

## MONTHLY NEWS REPORT AUGUST 2024



### E-Newsletter Issue 08/2024

Lisa Lane, Emma Stack, Ralph Westmorland, Alice Gadney and  
Cllr Stephen Clarke

At the Little Houghton CE Primary School Open Garden  
5 July 2024

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## NEWS REPORT AUGUST 2024

### Monthly Highlights

WNC is proposing to implement a 50-mph speed limit to replace the derestricted signs on the entrance to and exit from Little Houghton. The Consultation has now closed and WNC will proceed to final design, pricing and scheduling. On 31 July 2024, I asked Highways for an update on the status of the change P2023 to the Speed Limit on Bedford Road, Little Houghton.

On 17 July 2024, Sam Simons, Highway Service Manager wrote to Hartwell residents setting out the current position regarding the drainage works in the village of Hartwell.

The works outside the Old Rectory, Yardley Hastings 5381279 was completed on 2 July 2024.

I am still awaiting the pricing for surfacing and subsequent approval of Lodge Road, Little Houghton, which is to be completed during the Summer School break this year.

Part of Denton Road will be closed between 7-9 August 2024 to allow Anglian Water to undertake works to the main. They also intend to close Preston Deanery Road, Quinton between 19-21st August 2024.

Residents are invited to have their say on West Northamptonshire Council's (WNC) Draft Tenancy Strategy before midnight on Sunday 18 August 2024.

The Council would like to hear from anyone who has an interest in our parks and the development of a new strategy. The consultation will be live until midnight on 8 September 2024.

Please share your views on the Leisure Facilities in West Northants by completing the online survey in the Council's consultation hub before midnight on Sunday 15 September 2024.

If you think that there is not enough in the Local Transport Plan for you or your community then please respond to the consultation, which runs until 17 October 2024. If you do not submit your views then they cannot be considered.

Please visit the Have your say on the draft West Northamptonshire Electric Vehicles Infrastructure Strategy 2024-2030, which closes midnight Sunday 1 September 2024.

Please read through the WNC Annual Report to find out how we have performed during 2023/24.

There are still some cost-of-living roadshow events and pop-up stalls being held during August across West Northamptonshire to highlight the support available to residents.

As the Council undergoes a Revenue & Benefits Systems upgrade, the council tax, business rates and housing benefit systems will be temporarily unavailable from Tuesday, 13 August through to Thursday, 5 September. During the upgrade, residents will be unable to access the customer portal and online forms, though residents will be able to make council tax and business rates payments as usual. Ongoing benefits claims and regular payments will continue unaffected.

Adult Social Care Representatives will be at Welcoming Spaces, Towcester Library on 13 August 2024 from 10am – 12pm, no appointment is needed.

On 1 April 2024, the new housing allocation scheme came into place across West Northamptonshire replacing the three legacy schemes which operated in the Daventry, South Northamptonshire and Northampton areas. From Wednesday 14 August, residents will be able to see properties that fit their circumstances and make choices about which properties they are interested in through a Choice Based Lettings (CBL) system. See my Monthly Report.

Residents and stakeholders are invited to provide their input to an HMO Licencing Strategy by taking part in the survey via West Northamptonshire Council's consultation hub before midnight on Monday 7 October 2024.

Come along to Towcester Library on 14th August (1pm - 3pm) & access free help to find your dream job in West Northants.

Historic and cultural sites across Northamptonshire are invited to take part in this year's Heritage Open Days, which will take place between 6 and 15 September 2024.

The Northampton Balloon Festival takes place at Northampton Racecourse on Friday 16 to Sunday 18 August 2024.

Franklin's Gardens stadium has been announced as a venue for one of England's matches during the pool phase of the Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 tournament. It will host a Red Roses match during the 10th edition of the women's rugby event taking place across six weekends from 22 August to 27 September next year. Fans can register for free online to enter the presale on 24 September 2024 to ensure they are among the first to secure their place at the opening match and the final.

West Northamptonshire will welcome Britain's biggest professional cycle race this September, as we play host to the penultimate stage of the Lloyds Bank Tour of Britain Men. Taking place on Saturday 7 September 2024, the stage will start in Northampton town centre and take a 93-mile route through West Northants, before heading back to the finish line in Northampton.

Just let me know if you would like a copy of my Third-Party Grant Funding document.

I attended lots of events across the ward this month. Please read about my activities in my Monthly Report.

As I write this report, the sun is shining bright, the weather is exceptionally warm, and there is an abundance of outdoor activities to enjoy. Summer holidays are an opportunity to relax and unwind and I trust that whether it's a trip to the beach, a family vacation, or simply spending time at home with loved ones, you have a great break and come back full of 'vim and vigour' in September.

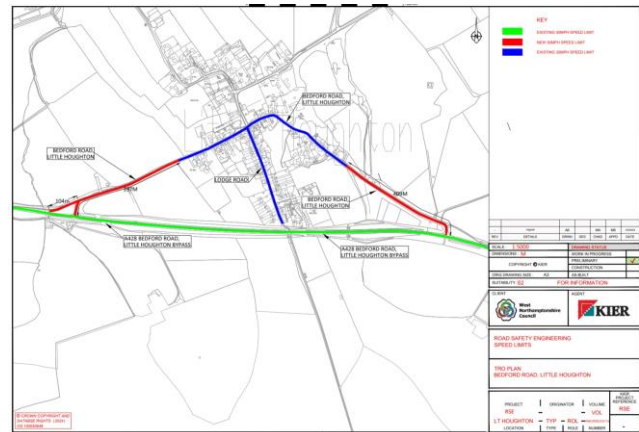
In the meantime, I hope that you enjoy this edition of my Monthly Report. Don't forget you can follow me on [www.facebook.com/stephen.clarke.31924](https://www.facebook.com/stephen.clarke.31924)

*All the Best, Steve*

## PARISH MEETINGS, VISITS AND CASEWORK

### Speed Limit Proposal for Bedford Road, Little Houghton, WNC Reference P2023

WNC is proposing to implement a 50-mph speed limit to replace the derestricted signs on the entrance to and exit from Little Houghton. The Consultation has now closed and WNC will proceed to final design, pricing and scheduling. On 31 July 2024, I asked Highways for an update on the status of the change to the



Speed Limit on Bedford Road, Little Houghton P2023.

### Update on Drainage Issues in Hartwell

On 17 July 2024, Sam Simons, Highway Service Manager wrote to residents setting out the current position regarding the drainage works in the village of Hartwell, details as follows:  
WNC have completed the following drainage works:

#### Ashton Road:

- Cleared the outfall of debris.
- Installed a pipe connecting Ashton Road to three gullies.
- Added a headwall by the allotments.
- Installed a catchpit to manage excess highway water during heavy rainfall.

#### Amberley Road:

- Replaced gully gratings to improve water flow.
- Addressed specific assets (Asset numbers 460130486, 460130485, and 460130484).



While some tasks remain outstanding, WNC believes they won't significantly affect the properties drainage. These include limescale management, pipe repairs, and vegetation clearing. There is also a ditch in the village that has, over time, been filled by vehicle accesses and hedgerow, if cleared this would take significant quantities of water that currently runs down the highway, WNC have no power to clear the hedgerow as we are not the owners. However, we plan to write to the owners to inform them of their obligations and the issues being caused.

In summary, we believe we have made substantial progress in alleviating the drainage issues where we can. However, if any flooding incidents occur during heavy rain, residents have been asked to call our emergency number, or provide a video or log of events leading to the flooding. Unfortunately, we cannot replicate flood events after the fact to identify any missed key elements.

### Little Houghton CE Primary School Garden 5 July 2024

On 5 July 2024, I was privileged to join many children and their parents at the Little Houghton CE Primary School Open Garden in aid of fund raising for the School Garden. The Children's enthusiasm together with that of their parents for this project was self-evident.



It was a pleasure to meet Lisa, Emma, Alice, Ralph and Mrs Carolyn Fairbrother, Headteacher and to thank them for their contribution to this school project. You can't but fail to be impressed with their combined passion for the school garden and the help they give children whilst learning about gardening.

Children in Key Stage 2 benefit from a gardening club, led by volunteers from the village and giving the children the opportunity to learn about growing fruit, vegetables and flowers and seeing the results of their hard work later in the year. Their website tells us that

Little Houghton school children are 'Learning For Life'. 'So that each child can flourish like a flower of the field' (Psalm 103:15).

A special thank you to Ralph Emma and Lisa and others who work so hard every week through the year teaching and looking after the school garden. They need our support to fix the door and weatherboard on the school garden house.

### Green Machine, Coffee@Carey, Hackleton 10 July 2024

On 10 July 2024, we went along to the Green Machine, mobile zero-waste refill service van, which was situated outside Coffee@Carey, Baptist Church, Hackleton. It gave us another opportunity to top up with dried foods and cleaning/toiletry products without the packaging waste. Well done to Roy Hawkesford and the Hackleton Wildlife, Environment and Biodiversity (WEB) Group for organising this initiative.

You can find out more about them on:

<https://www.hackletonparishcouncil.gov.uk/wildlife...>

And the Green Machine on:

<https://www.greenmachinerefill.co.uk/>

The Green Machine will be at Coffee@Carey on Wednesday, 7 August 2024, 2.00 to 4.00pm, and the chapel will be open as usual for coffee and cake.



### Denton Coffee Morning 12 July 2024

On 12 July 2024, I enjoyed meeting up with Russel, John, Mary, Jane, Pat, and others at the Denton Coffee Morning at St Margaret's Church, Denton, one of West Northants Welcoming Spaces. The church is in the centre of the village, and it is open every day and provides a community space for everyone in the village. They hold coffee mornings, weekly craft sessions, quizzes, and many other general community events. Welcoming Space opening times are





Thursday afternoons and Friday mornings. This delightful Community Coffee Morning is run by volunteers, and it is very well attended by those who live in Denton.

