on this matter so as not to preclude me from participating in any future planning decisions.

HOMES FOR UKRAINE

Are you interested in becoming a host for Ukraine Scheme?

WNC is currently looking for new hosts to help support Ukrainian guests whose original accommodation has not worked out, or where their original hosts, due to changes in their personal circumstances, are unable to continue to offer the use of their home.

Due to more visa applications being approved, further hosts are needed as new arrivals are looking to make West Northamptonshire their temporary home.

If you need any further information, please contact WNC on resettlement@westnorthants.gov.uk

Before you complete this questionnaire, please read the Homes for Ukraine privacy policy, which will tell you how the information you give us, will be managed.

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/service-privacy-notice/homes-ukraine-scheme-privacy-notice>



CONSULTATIONS

West Northamptonshire Parks Visitors Feedback Survey

West Northants Council manages over 160 parks and open spaces. 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 know your thoughts on certain major parks that exist in West Northamptonshire. If you would like to comment on more than one park, please complete a separate survey form. The Consultation closes 30 June 2023

Don't Forget Home to School Transport Consultation

The Home to School Transport Deadline for comments is the End of May. People are being encouraged to give their views on proposed changes to Home to School Transport services for children up to the age of 16 across West Northamptonshire. The review of the service seeks to ensure it is delivered in line with other local councils and at a reasonable cost, by tackling challenges including increasing demand and rising operating costs. It also explores opportunities for a more flexible, environmentally friendly service that increases choices for parents and better supports the independence of young people. We have produced some Frequently Asked Questions on our website to help you. <https://westnorthants.citizenspace.com/.../home-to-school...>



More information on Home to School Transport can also be found on the School travel assistance webpage <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/school-travel-assistance>

Short Breaks for Children with Disabilities

Short Breaks for children with disabilities Deadline for comments: 29 May.

Residents can have their say on the future shape of services providing 'short-breaks' for children with disabilities in Northamptonshire. The breaks offer young people with disabilities rich opportunities while allowing their carers to have a break. Northamptonshire Children's Trust and the NHS Northamptonshire Integrated Care Board fund a range of different services to provide these breaks. Having worked with parents and practitioners the organisations have developed a potential new model for the services and are looking for feedback on this before going any further. Have your say on the Short Breaks consultation, which closes on 29 May 2023.



Sexual Health Services

North Northamptonshire Council and West Northamptonshire Council Public Health teams are undertaking a Sexual Health Needs Assessment. We need you to help us improve sexual health in Northamptonshire and shape sexual health services. If you are 13, or older, please share your views by completing our survey to help us better understand your experiences, concerns and perceptions of sexual health and services in your local area. This survey closes 11 June 2023.

Commissioning of Healthwatch

Commissioning of Healthwatch Northamptonshire, Deadline for comments: 18 June. West and North Northamptonshire Councils would like to understand how you feel about local Healthwatch - an independent consumer champion for people who use health and social care services. The two councils are re-commissioning Northamptonshire's Healthwatch services, with the new service being live from 1 November 2023. They would like to hear views to help explore and shape how Healthwatch in Northamptonshire will look in the future. Complete the Healthwatch consultation 'Have your say' via our Consultation Hub.

FINANCE AND TRANSFORMATION

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.

If you are a Council Tenant, you can access the following link for Cost-of-Living Support.

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



Meal Vouchers to be issued ahead of May Half Term

12,500 families to receive meal vouchers ahead of May half term: Cost of living-2

Families with schoolchildren experiencing hardship across West Northamptonshire will receive a voucher to support them with food costs during the May half-term holiday. Provided by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) will be distributing over £187,000 in vouchers to help up to 12,500 of the most vulnerable families with the on going cost of living challenges.

Schools and those who are home educated have been contacted about the plans to issue the £15 (per week and per student) vouchers ahead of the half-term break, from week beginning 22 May. They can be used in supermarkets and must be used by the redeem date given.



The vouchers are the first step towards distributing £5,199,257 that has been allocated to the Council by the DWP in the fourth round of its Household Support Fund (HSF4). WNC's Cabinet will meet on 13 June 2023 to determine the best use of HSF4 within the scope set out by government over the next 9 months, which will support struggling residents and deliver better outcomes as part of its anti-poverty strategy. Residents are encouraged to look out for further information on the support packages

that will be available in the coming weeks. For more information on cost of living support please visit www.westnorthants.gov.uk/cost-of-living or call 0300 126 7000 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm).

REGULATORY SERVICES

New Coat of Arms for West Northamptonshire Council

A new Coat of Arms for West Northamptonshire was unveiled on 18 May 2023 at the Annual Council meeting to officially symbolise and celebrate civic pride across our area. The heraldic design has been officially granted to West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) and will promote the new authority area, which was created on 1 April 2021 as part of the biggest reorganisation of local government in the county for nearly 50 years. In line with strict royal tradition and procedure, the Coat of Arms has been hand-drawn and granted to West Northamptonshire Council by the College of Arms, a centuries-old



authority, which acts for the Crown on all official heraldic matters. In a highly traditional process that has taken nearly two years to complete, the Arms have been granted by the Kings of Arms, the three senior Officers of Arms, who act on behalf of the Crown and were subject to the approval of the Earl Marshal, who has overall responsibility for the College of Arms within the Royal Household.

The design has been specially drawn to reflect and represent West Northamptonshire's proud history and heritage, taking elements from the Coats of Arms of the former Northampton Borough, Daventry and South Northants districts and county.

Key elements of the Coat of Arms include the following:

- A Golden Lion, taken from the arms of Northampton, with a scallop shell on its foot in reference to the arms of the Spencer family who have owned Althorp for 500 years
- A Black Bull, from the county council arms, signifying Edward IV's historic marriage at Grafton, with

an iron collar representing agriculture, leatherwork and shoemaking and a horseshoe at its foot in reference to the area's history of metalworking, horseracing at Towcester and horsepower of the motorcars at Silverstone.

- A crest featuring a white castle from the arms of Northampton, on a ring of red roses symbolising county history and wheat sheaves representing the area's many rural settlements and agricultural heritage
- The shield features four traditional rose symbols of Northamptonshire representing Daventry, Brackley, Towcester and Northampton, wheat sheaf for agricultural heritage and a lion's face in allusion to the lions in the respective arms of Northampton and South Northants and the common seal of Brackley. Lines across the shield represent Watling Street (straight) and Grand Union Canal (wavy).
- The green and gold, considered interchangeable in heraldry, also reflect the colours used by the previous district and borough authorities alongside the traditional county red rose of Northamptonshire.

