



# Norfolk County Council

## Latest Information, Advice, Useful Links and Service Updates

**Updated 29 June 2023**

This weekly briefing is intended as a resource to keep you up to date with the latest information and advice.

**Service updates:** The most up to date information on council services can be found at [Norfolk County Council services disruptions.](#)

## Norfolk County Council

### Highways, Transport and infrastructure

Reports on two transport projects that are key to improving the way people travel in Norfolk will be considered by the county council's cabinet on 3 July.

Cabinet members will be updated on the good progress that has been made in recent months on the Norwich Western Link project, which would see a new 3.9-mile road built between the A47 and Broadland Northway to the west of Norwich. Work to develop the planning application documents has been the focus, including taking into account comments received through the project's pre-planning application public consultation held late last year. With this work now well developed, officers are recommending that the team reduce activity on the Norwich Western Link for a period of approximately three months while the council awaits a decision on the project's Outline Business Case from the Department for Transport. Approval of this business case would provide a funding commitment, which would enable the council to move forward with submitting the planning application.

Cabinet will also consider a report updating them on the delivery of Transport for Norwich. Norfolk County Council has been highly successful in bidding for external funding through their [Transport for Norwich strategy](#).

Link to the cabinet papers for the meeting on 3 July [here](#).

### Adult Services: Co-production week

Next week is national Co-production Week. Co-production is about working in equal partnership with the people using our services to ensure we meet their needs. It's a really valuable tool that helps our services or projects to run smoothly and effectively for both professionals and for the people who use them, and to ensure our residents and communities feel engaged, involved and listened to.

To mark the week, colleagues from Adult Services will be hosting displays and interactive activities to explain more about co-production.

The events take place at County Hall on 3 July in the old coffee shop area on the ground floor (through the security gates on the right, if you are facing reception, and directly after the first set of doors) and Wednesday (5 July) in the Marble Map area, from 11:00–14:00 on both days. There is no need to book – just drop by for as long as you like.

Read more about Co-production Week and the resources on offer [here](#).

If you have any queries or accessibility requirements to facilitate your attendance, please contact [assd.engagement&coproduction@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:assd.engagement&coproduction@norfolk.gov.uk).

## **Adult Learning**

A new approach to adult learning, due to more online sessions and a shift to more local venues, is being considered by the County Council's cabinet on 3 July.

A report to cabinet proposes to focus on accessible community venues and cease providing courses at Norwich's under-utilised and expensive to maintain Wensum Lodge from next year. The report says 8,000 people use the adult learning service each year and 37% of them use online courses.

The service is targeting people who live in the 30% most deprived wards in Norfolk and, to assist this, it is increasingly using a range of current venues that are more accessible to communities. Courses are also being planned for new venues in Kings Lynn and Great Yarmouth.

If the proposals are approved, staff and funding currently allocated to Wensum Lodge would be redeployed to other adult learning venues.

Link to the cabinet papers for the meeting on 3 July [here](#).

## **Adult Learning - Free Summer Courses**

Our free Adult Learning summer schools provide an excellent opportunity for people to increase their knowledge and confidence in a particular subject through intensive sessions run over a short period. The fun, friendly and relaxed courses are ideal for those who need a nationally recognised qualification in English, maths or ESOL for career progression, college or university this autumn. The wide range of courses also include accountancy, creative writing, counselling.

There are online or in-class options with a range of dates and supportive tutors to help with every step of the way.

Further information and a link to available courses [here](#).

Alternatively, people can call 0344 800 8020 (option 5) for further information.

## **Big Norfolk Holiday Fun**

The summer holiday activity scheme for 4-16 year olds, is now open for bookings. There are hundreds of activities running from 24 July to 5 September, including sport, drama, cooking, music, arts and crafts, dance, and much more – even zookeeping!

The programme is run by Active Norfolk in partnership with Norfolk County Council and activities are free to children receiving means-tested free school meals but anyone can book onto the activities for a small fee.