Pat and Sheila are still taking donations for Baby Basics and they have 2 Moses Baskets in the church, which will form starter packs for vulnerable mum's and their new born babies up to 3 months. You can donate items as listed on the Baby Basics leaflet. <https://www.facebook.com/BabyBasicsNorthampton/>

Today, Pat had organised a 'Name that Nursery Rhyme' quiz, which kept us all very busy. Each letter represents the first letter of the title words. There were a few rhymes that got us all stumped: WRTG, TLPWTM, WRTG, OMHWTTTC and WWW. Well done to Pat for organising the Quiz.

### **Great Houghton Coffee Morning 12 July 2024**

On Friday 12 July 2024, I attended the Great Houghton Coffee Morning which takes place in the Great Houghton Village Hall on the second Friday of each month at 10.30 am. This delightful Community Coffee Morning is run by the WI and is very well attended by those from both Great and Little Houghton. Whilst it is organised by the WI it is open to all villagers, family and friends so please come along.

I received a very warm welcome and spent an interesting time hearing about a number of local issues. The next meeting of this friendly and welcoming group will be 9 August 2024, when I look forward to catching up with everyone again.



### **Celebration of the Life and Service of Pete Collyer to Quinton 13 July 2024**

On 13 July 2024, I was privileged to attend a day of celebration for the life and service of Pete Collyer to Quinton. The celebration ran from 2.30pm to 6pm and we were invited to share some fizz in a toast to Pete. Ben cooked the sausages for the hot dogs and Emma provided a supply of hot drinks and strawberries



and cream. Emma and Julia led tributes to Pete before we all raised a glass in his memory and gave our combined thanks for his many acts of public service.

I first met Pete as Chairman of Quinton Parish Council, where he was a driving force behind the protection of Quinton as a village and the development of its facilities. He is missed by the Council and the village where he touched the lives of countless people.

Pete made a great contribution to the running of the village hall over many years, and he was a stalwart of many events. Through his efforts and those of others, Quinton Village Hall

provides space and facilities for community services and activities, which has made an enormous difference to the wellbeing of the community.

### **Cogenhoe Community Lunch 15 July 2024**

On 15 July 2024, I attended the Cogenhoe Community Lunch at the Village Hall, Cogenhoe. Well done to Deborah Rush, Svitlana Nikolaevna and the rest of the team who were managing the event.

As we started our Community Lunch today, Deborah reminded us that it was Gordon's Birthday and we all sang Happy Birthday to him. We had a very good lunch of Macaroni Cheese with salad and garlic bread followed by Carrot Cake and cream. Thank you to everyone who came along and



supported our community lunch today. A big thank you to Deborah, and everyone else involved in making it such a great fortnightly event. All your efforts are appreciated.

There is an outing by coach to Chester House to explore the exhibitions and shops followed by Afternoon Tea at Grendon Hall on 29 July 2024. An alternative option has been provided to those who wish to just drive to Grendon Hall and join everyone for Afternoon Tea.

The next Community Lunch event is on 5 August 2024, York Room, Cogenhoe & Whiston Village Hall, so please book your place by emailing Deborah at [clerk@cogenhoeandwhiston-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@cogenhoeandwhiston-pc.gov.uk) or phone 07512 045418.

### **Little Houghton Parish Lunch 18 July 2024**



On 18 July 2024, I attended the Little Houghton Parish Lunch that takes place at St Mary's Church from 12-2pm on the third Thursday each month. I enjoyed delicious food and great company in a welcoming environment.



The Little Houghton Community Lunch caters to the needs of the village, helping you stay connected and social. Whether you need a lift, a friendly chat, or a fun activity, the Little Houghton volunteer-led service is there to support you. The food is prepared and served by dedicated volunteers who care about

your wellbeing. If you would like to come along and make new friends, share your stories, and have a good time with other people in your local community then contact Joy Mayhew on 01604 890498. A special thank you to all those who make the lunch and the short service possible. There is no Parish Lunch in August. But they return after a Summer Break on Thursday 19 September 2024.

### **Outing to Chester House & Grendon Hall 29 July 2024**

On 29 July 2024, the Cogenhoe Community Lunch Group had an outing by coach to Chester House to explore the exhibitions and shops followed by Afternoon Tea at Grendon Hall. In addition, there was an alternative option to just drive to Grendon Hall and join everyone for Afternoon Tea.

As I had another engagement in the morning, I joined everyone for Afternoon Tea at Grendon Hall at 2.00pm. There is something special about an English Summer Afternoon Tea, particularly when the weather is glorious as was the case on that day.

We were served with a selection of tea, scones, delicious sandwiches, and sweet treats, all thoughtfully themed around summer. A special thank you to my fellow guests for their sparkling conversation and to Deborah who planned and executed this charming event.

The next Community Lunch event is on 5 August 2024, York Room, Cogenhoe & Whiston Village Hall, so please book your place by emailing Deborah at: [clerk@cogenhoeandwhiston-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@cogenhoeandwhiston-pc.gov.uk) or phone 07512 045418.



### Coffee@Carey 31 July 2024

Today, I visited Coffee@Carey, Hackleton's lovely community focused and volunteer run coffee shop, which opened in May 2021 in Hackleton Baptist Church. Coffee@Carey is open Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, 9am-1pm and can be found at Hackleton Baptist Church, Chapel Lane, Hackleton, Northampton, NN7 2AH. I was on my way to sort out some casework in the ward.



They were running a pop up stall with 'Sixty-two' offering delightful home and giftware and there were many visitors enjoying a well-earned break both inside and outside the church. I enjoyed catching up with Wendy and hearing more about the progress they are

making with the Forget-Me-Not-Group. The Forget-Me-Not Group has been set up by Hackleton Parish Council for residents who have dementia or dementia like symptoms and their families. If you would like to support the Group and you are able to volunteer in any way please come along to an informal meeting on Wednesday 14th August 7pm at The White Hart.

  
**Hackleton Parish**  
**Forget - Me - Not Group**

Providing practical support and activities for those living with Dementia or Dementia-like symptoms and their families (even if no diagnosis has been given).



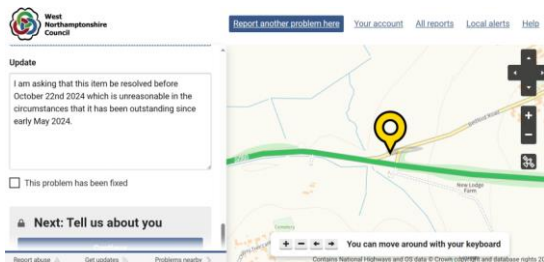
**1st and 3rd Monday of each month**  
**1.00-2.45 pm,**  
**Horton House Cricket Club**

If you would like to know about this amazing group and ways to help, either by volunteering on an adhoc basis, baking a cake, making the tea etc, then please come along to our meeting on Wednesday 14th August, 7pm at the White Hart.

  
forgetmenot@hackletonparishcouncil.gov.uk

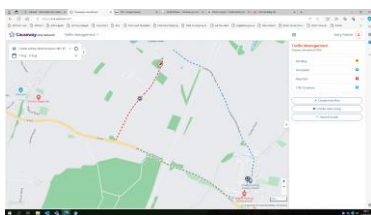
### Fix My Street Little Houghton 5869001

On 12 May 2024, I received a further complaint regarding the A428 and the slip road into Little Houghton.



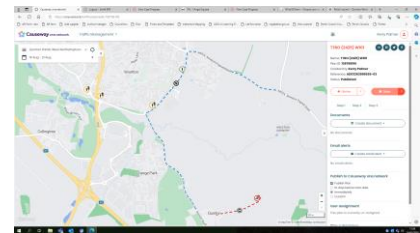
Residents are concerned about the current sight line which is masked by vegetation overgrowth and is making the junction to and from the A428 dangerous. As it is a Highway Safety issue, I have escalated the matter to Highways and I am asking that this item be resolved before October 22nd 2024 which is unreasonable in the circumstances that it has been outstanding since early May 2024.

### Denton Road Closure 7-9 August 2024



I have received details of a closure at the location shown. Part of Denton Road will be closed between 7-9th August to allow Anglian Water to undertake works to the main.

Should you need any further detail, please contact Michelle Budd on 03457 145145



### TTO 2425 W101 Preston Deanery Quinton 19-21 August 2024

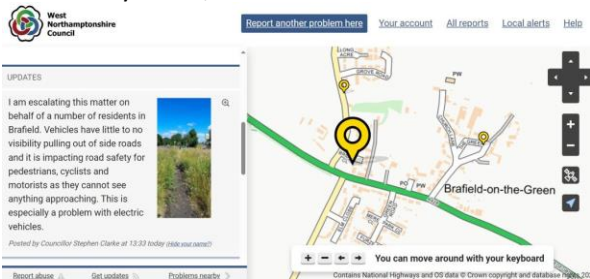
I have received details of a closure for part of Preston Deanery Road, which will be closed between 19-21st August to allow Anglian Water to complete works to the water main. Should you need any further detail, please contact Michelle Budd on 03457 145145

### Yardley Hastings, Outside Old Rectory 5381279

The works were scheduled and completed on 2 July 2024.

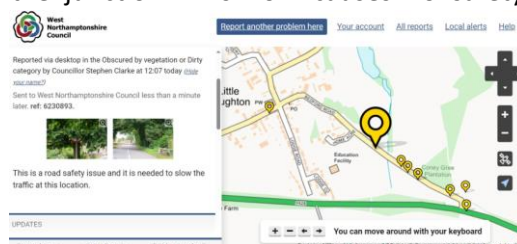
### Fix My Street Brafield 14 July 2024

On 14 July 2024, I escalated 6227226-Brafield to Fix My Street. I received the enclosed update to my escalation. "The vegetation meets the criteria for a Priority 3 response. We will schedule vegetation clearance to be completed within 28 days. Our current average response time for a Priority 3 is 9.3 days." Then on 31 July 2024, I received the following update: 'The grass has been cut back enough to widen the vision approaching the junction. This now causes no safety defects.



