

## MONTHLY NEWS REPORT SEPTEMBER 2024



**E-Newsletter Issue 09/2024**  
**Launch of Expansion to Cogenhoe Village Hopper**  
**At Stanwick Lakes, NN9 6GY**  
**5 August 2024**

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## NEWS REPORT SEPTEMBER 2024

### Monthly Highlights

WNC is proposing to implement a 50-mph speed limit to replace the national speed limit on the access to and from Bedford Road, Little Houghton. WNC will proceed to final design, pricing and scheduling. Once I have a date for the works, I will let you know.

Cogenhoe & Whiston Parish Council extended the Village Hopper to Weston Favell, Wellingborough (daily rather than just Saturdays), Rushden Lakes & Stanwick Lakes (Saturday & school holidays only). The minibus runs like a regular bus service with a set timetable with journeys between 7:30am and 6pm several times a day from Monday to Saturday to help residents travel to work, college, the shops and Northampton General Hospital.

On 30 August 2024, Kier Transportation, working together with West Northamptonshire Council, carried out work in Lodge Road, Little Houghton. I am pleased to let you know that the feedback from the residents has been excellent with comments like 'great organisation' and 'awesome job'.

Highways have advised me that temporary traffic works are in place on the A428 to reduce stress on a failing structure, which is described as 'parapet repairs'. They are working at planning repairs, but they are complex. The two-way traffic signals will remain in place as a 24-hour safety measure until the works are completed which is not likely until the end of September 2024. Once I have further news, I shall be in touch.

I have been informed that works on the Causeway Bridge, Billing will take place from 2 to 4 September 2024.

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 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.

Please visit the 'Give us your views on Pharmaceutical Needs' Consultation, which closes midnight Sunday 6 October 2024.

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.

The fifth round of the Household Support Fund has been announced and funded by UK Government until the end of September 2024. See my Monthly Report.

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

The final recommendations arising from the Community Governance Review for West Northamptonshire have been published on our website. See my Monthly Report.

MHCLG launched a consultation seeking views on proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the system, which is open now and will close at 11.45pm on Tuesday 24 September 2024.

WNC has approved a capital budget of £12.372 million to provide relocatable temporary accommodation as part of our ongoing efforts to address the rising need for temporary housing in the area. See my Monthly Report.

Organisations wishing to join our network of Welcoming Spaces are being offered grants of up to £1,500 to help them set up a Welcoming Space.

West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) has awarded £1.4 million in grant funding to a wide range of projects, including 24 community organisations to support initiatives focused on enhancing local skills, addressing critical needs, and fostering positive change within the community. See my Monthly Report.

Our new Community Mental Health Prevention Grant allows people to bid for funding for collaborative projects to tackle mental health inequalities within our local area. Organisations must submit an expression of interest by 27 September 2024. See my Monthly Report.

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.

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 to ensure they are among the first to secure their place at the opening match and the final.

Team GB Olympic gold medallist Tom Pidcock is set to be among the riders when the Lloyds Bank Tour of Britain cycling race visits West Northamptonshire on Saturday 7 September 2024. See my Monthly Report.

As I write this report, I have just returned from a most enjoyable holiday in Northumberland. It's almost impossible to describe the beauty of the landscape, punctuated by pretty villages, historic castles, busy market towns and harbours. We had a long list of places to visit, which included Lindisfarne, the Farne Islands, Alnwick Castle, Bamburgh Castle, Hexham Abbey, Hadrian's Wall and of course Fish and Chips in Seahouses. So, it's back to work for me and those of you, who have your head down in the garden or the office, school or at home, I am wishing you a richly rewarding month and year ahead.

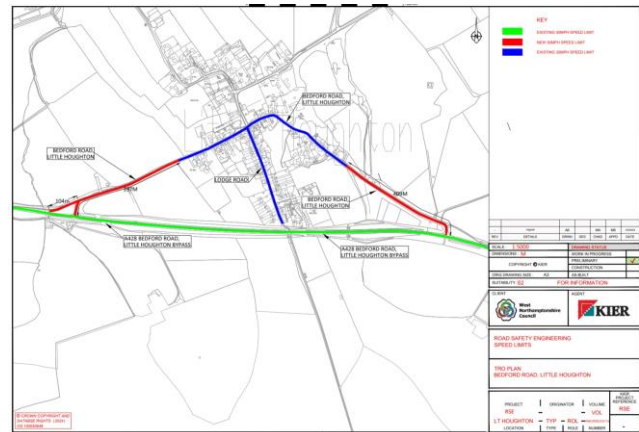
In the meantime, I hope that you enjoy this edition of my Monthly Report. Don't forget you can follow me on [www.facebook.com/stephen.clarke.31924](https://www.facebook.com/stephen.clarke.31924).

*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. Once I have a date range for the works, I will let you know.



### Quinton Coffee Morning 3 August 2024

We went to the Quinton Church Coffee Morning this morning, Saturday 3 August 2024. Open to all, the monthly first Saturday 10.30-12.00 coffee mornings provide an opportunity to relax and catch up with others from the local community. Everyone is always pleased to see a new face and offer a warm welcome to newcomers! It was great to catch up with Julia, Barbara, Andy, Rev Mark and others. The coffee and homemade cakes were most enjoyable especially the lemon drizzle cake.



Everyone who turns up always enjoys a warm

welcome, friendship and conversation! Well, done to those who make it happen.



Don't Forget the 40th Quinton and Preston Deanery Home Produce Show on Sunday 1 September on the Village Green. There will be the usual sections for Flowers, Fruit, Vegetables, Preserves, Cookery & Handicrafts. Entry forms to be submitted by 4pm, Friday 30th August to Diane Saunders, Preston Deanery Road, or email entry forms to [rnh536@gmail.com](mailto:rnh536@gmail.com). (Any queries, please call Pippa 07973 416561). The bar will be open from 11am to 4.00pm. Lunchtime BBQ & refreshments served from 12.00-2.00pm with ice cream, tea, coffee, cakes throughout the afternoon. Viewing of produce will take place from 2.00-3.00pm games and entertainment and then the auction of produce at 3.15pm followed by the prize giving and raffle.

### Community Lunch Cogenhoe 5 August 2024

On 5 August 2024, I attended the Community Lunch at the Village Hall, Cogenhoe. It is a very well attended event which runs every 2 weeks and is the perfect opportunity to chat with others whilst having something to eat. Lunch clubs can help you forge new friendships, share good food and enjoy a selection of interesting activities. Today, we heard a little bit about the history of Grendon Hall, where we had the delightful Afternoon Tea the previous week.



A special thank you to Deborah Rush and helpers who are giving so much back to their local community.

The next Community lunch is 'Fish and Chips' on Monday 19 August 2024 so please book your place by emailing: Deborah at [clerk@cogenhoeandwhiston-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@cogenhoeandwhiston-pc.gov.uk) or phone 07512 045418.

### Cogenhoe Village Hopper Launch of New Service 5 August 2024

From Monday 29 July 2024, Cogenhoe & Whiston Parish Council extended the Village Hopper to Weston Favell, Wellingborough (daily rather than just Saturdays), Rushden Lakes & Stanwick Lakes (Saturday & school holidays only). Passengers can travel directly from Wollaston, Bozeat, Easton Maudit, Grendon, Cogenhoe, Brafield, the Houghtons to Northampton, Wellingborough, Weston Favell, Stanwick Lakes and Rushden Lakes. The minibus runs like a regular bus service with a set timetable with journeys between 7:30am and 6pm several times a day from Monday to Saturday to help residents travel to work, college, the shops and Northampton General Hospital.

I was pleased to be invited to join representatives from West Northamptonshire, North Northamptonshire, Little Houghton Parish, Great Houghton Parish, Cogenhoe Parish Councils and others to celebrate the expansion of the service on 5 August 2024 at 2.15pm at Stanwick Lakes, NN9 6GY. It was an exceptionally busy day at Stanwick Lakes as we welcomed the new Service and heard just how popular this service has become already.