Find out more about WNC Coat of Arms on our website. <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/your-council/coat-arms>

RURAL SERVICES NETWORK (RSN)

Community Ownership Fund

Local assets such as sports clubs, music venues and historical buildings will be able to apply for government funding as part of the third round of the Community Ownership Fund, with £150 million worth of allocations available. Thanks to changes to the way the funding is delivered, it is now easier for the control



of prized assets to be seized back by community groups.

This will help with the strengthening and levelling up of local communities, whilst also restoring optimism, hope and pride. The changes see the requirements for match funding being reduced, making the process of acquiring assets without private funding easier.

Parish Councils are also now able to apply for the fund, with it previously only being available to charities and community groups.

More than 100 projects around the country are being supported by the fund

You can read about the Government's announcement at this link: <https://www.gov.uk/.../community-ownership-fund-prospectus>

Rural Households Survey 19 May 2023

A survey of rural households by the Rural Services Network (RSN) shows that more than 75% of respondents say that their financial situation has got worse over the last year. The RSN, which represents rural councils and other rural service providers, conducted the survey with the Rural Issues Group of Citizens Advice to better gauge the impact of the cost of living crisis on households in rural areas across England.

Responses to the online household survey were received from a staggering 6,780 rural residents in a clear demonstration of the severity of the situation. Headline findings of the survey showed:

After paying for essentials, two thirds of respondents are in households with a little income left over for other things. However, a fifth of respondents live either in households with no income left over, or in households where the essentials alone exceed their income. These essentials included rent or mortgage, food and drink, essential car or travel costs and childcare.

Rural residents are cutting back on spending across the board and this is especially true for low-income households where notable examples are reduced spending on home heating (90%) and visits to hospitality venues (91% of such households).

The survey highlighted concerning findings where rural households cited ways they are trying to save on home heating costs, such as wearing more clothing, sitting underneath blankets or duvets, running heating for shorter periods and living in fewer rooms. Some describe how the constant cold is affecting their physical health or mental wellbeing.

The survey followed initial research commissioned by the RSN last year, (Rural Cost of Living Emergency) which found that rural communities were facing a triple blow in the cost of living crisis, as higher domestic and transport energy poverty, coupled with lower wages, pushes rural areas into a cost of living emergency. The survey echoed these findings, with rural residents citing ways that they were trying to save on car running costs, such as dropping non-essential journeys, making fewer visits to family or friends and planning multi-purpose journeys. Some describe how this has left them feeling socially isolated. Rural residents often rely on their car for journeys due to a lack of public transport and this creates an additional burden on household's finances as a result.

The Government must overcome policy silos and develop an integrated strategy that recognises the multiple forms of disadvantage rural areas face. We need targeted measures to tackle the low wage levels and reliance on seasonal employment in rural areas along with support to ensure that rural houses can become more energy efficient to help get families out of fuel poverty. Many rural homes, which are off the gas network, are more difficult and costly to heat and insulate.

We are concerned that the situation for rural communities will only get worse, especially with interest rates rising, and without action, our rural communities risk being left isolated and vulnerable.

<https://www.rsonline.org.uk/.../Rural-Cost-Living.pdf>



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:

Determined or Cancelled:

- 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.
- WNS/2022/0904/MAO Manor Oak Homes, Outline application for sixty-seven homes, Land at Stratford Road Deanshanger-Withdrawn
- WNS/2021/0450/MAF Barwood Homes, fifty-two new dwellings with associated open spaces, roads, and drainage infrastructure. Land South of The Wharf, Bugbrooke, Northamptonshire-Hearing-Dismissed

Outstanding:

- S/2021/0448/PIP Development of 4 - 6 custom/self-build dwellings, Land East of Main Road Middleton Cheney- written Representations
- WNS/2021/1858/E Solar Farm, Milton Road, Gayton Inquiry 4 Days 23/05/2023
- WNS/2022/0557/EIA Construction of a solar farm and battery stations together with all associated works, equipment, and necessary infrastructure Land at Halse Road, south of Greatworth, Northamptonshire Inquiry 3 Days 06/06/2023
- S/2020/2083/FUL 5 New Houses, Greenway, Eastcote-Written Reps.
- WNS/2022/0071/MAO Outline for 32 dwellings on Land off Blenheim Rise, Kings Sutton Hearing 2 Days 13/06/2023

Two New Planning Committees from June 2023

From June 2023, two new committees will determine planning applications across West Northamptonshire, as our Council continues work to improve planning services. Since vesting we have operated three Local Area Planning Committees, covering the former Daventry District, South Northamptonshire and Northampton Borough council areas.

Proposals to abolish those committees and replace them with two new committees – one covering the north of West Northants, and one for the south – were agreed at Annual Council on Thursday 19 May. The Strategic Planning committee will remain unchanged.

The Planning Committee – North

It will be composed of eleven members and be constituted to deal with planning applications falling within the following wards:

Braunston & Crick, Brixworth, Moulton, Long Buckby, Daventry West, Daventry East, Woodford & Weedon, Duston West & St Crispin, Duston East, Dallington Spencer, Abington & Phippsville, Kingsthorpe North, Kingsthorpe South, Boothville & Parklands, Headlands, Talavera and Billing & Rectory Farm;

The Planning Committee – South

It will be composed of eleven members and be constituted to deal with planning applications falling within the following wards:

Bugbrooke, Towcester & Roade, Hackleton & Grange Park, Silverstone, Deanshanger, Middleton Cheney, Brackley, St George, Sixfields, East Hunsbury & Shelfleys, Delapre & Rushmere, Castle, Riverside Park and Nene Valley.

At the Annual Meeting of Council, 18 May 2023 I was appointed as Chairman of the West Northamptonshire Council Planning Committee South.

These changes form part of our response to the review by the Planning Advisory Service and seek to ensure that our planning function is effective, reflects good practice and supports our duties. It will enable us to continue to improve our planning services for residents and partners. We will be able to make decisions more quickly and improve our communications with residents by live streaming meetings, enabling them to watch from anywhere. It forms part of our wider planned improvements to the planning service, which has already seen us implement a new planning portal for Daventry, Towcester and Brackley areas – with Northampton to follow this summer.

All documents for applications in the South Northants area and Northampton area are available online for viewing.