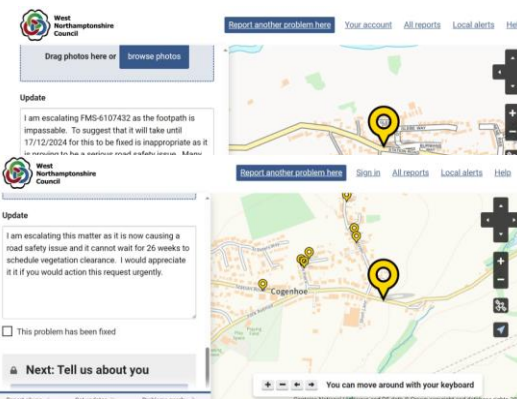
### Fix My Street Little Houghton 6230893

On 15 July 2024, I escalated this Road Safety Issue. On 29 July 2024, I was advised that this matter has been fixed.



### Fix My Street Cogenhoe 6107432

I escalated 6107432 on 17 July 2024. Once I have further news, I shall be in touch.



### Fix My Street Cogenhoe 6165526

On 31 July 2024, I escalated the matter of the roadway being reduced by up to 1 metre by overgrown trees/bushes as a matter of road safety. Once I have further news, I shall be in touch.

### Predisposition, predetermination or bias

As Chairman of the South Planning Committee, West Northamptonshire Council, 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.

## CONSULTATIONS

A range of consultation and engagement activities are currently taking place across West Northants. I have summarised the main consultations below, but please remember you can check new consultations, have your say, and sign up to receive alerts and updates via our Consultation Hub.

### Have Your Say on Draft Tenancy Strategy

Residents are invited to have their say on West Northamptonshire Council's (WNC) Draft Tenancy Strategy which sets out the approach that Councils and Registered Providers of Social Housing need to consider when developing their own tenancy policies.

Every UK local authority is required by law to have a tenancy strategy outlining:

- The types of tenancies
- The circumstances that different types of tenancies will be granted
- The length of fixed-term tenancies
- The circumstances where a further tenancy can be granted following a fixed-term let

As well as aligning its objectives to support the Council's Corporate plan and key housing-related strategies, the draft West Northamptonshire Tenancy Strategy seeks to:

- Set clear expectations of all social registered providers operating across West Northamptonshire in tenancy related matters
- Highlight the Council's preferred approach to tenancy types offered
- Encourage social housing providers to offer greater tenancy support and tenancy sustainment
- Encourage social rent levels in new build homes

Once adopted, the Tenancy Strategy will replace the existing tenancy strategies currently in place in West Northamptonshire.

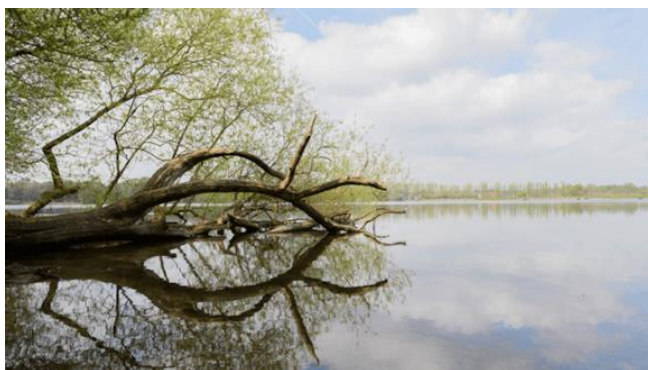
West Northamptonshire residents who hold a tenancy with a registered provider (otherwise known as a housing association), local tenant and resident groups, registered providers, and other interested parties and stakeholders are all encouraged to share their views in the survey.

People can take part in the survey by visiting the West Northamptonshire Council consultation hub before midnight on Sunday 18 August 2024.



### West Northamptonshire Parks Development Strategy

People are being asked to help shape a strategy setting out how West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) manages and develops its parks and green spaces. The Council manages around 150 parks and green open spaces across West Northants, including war memorials, and town and country parks.



The new Parks Development Strategy will set out how the Council can protect, develop, and improve these areas in ways that not only enrich residents' and visitors' lives, but also the natural environment. The current version is very much in draft form as we are keen to engage with and hear the thoughts of park users, local businesses,

community groups and other stakeholders in order to shape the final document. The Council would like to hear from anyone who has an interest in our parks and the development of this strategy. The consultation will be live until midnight on 8 September. Click here to view the draft strategy and have your say.

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

All responses will be analysed and considered by the Council in developing the draft strategy further. The feedback provided will help WNC to develop an updated version of the Parks Development Strategy and accompanying action plan. Once finalised, these will be presented to the Council's Cabinet in November 2024, with the final strategy to be published in 2025.

## Local Transport Plan

People are being encouraged to share their views on the development of our Local Transport Plan. The plan has been developed with key stakeholders and details a range of

proposals for transport over the next 20 years, with the aim that by 2045 we will have worked with communities and partners to:

- 1) Make public transport more attractive and accessible
- 2) Make active travel such as walking or wheeling a first choice for short trips
- 3) Reduce dependency on private cars
- 4) Make our transport system safer, cleaner, and more inclusive
- 5) Improve transport infrastructure and transport services to make them more resilient
- 6) Achieve net zero.



We are keen for residents, businesses, community groups, landowners, and other stakeholders to have their say on whether they agree with the proposals in the plan and help shape the future of local transport across the county.

Drop-in events are being held across the area and online on the following dates:

- Tuesday 13 August, 9am to midday at Daventry Market Square, High Street
- Friday 16 August, 9am to midday at Brackley Market, The Piazza
- Wednesday 21 August, 10am to 11.30am, online
- Thursday 22 August, 9am to noon at The Grosvenor Centre, Northampton
- Monday 23 September, 10am to 11.30am online
- Friday 11 October, 9am to midday at Towcester Farmers Market, Richmond Road

Local transport is used by people for many different reasons in both our urban and rural areas, so we need to make sure that we're focussing on the right things, whilst also considering the impact on the environment.

The plan describes our overarching ambition for transport and ensures that other transport related policies and objectives are working together. The consultation runs until 17 October and people can have their say on our consultation hub. <https://westnorthants.citizenspace.com/planning/draft-west-northamptonshire-local-transport-plan/>

## Help Shape Leisure Facilities in West Northants

Residents are invited to share their views about leisure facilities and physical activity in West Northamptonshire to help us shape future services and provision. West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) is currently developing an Active Lives Strategy and looking at the future management of Council owned leisure centres in Northampton and Daventry to ensure the delivery of a high-quality service across our communities.

To help us with this we are asking people to let us know how physically active they are and how physically active they would like to be at home, in the park, at sports clubs or at leisure centres.

We would also like to know how residents feel about the Council's leisure centres, the facilities themselves, the activities that go on in the centres and the priorities for the centres moving forward.

Responses will help us to understand the needs of people in West Northants and develop an Active Lives Strategy which considers future leisure centre management.

Please share your views by completing the online survey in the Council's consultation hub before midnight on Sunday 15 September 2024.

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



## Electric Vehicles Infrastructure Strategy 2024-2030

WNC is giving people the opportunity to provide feedback on its Electric Vehicles Infrastructure Strategy. In order to meet and support increases in the number of electric vehicles, there is an urgent need to develop and expand the current charging EV infrastructure nationally.



Have your say on the draft West Northamptonshire Electric Vehicles Infrastructure Strategy 2024-2030

Our Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy sets out key areas of work which will help support charging infrastructure for electric vehicles (including hybrid) in West Northamptonshire. Your feedback will help shape our Electric Vehicle Infrastructure strategy, ensuring it aligns with the needs and aspirations of our community, and contributes to achieving net zero emissions goals.

Give us your views

Please visit the 'Have your say' on the draft West Northamptonshire Electric Vehicles Infrastructure Strategy 2024-2030. For further information and how to have your say:

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

This consultation closes midnight Sunday 1 September 2024.

## FINANCE ADMINISTRATION AND TRANSFORMATION

### WNC Annual Report

2023/24 was set against a backdrop of challenging economic circumstances and public sector funding pressures, as we like many councils across the country, found ourselves dealing with significant rises in costs and unprecedented demand for our services. Yet despite these ongoing





challenges, we maintained and protected essential services within budget, while continuing to make good progress towards delivering improved service levels.

We were also pleased this month to publish our Annual Report for 2023/24, highlighting our key achievements from the past year. These include significant progress in economic regeneration, enhancements in community services, and initiatives to promote sporting excellence across the region. The report also outlines strategic priorities for the upcoming year, reflecting the Council's commitment to continuous improvement and sustainable development.

Please read through the report to find out how we have performed during 2023/24

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/reports.../annual-report>

### **Cost of Living Support at Summer Roadshows**

A series of cost-of-living roadshow events and pop-up stalls will be held across West Northamptonshire this summer to highlight the support available to residents. People are encouraged to go along to speak to a range of organisations to find out what help is available to them and where to find it. Organised by West Northamptonshire Council (WNC), the events will offer information on accessing grants, money and debt advice, wellbeing tips and much more. WNC's wellbeing service and community partners will be at:

- 1) Saints Community Trust Welcoming Space (St James Park, Churchill Way, Brackley, NN13 7EJ) on Wednesday 14 August from 10am - 12.30pm
- 2) Towcester SNVB Community Larder (The Riverside Centre, Islington Road, Towcester, NN12 6AU) on Thursday 22 August from 10am to 11.15am.
- 3) The service will also have a presence at Moulton's Community Mature Drive Roadshow, Kings Heath Community Funday, Southbrook Community Funday and Northampton Pride.



For those who are unable to attend these events but are keen to find out more, WNC's cost of living support hub

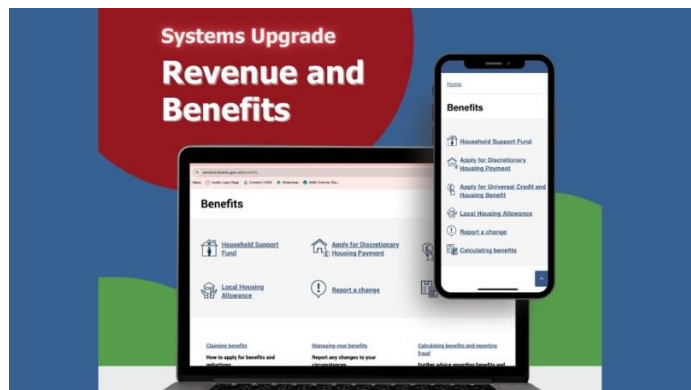
<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/cost-living-support>

is full of information and advice to help all residents find the support and help available to them. If someone is unable to access the internet, they can also call the Council's customer services team from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday on 0300 126 7000 and speak to somebody directly about the support available.