### Green Machine, Coffee@Carey, Hackleton 7 August 2024

On 7 August 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/>



### Little Houghton Afternoon Tea 7 August 2024

A summer reminder of Julia and Peter's 23/24 'Winter Warmer' sessions took place on 7 August 2024 in their garden in Little Houghton. Nearly everyone who had attended the 'Winter Warmer' events previously enjoyed this special Summer Afternoon Tea. Despite the overcast sky, the rain held off and we all enjoyed a delightful afternoon with friends. A special thank you to everyone who baked cakes and to Julia and Peter who were our hosts and provided the food and fizz. Thank you to Sheila for some great photographs.



The first fundraising event for last year's Winter Warmer took place on Saturday 28 October 2023 at Little Houghton Village Hall. It was organised by Julia and Peter Harrison to raise funds for the reopening of the Winter Warmer Sessions which started on Wednesday 1 November from 2-4pm. Then they took place every Wednesday until March 2024. Julia and Peter are planning to run Winter Warmer sessions monthly next year.

Well, done to Julia and Peter for organising 'Winter Warmer' last year and for the special Afternoon Tea this week.

### St Margaret's Church Coffee Morning 9 August 2024

On 9 August 2024, I attended the Denton Coffee Morning at St Margaret's Church, one of West Northants Warm Welcoming Spaces. The church is in the centre of the village. 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. Opening times: Thursday afternoons and Friday mornings. It has been a couple of weeks since we were able to make it. There were lots of folks there today. Although it was very hot outside it was cool inside the church. We enjoyed catching up with Sheila, Russell, Pat, John, Allison, Muriel, Margaret and others. There was a quiz underway when we arrived.



The church was looking extremely bare today as all the pews had been removed whilst they await the delivery of new chairs.

### Dementia UK Coffee Morning 10 August 2024

On 10 August 2024, I attended the Dementia UK Coffee Morning organised by the Ladies Fellowship, at the Cogenhoe and Whiston Village Hall, York Avenue, Cogenhoe. A special thank you to everyone who organised the Dementia UK event today. These events allow those caring for people with dementia to continue supporting families emotionally and practically by raising well-needed money for Admiral Nurses. Dementia UK, the specialist dementia nurse charity provides life-changing care for families affected by all forms of dementia – including Alzheimer's disease.



I enjoyed meeting up with all of you from Cogenhoe, who like me were enjoying the chat, sharing delicious cakes and tea or coffee with friends and having the space and time to share experiences.

### Little Houghton 10 August 2024

It was good to meet up today with friends at the Little Houghton Church Coffee Morning. I enjoyed catching up with John, Alice, Sheila, Paul and others. Well, done to



Alice, Emma, Lisa and Ralph for organising the fundraising needed to fix the door and weatherboard on the school garden house. Alice still has some greetings cards in aid of the Little Houghton CE Primary School Gardening Club. If you would like to support them then please contact Alice Gadney to purchase the cards directly. [alice@minimapmakers.com](mailto:alice@minimapmakers.com) Children in Key Stage 2 benefit from the 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.

The next meeting of this friendly and welcoming Coffee Morning Group will be 14 September 2024. Everyone is welcome for tea or coffee and biscuits and to try your luck at the monthly raffle whilst meeting your friends, or even making some new ones. All proceeds go to support the Village Church Charity.

### Lodge Road, Little Houghton 27 & 30 August 2024

Issue date: 23.08.24  
 Road: Lodge Road  
 Ward: West Northamptonshire

**Roadworks are starting in your area soon.**  
[What's happening, where and when?](#)

**What is happening:** Carriageway patching between number 2 and number 31.

**Where:** Lodge Road, Little Houghton

**When:** (Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> Pre-Survey works) & Friday 30<sup>th</sup> August 2024

**How long:** ½ day 27<sup>th</sup> (09:00-13:00) 1 day 30<sup>th</sup> (08:00 – 15:30)

**Traffic Management:** A road closure will be in place on Lodge Road as per above times, with restrictive access and egress. To allow works to be completed, we ask that residents park in side streets if requiring to use their vehicles. **We ask that there is no parking of vehicles on the carriageway between No 2 & No 31. We reserve the right to tow away any vehicles restricting the works.**

**Emergency Vehicles:** Emergency services will be allowed access when safe to do so.

**Residents/Businesses:** Residents/businesses will remain access if they fall within the works extents. Vehicles will be escorted through the works area when safe to do so by our Traffic Management teams.

**Public Transport:** Bus services will be notified of the works and will make alternative arrangements. Please contact your local bus provider for further information.

**Pedestrians and Cyclists:** Footways will remain open for pedestrians. Cyclists will be asked to dismount their bike and walk along the pedestrian footway.



Please see below the area highlighted in **RED**. This shows the extent of the patching / surfacing works. We ask that this is kept free of parked cars on respective dates and times previously detailed.



Issue date: 23.08.24  
 Road: Lodge Road  
 Ward: West Northamptonshire

**Parking and Property/Business Access**

We must ask that vehicles are not parked on the road within the works area during the road closure periods. We also recommend you plan extra time for your journeys.

We hope this information is helpful and we apologise for any inconvenience these essential works may cause. We will make every effort to minimise any unnecessary disruption. Our team on site will be ready to assist you with any issues you may have during the work, and we hope you will find our employees courteous and helpful.

**Information for residents**

**General advice**

For the latest information visit [www.wnhighways.co.uk](http://www.wnhighways.co.uk) or follow us on Twitter: @WNHighways

**Customer Service**

If you have any questions, concerns, or comments, please visit: [www.wnhighways.co.uk/contact](https://www.wnhighways.co.uk/contact) or call our Customer Service team on **0300 128 7000**

Site Specific contact: [Martin.Jenkins@wnhighways.co.uk](mailto:Martin.Jenkins@wnhighways.co.uk) - 01504 529750 (8.30 to 16.30)

In writing: [art@communications@wnhighways.co.uk](mailto:art@communications@wnhighways.co.uk)

Details of roadworks in your area can be found on [www.wnhighways.co.uk](http://www.wnhighways.co.uk)

Follow us!

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WNHighways/>  
 Twitter: <https://twitter.com/WNHighways/>

Please scan the QR code should you wish to give feedback after the work finishes, some devices may require a free app. If you do not have access to a QR scanner please use: <https://www.wnhighways.co.uk/QRcode>

Nothing is so urgent or important that we cannot take the time to do it safely. Please respect our workforce whilst we improve your network.

Kier Transportation, working together with West Northamptonshire Council, carried out work in Lodge Road, Little Houghton. Please see our full factsheet attached for more information. I am pleased to let you know that the feedback from the residents has been excellent with comments like 'great organisation' and 'awesome job'.

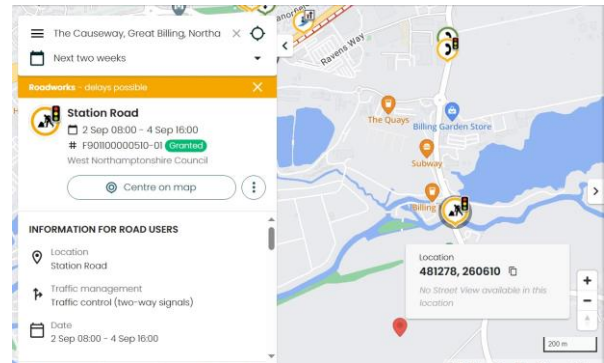


### Temporary Traffic Lights on A428

Several of you have asked me about the temporary traffic lights on the A428. Highways have advised me that the works are in place to reduce stress on a failing structure, which is described as 'parapet repairs'. They are working at planning repairs, but they are complex. The two-way traffic signals will remain in place as a 24-hour safety measure until the works are completed which is not likely until the end of September 2024. Once I have further news, I shall be in touch.