As part of these planned improvements, work has been on going to implement a new centralised IT platform, which will see one system available across West Northants. This is being delivered in two phases, with the Daventry and South Northants areas moving onto the new system in April, and the Northampton area being available from June.

HOUSING

Landlord Fined £115,181 on 20 April 2023

A landlord has been fined a total of £115,181 for offences under the Housing Act 2004, following a number of complaints received. West Northamptonshire Council's (WNC) Private Sector Housing Team inspected the four properties in March 2020 under a housing warrant after complaints were raised



over noise concerns, fly-tipping and waste accumulations. It was found that all four properties were unlicensed houses in multiple occupation and that each had significant defects.

During the sentencing, which took place on Thursday 20 April at Northampton Magistrates Court, the District Judge stated that the tenants were vulnerable and there was reasonable expectation that the landlord would provide a safe home. In this case, without the intervention of the Council nothing would have been done to improve living conditions for the tenants.

The landlord was ordered to pay the following:

- £100,000 fine
- £15,000 contribution to the Council
- £181 statutory victim surcharge

ENVIRONMENT

Energy Efficiency Upgrades

Low-income off- gas households across West Northamptonshire will soon benefit from energy efficiency upgrades and clean heating systems funding, following the successful £82,313,888 Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 funding bid secured by Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Consortium of which West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) is a member.

The grant funds energy efficiency upgrades and clean heating systems in low-income households, targeting the most inefficient off-gas grid heated homes, to tackle fuel poverty and progress towards the UK's 2050 Net Zero commitment.

Eligible households must either be situated in a pre-qualified postcode area (Indices of Multiple Deprivation Income Deciles 1-3) or have either a gross household income of no more than £31,000, or an

equivalised income where cost of living is below £20,000 after rent or mortgage costs.



Alternative fuels including electricity, oil, liquid propane gas, and solid fuels must also heat the home. The Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of the property will determine the energy efficiency criteria and residents will be supported with this part of the eligibility process during application. Residents will be provided with a free EPC where they do not already have one.

Local installers in each region will guide customers through the application journey, helping them understand and establish eligibility for the scheme. If eligible, the installer will identify which improvements for the home will provide the greatest benefits and arrange any necessary surveys and installations.

The scheme allows funding per property to provide a range of energy and cost saving upgrades, depending on the specific circumstances such as the fuel source, energy efficiency and EPC rating of the home, with the most funding available for the least efficient homes heated by the most polluting fuel sources.

Through Sustainable West Northants, WNC has committed to achieve Net Zero on all council operations by 2030 and those of residents and businesses by 2045, take a community leadership role for Sustainability in West Northants and ensure all Council strategies and policies are aligned to achieving these goals.

We are working with partners to finalise the application details of the scheme and further information will be available soon on our website.

Voi e-Scooters and e-Bikes Safety Training

Events to help riders use Voi's e-scooters and e-bikes safely are being put on in Northampton. The company has arranged a number of online safety webinars and in-person events from next month onwards. The hour-long webinars cover all aspects of safely riding a Voi e-scooter or e-bike, from wearing a helmet, to the correct position in the road and how to park without causing an obstruction for pedestrians. Anyone completing one will receive 30 free minutes for use on either a Voi e-scooter or e-bike. IN person events are also scheduled to take place at the University of Northampton's Waterside Campus on Saturday 20 May and Saturday 1 July.



Participants get a day pass worth £10, so they can ride for free throughout the session, and an extra 15 minutes of free riding time to practice riding safely afterwards. They also get a free helmet, worth £35.

To book a place at a Safe Riding Skills Event or Webinar, visit: Voi UK: Safe Riding Skills Events 2023

<https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/uk-forthcoming-events-200259>

Funding to clear 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.

To find out more and check eligibility, visit:

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



Primary Schools Name WNC Gritters

Primary school children across West Northamptonshire have been getting creative and coming up with new names for our fleet of gritters. We might be coming out of the winter season now, but our Council and Kier Highways are getting prepared and are already planning ahead for the next winter. As part of that, our Council and highways partner Kier provided primary schools across West Northamptonshire with the opportunity to have a road-safety assembly and come with imaginative names ready for our next gritting season, and the names did not disappoint! With over 700 entries, the winter team at Kier, along with Kier's General Manager John Coombes, and had the important task of choosing the winning names. Pupils from Brixworth Primary School, St Luke's Primary School, East Haddon Primary School and Croughton Primary School were tasked with naming the fleet of ten gritters, and chose the following:



- Snow Drop
- Frosty Flakes
- Great Britain

- Salt n Pepper
- Salty Sam
- Icey Slicey
- Gritzilla
- Pretty Gritty (in the city)
- Roadzipper.

We were delighted to be able to work with school pupils across West Northamptonshire to name our fleet of gritters and we look forward to seeing these out across the area next winter.

Investors in the Environment Scheme Bronze Award

Our Council has reached a key milestone in our journey towards becoming a net zero local authority by achieving our first national environmental accreditation.

Following an independent audit, the Council has earned Bronze Award accreditation with the Investors in the Environment scheme (iiE), recognising its commitment towards sustainability.

The iiE scheme is designed to help organisations improve their environmental performance and reduce their impact on the environment, save time and money as well as get recognition for their progress. Bronze status is the first of three iiE accreditation levels the Council is working towards achieving to ensure environmental excellence.

The Council is committed to achieving Net Zero for our own emissions by 2030 and Net Zero West Northants emissions by 2045, with the recent publication of our baseline emissions report for 2021-22 last month representing a significant step forward in meeting its sustainability goals.



Never Bin Batteries

Following a series of fires, residents across West Northamptonshire are being urged to help reduce risk to lives by disposing of batteries safely. People are being urged to ensure that they only recycle batteries using



specialist recycling services to help tackle the cause of fires happening in refuse collection vehicles and waste facilities. Household batteries that are being thrown away in rubbish and recycling bins have caused a number of incidents, including causing refuse collection vehicles to catch fire. West Northamptonshire Council, with the support of Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service, are issuing a warning never to bin batteries in household waste after a series of vehicle fires. There is a

serious risk of fires happening in both homes and Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) if batteries aren't disposed of properly.

There are three simple ways residents can reduce the risk of fires:

- Never put any kind of battery into your wheeled bins
- Use the Council's separate battery recycling collection, take batteries to supermarkets, or to a HWRC (please let staff know of any batteries when you arrive)

- Remove all batteries from old electrical or battery powered items before recycling electricals using the separate small electrical recycling collections. If you can't remove the battery out of an item, if it fits in a carrier bag – this can go with the separate electrical recycling collection, if it is too big – please take this to your nearest HWRC.