### **Upgrade to Revenue & Benefits Systems**

Residents can expect simplified and improved services through a major upgrade of our Revenue and Benefits systems. The upgrade replaces a number of legacy systems with a single, modern platform designed to simplify operations and improve the online experience. The new system will allow people to view all their benefits, council tax, business rates, and landlord accounts in one convenient portal. Business rates customers in Northampton will be able to access their accounts online and sign up for e-billing. This system upgrade will also introduce Daventry residents to a new online housing benefit form, simplifying the application process.

As the Council undergoes the upgrade, the council tax, business rates and housing benefit systems will be temporarily unavailable from Tuesday, 13 August through to Thursday, 5 September. During the upgrade, residents will be unable to access the customer portal and online forms, though residents will be able to make council tax and business rates payments as usual. Ongoing benefits claims and regular payments will continue unaffected. However, new claims and notifications of change submitted during the close down will be assessed after the upgrade is complete.



While our customer service staff will still be available to support residents, their access to information will be limited. Residents are encouraged to contact us only for urgent matters during this time. We appreciate everyone's understanding and cooperation as we work towards improving our services for the benefit of West Northamptonshire.

## REGULATORY SERVICES

### Customer Services Outreach

Our Customer Services Team visits locations across West Northamptonshire on a monthly basis, offering advice and guidance to residents on a range of issues. You are very welcome to attend for help with any queries you may have.

Sessions coming up over the next month include:

- 1) Blackthorn Community Centre (Longmead Court, NN3 8QD): Fri 23 August from 10am to 11am
- 2) Brixworth Village Hall (Holcot Road, NN6 9BS): Weds 14 August from 3.30pm to 4.30pm
- 3) Bugbrooke Community Living Room (30 High St, NN7 3PA): Thurs 26 September from 2pm to 3.30pm
- 4) Daventry Southbrook Community Centre (Hood Road, NN11 4JS): Weds 11 September from 1pm to 2.15pm
- 5) Hackleton Baptist Church (Chapel Lane, NN7 2AH): Tues 13 August from 10am to midday
- 6) Hunsbury Library (Overslade Close, NN4 0RZ): Thurs 15 August from 1pm to 4pm
- 4) Moulton Library Plus (Moulton Community Centre, Reedings, NN3 7AX): Fri 30 August from 10am to midday
- 5) St Lukes Primary Care Centre (Timken Way South, Northampton, NN5 6FR): Tues 6 August from 9.30am to 11.30am
- 6) Weston Favell Library (Weston Favell Shopping Centre, NN38JZ): Fri 2 August from 12:30pm to 3pm
- 7) Woodford Halse CE Primary School (NN11 3SU): Tues 20 August from 12.30pm to 2.30pm



View listings for all of the drop-in sessions

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/.../monthly-drop-sessions>

## RURAL SERVICES NETWORK (RSN)

### National Rural Conference 2024

- Rural Fair Funding-16 September
- Rural Economy & Regeneration-16 September
- Rural Affordable Housing & Planning-17 September
- Rural Connectivity- 17 September
- Rural Net Zero-18 September
- Community Services Discussion-18 September
- Rural Health & Care-19 September
- Rural Transport-19 September

### RSN 2024 seminar programme

- Rural planning – 23rd October
- Rural health and care – 27th November

### Adult Social Care at Towcester Library

Adult Social Care will be at Towcester Library and The Welcoming Spaces please see links below:-

From 10am – 12pm and you do not need an appointment.

- 13/08/2024
- 10/09/2024
- 08/10/2024
- 12/11/2024
- 10/12/2024

For further information on Adult Social Care, Towcester Library and The Welcoming Spaces please see links below:-

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/adult-social-care-and...>

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/list.../towcester-library>

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

**What's on at your Welcoming Space at Towcester Library**  
The Forum, Most Lane, NN12 6AD  
Open: Monday-Friday, 9am to 6pm and Saturdays 9am to 5pm

**Timetable of activities**

- Chatter and Matter**  
Every Thursday, 1.30pm - 3.30pm  
Look for the yellow 'Chatter & Matter' table signs each Thursday afternoon and drop in for a chat. For more information contact Niki Harbottle on 0300 124 7000 or email [Towcester.Library@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:Towcester.Library@westnorthants.gov.uk)
- Employment support**  
Every second Wednesday of the month, from 1-3pm  
Free help from our Employment Support Service, and a range of partners, including support with job searching, CVs, training, money advice and more.
- Help with your wellbeing**  
Every second Tuesday of the month, from 10am-midday  
Members of West Northamptonshire Council's Adult Social Care team are on hand to help you connect with your community, and access resources so you can achieve a meaningful and positive sense of wellbeing.
- Talking Therapies**  
Every third Monday of the month, from 10am-midday  
Are you feeling drained, overwhelmed, or just not your usual self? West Northamptonshire Talking Therapies supports people who may be feeling stressed, low or anxious, to help them get back on track.

**About our Welcoming Spaces**  
Welcoming Spaces are free-to-use spaces for local people from the voluntary, community and faith sectors across West Northamptonshire.  
Residents are offered a warm, friendly setting for people to establish and access services helping social isolation and cost of living challenges.  
Non-judgemental and safe, all guests are treated equally, with dignity and respect.

West Northamptonshire Council | COST | #welcomingspacesWN

## 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**
- WNN/2021/0466 Land North Of, Bedford Road, Great Houghton - **Dismissed**
- WNS/2022/1525/FUL Land North of Whiston Road, Cogenhoe, Northamptonshire – **Allowed subject to conditions.**
- WNS/2021/1858/EIA Solar Farm Milton Road Gayton-**Dismissed**
- N/2020/1474 a 6 storey building providing up to 112no. one, two & three bed flats and apartments (Use Class C3), commercial development (Use Class E (a,b,c,d,e,f,g(i))) and associated ancillary infrastructure', 123 - 135 Bridge Street, Northampton-Appeal **Allowed**
- N/2020/1497 6 storey building providing up to 66no. one, two & three bed flats and apartments (Use Class C3), commercial development (Use Class E(a,b,c,d,e,f,g(i))) and associated ancillary infrastructure', 153 - 165 Bridge Street, Northampton- Appeal **Allowed**
- APP/W2845/W/23/3327830 Hall Farm, Main Street, East Haddon, West Northamptonshire NN6 8BU. Appeal **Allowed**
- WNS/2022/2060/MAO. Outline Application - with all matters reserved to provide later living accommodation (Class 2) as three integrated types of accommodation on a site off the main entrance to Whittlebury Park. Appeal **Dismissed**.

### Pending

- 2023/5711/PIP Permission in principle for development of 8-9 custom/self build Land Poundfield Road Potterspury Towcester NN12 7QB Appeal **Pending**

### Housebuilding Planning & Growth

In her first speech since being appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rachel Reeves has outlined how growth will be achieved around the country through a raft of new measures. She has committed to the government delivering one and a half million new homes over the course of the next five years, thanks to a restoration of mandatory housebuilding targets. This number will include affordable and council homes. To support the delivery of the new homes, it was also announced that brownfield and greybelt land will be prioritised for development.



Housing sites that have stalled are also to be accelerated through the creation of a new task force, with this process beginning for 14,000 new homes in areas including Liverpool Central Docks, Worcester, Northstowe, and Langley Sutton Coldfield.

Local authorities will be supported when it comes to planning, as a further 300 planning officers will be committed around the country. Alongside this, projects that will support the economy but have seen their planning applications declined will be reviewed – this work has already begun for the planning appeals for data centres in Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire.

Further planning policy will be developed for critical infrastructure over the course of the coming months, whilst work to drive clean energy development has been accelerated as the ban on onshore wind farms is lifted.

## HOUSING

### Housing Allocation Scheme

On 1 April 2024, the new housing allocation scheme came into place across West Northamptonshire replacing the three legacy schemes which operated in the Daventry, South Northamptonshire and Northampton areas. From Wednesday 14 August, residents will be able to see properties that fit their circumstances and

make choices about which properties they are interested in through a Choice Based Lettings (CBL) system. This is the system that was previously used in the Northampton area.

CBL works through a bidding and points system, with housing providers uploading adverts based on attributes requested in the online application forms, and applicants who are live in the system placing a bid on the properties they think are suitable for them as part of a weekly cycle. Once the bidding cycle is closed to applicants, the property is offered to the applicant that is highest on the priority list. If that person rejects the home, it will be offered to the next person on the priority list, and so on. Homeless individuals tend to be high on the priority list to ensure they are housed quickly.

Frequently asked questions about the changes, including how customers can contact Housing teams for support if they have an urgent housing need are available on the housing register area of our website.

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

### How to contact us if you need support

If you have an urgent housing need, please contact our Housing Team on **0300 126 7000** who will be able to help. If you are in an emergency housing situation or become homeless at any time, please contact our Homelessness Team <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/housing-advice-and-support/homelessness>

by calling **0300 126 7000** or, visit our offices in Northampton, Daventry or Towcester between 9am and 5pm from Monday to Friday. <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/communicating-us/visiting-us>

### HMO Licensing Consultation

West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) is seeking residents' views on a new proposed licensing scheme which includes additional licensing areas for homes in multiple occupation (HMOs).

A HMO is a property where more than 3 people that form more than one household, rent a home, and share some facilities such as the kitchen or a bathroom in the home with the other tenants.

HMOs can include:

- a house let as individual bed-sitting rooms
- a group of rooms on each floor let to single occupants
- hostels, some hotels and guesthouses
- lodgings and shared houses
- houses converted into self-contained flats

The new scheme will be a continuation of the existing scheme introduced in 2020, but extended to include areas of new development, areas where the level of

#### Housing portal - high volume of traffic

We are currently experiencing a high volume of traffic to our housing portal.