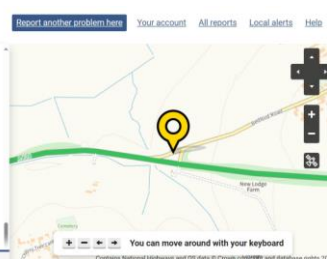
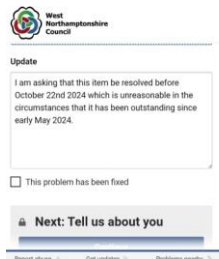
### Causeway Bridge, Billing

In response to the various enquiries about the works on the Causeway Bridge, Billing:  
<https://one.network/> shows 2 September-4 September 2024.



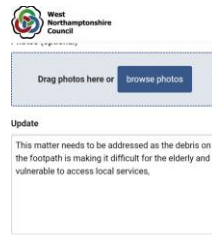
### Fix My Street Little Houghton 5869001

On 12 May 2024, I received a further complaint



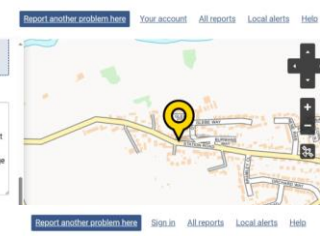
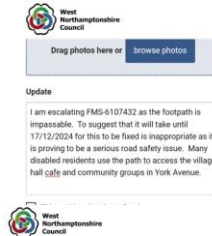
regarding the A428 and the slip road into Little Houghton. Residents are concerned about the current sight line which is masked by vegetation overgrowth and is making the junction to and from the A428 dangerous. As it is a Highway Safety issue, I have escalated the matter

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. I have since heard that the defect meets the requirement for a Priority 4 repair and the current average response time for a Priority 4 repair is 37.3 days.



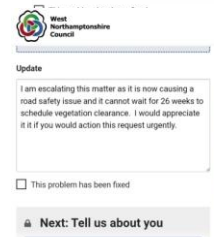
### Fix My Street Cogenhoe 6107432

I escalated 6107432 on 17 July 2024 and I was advised that they were currently awaiting a Greens Report. I have chased them again on 29 August 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. I was advised by Highways that this doesn't meet their criteria for urgent works. They also said that 'often we see defects of this kind being completed within 39 days'. 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.

### 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 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.

### Consultation to Lower Age of Hunsbury Park School

We are looking for views on the proposal to lower the age range for Hunsbury Park Primary School, Dayrell Rd, Northampton NN4 9RR from ages 4- to 11-year-olds to 2- to 11-year-olds. This will allow Hunsbury Park Primary School to take over the running of Campers Early Years and Out of School Club, located on site at Hunsbury Park Primary School (that is currently closed due to unforeseen circumstances).



#### Consultation on the Proposal to lower the age range at Hunsbury Park Primary School, Northampton

It is proposed that subject to a successful consultation process and statutory approvals being granted the nursery will re-open from Monday 23 September 2024. This will bridge the gap in provision for 2- to 11-year-olds in the local area and ensure continuity of service for families and the community. Hunsbury Park Primary School propose to continue running the previous term time, full day care model, offering flexible patterns to meet the needs of the working demographic. They will operate between 8am and 5:30pm, Monday to Friday and will continue to offer 24 full time equivalent funded early education entitlement (FEEE) places to 2- to 4-year-old children and an out of school club for 4 to 11 years.

To support a robust handover and to meet staffing requirements, they will be providing a staged approach by offering pre-school (3-year-olds) morning and afternoon sessions in the first academic year (2024/25) and extended full nursery sessions to 2- and 3-year-olds in the second academic year (2025/26). Although the school are proposing a staged approach, it is expected to have a minimal impact on families due to the low number of 2-year-olds previously in attendance.

Under this proposal, children aged 2-4 years would formally become part of the same structure as the school within the nursery school provision and on the nursery roll. The changes proposed are expected to be permanent. West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) is responsible for delivering early years provision within the Hunsbury area of West Northamptonshire. It is also legally obliged to conduct a period of consultation on this proposal as part of the statutory decision-making process.

Children will benefit from one cohesive team working with the school's early years cohort and a high-quality teaching and learning experience with provision led by the Head of Early Years (QTS).

All responses must be received by midnight on Tuesday 10 September 2024.

<https://westnorthants.citizenspace.com/.../subpage.2022.../>

### **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.../>



### **Give Us Your Views on Pharmaceutical Needs**



We are carrying out some important research across the whole of Northamptonshire to find out how people feel about the current services they receive from local pharmacies. We would like people to tell us what pharmacy services they have locally available, what they need, and what is missing. This will help to identify gaps and give us the information we need to help us to commission improvements. Please visit the 'Give us your views on Pharmaceutical Needs' for further information and detail of how to have your say. This consultation closes midnight Sunday 6 October 2024.

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

## 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).

An 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 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.../>

## 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/>

## FINANCE ADMINISTRATION AND TRANSFORMATION

### Household Support Fund

The fifth round of the Household Support Fund has been announced and funded by UK Government until the end of September 2024. West Northamptonshire Councillors have approved plans for distributing this funding in line with the Government guidance. This includes:

- providing around 12,700 families with children on benefits related free school meals with vouchers over the summer holidays for food and school essentials such as uniforms,
- providing grants to voluntary and community organisations allowing them to increase the dedicated and tailored support that they offer to residents,
- continuing to collaborate closely with our trusted partners to provide tailored support to residents with:
  - debt and money advice
  - energy saving advice.
  - practical energy saving measures.
  - practical household support

All awards and funding are complimented by wrap around support schemes to help transition households from crisis support to more sustainable longer-term offer of financial wellbeing.

### Cost of living

Further information and support can be found on:

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

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



### **Pupils in receipt of benefits-related free school meals**

Voucher links providing support for both Spring Term School Holidays were issued in March and May 2024 to all eligible pupils. These links have now expired and cannot be backdated.

Grocery vouchers have now been issued to schools or parents/carers of all pupils in receipt of benefits related free school meals. These are valued at £15 per child, per week of the summer holiday (some schools are eligible for 6 weeks, and some are eligible for 5 weeks).

A further £30 School Essentials voucher has also been issued to support with the purchase of school uniform, shoes, stationery or books.

### **Support where you live.**

Local Voluntary and Community Organisations have been able to apply for grants funded by the Household Support Fund. This allows them to use their knowledge and understanding of the needs of residents to provide tailored support.

The list of grants that have been awarded so far can be seen below. If you are in receipt of support from any of these organisations, you may be able to access the programmes funded by these grants.

### **Grants awarded.**

#### ***Support with food.***

The Household Support Fund has also provided monies to members of the Food Aid Alliance West Northants (FAAWN). Find your nearest Food Bank or Community Larder on:

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

#### ***Households requiring debt and money advice.***

The Debt and Money Advice team can offer support:

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/benefits/debt-and-money-advice-service>

- support with debt options and negotiating payment arrangements.
- money management and budgeting advice
- help with maximising income including benefits entitlement checks.
- completing welfare benefit claim forms and support with appeals
- referrals to partners for further holistic support that compliments the financial support provided.
- support in gaining confidence in managing finances through self-help tools.

If you are a Housing Association tenant and require debt and money advice support, please refer to your Housing Association provider for further assistance.

You can request debt and money advice online by submitting a referral form:

[https://northamptonshire-self.achieveservice.com/service/Request\\_debt\\_and\\_money\\_advice](https://northamptonshire-self.achieveservice.com/service/Request_debt_and_money_advice)

#### ***Households requiring energy saving advice.***

Households can also access support with energy saving advice. This service is provided by our partners at Community Law who specialise in this form of support. <https://www.communitylawservice.org.uk/energy-advice/>

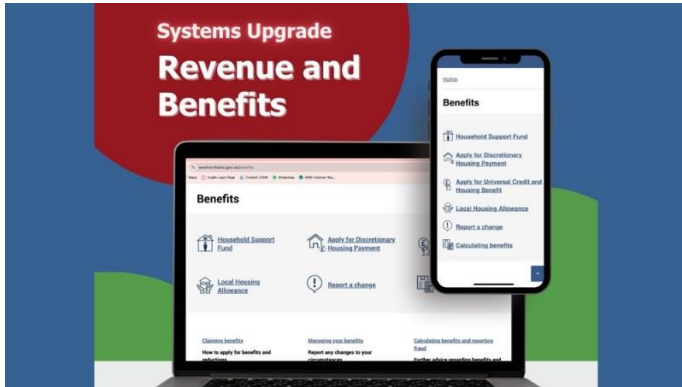
about the support available.