Domestic batteries can be put into a small plastic bag and tied to the handle of your wheeled bin for safe collection and recycling. Please put them on the following bins:

- Blue lid recycling bin in Northampton
- Black lid general waste bin in Daventry
- Either bin in South Northamptonshire

To find out more details of where you can recycle household batteries visit:

www.westnorthants.gov.uk/batteries

Right Stuff Right Bin

It's clear that all our residents do a fantastic job by recycling, with about half of all household waste being recycled each year. To help ensure that the right stuff, goes in the right bin – we have created a series of videos to help reduce contamination and improve these recycling rates.

- Have you ever opened something at home, but not known what to do with the packaging?
- Or perhaps you're a bit of a wish-cycler – putting things in your recycling bin in the hope they can be recycled?

We all try to do the right thing, but if too much of the wrong stuff goes in the recycling bin, it causes contamination. Too much contamination in our recycling bins can lead to entire lorry loads being spoiled and disposed of with general waste instead of being recycled into new products.

Residents can also download the 'West Northants' app for your Android or Apple mobile device and search our handy guide, or visit our Right Stuff, Right Bin web page.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

Local Area Partnership DSN4

The last DSN4 LAP meeting took place on 16 May 2023 and the next one is scheduled for 6 June 2023. The update from the West Northants Executive PLACE Board was as follows:

- Julie Curtis has met with Danny Moody, Chief Executive NCALC to discuss how to involve Town and Parish Councils in development of the LAPs. The proposal is to host a Town and Parish event in June for all Town and Parish Councillors and clerks to attend.
- Each LAP will host a virtual event for Town/Parish Councils in their area to discuss PLACE development and how work of the Town and Parish Council can be incorporated into the LAPs.
- Due to the number of Town/Parish Councils it is not feasible to ask them all to join the LAPs, they will become a subgroup of the LAP. A representative could be nominated for this subgroup to sit on the LAP.
- Elected members would be a good information conduit for town/parish councils and this will be explored further once the initial engagement events have taken place. Information/engagement can be tailored to individual town/parish councils.



The West Northants Executive PLACE Board consists of operational leaders from organisations across West Northamptonshire. At the previous meeting it was recognised individual organisations are trying to complete asset mapping of services within local areas on their own platforms. This Board agreed to host a workshop on asset mapping/IT Platforms, to try and understand which organisations are completing asset mapping, the information they are trying to collect and see if how these can be aligned. This work will be beneficial in signposting assets and services within the assets, to have a social community map to aid self-help groups collaborate and will be important when designing the individual LAP websites and the review of West Northamptonshire Council web pages.

Developing some generic design principles will help with asset mapping/IT platform work taking place. GIS mapping provides opportunities to look for services within an area.

The West Northants Executive PLACE Board feeds into the West Northamptonshire Health and Wellbeing Board. There are 4 Local Area Partnerships (LAPs) in Daventry and South Northants, which feed into the Daventry and South Northants Health and Wellbeing Forum. Each LAP will have its own delivery plan and these will sit with the respective Health and Wellbeing Forum, to enable them to have an overall view of their locality. Terms of Reference for the LAPs will be developed as the LAPs start to gain momentum. LAPs have a generic set of agreed functions and objectives.

Youth Provision

The data presented at the workshop by Inspector Wakeman gave a powerful overview of crime and young people in the DSN4 area. There is soft intelligence from the voluntary sector that young people feel a lack of hope and can be lured into county lines activity. Youth provision in the DSN4 area has eroded over time and there is a high percentage of under 15 years in the LAP. The Youth Offer Board looks at the youth provision within West Northamptonshire. WNC has undertaken a peer review of youth provision. Following the recommendations from the Peer Review, the Youth Offer Board is looking at funding streams for youth services. There is a shortage of youth workers across West Northamptonshire and a recruitment campaign is needed to bolster these numbers.

A youth provision needs assessment is to be completed by WNC and information from the LAPs will feed into this needs assessment. There are families who cannot afford to pay for activities for their children to participate in and these children are at risk of moving into crime. We need to consider how we can engage with these young people and families.

The Board that ran the Towcester Youth Coffee House has an agreement to hand the covenant to run the coffee shop over to another charity to manage. Northamptonshire MIND has expressed an interest in taking over this covenant. Concerns were raised that young people may not attend if they feel it is linked to Northamptonshire MIND.

There is a need to consider how to reach elderly people who suffer from isolation. The Warm Welcoming Space at Blisworth Chapel only had one elderly person attend and lack of community transport or feeling unsafe when going out may be a factor in poor attendance.

WNC is considering how to invest the public health grant and adult social care funding to reach those who are suffering from isolation, to encourage engagement in activities and provide targeted support to those in need.

DSN4 Priorities

The Priorities for the LAP will be:

- Youth activity
- Elderly people and isolation.
- Access to services - transport

A Task and Finish group will be created to look at how to encourage elderly people in Towcester to engage in the community event.

Warm Welcoming Spaces

The Warm Welcoming Spaces (WWS) scheme was launched in September 2022, with the grants becoming available in October/November 2022, and the first payments being made on the 1st December.

There are 96 WWS across West Northamptonshire. The WWS that were grant funded enabled the number of attendees to be monitored. During January and February, 34,310 residents attended these WWS, with 2,000 referrals made to wrap around services. Work will continue with those venues that wish to continue as Welcoming Spaces in the warmer months to see what additional services can be introduced. 86% of those attending WWS stated they were living with mental health issues.

There was a high level of under 25s using the service, which was unexpected and further investigation is underway to try and understand the reasons behind this.

In the DSN4 area there are 21 WWS, which is 20% of all the WWS in West Northamptonshire, and they had 1,582 attendees between January to March. Up to 50% of those attending were over are 65 years.

WNC has an interactive map to show the locations of the WWS.

Towcester Family Hub

The objective of the Family Hub is to provide support for families and children 0-25 years. Work is underway to explore how the space of the ground floor of the Forum can be utilised to make it accessible, friendly and easy to navigate, including using existing services such as the library. There are options to have a separate entrance for the library, with meeting rooms within the library to allow more personal conversations. A separate area to provide youth support services is being considered, these services will have to be scheduled to fit around school timetables. The Hub will include a one-stop shop arrangement with advice around benefits, revenues, housing and having VCSE surgeries.