Once your application and supporting documentation is submitted, we will review your application and contact you if we need any further information.

We aim to complete the assessment within 33 working days, however this can take longer when demand is high. Please do not call us to chase on the progress of your application as this may delay the process further.



anti-social behaviour or property conditions indicate that further intervention is necessary, and to bring a closer alignment of the Additional Licensing designation to the Council's Article 4 restrictions under the Town and Country Planning Act.

A street list and map of the existing areas and proposed additional licensing areas can be viewed in the consultation documents.

Landlords in the enhanced designated area will need to apply for a HMO licence, failure to do so could result in conviction and an unlimited fine through the courts or a civil penalty of up to £30,000 through the Council's powers under the Housing and Planning Act 2016.

They might also have to pay back up to a year's rent to either the tenant, or the Council in the case of Housing Benefit, if a rent repayment order is applied for.

The current Additional HMO Licensing scheme ends on 31 January 2025 and, if approved, the new additional five-year scheme will come into effect as soon as possible after 1 February 2025.

The 10-week consultation aims to gather residents' thoughts on these proposals as well as input on how to improve housing standards and ensure safe, well-maintained accommodation for everyone.

WNC's Cabinet will consider a report on the proposed scheme, including results from the consultation, at its meeting in November 2024. Residents and stakeholders are invited to provide their input by taking part in the survey via West Northamptonshire Council's consultation hub before midnight on Monday 7 October. <https://westnorthants.citizenspace.com/.../have-your-say.../>

## ENVIRONMENT

### Bird Keepers Urged to Register their Flock

West Northamptonshire Trading Standards Team are urging everyone who keeps poultry or captive birds to



register with the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA). Currently, anyone who keeps 50 or more birds it is compulsory to register their flock, however, those with fewer birds can voluntarily register. From 1 October, new requirements for all bird keepers who keep their poultry outdoors - regardless of the size of their flock – will come in which will require any who owns captive birds or poultry must officially register their birds. The new rules cover owners of backyard flocks, birds of prey and pigeon fanciers, but do not affect caged pet birds (excluding any poultry species) kept entirely inside a domestic dwelling,

such as a parrot, canary or budgie, which never leaves the property other than to visit a vet or another short-term period.

By registering their birds, keepers will ensure they receive important updates relevant to them, such as on any local avian disease outbreaks and information on biosecurity rules to help protect their flocks. This will help to manage potential disease outbreaks, such as avian influenza and Newcastle disease, and limit any spread. It also enables them to keep up to date with the latest national and regional guidance.

For all the latest information in relation to the spread of Avian Flu and information on how you can help to protect your birds please see this guidance on Avian influenza (bird flu).

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu>

Keepers can register their bird and poultry at Poultry and other captive birds: registration rules and forms - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

<https://www.gov.uk/.../poultry-including-game-birds...>

### Plastic Free July

Did you get involved? Joining the challenge was a great way to:

- 🌍 Reduce plastic waste and help protect our oceans and wildlife. Did you know that 8 million tonnes of plastic pollution enter our oceans each year and it is estimated that by 2050, there will be more plastic in our oceans than fish?
  - 🌍 Lower our carbon footprint and contribute to our workplace initiative to reach net zero on all council operations by 2030.
  - 🌍 Discover plastic free solutions that suit you and encourage sustainable habits that can last beyond July.
- 🌱 Did you see the Plastic Free July Calendar for even more ideas on how to avoid single-use plastics and build habits that will have a lasting impact on the environment.



### New Strategy for Nature Recovery

WNC is in the process of developing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for the area. This is one of many tools coming out of The Environment Bill 2021 to deliver the government’s Environment Improvement Plan (EIP). The Strategy will identify where the best places are to recover nature and deliver wider environmental



benefits in the authority area. It will guide and focus funding on these areas through other EIP tools such as Biodiversity Net Gain and government grants.

Since March, Nene Rivers Trust has been working on our behalf to engage stakeholders including landowners and the public. From mid-July onwards, now that the evidence and mapping data has been compiled, and the priorities and potential measures have been collected from stakeholders, the strategy will start taking shape. Following approval from Natural England and the Council ELT, a draft strategy will be due for public consultation in mid-October for a 6-week period. For more information visit the Local Nature Recovery Strategy website

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/.../local-nature...>

or contact [nature@westnorthamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:nature@westnorthamptonshire.gov.uk)

### Green Flag Award

Green Flags are being raised at five of our parks, as they have once again been awarded this coveted status celebrating Britain’s greatest parks and green spaces.



Abington Park, Bradlaugh Fields, Daventry Country Park, Delapre Park, and Brixworth Country Park have all retained their Green Flag Awards - nationally recognised as the benchmark for the management of recreational outdoor spaces. Bradlaugh Fields has retained the award for the fifth year running and Abington and Delapre parks, also in Northampton, retain their awards for the eleventh and twelfth years in a row respectively, in recognition of the hard work of community groups and volunteers to maintain these widely

used open spaces. Daventry Country Park, which has seen improvements to its visitor facilities in recent years, achieves the award for the 25th time.

The Green Health at Daventry project was also successful in achieving the Green Flag Community Award for its community garden, which is run with support from Daventry Country Park's Rangers. Our green spaces are essential to our residents' wellbeing and provide vital environmental benefits for local wildlife. These awards recognise the brilliant work that our park rangers, community groups, volunteers, and residents continue to do to maintain and improve our open spaces.

### Net Zero West Northants

The Net Zero West Northants programme offers grant funding & FREE advice to help businesses calculate their carbon footprints, cut energy costs, and progress on the journey to Net Zero. This support from Ngage Solutions is funded by the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund. Join the Net Zero West Northants programme: <http://ngagesolutions.co.uk/west-northamptonshire-net...>

[#NetZero](#) [#UKSPF](#) [#Sustainability](#) @NgageSolutions  
@WestNorthamptonshireCouncil

Funded by UK Government net zero: West Northants

Grants up to £5,000 available\*

Accelerate your transition to Net Zero

A new programme offering financial support and Net Zero advice to businesses in West Northants.

Register here

Don't miss out on this fully-funded support.

\*Terms and conditions apply

UKSPF Shared Prosperity Fund West Northamptonshire Council ngage

## HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

### West Northamptonshire Local Area Partnerships

Many of you are aware that I am the Hackleton and Grange Park WNC Representative on the Rural East LAP.

If you live in West Northamptonshire, your area will be part of one of the following Local Area Partnerships:

- 1) Northampton East: Billing and Rectory Farm, Riverside Park and Talavera
- 2) Northampton South: Delapre and Rushmere, East Hunsbury, Nene Valley and Shelfleys
- 3) Northampton West: Duston East, Duston West, St Crispin and Sixfields
- 4) Northampton Central: Abington and Phippsville, Castle, Dallington, Spencer and St George
- 5) Northampton North: Boothville and parklands, Headlands, Kingsthorpe North and Kingsthorpe South
- 6) Rural North: Braunston and Crick, Brixworth, Long Bucky and Moulton
- 7) Rural West: Daventry East, Daventry West and Woodford and Weedon
- 8) Rural South: Brackley, Middleton Cheney and Silverston
- 9) Rural East: Bugbrooke, Deanshanger, Hackleton and Grange Park and Towcester and Roade





## Local Area Partnership Rural East

The last meeting of the Rural East LAP took place on 18 June 2024 at 1.00pm and the next meeting is due to take place on 20 August 2024.

## Towcester Adult Social Care Engagement Sessions

Promotions continue for Support Services at Welcoming Space Towcester Library. They are all face to face drop-in monthly sessions:-

- Chatty Café
- WNC Employment Advice & Support
- WNC Adult Social Care Team
- NHFT Talking Therapies Health

From 10am – 12pm, no appointment needed:-

- 13/08/2024
- 10/09/2024
- 08/10/2024
- 12/11/2024
- 10/12/2024

For further information on Adult Social Care, Towcester Library and The Welcoming Spaces please see links below:-

[Adult social care and wellbeing | West Northamptonshire Council \(westnorthants.gov.uk\)](https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/adult-social-care-and-wellbeing)

[Towcester Library | West Northamptonshire Council \(westnorthants.gov.uk\)](https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/towcester-library)

[Welcoming spaces | West Northamptonshire Council \(westnorthants.gov.uk\)](https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/welcoming-spaces)

## Make Your Voice Count

Healthwatch North and West Northamptonshire is launching their ‘**Make Your Voice Count**’ campaign focusing on mental health and physical wellbeing. They want to know how people in Northamptonshire feel about their health and wellbeing, what works best for them and how they actually feel about living in Northamptonshire. To find this out they have created a survey, which should take a maximum of 10 minutes to complete. The questions cover topics such as how you feel about your own health and what works best for you in managing both your mental and physical wellbeing.

Once they have collected all the responses, a report will be created – providing recommendations for local authorities and health services based on the feedback from everyone in Northamptonshire.

We encourage everyone to give their views as it is crucial to improving the care you receive. The survey can be accessed here - <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/HWMYVC/>

Please share this link with anyone who could get involved. Alternatively, please consider engaging with the **Make Your Voice Count** campaign posts on social media to help Healthwatch widen their reach across the county.

## New Adult Social Care System

West Northamptonshire Council has signed a new five-year contract with social care software specialist, System C, to implement its Liquidlogic case management application for adult social care in the region.

**What's on at your Welcoming Space at Towcester Library**  
The Forum, Moat Lane, NN12 6AD  
Open: Monday-Friday, 9am to 6pm and Saturdays 9am to 5pm

**Timetable of activities**

**Chatter and Natter**  
Every Thursday, 1.30pm - 3.30pm  
Look for the yellow 'Chatter & Natter' table signs each Thursday afternoon and drop in for a chat. For more information contact Nikki Hamby on 0300 126 7000 or email [Towcester.LibraryPlus@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:Towcester.LibraryPlus@westnorthants.gov.uk)

**Employment support**  
Every second Wednesday of the month, from 1-3pm  
Free help from our Employment Support Service, and a range of partners, including support with job searching, CVs, training, money advice and more.