### **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 several 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 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 the West Northamptonshire.

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.

## REGULATORY SERVICES

### Final Recommendations from Community Governance Review

The final recommendations arising from the Community Governance Review for West Northamptonshire have been published on our website and are available to view here:

<https://westnorthants.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments...>

Recommendations affect the following parishes:

#### Change to boundaries:

- Boughton/Kingsthorpe
- Dodford/Weedon Bec
- Great Houghton/Little Houghton
- Pitsford
- Roade/ Stoke Bruerne
- Tiffield/Towcester
- Wootton/Hackleton

#### Change to parish wards.

- Daventry

#### Change to the number of councillors.

- Overstone
- Ravensthorpe
- Thorpe Mandeville
- West Hunsbury

The recommendations are due to be considered by the Democracy and Standards Committee on 2 September. If approved, they will be referred to Council to make the final decision on 26 September.

The changes in Hackleton and Grange Park are as follows:

### **Great Houghton/Little Houghton**

5.6.24 It is considered that this proposal meets the legal tests applicable to CGRs. Incorporating the land purchased by Great Houghton Parish Council into the parish will strengthen community interests and identities. Clearly defined boundaries (hedgerows, water courses etc.) have been used to draw up the boundary change. See map enclosed.

### **Wootton & Hackleton**

5.6.83 Taking account of the outcome of the consultation, it is considered that this proposal meets the legal tests applicable to CGRs. Incorporating the remaining dwellings belonging to the Wootton Fields development and the St George's Fields Development into Wootton Parish Council by moving the Hackleton Urban Parish Ward from Hackleton to Wootton would be reflective of the identities and interests of the community and would represent effective and convenient local government as all residents would be able to make use of polling station facilities closer to Page 42 their homes. The extent of urban development in this area also forms a clearly identifiable boundary. See Map enclosed.

## **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

### **RMTG Focuses on Young People**

Earlier this month, the Rural Market Towns Group (RMTG) held a sounding board session centred on the challenges and opportunities facing young people in rural communities. The session provided a platform for



representatives from various market town councils to share their insights, discuss pressing issues, and highlight initiatives that are making a difference. The discussion was framed around three main topics: the

biggest challenges facing young people, current initiatives and best practices, and desired policies for future support.

During the session, participants were asked to identify the three biggest issues facing young people in their communities. A common theme emerged around limited access to services and activities, leading to feelings of isolation and a lack of opportunities. The challenges have been exacerbated over the past three years by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, economic uncertainty, and changes in social behaviour. The sounding board highlighted several successful initiatives aimed at supporting young people in rural communities. These examples of best practices demonstrate how councils can make a tangible difference in the lives of their younger residents.

### **Soham Town Council Initiatives**

Soham Town Council has undertaken several initiatives to enhance the recreational spaces available to young people. The expansion of the local skatepark is a key project, providing a dedicated space for outdoor activities. Additionally, the council has installed picnic units in the recreation ground, although they have faced challenges with vandalism. Despite these setbacks, the council is committed to improving these spaces, demonstrating perseverance in the face of adversity. The council is also working to bring back the Youth Connection Bus, a mobile youth service that offers support and activities, which was delayed due to a lack of drivers.

<https://rsnonline.org.uk/rmtg-share-your-best-practice...>

### **Cricklade Town Council, Wiltshire**

Cricklade Town Council has made significant strides in providing safe spaces for young people. Responding to issues of anti-social behaviour, the council established a weekly session for 13-18-year-olds at a local leisure centre. This initiative, initially supported by a grant from the Wiltshire Council area board, is now fully funded by Cricklade Town Council. The sessions are facilitated by The Rise Trust, which provides youth work support across North Wiltshire. The council also supports an annual skateboarding event and a youth festival, offering young people a chance to engage in new activities. These efforts have led to a reduction in anti-social behaviour and positive feedback from the community.

<https://rsnonline.org.uk/rmtg-share-your-best-practice...>

### **Uppingham Youth Space**

Uppingham Youth Space offers a weekly drop-in session for 11-16-year-olds, run by a local charity at the Town Hall. This project aims to improve mental health and wellbeing by providing a space where young people can socialise, participate in activities, and receive support. Despite challenges in securing funding due to the town's image of affluence, the charity has successfully obtained a five-year grant from the National Lottery Community Fund and additional support from local organisations. The project has been a lifeline for many young people, particularly those who do not participate in sports, offering them a safe and supportive environment.

The RMTG sounding board provided valuable insights into the challenges facing young people in rural communities and highlighted innovative initiatives that are making a difference. The session highlighted the importance of continued support, both through local initiatives and government policy, to ensure that rural young people have the opportunities they need to thrive. The examples shared, from Soham to Uppingham, demonstrate the resilience and creativity of rural communities in addressing these challenges, offering a model for others to follow.

<https://rsnonline.org.uk/rmtg-share-your-best-practice...>

## 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 thirty-two 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**

### Consultation on Proposed Reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework NPPF

On 30 July, MHCLG launched a consultation seeking views on proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the system.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposed-reforms-to-the-national-planning-policy-framework-and-other-changes-to-the-planning-system/proposed-reforms-to-the-national-planning-policy-framework-and-other-changes-to-the-planning-system>

The consultation is open now and will close at 11.45pm on Tuesday 24 September 2024. A description of the key changes is provided below, but the full detail on the changes MHCLG propose to make are set out in the consultation document, with the draft track changed NPPF text found here.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66acffddce1fd0da7b593274/NPPF\\_with\\_footnotes.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66acffddce1fd0da7b593274/NPPF_with_footnotes.pdf)

The Government will respond to this consultation and publish NPPF revisions before the end of the year. Specifically, the changes proposed will:

- **Make targets mandatory and reverse other changes** made under the previous Government, which undermine housing supply.
- Implement a new **standard method formula** to ensure local plans are ambitious enough to support the Government’s manifesto commitment of 1.5 million new homes in this Parliament.
- Identify **grey belt land** within the Green Belt, to be brought forward for homes and other important development through both plan and decision-making.
- Deliver affordable, well-designed homes, with new **“golden rules”** for land released in the Green Belt to ensure release delivers in the public interest.
- Make wider changes to ensure that local planning authorities can **prioritise the types of affordable homes their communities need**, and that the planning system supports a more diverse housebuilding sector.
- **Support economic growth** in key sectors, including laboratories, gigafactories, datacentres, digital economies and freight and logistics – given their importance to our economic future.
- **Deliver community needs** to support society and the creation of healthy places; and
- **Support clean energy and the environment**, including through support for onshore wind and renewables.



Alongside these policy changes the Government are consulting on:

- whether to reform the way that the **Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP)** regime applies to renewable energy, commercial and water development, as the first step of the government’s NSIP reform plans.
- whether the **local plan intervention policy** criteria should be updated or removed, so the Government can intervene where necessary to ensure housing delivery.
- proposals to increase some **planning fees**, including for householder applications, so that local planning authorities are properly resourced to support a sustained increase in development and improve performance.

Finally, it sets out how and when we expect **every local planning authority to rapidly create a clear, ambitious local plan** for high quality housebuilding and economic growth. For further information, please see the press release here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/housing-targets-increased-to-get-britain-building-again>

and Written Ministerial Statement here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/housing-targets-increased-to-get-britain-building-again>

As confirmed in the King’s Speech, these changes to the NPPF will be followed by further reforms in the Planning and Infrastructure Bill. Details of what the Bill will do can be found here.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6697f5c10808eaf43b50d18e/The\\_King\\_s\\_Speech\\_2024\\_ba ckground\\_briefing\\_notes.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6697f5c10808eaf43b50d18e/The_King_s_Speech_2024_ba ckground_briefing_notes.pdf)

### **Social and Affordable Housing**

The announcement on 30 July also set out how the Government is taking steps to provide more flexibility and certainty to councils and housing associations to deliver the biggest boost to social and affordable housing in a generation. This included increased flexibilities on how councils can use their Right to Buy Receipts and the launch of the third round of the Local Authority Housing Fund. The Government also pressed Homes England and the GLA to maximise the number of social rented homes in allocating the remaining funding in the 2021-2026 AHP. The announcement signalled the Government's intention to



review the Right to Buy scheme more widely, bring forward details of future Government investment in social and affordable housing at the spending review; set out plans at the next fiscal event to give councils and housing associations the rent stability; and introduce Awaab's Law into the social rented sector. More details will be shared in the Autumn.