Discussions are taking place around whether activities currently delivered by the Towcester Children's Centre can also be delivered from the Hub. Footfall of the Children's Centre and types of activities will be analysed to see if this could be a viable option. If this is not a viable option the Hub will offer more universal services and avoid the stigma of attending a venue offering social services. The green space around the Forum would be good for to host outdoor activities in the warmer months.

Support for Carers 6 June 2023

Join our FREE webinar 'Support for Carers' – on Tuesday 6 June, at 4pm – when two Trust Governors will be talking about the work of Carers Corner and also how Northamptonshire Carers work with NHFT to support carers.

Book online here <http://ow.ly/C9Io50Or8Bx>



People Aged 70-79 encouraged to get their shingles vaccine

People aged 70 to 79 in West Northamptonshire are being encouraged to get their shingles vaccine to lower the chance of developing the infection. Shingles is a painful infection that can cause a headache, high temperature and an itchy rash, often accompanied with a burning, throbbing pain. The rash usually appears on the chest and abdomen (tummy), however any part of the body can be affected, including the face and eyes.

As older adults are more at risk of developing shingles it is important that people above the age of 70 years old get their free shingles vaccine to help lower the chance of catching the infection and reduce the nasty symptoms that can be experienced from it.

Dr Annapurna Sen, Consultant for Health Protection at Public Health West Northamptonshire Council said:



“In Northamptonshire, the number of those who have been vaccinated against shingles has declined, with only around 44% of people eligible having received the vaccine. The symptoms experienced from this infection are severe and can be life changing, therefore the vaccine is important in helping to protect people from this infection and help relieve the symptoms if they do catch it. So, please take the time to protect yourself from this infection.

“If you have not yet taken up the free vaccine and you are eligible to do so, please do get booked in via your GP or local pharmacy. If you have not yet been contacted that you are eligible, but think you should be please do speak to your GP or pharmacy who will be able to advise you further.”

The shingles infection cannot be caught from another person, however someone who has had chickenpox is at higher risk of developing the infection. After having chickenpox, the virus stays in the body but remains inactive. As people age, their immunity weakens which means the body cannot protect itself against infections or disease the same as it did, and as a result the virus can be reactivated later in life, causing shingles.

Most people will recover fully from this virus, but for some they may experience complications for several months or years. If you are over the age of 70 and have not yet had your vaccine, please contact your GP or your local pharmacy to discuss how you can arrange to get protected.

Virtual Wellbeing Festival 2023

If you're starting to think about your summer plans, make sure the Northamptonshire Virtual Wellbeing Festival 2023 is the first date in your diary! Now in its fourth year, this annual extravaganza is a week-long wellbeing celebration hosted online and completely free of charge – exclusively for health and social care colleagues in Northamptonshire.

The Virtual Wellbeing Festival 2023 (VWBF23) is taking place from Monday 3 to Friday 7 July and will feature an exciting line-up of headline speakers plus an array of entertaining, inspiring and informative activity sessions, stories and resources from across our county's health and care community.

This is YOUR Festival so make sure you don't miss out! Full details of this year's Festival programme are set



to be unveiled very soon. In the meantime, visit the VWBF23 website at www.wellbeingfestival.live to download our 'Save the Date' calendar appointment.

EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

New SEND Information and Support Services (IASS)

West and North Northamptonshire Councils are ready to launch two new separate SEND Information, Advice and Support Services (IASS). The new services will start on 1 April and will continue to deliver the IASS remit of providing free, impartial information, advice and support to children and young people with SEND and their families.

As part of the Children and Families Act 2014, it is a legal requirement that all local authorities ensure



children and young people aged 0 to 25 with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and their parents have access to impartial information, advice and support. These services operate at arm's length from local authorities and clinical commissioning groups and are independently trained. They provide practical, factual and impartial information advice and support to enable children and young

people and their parents to participate fully in decisions about education, health and social care. West Northants SEND IASS covers the entire West Northamptonshire Council area and has new branding, as shown above.

From 1 April, they can be reached by:

- Phone: 0300 12 61039
- Email: SENDIASS@westnorthants.gov.uk
- Website: www.iassnorthants.co.uk

Members are encouraged to share this information with children, young people and their parents and carers to help ensure a seamless transition and continuation of service delivery.

Are you thinking about Holiday Dates in 2023?

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

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

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



Adult Numeracy Courses

A range of free adult numeracy courses has been launched by our Council to help people brush up on their maths skills and become more confident with numbers. The courses, known as Multiply, are designed to make maths simpler for everyone, and to show that even those who struggled with maths in school can feel confident with numeracy in their day-to-day lives.

Launched as part of the government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme, Multiply includes numeracy courses for beginners and those who want to build on the foundations of their maths knowledge, to more advanced offers such as GCSE Maths and Level 2 Functional Skills Qualifications.

There is a range of flexible online courses available as well as one-to-one mentoring – all designed to fit around people's busy schedules. People can take a short quiz to understand which areas of numeracy they might want to improve by visiting the Skills for Life website.

<https://skillsforlife.campaign.gov.uk/courses/multiply/>



Multiply forms part of almost £575k allocated to help improve adult numeracy in the area by the Department for Education in partnership with WNC. Through Multiply, we want to boost people's confidence and ability to use maths and numbers effectively in daily life, at home and work. This includes helping people attain a formal qualification to open doors to new jobs, career progression and further study. You can find out more information and view the full range of courses on our

Multiply page <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/.../mul.../multiply-courses>

South Northants Youth Engagement (SNYE)

A charity, which supports young people in the Brackley, Towcester and Kings Sutton areas, is going from strength-to-strength with support from local partners.

More than 1,000 young people and their families benefit from the events put on by South Northants Youth Engagement (SNYE), including two regular youth clubs at Brackley Leisure Centre and Southfields School and a range of community



play and activity days. Most of the events are free or cost no more than £2 per session to cover costs, but are proving invaluable in helping local children build their confidence and skills.

A range of organisations, including West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) and both Brackley and Towcester Town Councils, supports the charity. Councillors Sue Sharps, Fiona Baker and Tony Bagot-Webb sit on both councils and between them supported SNYE with £2,000 of funding from their Councillor Covid Support Funds. Cllr Sharps is also a trustee of the charity, alongside Towcester Town Councillor Martin Johns. Brackley Town Council recently funded training for SNYE staff to allow them to put on popular skateboarding sessions for children ahead of the installation of a new skate ramp in the town.