**Help with Adult social care & wellbeing**  
Every second Tuesday of the month, from 10am-midday  
Members of West Northamptonshire Council's Adult Social Care team are on hand to help you connect with your community, and access resources so you can achieve a maintain a positive sense of wellbeing.

**Talking Therapies - Health**  
Every third Monday of the month, from 10am-midday  
Are you feeling lethargic, unmotivated, or just not your usual self? Northamptonshire NHS Talking Therapies - Health support people who may be feeling stress, low, anxious, have a long-term condition, to help get back on track.

**About our Welcoming Spaces**  
Welcoming Spaces are run by local people for local people from the voluntary, community and faith sectors across West Northamptonshire.  
Residents are offered a warm, trusted setting for people to socialise and access services tackling social isolation and cost of living challenges.  
Non-judgemental and safe, all guests are treated equally, with dignity and respect.

#welcomingspacesWN

The new cloud-based system is due to go live in February 2025, offering an integrated, comprehensive single view of individuals. It will incorporate a person's GP data and provide residents with the ability to manage their own records through a dedicated customer-facing portal.

Once live, the solution will be used daily by a council workforce of over 500 staff providing complex care and support to over 4,500 residents. More widely it will also be accessed by other users including social care providers, carers, and the voluntary sector. The new case management application will include a fully integrated finance system with the key benefit of streamlining assessment and payment processes. This integration will enable the council to enhance efficiencies and take a proactive approach in managing referrals for individuals requiring adult social care services. For residents, it will provide a dedicated portal where they can manage their account from one simple login, providing improved access for self-managing their records.



Thank you for your enquiries regarding the steps WNC has taken to ensure the confidentiality of people's medical records once the Liquid Logic system goes live. I have been advised that Shared Care Record functionality will be available for use with the new Liquid Logic solution however it will be part of the LA's Phase 2 programme. The LA will work with the supplier to fully understand its functionality and governance arrangements before switching this on to operational teams. ASC will work closely with the information governance team to ensure compliance in relation to consent and safe practices. I am happy to provide a more detailed response once ASC are clearer on the approaches open to us to consider. Once I have further news, I shall be in touch.

### **Family Hubs Website**

Our Council has launched a new online resource focused on providing families with a wealth of resources and local service information. The Family Hubs website provides bespoke guidance to cater to the needs of families at every life stage; from conception and pregnancy, through to toddlers, school admissions and the teenage years. It offers a seamless experience, organising information by age range to facilitate easy access to relevant support.



The website provides comprehensive guidance and local service details tailored to meet the specific needs of the local community, whether they're expecting a child, raising a toddler, or navigating the teenage years. Currently in its initial phase, the Family Hubs website is set to evolve further with the addition of new features and expanded content over the coming months. We are also working closely with community organisations and partners to look at how it can extend this offer across all nine of our Local Area Partnerships (LAPs) in West Northants.

We are committed to continually enhancing this resource to better serve the community, ensuring families have access to up-to-date and pertinent information. Please do take the time to explore the Family Hubs website and discover the wealth of support available: <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/family-hubs-west..>

This website launch comes as part of a wider project focused on increasing early support and intervention for families and young people. Together with other local organisations, we are looking at the early help offer and how this can be strengthened to ensure there is

the right, preventative support available including in-person Family Hubs, offering a place in local communities for families and young people to access. The first in-person Family Hub is set to open in Towcester later this year, with other locations in Northampton and Daventry to follow.

### **Workplace Wellbeing Toolkit**

Employers of any size across West Northamptonshire can now access a wellbeing toolkit designed to provide practical guidance on how to enhance wellbeing in the workplace and improve business outcomes. Free to all businesses, the Workplace Wellbeing Toolkit offers a step-by-step guide to workplace



wellbeing, providing an overview of what wellbeing is, how businesses can invest in it, and how they can use existing data to enhance their wellbeing programmes. It helps employers to create an action plan across a wide range of wellbeing topics to support the specific needs of their employees. offers a step-by-step guide to workplace wellbeing, providing an overview of what wellbeing is, how businesses can invest in it, and how they can use existing data to enhance their wellbeing programmes. It helps employers to create an

action plan across a wide range of wellbeing topics to support the specific needs of their employees.

Research shows that a good workplace wellbeing programme can have a positive impact on employee happiness and engagement, increase productivity and improve customer service and business outcomes. The toolkit aims to encourage businesses to adopt an insight and data led approach to workplace wellbeing, improving the health and wellbeing of their employees and subsequently their business performance. The toolkit has been developed by our public health specialists in partnership with existing businesses to ensure that it meets the needs of businesses and their employees. We will be continuing to develop the toolkit over the coming months and years based on feedback.

### **Statue to Raise Awareness of Children's Mental Health**

A willow sculpture has been installed at Daventry Country Park as part of a project to raise awareness of children's mental health.



The sculpture was created by artist Deb Jones, and is based on designs by two pupils from Barby Primary School and East Hunsbury Primary School - winners of an art competition held to mark Children's Mental Health Week last year. Located in the park's Lovells Bay (found here on Google Maps or by using what3words: [shortens.catching.liberty](https://www.what3words.com/shortens-catching-liberty)) the artwork aims to showcase how connecting with nature can support positive mental wellbeing in children and young people.

This was a great idea from our Healthy Schools team to get our young people involved in a creative task whilst thinking about how connecting with nature benefits their mental wellbeing. Talking about mental wellbeing is so important and this was an engaging way to start these conversations with students. A big well done and thank you to all who took part, there were many incredible entries – and the winning designs were truly well deserved as the final sculpture looks brilliant.

### Reminder for Children to be Vaccinated

Primary, secondary and further education students and their parents and guardians are being urged to check their vaccination status, to ensure they are up to date.

Increased mixing during the holidays means the risk of viruses spreading amongst children and young people is heightened. Some of the most common infections to circulate within our school aged population includes measles, mumps, and meningitis, which can cause severe complications, and in



some cases require hospitalisation.

Some children and young people may have missed out on getting their routine vaccinations or are newly eligible, and are therefore being reminded to get this protection. Vaccinations help to boost the immune system and protects against complications an infection can cause. Some children and young people may have missed out on getting their routine vaccinations or are newly eligible, and are therefore being reminded to get this protection. Vaccinations

help to boost the immune system and protects against complications an infection can cause.

Children and young people who attend school should have been offered vaccinations through their GP or the school immunisation programme. Anyone whose child has missed any doses of these vaccines or does not attend a school setting, is asked to please contact their GP to arrange an appointment.

For further detail regarding any of these vaccinations, please check out the West Northamptonshire Council Immunisation page.

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/health.../immunisation>

### Yellow Heat Health Alert

A Yellow Heat-Health Alert was issued across the East Midlands from 29 July to Wednesday 31 July by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and the Met Office. The warmer weather poses a much greater risk to the most vulnerable in our community, such as the very young and older people.

Residents are advised to remain cautious and seek advice from 111 if non-emergency health advice is required. 999 services should be used in emergencies only. The top ways for staying safe in the heat are to:

- 1) Look out for those who may struggle to keep themselves cool and hydrated; older people, those with underlying conditions and those who live alone are particularly at risk.
- 2) Close curtains on rooms that face the sun to keep indoor spaces cooler and remember it may be cooler outdoors than indoors.
- 3) Use cool spaces if going outdoors.
- 4) Drink plenty of fluids and avoid excess alcohol.
- 5) Never leave anyone in a closed, parked vehicle, especially infants, young children, vulnerable adults, or animals.
- 6) Try to keep out of the sun between 11am to 3pm, when the UV rays are strongest.
- 7) If you have to go outside in the heat, walk in the shade, apply sunscreen and wear a wide-brimmed hat.
- 8) Avoid physical exertion during the hottest parts of the day.
- 9) Make sure you take water with you if you are travelling.
- 10) Stay up to date with by visiting our hot weather web pages.



## EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

### Term Dates for West Northamptonshire Schools

Below are the term dates for the area, according to West Northamptonshire Council. Dates will vary at independent schools, and there could be additional days off at all schools for teacher training days, which will vary from school to school.

#### Summer term 2024

Summer holiday: Wednesday July 24 to Friday August 30.

#### Autumn term 2024

Monday September 2 to Friday December 20.

**October half term:** Monday October 28 to Friday November 1.

**Christmas holiday:** Monday December 23 to Friday January 3, 2025.

### Summer Reading Challenge

This summer, children aged 4-11 can visit any library across the county from 20 July to join the 'Marvellous Makers' Summer Reading Challenge, firing up their imaginations through the power of reading and creative expression. In partnership with Create, a leading arts charity, and public libraries, this year's Challenge celebrates kids' creativity and storytelling abilities. Children will be encouraged to explore new books and stories while taking part in free activities, from arts and crafts to music, dance, and more. Libraries will be offering a vibrant array of arts and crafts themed events for children over the Summer from ballet workshops, wind chime making, magic shows, decoupage, slime and much, much more!

The bespoke Challenge artwork is illustrated by celebrated artist Natelle Quek, bringing the 'Marvellous Makers' theme vibrantly to life. Sign up to the challenge anytime at your local library from 6 July. For further information regarding the Summer Reading Challenge and events please ask in your local library branch or visit the West Northamptonshire Council Libraries webpage:

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

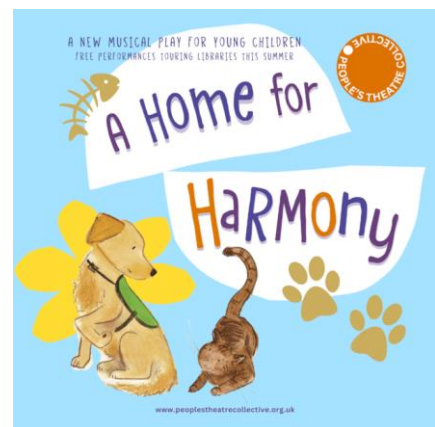
Our Libraries are also running a summer competition to celebrate what people love most about where they live. We would like young artists aged 5-12 to create art showcasing what they love about where they live, with prizes including a £50 Hobbycraft voucher on offer. Full information and application forms can be obtained from any of our libraries.

