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MONTHLY NEWS REPORT SEPTEMBER 2023



E-Newsletter Issue 9/2023
Steve with Liz Banyard
Joint Editor of Little Houghton and Brafield Parish Magazine
at
St Mary's Church
Little Houghton
on 12 August 2023

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NEWS REPORT SEPTEMBER 2023

Monthly Highlights

This month I requested copies of the signing plans for the changes to the A428 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. WNC has now received all the information required and has sent the instruction for the works to be carried out, which should be within three months.

On Sunday 4th June 2023, Stagecoach East made changes to the 41 service within the Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire network. So, let's 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.

With regards to the flooding at Blacksmiths Way, Hartwell, WNC has completed and assessed all the surveys. They concluded that to prevent future flooding on Blacksmiths Way they need to undertake the following works.

- Ditch clearance on Ashton Road (south of Oakleaf)
- Replace 12 metres of drain in access to Oakleaf. This will be reinforced with concrete to prevent any future damage by tree roots.
- Near 17 Ashton Road undertake works to replace/repair section of drain.

In addition to the above we will also be replacing a section of drain on Blacksmiths Way which does not have a top. Hartwell Parish Council to fund replacement gully top on Blacksmiths Way.

Our next site meeting has been scheduled for 26th September at 2pm. In the meantime, I will provide an update every two weeks with progress.

I attended several events across the ward of Hackleton and Grange Park this month. Please read more about my activities in my Monthly Report.

People are being invited to have their say on proposals for how social housing will be allocated across West Northamptonshire from spring next year. West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) is currently seeking views on its new draft Housing Allocation Scheme, which is due to be implemented on 1 April 2024.

Join Citizens Advice for their next cost-of-living briefing on September 14th, 12-1pm. Guest speakers will be announced shortly. See my Monthly Report for further details.

In the Local Government Boundary Commission final report published on 1 August 2023, the Commission has concluded that West Northants residents should be represented in the future by 76 councillors as the figure best facilitated a new warding pattern throughout the district. It means that from 2025 WNC councillors would be elected on a four-year term across 35 wards instead of the current 31 – comprising 13 three-councillor wards, 15 two-councillor wards, and seven single-councillor wards. See my Monthly Report for further details.

More than 100 projects around the country are being supported by the Community Ownership fund. Successful projects that DLUHC have funded to date include assets such as:

- community centres
- sporting and leisure facilities

- pubs
- cultural buildings
- heritage buildings

You can read about the Government's announcement in my Monthly Report.

Community Tree Planting Grants are available, and applications can be submitted from June onwards with a final deadline of 15 December 2023. See my Monthly Report.

Daventry Country Park, Abington Park, Bradlaugh Fields and Delapre Park have all retained their Green Flag Awards - nationally recognised as the benchmark for the management of recreational outdoor spaces.

The Summer Reading Challenge launches on Saturday, 8 July. Participants will be rewarded with a medal and certificate upon completing the challenge. The Library Service has also partnered with local leisure centres to provide a voucher entitling children to a free swim or badminton, table tennis or squash court hire, depending on location. The Challenge runs until Saturday, 9 September and aims to increase children's reading engagement and confidence. Further information around the Summer Reading Challenge and library events and services can be found on the libraries' webpage.

Join us for the CarKraft Young Driver Event on 17th Sept 2023. This exciting event at the Silverstone Circuit is perfect for young drivers looking to enhance their skills behind the wheel. Get ready for a half-day of fun and educational activities to improve your driving abilities.

A new town centre manager has been appointed to improve the appeal of Brackley and Towcester Town Centres to visitors and businesses. Samantha Hosking took up her post a month ago and will be the key point of contact working for West Northamptonshire Council in partnership with Brackley Town Council and Towcester Town Council.

Volunteer bus drivers are sought to support with this year's Heritage Open Days, which take place from 8 to 17 September. Drivers will need a category D PCV (passenger carrying vehicle) licence. We are also looking for volunteer bus conductors, who do not need a licence. Training will be provided for both drivers and conductors. Please email communications@westnorthants.gov.uk to register your interest.

I hope that you enjoy this edition of my Monthly Report. The summer season went by so quickly and although I may have met several you whilst out and about, many parishes did not hold Parish Council Meetings during August, so I look forward to catching up with you all in September.

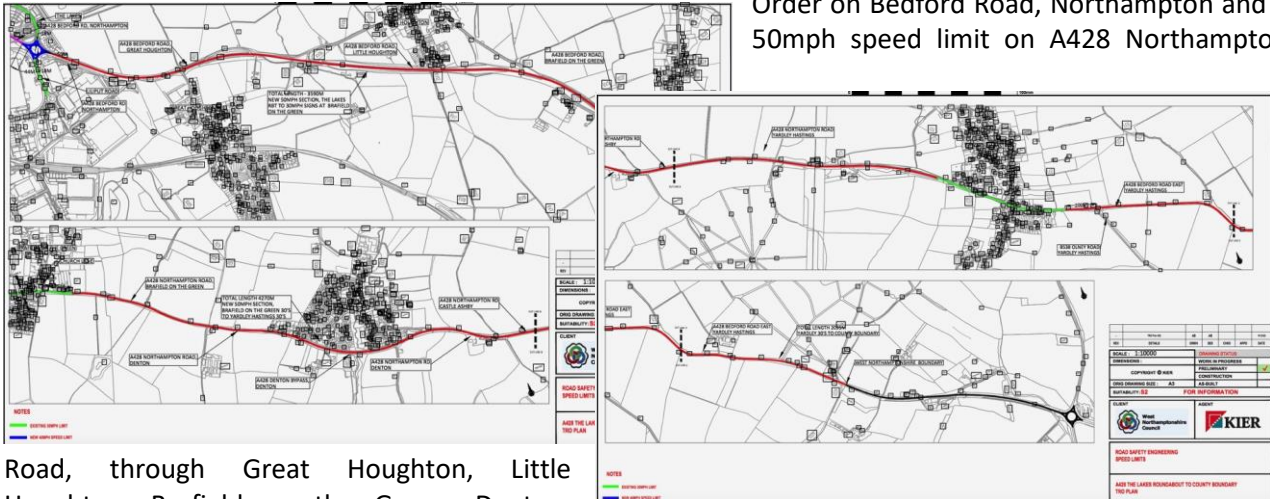
Don't forget you can follow me on [https:// www.facebook.com/stephen.clarke.31924](https://www.facebook.com/stephen.clarke.31924)

All the Best, Steve

PARISH MEETINGS, VISITS AND CASEWORK

Signing Plans for the changes to the A428

I have received copies of the signing plans for the changes to the A428 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. WNC has now received all the information required and has sent the instruction for the works to be carried out, which should be within three months.

41 Bus Service

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, we need to market and encourage an increase in bus patronage along this route so that we can secure it for the foreseeable future.

The link and timetable information are as follows:

<https://ticon-maps-stagecoachbus.s3.amazonaws.com/Timetables/East/BEDFORD/BE-41-040623.pdf>

Update on Drainage Issues in Hartwell

With regards to the flooding at Blacksmiths Way, Hartwell, WNC has completed and assessed all the surveys. They concluded that to prevent future flooding on Blacksmiths Way they need to undertake the following works.

- Ditch clearance on Ashton Road (south of Oakleaf)
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In addition to the above we will also be replacing a section of drain on Blacksmiths Way which does not have a top. Hartwell Parish Council to fund replacement gully top on Blacksmiths Way.

Our next site meeting has been scheduled for 26th September at 2pm. In the meantime, I will provide an update every two weeks with progress.

Important Notice - Hackleton Prescription Deliveries



As you are probably aware the owners of Hackleton Stores no longer wish to be a medication pick-up Point. From 10th July Hackleton Baptist Church has kindly agreed to allow patients to collect from them.

Their pick-up times are 11.00-13.00 Monday to Wednesday
Hackleton Baptist Church, Chapel Lane, Hackleton, NN7 2AH
Medication will arrive on Mondays prior to 11.00 and items not collected by 13.00 on Wednesdays will be returned to the surgery. Please remember to request delivery each time you order. Fridge items and controlled drugs must be collected direct from the surgery.

Hackleton Village Hall 6 August 2023



On 6 August 2023, I went to the Hackleton Village Hall Trustees Fundraising Event. The Trustees were hosting afternoon teas in the Village Hall for the community.