Health

### **New Towns**

The Government have also set out how it intends to deliver on our commitment to build a new generation of new towns. This will include large-scale new communities built on greenfield land and separated from other nearby settlements, but also a larger number of urban extensions and urban regeneration schemes that will work with the grain of development in any given area. More details can be found here [New Homes Accelerator Task Force](#) the Chancellor announced the New Homes Accelerator Taskforce as part of her speech on 8 July, which included the first four schemes that the Taskforce and Homes England will support - Liverpool Central Docks, Worcester Parkway, Northstowe, and Langley Sutton Coldfield, together delivering more than 14,000 homes. Homes England is leading the effort to accelerate these schemes. MHCLG look forward to working with local planning departments to identify and unblock sites. More details on the Taskforce will follow in the next newsletter.

The consultation closes on 24 September 2024.

<https://www.gov.uk/.../proposed-reforms-to-the-national...>

### **The official announcements**

Housing Targets Increased:

<https://www.gov.uk/.../housing-targets-increased-to-get...>

Plan to Build More Homes:

<https://www.gov.uk/gove.../news/our-plan-to-build-more-homes>

Expert Taskforce:

<https://www.gov.uk/.../expert-taskforce-to-spearhead-a...>

Proposed NPPF Reforms:

<https://www.gov.uk/.../proposed-reforms-to-the-national...>

## HOUSING

### Transforming Housing Through 5 Year Funding Regimes

The Local Government Association (LGA) has published a comprehensive report, "Building a Better Future", highlighting the critical economic and social advantages of implementing five-year housing funding regimes. This approach is positioned as a transformative solution to the enduring challenges of social housing shortages, overcrowded living conditions, and homelessness across England.



### A Call for Consistent Funding

For the past three decades, the growth in housing stock has lagged significantly behind demand. The current fragmented funding landscape, characterised by short-term, competitive funding pots, has led to inefficiencies and volatility in housing construction. The LGA report advocates for a shift to consistent, ring-fenced funding allocated over five-year periods. Such a regime promises to stabilise housing construction efforts, streamline administrative processes, and ultimately deliver more social homes to those in need.

### Economic and Social Benefits

The proposed five-year funding regime offers substantial economic and social benefits:

**Increased Housing Supply:** The certainty provided by secure, long-term funding is projected to lead to the construction of nearly 200,000 additional social homes over the next 30 years under current funding levels. With increased funding, this number could rise to almost 500,000 homes.

**Financial Gains:** The report estimates a net boost to public sector finances amounting to £3.3 billion over 30 years, potentially increasing to £5.6 billion with higher funding levels. These gains stem from reduced expenditures on temporary accommodation and homelessness services, as well as increased tax revenues from heightened construction activity.

**Socioeconomic Impact:** The construction of additional social homes is anticipated to generate socioeconomic benefits worth £31 billion, possibly reaching £56.1 billion with enhanced funding. These benefits include job creation, greater community stability, and improved living conditions for residents.

### Tailored Local Solutions

One of the report's key recommendations is the devolution of housing funding and decision-making to local authorities. This would allow for more tailored and effective responses to the specific housing needs of different regions. By aligning housing strategies with local development plans and infrastructure projects, councils can ensure more cohesive and sustainable community growth.

In conclusion, LGA's "Building a Better Future" report makes a compelling case for the adoption of five-year housing funding regimes. By providing secure, long-term funding, local authorities can significantly enhance their housing delivery capabilities, resulting in substantial economic, social, and financial benefits. This strategic shift promises to alleviate the housing crisis, improve living conditions, and foster stronger, more resilient communities across England.

For a detailed exploration of the findings and recommendations, please refer to the full report on the LGA website: Building a Better Future Report <https://www.local.gov.uk/.../building-better-future...>



## Challenges and Constraints in Housing Supply

The Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) recently published a working paper on the determinants of local housing supply in England, shedding light on the underlying factors that contribute to regional disparities in housing availability.

The study estimates an average local housing supply elasticity of 0.14 over the period from 1996 to 2021,



indicating a limited responsiveness of housing supply to changes in demand. This is significantly lower compared to other countries like the US, France, and Germany. The low elasticity is attributed to several constraints including planning

policies, geographical factors, and land availability. In rural areas, these constraints are often more pronounced due to the preservation of agricultural land and protected natural areas.

The working paper identifies that areas with less land available for development, greater differences in elevation, higher historical population density, and stringent local planning authorities exhibit lower supply elasticities. Specifically, the share of land available for development and pre-existing urban density are highlighted as major determinants, accounting for 80% of the variation in local housing supply responses. In rural areas, the availability of developable land is often further constrained by agricultural use and protected land designations, such as Green Belts and national parks.

Rural areas face unique challenges in housing supply. The constraints of land use, combined with stringent planning policies, often limit the ability to develop new housing. This leads to increased housing prices and reduced availability, which can hinder economic growth and demographic diversity in rural communities. The working paper suggests that if rural areas had housing supply elasticities comparable to more flexible regions, they could better accommodate population growth and housing demand.

The analysis reveals stark regional differences in housing supply responses. London and other urban areas, despite significant demand, have a poor record of building homes where they are needed the most. Conversely, areas like the East of England, with fewer geographical constraints, show higher elasticity and better responsiveness to demand changes. Rural areas, particularly those with stringent land use policies and significant geographical constraints, exhibit some of the lowest supply elasticities.

The findings highlight the need for policy interventions tailored to the unique challenges of rural areas. Simplifying planning processes, increasing the availability of developable land, and re-evaluating land-use restrictions, particularly in rural regions, could enhance housing supply elasticity. Additionally, targeted policies to incentivize development in rural high-demand areas could help mitigate the housing shortage and promote sustainable rural communities.

The IFS working paper provides crucial insights into the factors limiting housing supply in England. Addressing these constraints is imperative for improving housing affordability and ensuring that homes are built where they are most needed. Policymakers must consider these findings to formulate effective housing strategies that align with regional demands and geographical realities, especially in rural settings.

For a detailed understanding, read the full working paper:

<https://ifs.org.uk/.../WP202435-The-determinants-of-local...>

## Funding for Temporary Housing

WNC has approved a capital budget of £12.372 million to provide relocatable temporary accommodation as part of our ongoing efforts to address the rising need for temporary housing in the area. The plan includes the delivery of around 100 units of relocatable temporary accommodation across two sites in Northampton, reducing the reliance on expensive and less stable options like nightly lets and bed and breakfast accommodation. The units - known as relocatable temporary accommodation (or reTA) - are designed to be genuinely relocatable, ensuring minimal regret costs and maximum flexibility. They will support residents in securing stable addresses, which is essential for accessing employment and other opportunities and helping them transition back to conventional housing.



The project is estimated to save the Council approximately £667,000 annually by providing a more cost-effective alternative to current temporary housing solutions.

By providing stable and cost-effective housing solutions, we are not only addressing immediate needs but also laying the groundwork for long-term benefits for our community. This initiative underscores our dedication to improving the quality of life for our residents and ensuring that everyone has access to safe and appropriate housing.

The Council has explored various strategies to tackle the housing crisis, including acquiring properties on the open market and increasing affordable housing delivery. However, the introduction of reTA is seen as a necessary and innovative step to complement these efforts and ensure adequate housing provision for those with an immediate housing need until a permanent accommodation solution is found.