And SNYE also works with Northamptonshire Sport, Sponne School and Towcester Leisure Centre to run regular sports sessions for young people, with plans for a youth club in the town once a suitable venue is found.

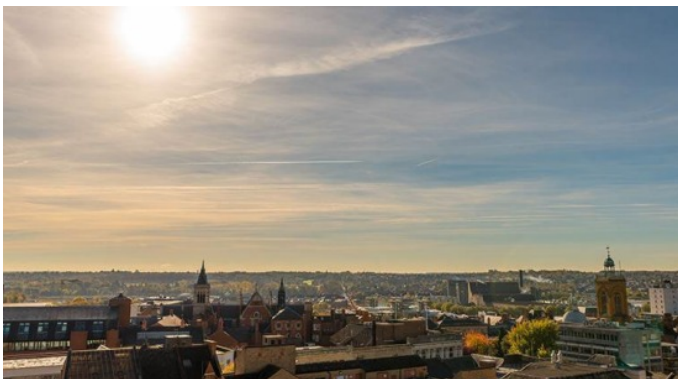
The charity this year appointed two new youth workers to work in Brackley and Towcester, but is always in need of new volunteers to help them support more children in the area.

Anyone interested in volunteering should email admin@youth-engagement.co.uk

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & GRANT FUNDING

£5.4million funding from the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)

New cycleways will be created and local businesses and voluntary organisations are set to benefit from



more than £5.4million funding from the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). The funding is the largest allocation in the South East Midlands and will be used to create pride in place, improve people's life chances, increase skills, create stronger communities and support local businesses over the next 2 years. Our plans for the funding include creating new and improved pedestrian crossing facilities between the Billing Road and Abington, in Northampton, and improving paths

and cycleways to encourage active travel. The funding will also be used to tackle fuel poverty and the cost of living through the provision of a range of services across West Northants, including improving Household Energy performance in people's homes.

Local voluntary and community organisations will also receive a portion of the money to help increase engagement in community centres and improve the support available to residents.

A range of initiatives, including a new grants programme to help local businesses at all stages to start, sustain, grow and innovate and tailored employment support to help people into work, will also receive some of the funding.

Other areas planned to benefit include:

- Funding for volunteer and social action projects
- Decarbonisation and improving the natural environment
- Business support to enable employers to better utilise the local workforce and understand the advantages of being flexible in terms of recruitment.

We have worked closely with stakeholders, community groups and local partners to analyse the greatest needs for this funding, and most importantly, to deliver economic prosperity in our area whilst supporting sustainability, increasing employment opportunities and offering greater support for local businesses.

King's Awards for Enterprise

Two West Northamptonshire businesses including a manufacturer of trailers for transportation and a manufacturer of ethical vitamins have received a 2023 King's Award.

Brian James Trailers Limited, who are based in Daventry and specialise in designing and manufacturing trailers for transportation of vehicles, plant machinery and general materials, received an award in the International Trade category.

The company was founded 40 years ago as a family business and now produces a variety of products including trailers for plant machinery such as mini-diggers, dumpers and scissor-lifts as well as general purpose and tipper trailers.



An award in the same category was granted to Viridian Nutrition, also based in Daventry, which specialises in effective, ethical and pure health supplements, nutritional oils, tinctures and topicals.



The family-run business established in 1999, has a range of 220+ vitamins, all developed by expert nutritionists using clinically evidenced research. Viridian is committed to earth friendly practices from using ethically sourced ingredients to using recyclable bottles and packaging and has its own charity programme.

Cheryl Thallon, Viridian Founder and MD, said: "It's a great honour to accept this regal award acknowledging not only the success of our team and customers, but also our ethical commitment to spreading health and happiness across the

globe.

"King Charles has long championed organics and complementary medicine and we applaud his continued work in these and other fields."

The King's Awards for Enterprise are the most prestigious awards for UK businesses, with winning businesses able to use the esteemed King's Awards Emblem for the next five years. The 2024 Awards will open for applications on 6 May 2023.

Northampton's Historic Market Square Redevelopment

The redevelopment of Northampton's historic market square is three months into the extensive programme of regeneration works. West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) is working with leading construction firm Stepnell Ltd to carry out a multi-million-pound project to rejuvenate the area for business, traders, residents and visitors alike.

In March, preparations works were well underway to enable construction works to take place. The existing surface has been removed with the cobbles to be cleaned and reused as part of the new market



square development. Digging has commenced to achieve the levels required for the new paving and work is underway to disconnect and remove features including the old light columns. WNC and Stepnell Ltd are working with the Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA) to monitor the digging to ensure any potential findings are preserved and recorded.

Further digging and paving works will commence in early summer on the perimeter of the Market Square. This will require working closely with surrounding businesses and residents to ensure their premises are always accessible. New services and the supporting infrastructure for features such as the new lighting, fixed market stalls and water feature will also get underway in the coming weeks.

WNC continues to work with traders to promote the temporary relocation of the market to Commercial Street Car Park. In addition to this, the Council is exploring options to support the traders and is preparing a detailed report to present later this month.

Keep up to date with the redevelopment of Northampton Town Centre and across West Northamptonshire.

West Northamptonshire Social Enterprise Town Investment Fund

West Northamptonshire Social Enterprise Town (WNSET) has launched a new investment fund aimed at supporting the growth and development of social enterprises in Northampton. WNSET Social Enterprise Development Fund offers a community driven initiative that will provide funding and support for local social entrepreneurs to maximise the impact of the Town's diverse social enterprise sector.

The event took place at the University of Northampton with presentations by local social entrepreneurs about their experiences and success stories. The Northampton Social Enterprise Development Fund forms an integral part of West Northamptonshire's ambitious £33 million Towns Fund and Future High Street Fund regeneration programme to transform Northampton Town Centre.

This project enables us to directly support the growth of our thriving social enterprise community who provide diverse and invaluable services for Northampton and beyond. We are delighted to see the launch of this fund and we look forward to seeing the positive contribution it makes to our community.

Third Round of the Community Ownership Fund Launched

Last week, DLUHC launched the third round of its £150 million Community Ownership Fund. Applications to bid for round three of the funding, which will open on 31 May. Changes to the fund will make it easier for voluntary and community groups to apply for funding to acquire important assets and run them for the benefit of the local community.