Each year there have been 'Cream Teas' sold in the Village Hall during August. This year there will be just two sessions, today and 20 August 2023 from 2.00-4.00pm. I enjoyed catching up with Edward and Godfrey and others and munching on a great coffee and walnut cake.



Coffee@Carey, Hackleton 9 August 2023

On 9 August I enjoyed meeting with Revd Jennie, Mary, Paul and others at Coffee@Carey, Hackleton. It was exceptionally busy and there were lots of children. They have their Babies and Tots Group on a Wednesday from 10.30am - 12.00pm.



Food Donation from Project 16:15 was on display. They had 48 fortified liquid meals with a long use by date from a care home. Please do take them if you need them or know someone who does. Please PM Revd Jennie Lee if you need a food hamper from Project16:15.

Denton Coffee Morning 11 August 2023

We met with our friends at the Coffee Morning in St Margaret's Church Denton this morning. It has been a couple of weeks since we were able to make it. There were lots of folks there today. It was good to catch up with Doug, John, Russel, Alison, Carole, David and others.

It was particularly useful to take a walk with some of you afterwards to Bridge Meadow and Bedford Road to follow up on some case work that I am working on. Well done to David for helping me with a detailed map of this part of Denton and to Russell for bringing along his beautiful tomatoes to share with others. Sorry to have missed Mary, Diane, Pat and Sheila this week. All the Best to you.



Book Sale, Quinton 12 August 2023



On 12 August 2023, I enjoyed meeting up with Emma, Val, Kathey and others at the Book Sale in Quinton Village Hall. It gave us the opportunity to have a browse of the books whilst meeting up with friends from Quinton over a cup of coffee and cake.

Books are available to take home with you in exchange for a donation of either a book or £1. It's an opportunity to mix with neighbours, recycle your pre-loved books and support the village hall (the energy price increases have quite an impact on running costs so they would really appreciate your support!).

Quinton Village Hall are now online. For all enquiries, bookings and payment please visit <https://www.quintonvillagehall.co.uk/>.

The hall has a fully equipped kitchen, brand new infra-red heating, wheelchair access and a super garden and outdoor space.

Little Houghton 12 August 2023

It was good to meet up today with friends at the Little Houghton Church Coffee Morning. I enjoyed catching up with John, Gill, Ralph and others whilst listening to the accordion music. It was good to hear about the appointment of Revd Jez Safford who has accepted the post of Rector of the Wymersley Benefice.

Revd Jez Safford, currently Club Chaplain, Well-being and Welfare Lead at Northampton Saints RFC, has been offered and has accepted the invitation to become Rector (four days per week) in the Wymersley Benefice. The appointment of Jez is subject to the normal Church of England legal and administrative procedures.

Jez will be Instituted by Bishop John and Inducted by Archdeacon Richard Ormiston on 5 October 2023 at 7:30pm at St Laurence Church, Brafield on the Green. I look forward to meeting him as he starts his work serving the villages of Cogenhoe, Great Houghton, Little Houghton and Brafield on the Green.



Denton Coffee Morning 25 August 2023

On Friday, 25 August 2023, I attended the Coffee Morning at St Margaret's Church, Denton. It was great to see Pat now recovering from her recent knee operation. It was a very busy morning with lots of residents



catching up with each other over coffee and croissants ably served by Alison and Elias. Helen had brought along her loom, and she showed Doug our local expert just how she was getting along with her weaving. I must say that it was very impressive.

A special thank you to Russell for bringing along more of his beautiful tomatoes to share with others.

I saw the beautiful new tapestry which had been donated to the church and I was able to access the chancel now that the roof has been repaired. A special thank you to Michael Brown who has done an amazing job with his pilgrimage! Thank you

to everyone who donated to help to raise £1,110 to repair the chancel ceiling at St Margaret's, Denton. Michael completed his pilgrimage from Saint Ives to Saint Michael's Mount. The route was over 50 miles with a rocky and difficult terrain.

The church is a place of worship, but also a social hub for the village which offers many benefits to different groups within the community including the elderly, social groups and after school club as well as regular services of worship.

It was good to meet with Doug, John, Russel, Alison, Elias, Carole, David, Duncan, Sheila, Pat, Mary and others. As arranged, I met Jonathan Hazell, WNC, Arboricultural Officer together with Diane, Duncan and David afterwards to visit the site behind Bridge Meadow and Bedford Road to follow up on some case work that I am working on.



Little Houghton Afternoon Tea 27 August 2023



On Monday 27 August 2023, I enjoyed Afternoon Tea at St Mary's Church, Little Houghton. It was good to catch up with Jenny, Vicky, Alice, Ralph, John, Sue, Geoff and others whilst enjoying Jenny's famous Coffee and Walnut cake.

It was great to chat to John who was in fine spirits and to catch up with Sue and Geoff as I hadn't seen them for some time.

The flowers in the church were very beautiful-well done Alison.

We were sorry to hear that Revd Jez Safford has had to withdraw from his appointment as Rector and family had been looking



of the Wymersley Benefice. Jez and his wife forward to moving into Cogenhoe Rectory over the next few weeks but are now unable to take up the appointment because of an unforeseen change in their personal circumstances. It is great that we have Revd Irene who will continue to be the Assistant Priest.

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.

REFUGEES

Hosts for Ukraine Scheme still needed

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.

Please complete the online questionnaire to tell us whether you are interested in becoming a host; the type of accommodation being offered, and some further information about you. 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-notices/homes-ukraine-scheme-privacy-notice>



Afghan Resettlement Scheme

On 28 April, Minister Mercer announced to Parliament the government's determination to close all Afghan Bridging hotels across the UK by the end of the summer. The reasons were two-fold; that it was not right for people to be living in hotels long term, and it is not affordable for the British public to continue to fund this situation. The Afghan nationals in the two hotels in West Northamptonshire currently house just over 140 people, and over 380 have been moved on into settled accommodation since the establishment of the hotels in September 2021. The current position following notice being served on Bedford Road for 26 August (effective from 25 August) and at Flore for 31 August is:



The Flore hotel is currently accommodating 45 people, comprising 14 discrete households including some single men, and the Bedford Road hotel is accommodating 96 people, comprising 31 discrete households, again including some single men. We currently have several moves in the pipeline which range from families who have agreed accommodation offers and are just awaiting transport to be confirmed, to people part way through conversations with agents and landlords.

As it stands, if all these moves are realised, we are currently looking at around 60 individuals who will not have a viable option at the end of the process and who the Council will need to assess a homelessness duty for. This is a fast-moving, dynamic situation and will change over the coming days and weeks. We are working extremely hard to ensure that we can find options for everyone at both hotels.

As a Council, our pledge is to resettle and support 10 households and we are committed to fulfil that pledge, whilst also utilising alternative means to resettle people through partnership working with NNC and other local authorities and utilising LAHF funding and additional homelessness funding. Additionally, DWP are assisting with homeless 'Duty to Refer' referrals to relevant local authorities, however the majority of cases will fall to WNC to provide housing and assistance, and for single men, an additional, bespoke option will be explored following the model of the Homes for Ukraine sponsorship scheme.

CONSULTATIONS

Community Governance Review Consultation

The LGBCE (Local Government Boundary Commission for England) have been conducting a ward boundary review for our Council. These changes will impact on some parish councils whose boundaries no longer align with our new wards. If a parish boundary is not aligned with a council ward, this may result in the need for parish wards to be created to enable the election to be conducted in areas which fall outside the council ward boundary. This can lead to additional expenses for parishes in the conduct of elections.

To meet this challenge WNC are preparing a Community Governance Review, allowing Town and Parish Councils an opportunity to put forward proposals to change their boundaries and the number of members. It also allows for the possibility of merging with an adjacent parish or parish meeting. Responding to the review WNC have written to parish councils recently, to ask them to express their interest in being part of that review, and we are being asked to encourage parishes in their wards to respond to us.



In order to be a part of the Community Governance Review, parish and town councils needed to email their views to electoralservices@westnorthants.gov.uk no later than 18 August.

WNC were particularly asking parishes to consider the following:

- Are there any parish meetings which should be incorporated into a parish council?
- Should any parish councils be merged with another parish council or parish meeting?
- Are any changes required to the existing boundaries of a parish to better reflect local communities? (This may be particularly relevant in areas where there has been housing development for instance.)
- Are there any parish councils that should be renamed to better reflect the communities they represent?
- Please note that the following is not within the scope of this review:
- The ward boundaries of West Northamptonshire Council
- Parliamentary boundaries
- The conduct or membership of individual parish councils or meetings.