The project will also involve the development of housing management and support services to help residents prepare for a successful transition to permanent housing. Detailed planning and procurement processes will follow to ensure the efficient and effective implementation of the reTA units.

## 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...>

## 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 Road



### Local Area Partnership Rural East

The next meeting is due to take place on 23 September 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: -

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

**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.

West Northamptonshire Council | COST OF LIVING SUPPORT | #welcomingspacesWN

- 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 \(westnorthants.gov.uk\)](#)

[Towcester Library | West Northamptonshire Council \(westnorthants.gov.uk\)](#)

[Welcoming spaces | West Northamptonshire Council \(westnorthants.gov.uk\)](#)

### Five Year Strategy for Unpaid Carers

West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) has adopted a five-year strategy which sets out the vision to support unpaid carers across the area, helping them to find a balance between their caring responsibilities and maintaining their own health and lifestyle.

A carer is someone who selflessly offers unpaid assistance to their partner, family member, friend or neighbour who may be unwell, have a disability or struggle without this essential help.



The carers strategy (2024-29) is for all unpaid carers that live in, or care for someone that lives in West Northants, and has been developed together with local carers, ensuring their voices drive forward progress over the next few years to provide the right support and information for them.

Chosen by our local carers, 17 priorities have been identified to focus on improving over the next five years as well as specific

measurements to track progress. Each one has a set of actions that will support with achieving the priority over the five-year period.

Work is now underway to roll-out the priorities set out in year one which include:

- A One-Stop Shop delivered in all our Local Area Partnerships (LAPs) for carers to meet other carers, find support and be given information.
- Develop and provide a carer guide in both written format and available on an app.
- Find hidden carers who are people that do not yet recognise themselves as a carer and offer them support.

Over the next five-years WNC will work with North Northamptonshire Council and health colleagues to deliver the ambitions set out in the strategy and ensure that carers receive the support they need.

Click here to find out more about support for carers across West Northamptonshire and view the five-year strategy.

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/.../carer-strategy-2024...>

### Highlighting Patient Partnership Week

The Patients Association's Patient Partnership Week 2024 is set to commence on Monday, 2nd September 2024. This event offers a series of informative webinars aimed at improving patient engagement and healthcare delivery. These webinars, free and accessible via Zoom, represent an invaluable opportunity for healthcare professionals and patients alike to engage in meaningful dialogue and learn about progressive strategies in healthcare.



### Webinar Highlights

Implementing shared decision-making in practice, Monday 2nd September 11am – 12pm. Patient Jess Plant and Trustee Professor Alf Collins will explore the benefits to patients and the health system of shared decision making.

In conversation with the Patient Safety Commissioner, Monday 2nd September 3– 4pm. Dr Henrietta Hughes, Patient Safety Commissioner will discuss her work with our Chief Executive Rachel Power. She'll talk about Martha's rule and patient safety principles.

Barriers to care faced by those with cancer and blood disorders, Tuesday 3rd September 2pm – 3pm. Patient Ram Paul, John James OBE Chief Executive at the Sickle Cell Society, and Alfie Bailey-Bearfield, Head of Health Improvement & Influencing at Pancreatic Cancer UK discuss reducing health disparities and improving access to care for underserved communities living with cancer and blood disorders.

Empowering patients as equal partners in care, Wednesday 4th September 9– 10am. Professor Havi Carel, from the University of Bristol's Department of Philosophy, will talk about the EPIC (Epistemic Injustice in Healthcare) project and its findings, and how changes can be made to ensure patients' experiences are better valued by the health system.

Effective communication strategies for informed patients, Thursday 5th September 8– 9am. Demos' Director of Participatory Programmes, Miriam Levin and patient Rajendra Patel will discuss how critical communications is in the provision of healthcare.

Joining services around patients: the role of data, Friday 6th September 9- 10am. NHS England's Chief Data and Analytics Officer Ming Tang discuss with patients Amin Islam and Sandra Rennie how data can improve the provision and quality of care, and ensure patients are at the centre of their own care.

More events are being added so visit the website.

<https://www.patients-association.org.uk/.../Category/events>

to keep up to date. If you have any questions, please contact [mailbox@patients-association.org.uk](mailto:mailbox@patients-association.org.uk)

Patient Partnership week is sponsored by Novartis and Eli Lilly and Company. Neither company has had any input into or influence over content of the webinars or any of the related activities.

### Drug Warning and Alcohol Guidance Issued

Northamptonshire's Combatting Drugs and Alcohol Partnership is issuing a warning about the latest dangerous drugs in circulation in the county and across the UK.

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/.../drug-warning-and...>

The Partnership, which is made up of police, health organisations, local drug and alcohol services, and West and North Northamptonshire Councils, has been alerted to an increasing number of incidents in recent months where drug users have experienced very poor health from taking street drugs, including heroin and cocaine, requiring emergency medical treatment.

The new group of drugs called synthetic opioids, sometimes known as Nitazenes, pose a substantial risk of overdose, drug-related hospitalisation, and drug-related death. The synthetic opioids are combined with



street drugs, including heroin, which users may not be aware contains Nitazene. Anyone taking drugs is urged to take extra care and to alert the family and friends of those using street drugs to the danger of synthetic opioids.

Colleagues across the Northamptonshire Combatting Drugs and Alcohol Partnership want to ensure we protect people from harm by raising awareness of the dangerous drugs circulating in Northamptonshire and across the UK because of the devastating impact they can have.

There are services across Northamptonshire which provide treatment for drug users and those recovering from addiction, and this includes adults and young people. Anyone with any information or concerns about drugs in their community is urged to call the police on 101 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111. Find out more about accessing Naloxone and drug and alcohol services in Northamptonshire.  
<https://www.changegrowlive.org/star-northamptonshire>

### Priority Support for Vulnerable Individuals

If you know someone with health, communication, or safety needs, they may be eligible for free extra support from utility companies.



This support includes priority assistance during planned or emergency gas, water, or power outages.

We encourage you to share this information with those who may benefit.

To find out if they qualify for the Priority Services Register, please visit [www.cadentgas.com/PSR](http://www.cadentgas.com/PSR)

### Funding Available for Welcoming Spaces

Organisations wishing to join our network of Welcoming Spaces are being offered grants. Welcoming Spaces places that people in West Northamptonshire can visit to stay warm, socialise, access services and become better connected to the community.

Since the initiative started in 2022, 109 spaces have registered, 109,496 people have attended welcoming spaces sessions and 5,231 referrals have been made to organisations and services including Money & Debt, Housing & Homelessness, Welfare Rights, Immigrations Issues, Education, Employment & Support, Mental and Physical Health.

Organisations that would like to join the network can apply for grants of up to £1,500 to help them set up a Welcoming Space.

More information about the grant scheme can be found on our website here:  
<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/cost.../welcoming-spaces>



found on our website here:

### Health & Safety Wellbeing Forum 27 September 2024

Business owners across West Northants are invited to a free forum aimed at health, safety and wellbeing within the workplace. The event, taking place on Friday 27 September between 9am and 1pm, at The Hub, Drift Drive in Crick (NN6 7GZ), is an opportunity for new and established businesses to listen to a series of speakers on the following topics:

- Workplace wellbeing toolkit – West Northamptonshire Council’s Health Improvement service
- Wellbeing, diversity, and inclusion within Wickes
- Unforeseen safety risk (and solution) to decarbonising forklift truck fleets with Travis Perkins
- Warrens The Journey



Organised by West Northamptonshire Council's Regulatory Services and Warrens at DIRFT, there will also be information on food hygiene, health and safety, allergen management, pest control and more. WNC's Inward Investment and Business Growth team will be on hand to offer business advice and support and information on funding opportunities.

Places are limited and can be reserved on the Council's Ticket Source page.