A summary of the key changes to the eligibility requirements for the relaunch of the fund include:

- Reducing the match funding requirement
- Increasing the amount of funding all projects can bid for from £250,000 to £1 million
- Allowing parish councils (and their equivalent town and community councils) to apply in the same way that community groups do currently



The government is providing funding over four years to support community groups to take ownership of assets and amenities at risk of being lost such as community centres, parks, pubs and post office buildings. The deadline for applications for this funding round is 12 July. Further information, the application form and prospectus can be found online:

<https://www.gov.uk/.../more-cash-to-rescue-community...>

Merged Futures 5. UON Learning Hub

Merged Futures returns to the Learning Hub at the University of Northampton's Waterside Campus on Friday June 30 and, as with all Digital Northants events, it's free to attend. A celebration of Northamptonshire's innovators, educators and entrepreneurs, the event brings together people from different sectors interested in digital, tech and innovation to share and spark ideas. It's also an opportunity for the business community to discover some of the University of Northampton's innovative teaching methods, the skills developed by students and the potential to partner and collaborate with the University in different fields. Northamptonshire is a forward-thinking county, home to hundreds of entrepreneurs and innovators. Events like this provide us with the ideal opportunity to make new connections, share best practice and drive forward change together.



The event takes place at the Learning Hub, University of Northampton, on Friday June 30, 2023 from 10am to 4pm. You can find out more and book a free ticket online.

<https://www.digitalnorthampton.com/events2/merged-futures-5>

TRANSPORT & HIGHWAYS

A428 Carriageway Resurfacing

Kier is intending on carrying out carriageway resurfacing works along the A428 through Yardley Hastings. To undertake this work safely the road needs to be closed with the initial patching works due to commence on the 14th of June until the 27th of June at off peak times. The closure and diversion can be viewed here <https://one.network/?tm=133635733>



Active Travel Grant Funding

West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) has been awarded £642,871 funding from Active Travel England to roll-out a new traffic free route in Northampton.

The 1,300-metre route will provide an accessible route through Delapré Park to link Far Cotton with Brackmills, and will encourage walking, wheeling, and cycling whilst providing a missing link between these areas. A planning application showing the routes in Delapré Park has previously been submitted.



The funding will also provide covered cycle

parking, wayfinding and information boards in the area and support the social prescribing and cycling hub project, which aims to promote mental and physical wellbeing, based at Delapré Abbey.

The route is set to be delivered by March 2024 and forms part of the Active Quarter, a collaborative partnership of key public, third sector and private stakeholders who have come together around a shared ambition to pioneer active travel in the south-west area of Northampton.

The Active Quarter's vision is to create accessible routes and projects in the southwest area of the town to promote active travel and encompass Midsummer Meadow, Becketts Park, Delapré Abbey, Delapré Park Golf Centre, the University of Northampton, Brackmills and the neighbouring Pocket Parks.

Progress has been achieved already with the delivery of projects such as the award-winning Northampton Mountain Bike Park, wheelchair accessible angling platforms around the Nene Valley water-skiing lake, and a partnership between the University of Northampton (UON) and Public Health West Northants to develop Waterside as an 'Active Campus' for staff and students.

The Delapré Active Travel route will cater to individuals walking, running and users of all types of wheels, including wheelchairs, pushchairs, and bicycles during all seasons. By designing an inclusive route, we are ensuring that everyone can benefit from this traffic free route connecting nature, heritage, education, and employment.



Angel Street Closed until mid-end September 2023

Angel St in Northampton remains closed to cars while redevelopment works take place to create a new cultural space at 24 Guildhall Road with NN Contemporary Art. This closure is expected to end mid-Sept. Pedestrian access has been maintained and local businesses continue to trade as usual.

For more info on regeneration projects across WN:

<http://ow.ly/M3oS50vtmO>

£2.86m Investment into Road Network across Area

Road users across West Northamptonshire are set to benefit from an additional £2.86 million investment into the road network across the area.



West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) is investing an additional £1 million for 2023/24 into our roads. The Council is also looking to invest in new technologies to help maintain the roads it is responsible for more efficiently and to a better standard. In addition to the Council's additional investment, WNC has been awarded £1.86 million from the Government to boost the planned improvements for the year ahead.

As part of the new Highways contract which kick-started in September 2022, WNC is working with Kier to deliver a multi-million-pound plan to maintain our road network through the Community Enhancement Plan. This work has reached over 161 parishes, clearing nearly 4km of vegetation and cleaning more than 1,500 road signs to date. Alongside this, Kier has also rectified over 1,688 road and footpath defects, and 6,771 carriageway repairs.

As part of the new contract, Kier set out their commitment to working with WNC on sustainability goals to achieve net zero emissions by 2030, as well as increasing social value to benefit the wider West Northants community and economy, such as supporting local disadvantaged groups and working with local sub-contractors.

Bus Fare Cap Extended until end of October

As part of the Help for Households support, the government announced that it is extending discounted bus travel. To help people with cost-of-living pressures and save on everyday travel costs, the government will continue to cap single bus fares at £2 outside London until the end of October 2023 and then at £2.50 until 30 November 2024 –when the government will review their effectiveness and future bus fares.

The government has published a list of bus companies and bus routes included in the £2 bus fare cap scheme. The government also announced £160 million will be provided to local transport authorities to improve fares, services and infrastructure while £140 million will go to operators to help protect essential services across England



[Government extends £2 bus fare cap and protects vital services - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

POLICE FIRE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

Bleed Control Kits

Kits holding life-saving equipment to help control traumatic bleeding have been rolled out for the first time to public places in South Northants and the Daventry area. The rollout is thanks to a partnership between campaigning group Off the Streets NN and Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Stephen

Mold, who has funded 14 kits to be located in an area spreading from Brixworth to Brackley.

The new bleed control kits are in shops and other venues that will be shown by a window sticker and have items that are used to stop catastrophic bleeding and support an injured person until the emergency services arrive.

Work by Off the Streets NN that has already seen more than 120 bleed cabinets and kits installed around the county, and hundreds of people trained in life-saving skills. These 14 new kits are the first available for public



use that have been rolled out in South Northants and Daventry.

Off the Streets NN set up the scheme to tackle knife and gang-related crime through a partnership approach, involving community bodies ranging from educational establishments to faith-based organisations and voluntary agencies.

Community Safety Partnership 2023/2024 Strategy

The West Northamptonshire Community Safety Partnership (CSP) has launched its 2023/24 strategy reinforcing its commitment to make West Northamptonshire a safer place for residents and visitors by taking a partnership approach to reducing crime, serious violence, and anti-social behaviour. The responsible partners for the CSP include West Northamptonshire Council (WNC), Northamptonshire Police, Northamptonshire Probation Trust,



Northamptonshire Integrated Care Board and Northamptonshire Fire Service.