WNC started preparing for the Community Governance Review as soon as our Council's new ward boundaries were confirmed, and we will draw up proposed terms of reference for the review.

The proposed timetable was as follows:

- 1 August 2023: Final decision of the Boundary Review
- 18 August 2023: Deadline for requests from Parishes for Community Governance Reviews
- 28 September 2023: Report to Council to commence Community Governance Review
- 28 September 2024: The Community Governance Review must be completed by this date.

The review will require West Northamptonshire Council to draw up proposals as to how the boundaries will be redrawn and then to carry out public consultation in relation to those proposals before a final decision is reached. A formal decision is made by full Council to amend the boundaries.

- By December 2024: Polling Station Review for new wards and parishes
- January - May 2025: 2025 Election delivery underway

Visit our Consultation Hub for more information about the Community Governance Review <https://westnorthants.citizenspace.com/.../community.../>
National Guidance on the Community Governance Review process can be found here <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/.../1527635.pdf>

Housing Allocations Consultation

People are being invited to have their say on proposals for how social housing will be allocated across West Northamptonshire from spring next year. West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) is currently seeking views on its new draft Housing Allocation Scheme, which is due to be implemented on 1 April 2024.



There are currently three housing allocation schemes that operate in West Northamptonshire covering the Daventry, South Northants, and Northampton areas. The existing policies operate in different ways to each other, therefore introducing a West Northamptonshire Housing Allocation Scheme will harmonise these differences making it fairer, clearer and more consistent across the West Northamptonshire area.

Residents, tenants and housing associations are among those being encouraged to give their feedback on these

proposals as part of a 10-week consultation starting today (19 July) and running until midnight on Tuesday, 26 September.

All responses will be considered and will help to shape a final version of the scheme to then be considered by West Northamptonshire Council's Cabinet this autumn. To view the draft proposals and complete the online questionnaire, visit the WNC Consultation Hub.

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

The new draft housing allocation scheme sets out proposals for who would be eligible and could apply for social housing across the whole of West Northamptonshire, along with how the Council processes applications, assesses and manages people's housing needs, and determines who should have priority for social housing.

Plans include expanding the Choice Based Lettings approach to allocating social housing across the whole West Northants area, which is already used in the Daventry and Northampton areas. Choice based lettings allows applicants to register an interest in properties they prefer that are suitable for their household size.

The consultation will last 10 weeks and closes on 26 September 2023. Residents can take part in the following ways:

- Complete the online survey here.

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

- Call us on 01327 322175.

- Email: ConsultationAllocationsPolicy@westnorthants.gov.uk

- Write to: Housing Allocations Consultation 2023, West Northamptonshire Council, The Guildhall, St Giles' Square, Northampton NN1 1DE

To request the consultation document in an alternative format,

please email ConsultationAllocationsPolicy@westnorthants.gov.uk or call 01327 322175.

Parks & Open Spaces Consultation

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 for each park.

The parks we are gathering feedback on are:

- Abington Park, Northampton
- Becketts Park, Northampton
- Borough Hill, Daventry
- Brackmills Country Park, Northampton
- Bradlaugh Fields, Northampton
- Brampton Valley Way Linear Park (Northampton to Market Harborough)
- Brixworth Country Park
- Cracks Hill, Crick
- Dallington Park, Northampton
- Daventry Country Park
- Delapre Park, Northampton
- Hunsbury Hill Park, Northampton
- Lings Wood & Billing Arbours Wood, Northampton
- The Racecourse, Northampton
- Upton Country Park, Northampton
- Midsummer Meadow, Northampton
- Watermeadow, Towcester



The feedback you provide will be used to help us to identify improvements and understand what is working well. Please tell us your views by completing the online feedback survey using the link below.

The Consultation closes on 30 September 2023. 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:

Email address: parcs.ddc@westnorthants.gov.uk

Address:

Environment, Countryside and Parks Team

West Northamptonshire Council

The Guildhall

St Giles' Square

Northampton

NN1 1DE

Telephone: 0300 126 7000

Public Spaces Protection Order Renewal 2023

We are consulting on renewing the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for Northampton to help tackle nuisance or problem behaviour.



A PSPO can deal with persistent and unreasonable nuisances and anti-social behaviour that has a negative effect on the quality of life for the local community in a particular area and intend to help ensure that members of the public and local communities can use and enjoy open areas and public spaces, helping to make Northampton a safe place to live. The Consultation Closes 12 September 2023.

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

FINANCE AND TRANSFORMATION

Household Support Fund

WNC have received further funding from the Department of Work and Pensions to support eligible residents until 31 March 2024. The Household Support Fund will be distributed in a variety of ways over the coming months, and we are currently working on the eligibility criteria and application process. Please note that the criteria and type of support offered for each round of funding can be different.



Whilst we finalise these arrangements, other support can be found on the following web pages:

Cost of living support:

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

Government Cost of Living Hub:

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

We will also be working with our partners to identify and support vulnerable families directly. Working on a low wage Support is available for West Northamptonshire residents earning less than £400 per week. Please follow the link below to view the eligibility criteria and application form. Residents who have applied for previous rounds of funding will be able to apply again (subject to meeting the eligibility criteria). The application may be closed at any point, and the website will be updated with details, to ensure funds are made available throughout the year up until 31 March 2024.

We are currently aiming to process applications within 3 weeks.

Make an application for the Household Support Fund:

<https://northamptonshire-self.achieveservice.com/.../Appl...>

Citizens Advice Cost of Living Data Briefing September 2023

The Citizens Advice Cost of Living Data Briefing is to be held on 14 September 2023 at 12 noon-1pm. The Chief Executive, Clare Moriarty and Chief Data Analyst, Tom MacInnes will look at their latest data. We'll also hear from a panel of expert speakers looking at tackling increasing costs and rising debt from a range of perspectives.

The number of people coming to Citizens Advice for help is still the highest it's ever been. The housing crisis is continuing to escalate, with mortgage holders plummeting deeper into debt, private sector evictions showing no signs of slowing, and rent prices continuing to increase. Citizens Advice advisers say this is the biggest issue people are facing. So, what should be a top priority for decision makers? They intend to discuss this and more on 14 September.



Public Finance Awards 2023

Our Finance and Procurement teams have made the Public Finance Awards 2023 shortlist not in one but in three categories!

The categories are:



- Finance Team of the Year
- Public Finance Leader of the Year – James Smith was nominated. James epitomises the ambition, positive attitude, behaviour and culture of the West Northants Finance Team
- Outstanding Procurement Initiative

View the 2023 categories and shortlist.

This remarkable achievement serves as a testament to the team's hard work, dedication, and expertise. We wish them all the best on 28 November at the awards ceremony in London, and we are certain that they will shine bright.

REGULATORY SERVICES

Consultation to close Emporium Way

This week we launched a consultation to seek the views of local residents and businesses around a proposal to temporarily close Emporium Way in Northampton, which has become a hotspot for anti-social behaviour and crime. The walkway is located off Northampton Market square and provides shortcuts to Sheep Street and the nearby Mayorhold and Newlands carparks, however, in recent months it has attracted illicit activities including loitering, urination, muggings, fighting and drug dealing. To tackle these behaviours, we are proposing to make a Public Spaces Protection Order to close the public highway temporarily. If the Order is approved, the walkway will be closed 24 hours a day, seven days a week until the market square redevelopment is complete in Summer 2024, with access to all adjoining areas available via alternative routes. Please encourage residents and local



businesses to share their views by taking part in the online survey via the Council's Consultation Hub.

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

Council's Annual Canvass

Our Council's annual canvass is underway, during which every property in West Northamptonshire will receive a communication via email or letter.

If you have provided your email address to us for the purpose of the canvass, you will receive branded emails from our Council next week. The emails will come from electoralservices@westnorthants.gov.uk and contain step-by-step instructions on how to check, confirm and/or change your details online. Every year the Electoral Registration Officer West Northamptonshire Council is legally required to conduct an annual canvass to ensure the electoral register is accurate and complete, for publication on 1 December 2023.

Voter ID

To view the full list of acceptable photo ID you can use to vote at a polling station, and for further information, please visit our website.

If you do not hold accepted photo ID, you can also apply for the free Voter Authority Certificate.

www.westnorthants.gov.uk/VoterID

Local Government Boundary Commission Review Issued

The number of West Northamptonshire unitary councillors will reduce from 93 to



76 at the next local elections in 2025 under the final recommendations of a review by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE).