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/.../business.../e-rlldrz>



#### **BREW-TIFUL BROMANCE SOCIAL CAFE**

LOCATION : THE COACH HOUSE, DELAPRE ABBEY, LONDON ROAD, NORTHAMPTON, NN4 8AW

1PM TO 3PM ON THE FOLLOWING DATES:

21ST SEPTEMBER  
19TH OCTOBER  
30TH NOVEMBER

SENDS 4 Dad is a support group for dads and male carers of a child or adult with special educational needs and/or a disability

### **SENDS 4 Dad**

SENDS 4 Dad is pleased to announce its first social café – Brew-tiful Bromance. SENDS 4 Dad is a support group for dads and male carers who have a child or adult with special educational needs and/or a disability. The monthly café will be held at Delapre Abbey and will provide a free cup of coffee or tea and chances to form friendships and take part in fun activities. Members of the group can expect to find other like-minded dads and male carers who may have interest in taking part in board and card games, walks, arts, and crafts, reading etc.

The café will be for dads and male carers only and it is hoped that there will be further cafes open up around the county in the future (If you would like to see one set up in your area, please e-mail [sends4dad@gmail.com](mailto:sends4dad@gmail.com))

Further information about SENDS 4 Dad can be found on their website: [www.sends4dad.org.uk](http://www.sends4dad.org.uk)

## **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.

### **September Focus towards Improving Send Assessments**

Priority work on improving services for children with special needs and disabilities (SEND) in West Northamptonshire continues to progress, with extra staff starting next month to focus on tackling the increased demand for education health and care plans (EHCPs).

Seven dedicated EHC caseworkers will be joining West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) at the start of the new school year in September to improve the timeliness and quality of these pivotal assessments for families requesting SEND support.



The work is a key area for improvement identified in the recent Ofsted inspection of West Northamptonshire's SEND Partnership, which highlighted significant concerns about the services currently provided to children and their families in the area.

The Council is working with partners to progress a broad range of actions to address the report's findings, and recently committed to increasing capacity of its SEND team to help meet the unprecedented demand

for the services – having experienced in its first few years as a council a 40 per cent increase in EHCP requests (an increase of over 1,000).

Work is already under way to address the issues, with WNC also recently commissioning a team of Educational Psychologists to support with overdue EHC assessments, setting a positive trajectory for improvement. Although there is still much work to do, the additional resource is starting to make an impact, with 42% of EHCPs issued within the 20-week statutory timescale in June 2024 – a significant increase from the 2023 average of 6%. 139 plans have been issued since the start of the priority action plan, with 20.1% of these issued within 20 weeks.

The Partnership is now focusing on several priority actions that require urgent attention to address the findings of the report which can be found on our SEND pages.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & GRANT FUNDING

### WNC Awarded £1.4m for Skills and to Grow Economy

West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) has awarded £1.4 million in grant funding to a wide range of projects, including 24 community organisations to support initiatives focused on enhancing local skills, addressing critical needs, and fostering positive change within the community. Funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), the People and Skills Grant funding is designed to empower individuals and grassroots organisations by providing the resources needed to cultivate essential skills and foster a resilient workforce equipped to meet evolving needs and drive economic growth. The largest part of the skills programme is an initiative called "Skills for Communities", providing community organisations with funding to deliver innovative skills projects. The successful grant recipients were selected through a competitive process based on their innovative approaches and potential for significant community impact. The funded projects cover a wide range of areas, including Not in Education; Employment or Training (NEET); Digital Literacy, Science Technology Engineering Maths (STEM), English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Literacy at Work; and inclusive recruitment.

A screenshot of the West Northamptonshire Council website. The top navigation bar is dark blue with the council logo on the left, and links for 'News' and 'All services' in the center. A search bar is on the right. Below the navigation is a large banner image showing a man in a dark shirt working on a bicycle. A red L-shaped graphic is overlaid on the right side of the banner. In the bottom left corner of the banner, there is a white box with the text 'Free business support' in blue and 'Funding and allocations' in bold black.



Support on offer will include one to one personalised coaching to help people get back into work, help for families in crisis, increased volunteering opportunities, therapeutic sessions to support adults' mental health and emotional wellbeing, and a programme to tackle social exclusion in young people. The primary objectives of the People and Skills Grant Funding program include:

- Enhancing Workforce Skills and providing targeted training programs to help individuals acquire new competencies and advance their career and employment prospects, such as Digital and Literacy Skills in the Workplace.
- Promoting Inclusivity by ensuring equitable access to skill development opportunities for underrepresented and disadvantaged groups, such as those for whom English is a second language (ESOL) or those looking to improve their levels of Literacy at Work.
- Supporting Innovation and encouraging the development of innovative solutions to address current and future skill needs, such as STEM Skills.
- Strengthening Community Resilience and building a robust and adaptable workforce that can thrive in a rapidly changing economic landscape, focusing on supporting individuals recovering from long-term health challenges or those leaving care to engage with employment opportunities and training.

The funding has been awarded to a mix of voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations and specialist organisations to deliver specific pieces of work, including:

- Free to Talk CIC
- Volunteer It Yourself
- Learning & Skills Academy
- Northampton Hope Centre
- The Good Loaf
- Salvation Army
- Shudan CIC
- Dostiyo Asian Women and Girls Organisation
- Sport4Fitness CIC
- Voluntary Impact Northamptonshire
- Citizens Advice West Northants & Cherwell
- YMCA Northamptonshire
- Springs Family Centre
- Workbridge (St Andrew's Healthcare)
- Progressive World Vision CIC
- United African Association
- Doddridge Centre Limited
- Peak Empower
- Innovation CIC
- Sikh Community Centre & Youth Club (SCCYC)
- Future Toolbox
- Restore Northampton
- Lewis Foundation
- Tendered Services - Skills for Growth:
- Adult Learning Service
- Diversiti UK
- Learning Skills Academy
- Support Northants
- Silverstone Technology Cluster
- West Northants Employment Support Service

For more information on funded projects or about our grant programs and any future funding opportunities, please visit WNC Funding and Allocations. <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/funding-and-allocations>

### **Construction Works Underway for New Shopping District**

The works on Fish Street, as part of a wider regeneration project to Northampton town centre, are well underway with new lettering cementing the rejuvenation of this part of the town. West Northamptonshire Council is working with Kier Transportation to carry out vital works to enhance the appearance of Abington Street and Fish Street. Since March, nearly 900m<sup>2</sup> of paving has been installed on Fish Street, along with an improved drainage system and fish themed paving designs. This project will lift the quality of the public spaces through high quality materials, increasing seating and planting, introducing new art and play opportunities along the street, as well as space for outdoor dining and community activity.



Businesses in the area have been kept up to date with the project's phases, and the project's dedicated single point of contact has been working closely to ensure they have been able to operate with minimal disruption. The redevelopment will complement the wider Market Square transformation and provide enhanced connectivity with the rest of the town. Work continues with the completion of Abington Street repaving, the upgrade and installation of street lighting, installation of street furniture, planting of new trees, and minor finishing touches. The project is set to be complete in Winter 2024/2025 and will be thoroughly cleaned once all construction works are completed. To stay up to date with the regeneration of Northampton Town Centre, visit: <https://www.wearenorthampton.com/>

### **Business Leaders Invited to Join New Business Board**

Business leaders in West Northamptonshire are being sought to join a new Board that advises local authorities on the economic growth and development of the South Midlands. Created as part of the South Midlands Authorities, a new partnership of six local authorities covering the region, the Business Board will play an important role in giving businesses a clear voice towards shaping future economic strategy and ensuring that priorities align with the needs and opportunities of businesses across the area.

**Join the  
South Midlands  
Business Board**



The South Midlands Authorities is seeking up to 15 representatives from growth key sectors including construction, logistics and healthcare, rural representatives and SME representatives.

Those interested in learning more about the South Midlands Business Board, and the available roles, should download the Recruitment pack, found here <https://www.semlepgrowthhub.com/business-board-recruitment/>

## Save the Date for Reopening of Northampton Market Square

Residents and communities across West Northamptonshire are invited to come together to celebrate the official grand opening of the revitalised Northampton Market Square this October, as West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) and Northampton Forward celebrate the transformation of this beloved community space ensuring it can be enjoyed by future generations to come.