### 'Home for Harmony' Play in Libraries this Summer

The Musical play 'A Home for Harmony' will visit libraries in West Northamptonshire this August as part of its Summer 2024 Tour.

Written by Renata Allen and produced by the People's Theatre Collective, the play is created specifically for young children and uses engaging music to inspire emotional resilience and confidence, ensuring families can enjoy the performance while recognising its valuable messages.

The play follows the touching story of Sam, a disabled person, and their loyal assistance dog, Bouncer, whose home is disrupted when a stray cat named Harmony appears on their doorstep and is welcomed into their family. The play is designed with inclusivity in mind, featuring accessible elements for audiences with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), including sensory and musical components, Makaton sign language, and non-verbal storytelling to ensure that every child can enjoy and engage with



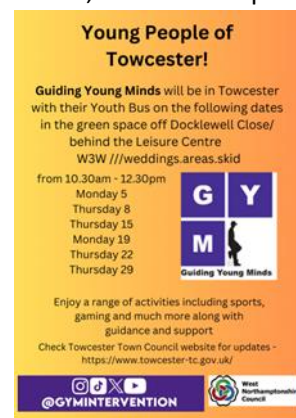
the performance. For more information and to see the full list of tour dates and venues, visit the People's Theatre Collective's website.

<https://www.peopletheatrecollective.org.uk/>

To find your local library and see a list of events, visit the WNC Libraries webpage. <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/libraries>

### Guiding Young Minds

Guiding Young Minds will be in Towcester with their Youth Bus by the Leisure Centre for several sessions over the summer holidays offering a range of activities including sports, gaming and much more. Please find attached promotional flyer with dates and times.



### StaySafe4Summer Campaign

As the school summer holidays get underway, children in Northampton are benefitting from safety advice thanks to a neighbourhood Police Community Support Officer (PCSO). The #StaySafe4Summer campaign is run annually by Northamptonshire Police PCSO Naomi Coote to share potentially life-saving advice with primary school-age children across her Northampton Central patch.

Naomi organised sessions for children in Years 5 and 6 in 10 schools in the run-up to the holidays, working with partners including Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS), the joint police and fire service Arson Task Force, London Northwestern Railway, South Northants Community Responders and West Northamptonshire Council.



Topics in the assemblies included water safety, the dangers of setting fires, railway safety, basic first aid and staying safe when out and about in the summer sun.

Part of Naomi's work included a safety superhero poster competition for Year 5

pupils supported by funding from the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. On Saturday, 20 July 2024 the winners were announced at an event in the Grosvenor Centre which saw representatives from Northamptonshire Police, NFRS, the Arson Task Force, Crimestoppers, Re-Solve, South Northants Community Responders and Northamptonshire Emergency Service Cadets share advice with families and shoppers.

The competition winners were Brooke Lowe from Earl Spencer Primary School was picked for her Super Sky character, alongside Maryama from Spring Lane Primary School, who created Sunny Summer to share safety advice.

As well as prizes including Amazon vouchers donated by the OPFCC and London Northwestern train tickets, their superhero designs have been made into safety advice leaflets which will be handed out at events over the summer, with the designs from the runners up set to go on display at the PFCC's office in Wellingborough.

### Send Priority Action Plan

The local SEND partnership has developed a Priority Action Plan (PAP) in line with the requirements from OFSTED, the Department for Education (DFE) and NHS England, and has been approved by Ofsted. The PAP is aligned with West Northamptonshire's SEND & Alternative Provision Strategy and been developed with all partners represented at the SEND & Alternative Provision Partnership



Improvement Board. The local area SEND partnership will now meet with DfE and NHSE at regular intervals during the next eighteen months to ensure the delivery of the action plan.

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/local-offer/send-strategy>

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/news/west-northants-send-partnership-responds-inspection-report>

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & GRANT FUNDING

### ACRE Reopens Grants for Village Hall Improvements

ACRE is pleased to confirm that village hall management committees can apply once again for larger grants to improve their buildings. The fund, which was originally announced to mark the Late Queen's Platinum Jubilee has reopened for new applications.



Groups can submit applications for grants of between £7,500 and £75,000 which can be used to cover up to 20% of capital costs associated with renovation and improvement projects. This latest window for new applications is expected to last until government funding has been exhausted. The process is competitive and hall committees must be able to complete the project work by the end of March 2025. Interested groups are strongly encouraged to read information and guidance about the fund available from ACRE's website before applying.

<https://acre.org.uk/main-grants-scheme-for-village-halls/>

### Employment Support 14 August 2024

Come along to Towcester Library on 14th August (1pm - 3pm) & get free help to find your dream job in West Northants. We will be on hand with Haus of HR, Key Business Skills, Evolve your Future, Daventry Volunteer Bureau & other employment support partners to help you with job searching, CV writing, training, one-to-one guidance & more. No booking required.



## TRANSPORT & HIGHWAYS

### Additional Highways Investment

An additional £10 million will be invested into improving roads across West Northamptonshire. The extra funding will allow WNC and its highways partner Kier to extend the surface dressing programme for roads and paths across the area as well as carrying out bridge maintenance schemes



and work to resolve drainage issues across the area. This will also provide the opportunity to trial an innovative road surfacing technique (called in-situ recycling) that produces a long-lasting repair and reuses existing material to reduce costs and carbon emissions, resulting in more sustainable repairs across our rural network.

The additional funding, which was approved at Council on Thursday 18 July 2024 is coming from the capital budget which is used for things like improving local infrastructure. This follows on from the £2.8 million investment into purchasing and operating new machinery in 2023, which has already increased the efficiency of road maintenance and repairs in our area.

To find out more about the Highways services across West Northamptonshire visit: Highways <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/roadworks-major-projects...> or visit @WNHighways on Facebook and X.

## POLICE FIRE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

### Look Closer for Exploited Young People

Exploited children and young people don't always look vulnerable and may not act like victims. If something doesn't feel right, it might not be. Public spaces like bus and train stations, fast food outlets, hotels and roadside services can be where young victims of child exploitation are most visible. If we all learn to spot the possible signs of a young person being exploited, we can all help to keep them safe and stop this abuse from happening.

Please take a few minutes to learn a little about child exploitation and what to do if you are concerned about a young person or group of young people you see. Young people who have been exploited or abused:

- Don't always look vulnerable
- Don't always act like victims
- May not understand they are being exploited
- May have a distrust of police/adults in authority
- May appear angry or aggressive; these are common signs of trauma
- Can feel scared about what might happen to them next
- Need to feel safe and heard, so that they feel comfortable talking about what might be happening to them

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- Can feel scared about what might happen to them next





- Need to feel safe and heard, so that they feel comfortable talking about what might be happening to them

Help us protect children and young people from all forms of exploitation. Don't wait. Report it: If you are concerned about a child and think it's an emergency, dial 999 or if it's not an emergency call 101.

If you are on a train text British Transport Police on 61016.

Otherwise contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

[childrenssociety.org.uk/lookcloser](https://childrenssociety.org.uk/lookcloser)

### **Closure Order at Northampton Property Following Drug Related Anti-Social Behaviour**

A property in Northampton has been issued with a full closure order following concerns around drug dealing and anti-social behaviour from members of the public. The 3-month order follows numerous complaints from local residents about a range of disruptive activities linked to the flat, located in Park Avenue in Abington, over the past six months.

Since January 2024, there have been persistent reports of disturbances including frequent visitors to the flat throughout the night and early morning; noise from shouting, arguing, fighting, and swearing in communal areas; other residents' flat buzzers being rung in the early hours; and suspicious packages being exchanged, believed to be drugs, causing the community a high level of alarm and distress.

On 10 July 2024, West Northamptonshire Council's (WNC) Anti-Social Behaviour team and Northamptonshire Police successfully obtained a closure order to shut down the property under Part 4 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. The Council and the police worked together to gather the evidence needed to obtain the closure order at Northampton Magistrates Court. The property will be secured and boarded to prevent entry. Any unauthorised person who enters the property will be committing a criminal offence.

Closure orders last for a period of 3 months and can be extended further if necessary. They are used when other approaches to tackling anti-social behaviour have been unsuccessful and aim to protect residents living in the neighbourhood by preventing criminal behaviour taking place in or around a property. If you are experiencing issues with anti-social behaviour or suspected criminality where you live, please report it to police on 101 or report online at [www.northants.police.uk/RO](https://www.northants.police.uk/RO). In an emergency, where a crime is in progress or life is at risk, always call 999.

Non-emergency reports can also be made in confidence to independent charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.

### **Special Constabulary Recruitment Now Open**

Recruitment is open for Special Constables:

<https://www.northants.police.uk/>



**DO SOMETHING NEW**  
**DO SOMETHING EXTRA**  
**DO SOMETHING SPECIAL**

Receive training and support

Learn new transferable skills

Be a positive contribution towards public safety and your community

Meet new people and develop new friendships

Volunteer and be the difference

I love being a Special Constable, I think it is possibly the best thing that I have ever done!  
- SC Astlie

Every time I put on my uniform I feel proud, knowing that I have the potential to make a positive difference in someone else's life.  
- SC Lorna

sc@northants.police.uk  
northants.police.uk  
#DoSomethingSpecial

### Ten-Second Triage Kits added to Fire Appliances

New kit is being added to all frontline Fire appliances in Northamptonshire to help firefighters speed up the triage of injured patients at major incidents. All fire engines will have ten-second triage kits, which allow fire crews to identify what category of care an injured patient needs within ten seconds and put a colour coded wristband on that quickly identifies to paramedics which patients need urgent care. The kit has been purchased following the findings of the Manchester Arena



inquiry, and it will allow all emergency responders – whether that's Fire, Police or Ambulance – to start to be able to rapidly triage patients and mark what priority of care they will need at major and critical incidents. Xtract Stretchers will also be added to all frontline

appliances, and this will allow fire crews to be able to quickly move people away from areas of risk.