West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) welcomed the outcome of the wide-ranging review, which is the first to take place for 10 years and sees changes to all electoral ward boundaries across the area. The LGBCE's conclusion must now be scrutinised and approved by Parliament before legally coming into force for the next WNC elections in 2025.

In their final report, the Commission has concluded that West Northants residents should be represented in the future by 76

councillors as the figure best facilitated a new warding pattern throughout the district. It means that from 2025 WNC councillors would be elected on a four-year term across 35 wards instead of the current 31 – comprising 13 three-councillor wards, 15 two-councillor wards, and seven single-councillor wards.

In response to residents' feedback during the review, other recommended changes by the Commission include creating two single councillor wards in the north of Daventry and merging two of draft recommendation wards in the south-west of the area to form a two-councillor Middleton Cheney ward.

The final recommendations report and interactive mapping can be viewed on the LGBCE website.

<https://www.lgbce.org.uk/.../new-political-map-west...>

The last electoral review in Northamptonshire took place in 2013 and WNC's current electoral arrangements are based on those of the previous county council, with 93 councillors serving across 31 wards.

LGBCE launched the review in summer 2022, holding its review in two stages with public consultation, firstly looking at the number of councillors, and then looking at how many wards, and the names of those wards.

To find out more about councillors, elections and democracy in West Northamptonshire, visit the Council's website.

RURAL SERVICES NETWORK (RSN)



The Rural Services Network
**National Rural
Conference 2023**
Monday 18th - Thursday 21st September

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.

Successful projects that DLUHC have funded to date include assets such as:

- community centres
- sporting and leisure facilities
- pubs
- cultural buildings
- heritage buildings

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

Community Organisations Cost of Living Fund

The national Lottery Community Fund is for organisations that support people and communities under severe pressure because of the increased cost of living. The main priority is to fund organisations supporting low-income households and individuals. You can apply for between £10,000 and £75,000.



To apply your organisation must already run critical services around at least one of the following:

- 1) food and emergency supplies – like food and baby banks
- 2) provision of hot meals, clothes or toiletries
- 3) emergency shelter – like night shelters or other accommodation for people experiencing homelessness.
- 4) safe spaces – like domestic abuse services and youth services

5) warmth – like warm rooms and spaces

6) financial and housing advice – like giving people advice because of the increased cost of living.

Your organisation must also be facing both increased demand for these critical services and increased costs of delivering these critical services. The deadline for applications is 16 October 2023 and funding must be spent by 31 March 2024.

<https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/community-organisations-cost-of-living-fund>

Community Tree Planting Grants

The UK Community Tree Planting Programme aims to support community projects that will:



- Conserve, restore and protect indigenous trees and woodlands, forests, habitats and associated biodiversity.
- Support community engagement in tree planting to promote reforestation and to increase awareness of the importance of trees and forests to environmental and human well-being.
- Encourage social cohesion and inclusion.

To be eligible, your organisation must be community-based e.g. a school, community group or non-governmental organisation. There are two tiers of funding available:

- Small scale: A maximum of £1,000 is available for projects of up to 1 year in duration. This could be small community woodland, orchards, hedging projects, etc.
- Larger scale: Projects to range from 1000 – 10,000 trees, with a maximum price equivalent to £1.50/tree (inclusive of tree protection). Most suitable for community woodland or hedging projects.

Applications can be submitted from June onwards with a final deadline of 15 December 2023.

UK Community Tree Planting Grant — International Tree Foundation

<https://www.internationaltreefoundation.org/uk-grants>

Consultation launched on ways to best protect our hedgerows

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has this week launched a new consultation on the best ways we can protect our hedgerows.

As the EU's land-based subsidies are replaced with new farming schemes, there is also a move away from cross compliance regulation. In its new consultation, DEFRA says it's aiming to improve the way farm



regulation works to make it fairer, clearer, and more proportionate and effective, whilst working in partnership with industry to deliver the Government's environmental targets.

As 'important ecological building blocks across our landscapes', hedgerows provide habitat, act as wildlife corridors, slow soil erosion and water run-off, support crop pollinators and sequester carbon. As such, farmers are not allowed to remove important hedgerows. They must also maintain a buffer strip along their hedgerows and must not cut or trim hedgerows during bird nesting and rearing season.

The consultation is seeking views on the best way to maintain and improve existing protections, as well as how the department should approach enforcement. Further information about the consultation can be found on DEFRA's website The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has this week launched a new consultation on the best ways we can protect our hedgerows.

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The consultation, which closes on 20 September 2023, is seeking views on the best way to maintain and improve existing protections, as well as how the department should approach enforcement. Further information about the consultation can be found on DEFRA's website below, including details of how you can submit your response. <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/.../Consultation%20on...>

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
- WNS/2022/0071/MAO Outline for 32 dwellings on Land off Blenheim Rise, Kings Sutton 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/2022/1948/PIP Land South-East of Brackley Road Silverstone, 3 - 5 houses
- WNS/2022/1947/PIP Land to North of 14 Longcroft Lane, Paulerspury 2 - 4 houses

HOUSING

Action Plan to tackle issues with HMOs

A new action plan to tackle issues around Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs) is set to be discussed by West Northamptonshire Council's (WNC) Cabinet next week. At the meeting planned for Tuesday, 11 July, Cabinet Members will consider the latest report which details proposals to crack down on unregulated and poorly managed HMOs, tighten planning controls and improve private renting for tenants. The report provides a summary of work achieved by the HMO Member working group, which includes Members drawn from cross party membership, and makes recommendations for the implementation of an action plan for the Council to progress.

The working group also heard from local residents and Ward Councillors in seeking to understand the perceived community impact of HMOs, along with representatives from the Northampton Student Landlord Network.

Proposals put forward in the plan include:

- a. Tackling litter and rubbish generated by HMOs
- b. Monitoring general maintenance of properties
- c. Reviewing room sizes and amenities for tenants
- d. Maintaining a register of licensed HMOs
- e. Enforcement action against unlicensed HMOs
- f. Reviewing the Housing regulatory regime; including the Council's Additional HMO and Selective Licensing Regimes
- g. Ensuring information is available to local communities via the Council website.

Other proposals in the plan include improving parking in neighbourhoods with HMOs by investigating vehicle ownership and use across licensed HMO properties and single-family dwellings of a comparable size and reviewing rules and best practice relating to HMOs and their impact on local communities in other areas of the country.

The report also recommends that planning decisions are made in line with the Article 4 Direction policy - planning legislation which allows the Council to remove permitted development rights in order to protect



local amenities or the wellbeing of an area, and to ensure that this information is available to residents, communities, property owners, and developers.

Homelessness

It's important that you contact us as soon as possible if you are worried about your housing situation or are facing homelessness. Call our Housing Teams on 0300 126 7000 or, in an emergency, visit our offices in Northampton, Daventry or Towcester. We are available 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. The earlier in the day you contact us, the more time we will have to help you.

- If you have nowhere to stay tonight and need help after 5pm, please call our out of hours service on 0300 126 7000.
- If you have concerns, outside of our opening hours, that someone who is under 18 has nowhere safe to stay tonight, please contact the Police on 999
- If you or someone you know are at risk of domestic abuse or feel unsafe at home, please see our domestic abuse advice page.
- <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/community-safety-and-emergencies/domestic-abuse>
- We also have monthly drop-in services at Brackley and Hunsbury Libraries.
- <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/your-council/monthly-drop-sessions>

Although it's not essential you have this with you, we will be able to help you more quickly if you have available relevant paperwork, such as:

- any paperwork relating to your housing problem, such as your Tenancy agreement or any Notice from your landlord.
- information about your income or any benefits you receive.
- valid ID (such as a driving licence or passport)

Contact us online.

If you are worried about your housing situation or are facing homelessness, you can register online for help and advice. You will need your email address and will be asked to set up a password to register before providing details of your circumstances. A member of our Housing Team will then contact you to discuss your circumstances further.

Register online.

<https://live.housingjigsaw.co.uk/accounts/account/register>

ENVIRONMENT

Four Parks Retain Green Flag Status

Daventry Country Park, Abington Park, Bradlaugh Fields and Delapre Park have all retained their Green Flag Awards - nationally recognised as the benchmark for the management of recreational outdoor spaces.

Bradlaugh Fields in Northampton has retained the award for the fourth year running, following a community effort to increase biodiversity and conservation.



Abington and Delapre parks, also in Northampton, retain their awards for the tenth and eleventh years in a row respectively, in recognition for the hard work of community groups and volunteers to maintain these widely used open spaces.