The strategy has been co-produced with members of the community, elected members and the Voluntary and Charity Sector to help refresh the priorities for the partnership. The current volume of crime and community concern, and impact on communities and victims were also taken into consideration.

Key priorities of the strategy include:

- Working with communities to ensure our neighbourhoods are safe spaces for everyone
- Targeting those causing the greatest harm and tackling the causes of crime through prevention and early intervention
- Reducing incidents of serious violence including domestic abuse, sexual offences and knife crime
- Protecting vulnerable people and safeguarding those at risk of exploitation

To ensure it is accessible for all, the strategy has avoided using a multiple page document and is instead laid out in sections on the CSP webpage. The webpage will feature quarterly live updates to reflect how the CSP has delivered against its key priorities. As part of the strategy, partners have a commitment to deliver the Serious Violence Duty in accordance with the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022, which is intended to ensure relevant services work together to share information and collaborate on interventions to prevent and reduce serious crimes within their local communities.

These services include:

- Police
- Justice
- Fire and Rescue Authorities
- Health
- Local Authorities

The specified services have a collective responsibility under the Act to assess serious violence in their local area and produce and implement a delivery plan to address this by January 2024. Funding attached to the delivery of the Duty will be allocated to the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) and distributed by the responsible authorities.

Projects already delivered by the CSP include providing a critical response to incidents of knife crime and supporting Police with knife amnesty events, working with youth providers such as Free2talk to offer mentoring and support to young people involved in gangs and knife crime, and the launch of an animation for young people highlighting key community safety subjects including fire and water safety, child exploitation and online safety. In addition, the CSP partners between them secured Safer Streets funding of more than £1.7 million, which enabled projects, programmes and physical improvements, including installing 'Help Points' on the Racecourse and Becket's Park as part of 'safer routes' in Northampton town centre, reinstating CCTV cameras across Northampton, improving street lighting, and alleygating anti-social behaviour hotspots.

Partners have also worked together to deliver more than 60 community engagement events, bringing communities together and celebrating diversity, including Srebrenica, International Youth Day, International Women's Day, Northampton Pride, Diwali and Stephen Lawrence Day, and support campaigns including 16 Days of Activism, Serious Organised Crime week of action, Operation Revive and the launch of the Flare app.

More information including the CSP strategy and full list of partners can be found on the CSP webpage.

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/west-northamptonshire-community-safety-partnership>

CULTURE, HERITAGE & SPORT

Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III and Her Majesty Queen Camilla

Thousands of people came together to enjoy a bank holiday weekend of events and activities as communities across West Northamptonshire celebrated the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III and Her Majesty Queen Camilla.

On Saturday 6 May 2023, hundreds of people braved the rain for the Community Festival street party in



Northampton town centre, with the celebrations continuing in the sunshine on Sunday as over 6,000 people flocked to the Coronation Big Lunch and After Party in the grounds of Northampton's historic Delapré Abbey to enjoy a range of live music, performances, activities and stalls. Visitors to the free event were treated to a variety of local performances including StyleStars and Dance with a Difference, Northampton's Pauline Quirke Academy, Similar Jones, Old Savoy Jazz Band, Rock Choir, Djin-Li, Britain's Got Talent

semi-finalists Born To Perform and Lucien Moon, who appeared on The X-Factor in 2015 and is opening up for the legendary boy band Westlife later this summer – all topped off with a live broadcast of the National Coronation Concert on the big screen. Coronation events also took place at towns and villages across West Northamptonshire, with over 70 street closures taking place as neighbourhoods gathered to stage their own street parties. The weekend concluded with the Big Help Out on bank holiday Monday, where people across the country joined over 1,500 charities to take part in voluntary work to highlight the impact of volunteering on local communities.

James Saunders Watson, HM Lord-Lieutenant for Northamptonshire, said: "It was fantastic to see thousands of people turn out to enjoy the celebrations across a spectacular bank holiday weekend. "The weather on Sunday was splendid and it was great to see so many street parties and local events taking place across the whole weekend, with children, families and local communities all getting involved. "The Big Help Out on Monday was the cherry on top of what was a truly terrific Coronation celebration." All council-owned car parks in Northampton town centre were free to use over the Coronation weekend along with the parking facilities in Car Park One and Two at University of Northampton Waterside Campus.

Armed Forces Week 2023

To mark the start of Armed Forces week 2023, West Northamptonshire Council will be hosting three flag-raising events at 10:00 on Monday 19 June. You are duly invited to attend one of our three events and join us in showing your support for the serving troops, veterans, cadets, and family members who make up West Northamptonshire's Armed Forces community.



ARMED FORCES DAY
SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

Northampton

09:50 | Attendees to assemble outside County Hall steps on George Row for introductory speeches

10:00 | Armed Forces Flag to be raised

10:02 | Closing speeches

10:10 | Refreshments served in Room 58 at County Hall

Daventry

09:50 | Attendees to assemble outside Lodge Road for introductory speeches
10:00 | Armed Forces Flag to be raised
10:02 | Closing speeches
10:10 | Refreshments served in Committee Rooms 1 & 2 at Lodge Road

Towcester

09:50 | Attendees to assemble outside the Forum for introductory speeches
10:00 | Armed Forces Flag to be raised
10:02 | Closing speeches
10:10 | Refreshments served in the Council Chamber at the Forum

To confirm your attendance at one of our events, we would be grateful if you could RSVP to Covenant.NNC@westnorthants.gov.uk by Friday 9th June 2023.

Thank you and best wishes,
Armed Forces Covenant Support Team

Heritage Open Days Event 8-17 September 2023

Historic buildings, churches and venues across West Northamptonshire will be open to the public for free from Friday 8 to Sunday 17 September, as part of the Heritage Open Days event. The initiative is a once-a-year opportunity for residents to explore some of the area's unique historic buildings and sites, many of which are usually restricted access or charge for entry, finding out about West Northamptonshire's vibrant culture and heritage like never before.

We'll be listing all local attractions and events over the coming months on our website and across our social media channels. Please encourage any local attractions who might be interested in taking part in this year's event to contact economy@westnorthants.gov.uk by 31 May 2023.



All sites and associated events/activities taking part in HODs must be completely free to access, from entry to exit, and ideally will offer something to your audience which is not normally available.

Residents can also download our Explore West Northants App to discover the full offer of the area from independent businesses and attractions to exclusive discounts and events.