### Emergency Services Fun Day

Enjoy free food, entertaining activities, emergency service demos, and learn more about the important work our Emergency Services provide for the community.

**DATE:** Wednesday 7 August 2024

**TIME:** 10am - 2pm

**WHERE:** Danetre and Southbrook Learning Village (DSLV)

The event is FREE.



## CULTURE, HERITAGE & SPORT

### Heritage Buses to Showcase 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Northampton Transport Heritage Buses have been selected to showcase in the national Heritage Open Days gallery to celebrate the festival's 30th anniversary. The online gallery will feature 30 stories from across the UK covering the breadth of Heritage Open Days over the years and detailing the story behind each one to serve as an important record of the event's history.

From 1 July, the public will be able to vote for their favourite entries, with the winning 10 being featured in the final gallery and being awarded a small grant from the National Trust.

The vintage bus service is a popular fixture in West Northamptonshire's Heritage Open Days festival and was selected by the National Trust out of over 100 entries following an entry submitted by West Northamptonshire Council (WNC).

The buses have been taking part in Northamptonshire's Heritage Open Days event since 1994, offering a free hop-on-hop-off service between venues and attractions across the county during the 10-day event, delivered by a great team of volunteers.

Over the years, Northampton Transport Heritage has also provided classic buses representing various operators nationwide, including United Counties and on occasion buses from further afield such as London Transport's ubiquitous Routemaster.



Heritage Open Days is England's largest community led festival of history and culture, involving thousands of local volunteers and organisations. Each year the event brings people together to celebrate their heritage, community and history with stories, traditions and histories all brought to life with free events and activities.

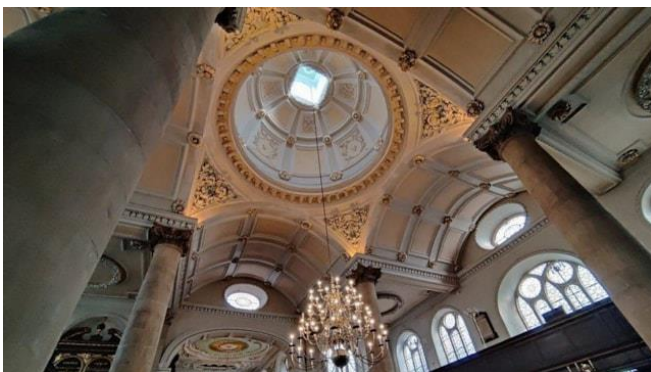
This year's Heritage Open Days event will take place between 6 and 15 September and will utilise the theme Routes, Networks & Connections to bring together the past and present with workshops, talks, hidden spaces, walks and activities for all the family.

West Northamptonshire Council has again been co-ordinating this year's local events programme which, for the first time, includes many offers from attractions across the whole of the county with the aim of making the heritage festival more diverse than ever before. This year's events include a film of Northampton's evolving Market Square, a student showcase of Northampton's rich heritage and fun runners getting into the heritage spirit. More details will be revealed shortly on the WNC website together with details of where and when the heritage buses will be running.

Find out more about the festival and vote for your favourite stories in the 30th anniversary gallery on <https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/.../anniversary...>

### Heritage Open Days 2024

Historic and cultural sites across Northamptonshire are invited to take part in this year's Heritage Open Days, which will take place between 6 and 15 September 2024. Venues such as stately homes, buildings of historic interest, museums, places of worship, and archaeological sites can now register to participate in



Heritage Open Days, which is England's largest annual festival of history and culture.

The festival offers the public free entry to places which might normally be closed or have an entrance fee, and where admission is charged, venues will offer something new to see, with many connected by Northampton Transport Heritage buses' free hop-on hop-off service.

West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) is an official promoter of the event and a list of all participating attractions and events can be found

on the Council website, which will be updated regularly as more attractions register. Events will include a film of Northampton's evolving Market Square, a student showcase of Northampton's rich heritage, and fun runners getting into the heritage spirit. More details will be revealed shortly on the WNC website together with details of where and when the heritage buses will be running.

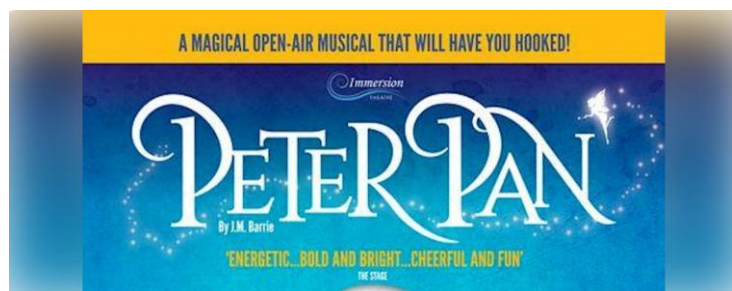
Registration can be completed by emailing [economy@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:economy@westnorthants.gov.uk). For more information, please visit the Heritage Open Days page. <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/cultu.../heritage-open-days>

Sites can also register on the national Heritage Open Days website <https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/.../registration-form...>

before 8 August 2024.

### Peter Pan Open Air Musical

On Sunday 4 August 2024 at Evenley Wood Garden there is an open air musical of Peter Pan. This fast-paced, larger-than-life production contains all the ingredients Immersion's loyal audiences have come to love and expect, including a laugh out loud script, heaps of audience interaction, a host of catchy songs, unforgettable characters, and maybe even the



odd water gun or two! With magic and mayhem throughout, this is one hair-raising adventure the family won't want to miss!

Age suitability: 4+, 5pm, Sunday 4 August

Booking and ticket information <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/.../peter-pan-tickets...>

Location: Evenley Wood Garden, Evenley,  
Northamptonshire, NN13 5SH

### Northampton Balloon Festival

The Northampton Balloon Festival takes place at Northampton Racecourse on Friday 16 to Sunday 18 August 2024. The annual Northampton Balloon Festival promises to be a spectacular event filled with excitement and fun for the whole family. Experience the breath-taking sight of colourful balloons filling the sky, creating a mesmerising display you won't want to miss.



But that's not all – the festival offers a wide range of attractions to enjoy. Delight in the variety of inflatable attractions, perfect for kids and adults alike. Savour delicious festival food from an array of vendors, offering everything from classic fair treats to gourmet delights. Quench your thirst at the well-stocked bars, providing a selection of refreshing beverages. Birds of prey displays and so much more. A day not to be missed. Open from 12pm to 10.30pm each day. Location: Northampton Racecourse, Northampton, NN2 6JA

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

### England's Red Roses are coming to Northampton

Franklin's Gardens stadium has been announced as a venue for one of England's matches during the pool phase of the Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 tournament. The 15,000 capacity stadium - home of course to the Premiership champions Northampton Saints - will host a Red Roses match during the 10th edition of the pinnacle women's rugby event taking place across six weekends from 22 August to 27 September next year. The full match schedule and kick-off times will be announced in October, when fans will be able to buy tickets for what promises to be the biggest-ever global celebration of women's rugby.



It will be a chance to watch the world's 16 best teams and the biggest stars of the game compete at eight locations across the length and breadth of the country, culminating in a grand finale at Twickenham Stadium. Ticket prices will range from £5 to £95 across the tournament, with over 60 per cent of tickets under £25 and children's prices available at every match. Accessible tickets will also be available for all matches.

Fans can register for free online to enter the presale on 24 September 2024 to ensure they are among the first to secure their place at the opening match and the final.

<https://www.rugbyworldcup.com/2025/en/newsletter>

The tournament's Worldwide Partner Mastercard is also offering its cardholders access to a priority sale on 17 September via the official Women's RWC 2025 ticketing website

<https://www.rugbyworldcup.com/2025/en/tickets>

## Men's Cycling Tour

West Northamptonshire will welcome Britain's biggest professional cycle race this September, as we play host to the penultimate stage of the Lloyds Bank Tour of Britain Men. Taking place on Saturday 7 September, the stage will start in Northampton town centre and take a 93-mile route through West Northants, before heading back to the finish line in Northampton. This area is no stranger to professional cycling, having held women's Tours of Britain in 2014 and 2016, but this will mark the first occasion that the men's event has come to the county. Events like this play an important role in bringing communities together and inspiring people to take up sport and live a more active and healthier lifestyle. They also provide a significant boost to our local economy and showcase our wonderful area to a global audience. When previously hosting the Women's Tour we saw a record number of spectators visiting West Northamptonshire and lining the route to show their support and we very much hope to witness that again this year as we celebrate all those taking part in the race. The Lloyds Bank Tour of Britain Men begins in the Scottish Borders on Tuesday 3 September, visiting the Tees Valley, and South Yorkshire over subsequent stages. The race will then conclude in Suffolk on Sunday 8 September after six stages of racing. More details of the Lloyds Bank Tour of Britain Men, including the stage five route map, detailed stage timings, and competing teams will be announced in the coming weeks.



<https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/tourofbritain>

## Car Park Dig

Archaeologists working at Chalk Lane discovered large pieces of ironstone which may once have formed part of Northampton Castle. They were revealed by experts from the Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA) during an initial investigation of the car park, ahead of its transformation to deliver a new heritage park for Northampton. Situated near the entrance to the railway station, this scheme will create an attractive green space in one of the town centre's key gateways, offering a playground and community garden, together with a series of timeline poles revealing the area's rich history. The dig, which took place earlier this month, revealed several large pieces of ironstone, likely quarried in



Northamptonshire and which may relate to the demolition of Northampton castle in 1879. This ironstone was mixed with brick and modern pottery and located next to trenches dug by archaeologists in the 1960s, suggesting it is the remains of the rubble they removed. MOLA's investigations also revealed the remains of a post medieval wall belonging to a house built amid the ruins of the castle. This work, along with other excavations in the town centre, is helping build an understanding of how the town developed around the castle in the centuries following the Civil War, when its defences were removed. Motorists are reminded Northampton's Chalk Lane Car Park will remain closed until 12 August 2024 while work takes place to return the car park to a safe standard so it can reopen.