Daventry Country Park, which has received investment to its visitor facilities in recent years, achieves the award for the 24th time.

To find out more about open spaces and parks across West Northamptonshire, visit our parks and open spaces page.

You can view the list of all winners here: <https://www.keepbritaintidy.org/.../Winners%20List...>

Don't Bin Batteries



People are being further reminded not to bin batteries, after this laptop battery almost caused a fire at our Household Waste Recycling Centre in Daventry last week. Fortunately, staff noticed the smoke and removed the battery in time - but the incident serves as a timely reminder of the potential dangers.

They may look harmless, but batteries left in bins can be squashed, punctured or shredded by our machinery, causing them to overheat and catch fire. Advice on disposing of

batteries safely can be found here:

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/bin.../battery-disposal>

New Scheme to cut Fuel Poverty & Tackle Climate Change

West Northamptonshire Council is pushing ahead with a plan to harness renewable and wasted heat to tackle fuel poverty and make the Northampton area a more sustainable place.

It has announced work on a Sustainable Heat Network Feasibility Study to explore the possibility of a district heating system that can deliver lower-cost, low-carbon heat to homes and businesses. District heating collects warmth from a variety of sources and uses a distribution system of insulated pipes to carry it from a central source to multiple buildings. This can significantly reduce heating costs and carbon emissions compared with traditional heating solutions which use electricity or burn fossil and other fuels. To bring this vision to life, West Northamptonshire Council has secured £112k from round 12 of the Government's Heat Network Delivery Unit (HNDU) funding. The project will also be match-funded by contributions of £20k from Northamptonshire Partnership Homes and £40k from the council's Public Health team.



The project, built on work originally launched by Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS, now Department for Energy Security & Net Zero) in 2019, will now focus on the Northampton and Rothersthorpe Village area.

Its aims are to:

- Update the previous BEIS report, to include data from those located within the wider boundary now covered by the project.
- Investigate opportunities for multiple energy centres, including recoverable heat from different sources such as commercial activities, sewer network heat recovery, and water bodies.
- Produce a detailed feasibility study highlighting sustainable heat generation options, costs for providing the heat network, carbon savings, potential energy costs for users, operating costs, income and commercial viability,
- Identify where West Northamptonshire and other social housing stock can be supplied with heat from the network.

Sustainable engineering firm, Ramboll, will work on the project with infrastructure consultancy, AECOM, following a competitive bidding process.

Upon completion, the feasibility study will provide critical data on sustainable heat sources, technical and financial costs, and potential funding opportunities. The council aims to apply for funding from HNDU round 13 to cover the detailed project development phase based on the study's findings.

Support Needed for Energy Bill Amendment

Can you help? Article provided by OFTEC, one of RSN Rural Services Partnership members.



You may be aware that the government has proposed to phase out the installation of appliances that burn oil, LPG or coal in homes and non-domestic premises off the gas grid. For homes, the end date is 2026, some nine years earlier than similar proposals for homes that use gas. In most cases, the owners will be expected to install a heat pump instead. While the need to reduce emissions is important, there is concern that the proposals treat rural dwellers unfairly, exposing them to much higher installation costs and significant disruption, while denying them the opportunity to

choose a low carbon heating system that best suits their needs.

If you currently use oil heating, you may be interested to know that the Cornish MP, George Eustice, has tabled amendments to the Government's Energy Bill. The amendments would enable a renewable liquid fuel called HVO to be made available at an affordable price for heating use. It costs around £500 to convert existing oil heating systems to use HVO, compared to the significant costs of between £10,000 and £30,000 to install a heat pump in off grid homes, and HVO delivers a carbon reduction of around 88% compared to fossil fuel heating oils. Conversion can be achieved in little more than hour, making it exactly the kind of friction free solution that rural households and businesses need.

To be successful, the amendment needs to be supported by as many MPs as possible. You can help by asking your MP to support the amendment.

A draft letter is available here.

https://rsnonline.org.uk/.../amendment_campaign_july_2023...

You can find the contact details for your MP here:

<https://members.parliament.uk/FindYourMP>

You can find out more about HVO on the Future Ready Fuel website:

<https://futrereadyfuel.info/>

Tackling Environmental Crime

Fly-tipping and environmental crime has a significant negative impact on our streets and countryside. West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) is committed to reducing fly-tipping through the fly-tipping charter, which is backed by a robust enforcement policy to discourage and prosecute offenders.



The Charter includes a detailed plan of action, demonstrating the steps that are being taken to tackle the issue, including targeted patrols, the use of CCTV, and working with residents, businesses, and town and parish councils to avoid fly-tipping and gather intelligence to prosecute.

Through the cleaner communities campaign, WNC seeks to highlight the negative impact of environmental crime and demonstrate the work of officers to tackle this and remove fly-tipping on

the land where we have a responsibility to do so. Through investigation and working with the public to share information WNC will hold people to account and prosecute offenders.

It also sets out how the Council will communicate with businesses, landlords and householders to ensure they are clear on their responsibilities towards managing their waste responsibly.

The latest figures published by Government relating to our first year as a new unitary council demonstrate the vast scale of illegal waste which is carelessly fly tipped across our area. Through the hard work of our environmental crime team, we have made a head start in tackling fly-tipping in West Northamptonshire and creating a cleaner community for everyone.

People can view the Fly-tipping Charter at <http://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/.../fly-tipping-and-duty...>

People can report fly-tipping and environmental crime by visiting:

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/stree.../report-fly-tipping>

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

Local Area Partnership DSN4

The DSN4 LAP meeting took place 8 August at 13.00pm.

The date of next meeting is 5 September 3.00 pm – 4.00 pm.



Crisis Cafes

If you or someone you know needs mental health support, you can drop into one of our crisis cafes to talk with a mental health

professional and a MIND peer support worker.

For locations and times, visit: www.nhft.nhs.uk/crisis-cafe

Northampton Wellbeing Walks Programme

West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) has awarded £10,000 in funding to Trilogy Active to continue to deliver free sports and wellbeing activities in Northampton.

The activities run across different areas of Northampton and include walks to improve mental health and wellbeing as well as sports activities for young people.



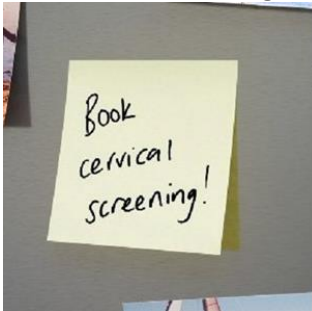
The Northampton Wellbeing Walks Programme, which is part of the nationally recognised Ramblers Wellbeing Walks programme, aims to provide everyone with access to a short group walk within easy reach of where they live. The walks allow people of all abilities to meet and connect with new people in their area whilst getting more active and will be delivered 14 times per week across 12 locations in Northampton, all free of charge.

The Street Sports initiative is a doorstep sport programme which aims to engage young people in underserved communities and use sport as a diversionary activity to create positive change by providing free to access sport and exercise activities.

The programme includes 10 weekly sessions for people aged 8 to 18 years and will take place across the Thorplands, Kings Heath, Blackthorn and Bellinge areas of Northampton.

Cervical Cancer Screening

Cervical Cancer Screening is available to those between the ages of 25 to 64 and is crucial in helping to pick up signs of cervical cancer at an early stage. Cervical cancer is when abnormal cells in the lining of the cervix grow in an uncontrolled way and in time, form a growth also known as a tumour. If not caught early, cancer cells gradually grow into the surrounding tissues and may spread to other areas of the body which can be life threatening.



**Don't ignore
your cervical
screening invite**

Screening
Save time
Help us
help you

NHS: With West Northamptonshire data showing a percentage of people not taking up a cervical screening test, the local Public Health team is advising residents between the age of 25 to 64, who are eligible for cervical cancer screening to make sure they attend their screening appointment and remain up to date with their screening.

Dr Annapurna Sen, Consultant in Health Protection for West Northamptonshire Council says:

“Across West Northamptonshire 30% of the eligible

population between age 25-64 did not have their cervical screening test, especially younger women. This may risk many of these people with cervical cancer go undetected, which may spread due to delay in diagnosis and treatment.

“I urge to you protect yourself from a risk of developing a cervical cancer. Attend your screening appointment as it is reliable at picking up cancers or abnormalities that could lead to cancer and will do more good than harm to you. If you have missed your last appointment or are putting it off, take the time to call your GP and discuss booking an appointment.”

What is a Chatty Café Scheme?