Further information and a link to activities [here](#).

## **Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service (NRFS)**

Following the devastating fires that destroyed 22 homes across the county last year, NRFS has secured over half a million pounds for new equipment and training for firefighters. They are currently trialling brand-new Wildland Firefighting suits which are lightweight and more breathable, making it easier to work in extreme heat for long periods

They are also working closely with communities to make sure they are more fire-wise. The farming community and landowners have received help to reduce fire risks on their land and to plan how they can help stop the spread of wildfires, using their skills and equipment in the event of an incident. They have also helped us map out how to access their water supplies in the event of an emergency.

Information and advice for residents and visitors about how to prevent wildfires and protect their homes is available [here](#).

Members are asked to promote information about how constituents can help prevent wildfires and protect their homes from wildfires.

## **Norfolk Museums: Time and Tide Museum wins award**

Time and Tide Museum of Great Yarmouth Life has been named Norfolk Top Family Attraction in the Muddy Stiletto Awards. The museum was voted for by the general public and was up against some very stiff competition. It is very rewarding to know that our visitors really enjoy coming to the museum and consider it the top family attraction in Norfolk.

The team is looking forward to celebrating the museum's win at a special awards ceremony in a few weeks' time.

## **Public information notice: Norfolk Coroner's Service next of kin appeal**

The Norfolk Coroner's Service are appealing for help to trace the family of a man who died at his home address.

64-year-old Geoffrey Deboo lived at an address in the Hawkins Close area of Great Yarmouth and died on 16th June 2023. There were no suspicious circumstances and despite carrying out extensive enquiries no next-of-kin have been identified.

Anyone with information relating to Geoffrey should contact the Coroner's office in Norwich on 01603 774773. [coroner.referral@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:coroner.referral@norfolk.gov.uk)

## **National Grid proposals and consultation affecting Norfolk**

National Grid wants to build a major new 112-mile 400kV line it says is vital to help the UK achieve its ambition of net zero emissions by 2050.

The precise proposed route the line and its supporting pylons will take has been unveiled, running from Dunston, near Norwich, to Tilbury on the Thames estuary.

They have produced an [interactive map](#), detailing their proposals for Norwich to Tilbury. They are asking for feedback on the latest preferred draft alignment and anything they should consider as they develop the proposals further.

They are consulting with local residents, communities, landowners and local businesses and interest groups, as well as elected representatives, and prescribed consultees, such as the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England.

The consultation is open from 27 June until 21 August.

Further details and a link to their consultation [here](#).

## **Electoral Commission initial report – voter ID at the May 2023 Elections**

The Electoral Commission is the independent body which oversees elections and regulates political finance in the UK. They work to promote public confidence in the democratic process and ensure its integrity.

Data from the Electoral Commission's initial report on voter ID at the May 2023 elections showed 14,000 voters or 0.25% of those attending polling stations were not able to vote while public opinion research suggested 4% who did not vote listed ID as the reason.

In addition, the commission's research found 92% of people were aware of the rule change, but the figure dropped to 74% for people who did not have ID. There were high levels of satisfaction with the process of voting, in line with previous comparable elections; 89% of polling station voters said they were very or fairly satisfied.

While there is no legal requirement to do so, the commission has recommended that data on voter ID should be collected at all future elections up to the next General Election.

Their full report will be published in September 2023.

Further information from their initial analysis available [here](#).

## **Government updates**

### **Homes England**

Homes England has announced that grant funding provided through the Government's Affordable Homes Programme 2021-26 can now be used to fund replacement homes, alongside new affordable homes, as part of wider estate regeneration plans. This change has been agreed with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

The Affordable Homes Programme provides grant funding to support the capital costs of developing affordable housing for rent or sale.

Homes England welcomes proposals from existing and new partners – housing associations, local authorities, developers, for-profit providers, community-led organisations and others who have an ambition to develop affordable homes.

Further details, funding requirements and guidance available [here](#).