The Chatty Café Scheme is the UK's leading non-profit organisation tackling loneliness. They offer three services, all designed to reduce loneliness and/or social isolation. They include:

- Face to face meet ups where venues offer 'Chatter & Natter' tables, where customers can get together and chat. There are hundreds of venues around the UK, many Chatter & Natter tables are hosted by Chatty Table Volunteers.
- Online Chatty Cafe Sessions held every Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 1pm – 1:30pm. Anyone over 18 can join, simply to chat to others.
- Telephone Friendship Service for anyone over 18 who is experiencing loneliness and could benefit from a weekly chat on the phone.

They have a wonderful team of volunteers who help deliver the above services. Please visit their 'Volunteers' page to find out more about our volunteering roles.

<https://thechattycafescheme.co.uk/>

Each venue receives Welcome Pack with 'Chatter & Natter' table signs, posters, leaflets, and window stickers, and registration on the national scheme's map. WNC can provide comms support

West Northamptonshire Council
LibraryPlus
ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Chatty Cafe Scheme

At a loose end?
Fancy a chat?

Whether you're on your own or with a friend come and have a natter at:

Towcester Library
The Forum
Moot Lane
NN12 6AD

Every Tuesday 10am - 12pm

For more info contact Nikki Hambly on
0300 126 7000
Towcester.LibraryPlus@westnorthants.gov.uk

A warm welcome is waiting
Stay for as long as you like - it can be 5 minutes or an hour or so - the choice is always yours.

Having a chat can brighten your day

in terms of promotions/press releases etc, and monthly updates from the national scheme to help reduce loneliness and get people talking. Funding is available from CC Scheme for refreshments if required.

EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Are you thinking about Holiday Dates in 2023?

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

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

Summer Reading Challenge

This summer, children aged 4 to 11 can visit any West Northamptonshire Library to get involved in a Summer Reading Challenge themed around the power of play, sport, games and physical activity. The Summer Reading Challenge, which launches on Saturday, 8 July, invites children to read six books over the summer holidays while tracking their reading via a fictional summer obstacle course - brought to life by children's author and illustrator Loretta Schauer. Participants will be rewarded with a medal and certificate upon completing the challenge. The Library Service has also partnered with local leisure centres to provide a voucher entitling children to a free swim or badminton, table tennis or squash court hire, depending on location.



The Challenge runs until Saturday, 9 September and aims to increase children's reading engagement and confidence whilst supporting their health and wellbeing and introducing families to their local library.

People can sign-up to the Challenge in any library branch from 8 July. Further information around the Summer Reading Challenge and library events and services can be found on the libraries webpage.

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/libraries>

CarKraft Young Driver Event

Join us for the CarKraft Young Driver Event on 17th Sept 2023.

This exciting event at the Silverstone Circuit is perfect for young drivers looking to enhance their skills behind the wheel. Get ready for a half-day of fun and educational activities to improve your driving abilities. At the CarKraft Young Driver Event, you'll have the opportunity to learn from experienced instructors and participate in various driving exercises. This event covers everything from mastering the art of braking and steering to understanding road safety. Whether you're newly qualified or have some driving experience, this event caters to all skill levels.

So, if you're eager to become a confident and skilled driver, mark your calendar and prepare for an unforgettable day at the CarKraft Young Driver Event! Find out more and book your place here: <https://www.carkraft.info/>

A promotional flyer for the CarKraft Young Driver Event. The top features the CarKraft logo and two call-to-action buttons: 'WANT TO LEARN TO DRIVE?' and 'SO YOU THINK YOU CAN DRIVE?'. Below this, it states 'CarKraft is a FREE half-day driving experience at the Porsche Experience Centre, Silverstone Circuit, Northants, NN12 8GR'. A yellow box highlights 'DRIVERS AGED 17 to 30'. The flyer lists activities: 'Experience skidding techniques on the Kick Plate and Ice Hill™', 'On-the-road observed driver' (noting it's not an assessment), and 'Safer driving interactive workshop' (looking at crash causes). It includes social media icons for Twitter and Facebook, and a website link: 'Visit www.carkraft.info to view availability and to book your place'. Logos for NSRA (Northamptonshire Safer Roads Alliance) and other partners are at the bottom.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & GRANT FUNDING

STACK to transform Market Walk Shopping Centre

WNC is delighted to be working with a leisure developer, STACK, to transform the vacant Market Walk shopping centre in Northampton town centre. STACK completed the acquisition of the Market Walk site earlier this month and will now bring forward an exciting regeneration and development project to transform the site to offer an innovative food hall and leisure space. Previously known as Peacock Place, Market Walk occupies a prominent spot at the heart of the town centre, next to the historic Market Square. However, the site has stood empty for a number of years. To complete the project, WNC will provide up to £4.2 million investment through the Towns Fund, coupled with private investment of £8 million from STACK. Once finished, the space will host a series of independent street food traders, a variety of bars and a dedicated space for interactive games, all focussed on communal seating and a main stage for live music performances and entertainment. This type of leisure concept is already successful in other cities in Newcastle and Sunderland. STACK Newcastle welcomed over 3 million visitors in the first three years and STACK Seaburn attracts over 70,000 visitors per month. The repurposing of the shopping centre will enhance the town's vibrancy and vitality, supporting both the daytime and night-time economy and complementing the ongoing transformation of the historic Market Square and public realm of Abington Street and Fish Street. Following the successful acquisition, the developers will now take the first steps to seek the relevant planning and licensing permissions to bring this project forward for delivery over the coming months.



WNC Acquires Vacant Job Centre Site

The former Job Centre located in Wood Street Northampton has been purchased by West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) as part of the ongoing redevelopment of 35 – 45 Abington Street.

The site is in the heart of the town centre, set just behind Abington Street and the Grosvenor Centre. Having sat vacant for more than a decade the site has fallen into disrepair. WNC has bought the building to ensure that this site benefits from restoration and provides high-quality homes and services for the local community.



The £475,000 freehold price plus costs, was funded through the Towns Fund, which is allocated by Government to enable WNC to transform Northampton Town Centre. WNC has been able to acquire this site to form part of the wider regeneration of the former BHS and M&S stores.

The Towns Fund is part of the Government's plan for Levelling Up the UK economy and the Council has secured £24.9 million to invest into transforming Northampton's Town Centre. The completion coincides with the Expression for Interests as WNC seeks a development partner for the site. The sites will undergo extensive redevelopment to deliver modern leisure or retail spaces to the ground floor with new homes for residents above.

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Through the densification of the site, it will bring forward new homes and flexible leisure space and which will lead to increased footfall into the centre to support the existing retail offer within the wider town.

The next phase of the project on the former BHS property will see the large central building, measuring approximately 60,000 sq. ft undergo a full internal strip out and the removal of any asbestos containing materials. This will ensure the building is safe and secure and enable the Council to bring forward the exciting regeneration project at the earliest opportunity.

These works form part of the Northampton Town Centre Masterplan (2019). The wider regeneration of Northampton Town Centre includes the Market Square redevelopment which will see this area become a cultural hub for the town centre, and public realm works in Abington Street and Fish Street which will see the area transformed with new paving, improved seating, lighting and landscaping, and public art installations.

New Town Centre Manager for Brackley and Towcester

A new town centre manager has been appointed to improve the appeal of Brackley and Towcester Town Centres to visitors and businesses. Samantha Hosking took up her post a month ago and will be the key



point of contact working for West Northamptonshire Council in partnership with Brackley Town Council and Towcester Town Council. Her new role, which is funded as part of a Section 106 financial contribution made by local developers as part of their planning permission, will include establishing relationships with local businesses, the community and voluntary organisations. Samantha, who lives locally, will coordinate and lead on a programme of

improvements and innovations to revitalise the much-loved towns whilst promoting the areas for investment and business growth and helping the local economy thrive.

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.

Funding to improve quality of life of older people

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/>

TRANSPORT & HIGHWAYS

Surface Dressing for Eight Key Roads

The condition of eight key roads across West Northamptonshire is set to be improved over the coming weeks. More than 100,000 square metres of highway are to undergo surface dressing between now and mid-September.



Following the completion of the works, road users should adhere to the temporary road signage, and are required to take extra care. Loose chips are laid onto a layer of bitumen to seal the road surface and provide better grip for vehicles. There is a short-term heightened risk of skidding from the loose chippings so motorists must reduce their speed when travelling on the treated sections of road network.

The roads earmarked for the 2023 surface dressing programme up to 13 September include:

- A428 Bedford Road East, Yardley Hastings
- A5076 Redhouse Road, Northampton
- A45 London Road, Weedon
- A5199 Welford Road, Thornby
- A508 Harborough Road, Maidwell
- Scaldwell Road/Lampton Road, Old
- B4031 Croughton
- Station Road, Aynho

The process is weather dependent and cannot take place in the event of rain, so the programme is flexible. Residents will be informed 48-72 hours before work is due to commence. Members can find further updates regarding works in your area via our Current Works page.

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/.../roadworks/current-works>

Further Works on A428 Yardley Hastings

Kier, working with West Northants Council, will be carrying out further works on A428, Yardley Hastings. This will be taking place 29th August 2023-7th September 2023, 20:00-06:00 under a full road closure.





Following on from recent resurfacing works Kier will be installing road markings, studs, etc.

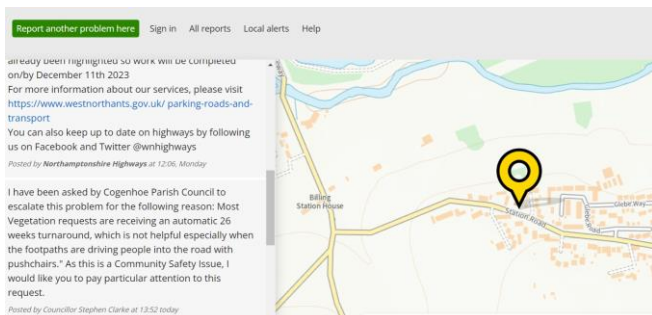
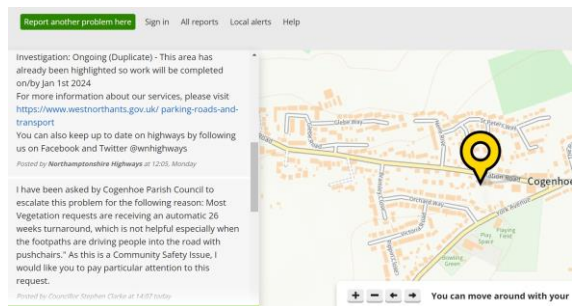
Angel Street Closed until mid-end September 2023

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/M3o5S0OvtmO>

Fix My Street 4718676 now 4718678 Cogenhoe

I have been advised that Problem 4718676 is a duplicate of 4718678. I have escalated it again as it is an automatic 26 weeks turnaround, which is not helpful, especially when it is a footpath that results in people moving onto the road with pushchairs. I have asked them to consider this as a Community Safety Issue. I will keep you updated. I received an update on 1 August 2023 confirming that it will be completed within its original timeframe.

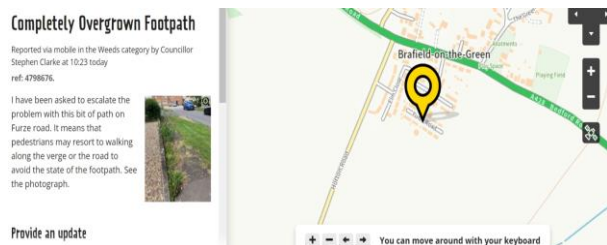


Fix My Street 4718666 now 4641502 Cogenhoe

I have been advised that Problem 4718666 is a duplicate of 4641502. I have escalated it again as Vegetation Requests are receiving an automatic 26 weeks turnaround, which is not helpful, especially when it is a footpath that results in people moving onto the road with pushchairs.

I have asked them to consider this as a Community Safety Issue. I will keep you updated. I received an update on 1 August 2023 confirming that it will be completed within its original timeframe.

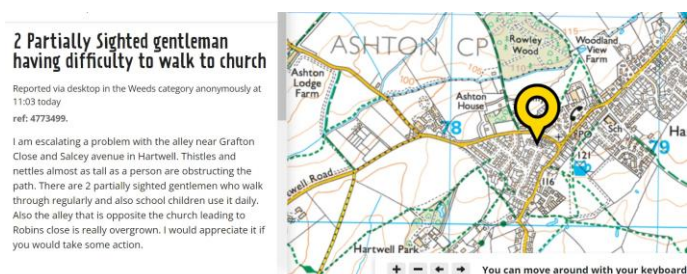
Fix My Street 4798676 Brafield on the Green



I have escalated again to Fix my Street (ref: 4798676) the problem with this bit of path on Furze road, Brafield. It means that pedestrians may resort to walking along the verge or the road to avoid the state of the footpath. See the photograph.

I received an update on 1 August 2023 confirming that it will be completed within its original timeframe.

Fix My Street 4773499 Hartwell



I escalated a problem with overgrown alleyways in Hartwell used by partially sighted gentlemen and children.



On 18 July 2023, I heard from Fix My Street:

Investigation: Completed (Defect Found), Defect Repair: Not Started - The area has been inspected and work has been scheduled to be carried out within the next 28 days. You will receive further information when this job is completed. I am pleased to report that work was completed on 7 August 2023.

Bus Fare Cap Extended until end of October

On Wednesday, as part of the Help for Households support, the government announced that they are 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/government/news/government-extends-2-bus-fare-cap-and-protects-vital-services)

Community Transport Directory

Community transport providers in Northamptonshire provide a valuable and often essential service to vulnerable people. push more people across doctors and hospital groceries.



Poor rural bus networks cause isolation and into poverty. Community transport schemes Northamptonshire help 1000s of people reach appointments and take them to fetch

With thanks to all the contributed to the updated regularly, information was Northamptonshire to the content in the included. If you are a wishing to use the you credit providing a link to our For your copy, please

organisations and transport schemes that have Northamptonshire ACRE guide. This guide is and every effort was made to ensure the correct when it was published. Please contact ACRE should you wish amendments to be made directory or if you are aware of a scheme not local authority, organisation or business information from directory, please ensure that Northamptonshire ACRE as your source website and contact information.

765888 acre@northantsacre.org.uk

contact Northamptonshire ACRE- 01604

<https://www.northantsacre.org.uk/latest-transport...>

Community Transport Grants

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.

<https://www.motability.org.uk/.../community-transport.../>

Northamptonshire Strategic Transport Model

West and North Northamptonshire Councils have teamed up to start work on a new version of the Northamptonshire Strategic Transport Model. The model uses a computer simulation to anticipate traffic flows and is used to inform strategic planning where new developments or major roads are proposed.

It was last rebuilt in 2015, since when technology has moved on significantly, meaning a full overhaul is needed to ensure the data it produces is as accurate as possible. Each council will contribute £78,000 toward the project from fees charged to developers using the model, alongside £400,000 previously allocated by the former Northamptonshire County Council.



Hosting, maintenance and operation fees could take costs to a total of around £2m over the life of the contract. West Northamptonshire Council will lead on procurement of the model rebuild. As part of the process, each council will have its own version of the new model, but it will be managed through a continued relationship with the consultancy building it.

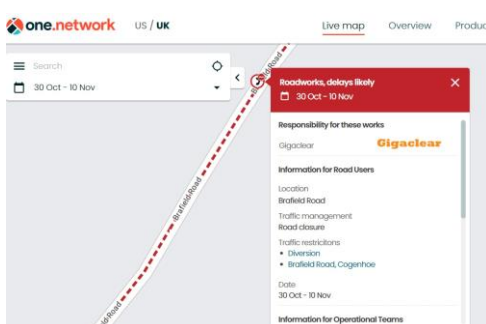
The new model will have a 2023 base year, informed by verified traffic count data, and the process is expected to be complete by autumn 2024, with a contract anticipated to run until 2031.

West Northants Council's response to the consultation welcomes that staff will still be available to assist with ticket purchases, customer service and passenger assistance, but warns that there should be no reduction in staffed hours compared to the current ticket office hours. The response also highlights that the needs of the partially sighted and those with mobility issues must be fully taken into account. In addition, simplification of the fares structure as well as an improvement in both the quality and number of ticket machines are required before the changes can be made.

The public consultation will take place until 1 September and people are able view the proposals and the consultation online. Find out more about the proposals and the consultation here:

<https://www.transportfocus.org.uk/train-station-ticket.../>

TTRO(23/24) W339 - Brafield Road Cogenhoe



Comex2000UK are intending on undertaking ducting works on behalf of Gigaclear along Brafield Road in Cogenhoe. To complete this work safely will require that the road is closed from the 30th of October 2023 until the 10th November 2023.

The closure and diversion can be viewed here

<https://one.network/?tm=135418767>

Expansion of E-Scooter Service

People in Northampton have taken 3 million trips on e-scooters across the town over the last three years. And now, Voi, together with West Northamptonshire Council (WNC), has announced the expansion of its e-scooter service to the north and south of Northampton to include Moulton and Collingtree.

Since the e-scooter trial was launched in September 2020, public hire e-scooters have become an important addition to transport in the town, with just over 63,000 people in Northampton now signed up to Voi, using them to commute to work and education.

E-scooters are a much greener way to travel and since their introduction in Northampton have replaced over 1.4 million car journeys, clocking up over 4.3 million miles and reducing CO2 emissions in the town by an estimated 667 tonnes.

Safety is Voi's top priority with the company hosting a number of online safety webinars which 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. Remaining webinars for 2023 have been scheduled for Tuesday 12 September at 5.30pm and 6.45pm, Thursday 19 October at 12pm and 1.15pm, Tuesday 14 November at 5.30pm and 6.45pm and Thursday 7 December at 12pm and 1.15pm. Anyone completing a safety webinar will receive 30 free minutes for use on either a Voi e-scooter or e-bike and a helmet. Riders must be 18 or over and have a provisional or full driving licence. People can sign up for the webinars by visiting: Voi UK: Safe Riding Skills Events 2023

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



POLICE FIRE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

Safer Streets Funding

In partnership with the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners office (OPFCC), we have delivered further improvement works around Northampton.

The works include lighting improvements around taxi ranks on Mercers Row, Wood Hill and George Row and CCTV cameras installed around St Giles Churchyard and Newlands Car Park in Northampton Town Centre following anti-social behaviour issues. These have been delivered using £448,000 of shared Safer Streets funding with North Northamptonshire Council.

Find out more about Safer Streets funding.

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/.../safer-streets-funding>



Serious Violence Consultation

Residents are being asked to have their say on how serious violence is tackled in Northamptonshire by taking part in a consultation. The Serious Violence Duty was introduced in January 2023 and requires organisations across the public sector to work together locally to tackle, prevent and reduce incidents of serious violence, including knife crime and domestic abuse, and make local communities safer. Anyone affected by serious violence in the last year is asked to share their experience in the survey. All results are recorded



anonymously and there is no obligation to provide any information that will identify anyone. The feedback provided will help the Northamptonshire Serious Violence Alliance deepen its understanding of the views and experiences of residents across the county and identify the kinds of serious violence that happen in the county, enabling authorities to put effective schemes in place which focus on preventing crime and intervening early to reduce the chances of someone committing or becoming a victim of crime. The specified authorities responsible for the Northamptonshire Serious Violence Alliance include Local Government Authorities, Criminal Justice, Health and Social Care, Police, and Fire and Rescue authorities. Serious violence can affect anyone, and the impact can be life changing - whether you are a victim, their friend or family member, or a witness. That is why we are strongly encouraging anyone who has been affected by serious violence in the last 12 months to share their experience in this survey and help us to improve the safety and wellbeing of people in our communities.

The Northamptonshire Serious Violence Alliance will also be going out to communities and involving various stakeholders to collect information in addition to this survey. Dates and times of these public events for people to attend to find out more will be released at a later date.

The survey closes at midnight on Friday, 27 October 2023, and people can share their views via the West Northamptonshire Council Consultation Hub. <https://westnorthants.citizenspace.com/.../serious.../>

Grants Scheme Launched to mitigate Knife Crime

West Northamptonshire Council (WNC), in partnership with the Northamptonshire Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (OPFCC) has launched a new grants scheme to mitigate youth violence and knife crime in West Northants.

Grants of up to £10,000 are available for Voluntary and Community Sector organisations who have



identified projects, either new or existing, that aim to alleviate youth violence and knife crime in local communities.

These projects can be prevention or intervention projects, including projects that promote community safety, deter potential offenders, or provide support and resources to at-risk individuals or groups to prevent their involvement in violence and crime.

Registered charities, voluntary or community groups, constitutionalised clubs that engage with young people,

and not-for-profit organisations can submit an expression of interest form to WNC outlining their project to be considered for the funding.

Find more information and view the full criteria for applications on the WNC website and in the Council's Community Funding Grants Framework. If you would like to speak to the Community Funding Grants Team about your project or your eligibility to apply for this grant, email: communitygrants@westnorthants.gov.uk including your contact telephone number, as a telephone conversation can sometimes clarify a question more efficiently.

The roadshow starts with a talk, so it is best to arrive before the start time so you can get a cup of tea and get settled.

CULTURE, HERITAGE & SPORT

Heritage Open Days Event 8-17 September 2023

Everyone is invited to explore West Northamptonshire's history during the Heritage Open Days festival taking place between 8 and 17 September. Dozens of stately homes, including Sulgrave Manor, Lamport Hall and Canons Ashby, buildings of historic interest, including 78 Derngate and Weedon Royal Ordnance

Depot, and museums and places of worship across the county will all be taking part in England's largest annual festival of history and culture.



As well as opening up buildings or parts of buildings not normally accessible to the public, there will also be individual events on offer including guided tours, walks and open days, all free to attend.

Our Council is an official promoter of the event and a list of all participating attractions and events is available on the Council website to endorse the festival and boost visitor numbers. This will be updated as more attractions register, so be sure to

keep checking back!

This is a fantastic opportunity to explore and enjoy West Northamptonshire's many fascinating cultural sites and learn about its rich past. I am pleased to see so many of our local attractions taking part and providing activities which are accessible and free for all, including the fantastic Heritage Bus Service which forms an important part of the event and enables people to travel between venues freely.

Volunteer Bus Drivers

Volunteer bus drivers are sought to support with this year's Heritage Open Days, which take place from 8 to 17 September. Drivers will need a category D PCV (passenger carrying vehicle) licence. We are also looking for volunteer bus conductors, who do not need a licence. Training will be provided for both drivers and conductors. Please email communications@westnorthants.gov.uk to register your interest.

Coronation Art Competition



Schoolchildren of all ages in Northamptonshire are being asked to display their creative skills and share what inspired them about the King's Coronation by taking part in the countywide Coronation Art Competition.

His Majesty's Representative in Northamptonshire, the Lord-Lieutenant is inviting pupils to create a work of art based on their take on the Coronation celebrations that took place across the country in

May.

James Saunders Watson Esq, His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire, said: "The possibilities are endless: you can submit drawings on size A3 canvas, paper, board, or you can use oil or water-based paint, pencil, pastel, crayons, collage, and photography to show what Coronation meant to you and remember you're limited only by your imagination.

"Being Northamptonshire I expect we'll see plenty of creative ways to use shoes and boots, and if you're not creative with your hands, write a poem or a song or send across your computer graphics.

"We are looking forward to receiving some wonderful and colourful submissions and I cannot wait to see the entries displayed at the final exhibition that will take place during the October half term. "

There are four age categories for children with ages between four and sixteen with a cash prize of £100 per category, to be awarded at the final exhibition that will take place at The Stables at Lamport Hall on Thursday, 26 October. The top ten contestants in each category will be invited to exhibit their artworks at the exhibition. Residents, entrants, and their families will be welcome to visit the exhibition, which will run from Thursday, 26 October until Sunday, 29 October.

Entries must be sent to coronationart@outlook.com by Wednesday, 30 August, and include the entrant's name, age, the school, and the school's postcode.

West Northants to host Women's 2025 Rugby World Cup

West Northamptonshire will be taking part in the biggest-ever celebration of women's international rugby having been announced as a host for the Rugby World Cup 2025 – and the 2-year countdown kicked yesterday 22 August. The 10th edition of the women's pinnacle global tournament is set to take place between 22 August and 27 September 2025, and will see matches taking place in front of a worldwide audience at Northampton's legendary Franklins Gardens stadium - home of the internationally renowned Northampton Saints.

The tournament will be the most accessible women's Rugby World Cup ever and will expand the reach of the game across the five-week period by bringing the world's best players to cities and venues across the country, including:

- Brighton and Hove – Brighton and Hove Albion Stadium
- Bristol – Ashton Gate
- Exeter – Sandy Park
- London – Twickenham Stadium
- Manchester – Salford Community Stadium
- Northampton – Franklin's Gardens
- Sunderland – Stadium of Light
- York – York Community Stadium

While the full match schedules and ticketing details will be announced next year, the milestone two-year celebration and confirmation of dates and venues provides the ability for fans across England to start to plan their Rugby World Cup 2025 experience.