Taking place across Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 October 2024, WNC will host a community celebration filled with a whole host of fun activities for all the family, including creative musical and cultural performances, historic and heritage exhibitions, and an array of amazing food and drink from a variety of local businesses and vendors. £30,000 of Government funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) has been allocated towards activities for the family weekend.

Market traders and local businesses will also

be offering a wide range of fresh local produce, gifts, services, food, and drink during the weekend. Drawing on Northampton's rich history, the regenerated space complements the wider transformation of the town centre, featuring high-quality market stalls, improved seating and lighting, enhanced paving and an interactive water feature, creating a sustainable, accessible and inclusive space for everyone to enjoy. The scheme is being funded through the Government led Towns Fund, which is overseen by Northampton Forward; a public and private partnership made up of key organisations across the area.

WNC is supported by key local organisations to deliver this event, including Northampton Forward, Northampton Business Improvement District (BID) and Northampton Town Council.

Once open, the rejuvenated space will invigorate the local economy, provide new opportunities for local businesses and attract visitors to the area while providing a vibrant and accessible venue for regular markets, community events, and social gatherings, enriched with a variety of cultural and social activities.

Further details, including the full line-up and list of events will be announced on the WNC website and social media channels soon.

## Funding for Positive Mental Health Initiatives

Voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations across West Northamptonshire are invited to apply for grant funding to deliver community-based projects which seek to improve the mental wellbeing of residents.



We are committed to promoting good mental health and wellbeing, and to that end are working with NHS, the VCSE sector, and other partners to deliver services which benefit the local community.

Our new Community Mental Health Prevention Grant allows people to bid for funding for collaborative projects to tackle mental health inequalities within our local area. Organisations must submit an expression of interest by 27 September to be considered. To receive an application form and the grant documents, please

email [publichealth@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:publichealth@westnorthants.gov.uk) with the subject 'Community Mental Health Prevention Grant'.

It is hoped the money can be used to fund a variety of mental health support programmes in local communities, in support of both our 'Live Your Best Life Strategy', and the national Better Mental Health

For All Report, which highlights the importance of public mental health acting in an empowering way to tackle health inequalities. <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/.../MHF-better-mental...>

## TRANSPORT & HIGHWAYS

### Warning over Fake Car Park QR Codes

WNC has told drivers to be vigilant after fake QR codes were placed on some of its parking machines. (A fraudulent QR code has been stuck on a machine in Northampton's Midsummer Meadow car park).



West Northamptonshire Council said the code would take users to a fake site which asked for payment information and other personal details. Following payment, the parking would then not be valid.

In a tweet, the council said it "offers no services via QR codes and these should not be used at any Northampton car parks or country parks. WNC said its team would be checking all car parks to "prevent further scams."

### WNC awarded £1.9 million in grant funding across West Northants

West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) has awarded over £1.9 million in grant funding to local Voluntary and Community Sector organisations to enable them to deliver a range of projects and initiatives across West Northants. The funding has been awarded, over two years, as part of three Community Funding Grant Schemes using £655k from Central Government via the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF). Initiatives that will be delivered using the funding include improved community transport services; debt and money, and immigration advice services; and additional support for local infrastructure organisations to help them grow and meet the needs of the local voluntary, community and social enterprise sector. Seven community transport operators have been awarded funding totalling £951k to provide safe and cost-efficient community transport options across West Northants which aim to increase accessibility and inclusion and reduce social isolation. The successful organisations are:



- Ability CIC
- Brackley Volunteer Car Scheme
- Cogenhoe & Whiston Parish Council (Village Hopper)
- Comm Mini-Bus
- Daventry Area Community Transport
- Northampton Door to Door
- Towcester Area Door to Door

Voluntary Impact Northamptonshire, in partnership with Daventry Volunteer Centre and South Northants Volunteer Bureau, were also successful in winning £260k of funding which will be used to bring together

and strengthen diverse groups and marginalised communities and support the local voluntary and community sector.

Citizens Advice West Northamptonshire and Cherwell (CAWNAC) have teamed up with Community Law Service (CLS) following £620k of funding which will be used to provide debt and money advice services and provide early intervention and support to help prevent people from experiencing financial crisis and issues such as bankruptcy and eviction.

CLS alongside Northamptonshire Rights and Equality Council have also been allocated £116,164 to provide immigration support, including providing individuals with legal guidance to understand their rights, options, and obligations under immigration law and protecting the Human Rights of individuals fleeing persecution, violence, or other forms of harm.

## POLICE FIRE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

### Police officers to pilot use of potentially life-saving nasal spray for drug overdose.

Several Northamptonshire Police officers are being trained in the use of Naloxone – a medical nasal spray designed to save lives of people who have suffered a drug overdose. Neighbourhood officers working on the Operation Revive programme in Northampton, Wellingborough and Kettering, will now be carrying the spray, having been trained and certified in its use. More frontline officers will soon also be able to choose to carry Naloxone when the specialised training is rolled out further. The nasal spray is an emergency antidote for overdoses caused by heroin and other opiates or opioids. The medication works by temporarily reversing the effects of the overdose by reversing the depression of the central nervous and respiratory systems.



In 2005, Naloxone was added to a list of medicines that anyone can legally administer in an emergency to save a life. Since February 2019, Naloxone has been available in a pre-packaged nasal spray. The spray delivers Naloxone up the nose where it is quickly absorbed and blocks the drug from affecting the body. The reaction is usually very quick and prevents the opioid from blocking the breathing centres of the brain which would cause suffocation - the main cause of death in opioid overdose – and in turn buying valuable time to keep the subject alive pending arrival of paramedics. The carrying of Naloxone by officers is voluntary and full training will be provided to all officers who sign up to the scheme. The Force is working with partners including with Public Health England, CGL and S2S as part of the pilot.

### Chimney Fire Safety Week is Next Week

The annual campaign will run from Monday 2nd September - Sunday 8th September 2024. This campaign strives to raise awareness of chimney fires and encourages consumers to take appropriate action. As the national fire and rescue statistics show, chimney fires have been steadily decreasing in most regions over the years, despite recent wood burner popularity. In England across 2023-24, chimney fire incidents reduced by



16.29% in comparison to 2022-23, representing approximately 1.5% of the total fires for 2023-24. The total number of chimney fires which occurred in England during 2023-24 is 2126, with incidents peaking January – March. Statistics show that 40% of chimney fires in England take place over these three months, coinciding with the period where people will be using their stoves the most. <https://www.hetas.co.uk/chimney-fire-safety-week-2024/>

## 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...>

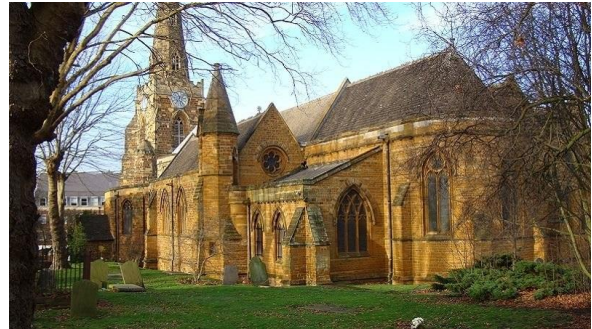


### Explore West Northamptonshire's Rich History

Discover the adrenaline-fueled history of British motor racing, learn about Northampton's historic Market Square, and take part in fun quiz trails in Brackley, Towcester and Daventry. They are just some of the free activities being offered across West Northamptonshire as part of the two-week Heritage Open Days festival, taking place between 6 and 15 September. The event 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.

This year's event will have the theme 'Routes, Networks & Connections' to bring together the past and present with workshops, walks, talks, hidden spaces, and activities for all the family, with the aim of making the heritage festival more diverse than ever before. Funded by our Council, Northampton's famous heritage red Daimler double-decker buses, which have appeared every year since 1994, will once again be running out of George Row in Northampton town centre on Saturday 14 September, transporting passengers to attractions in Northampton and beyond for free.

The Council is an official promoter of the event and a list of all participating attractions and events can be found on the Council website <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/cultu.../heritage-open-days>



### 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 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>

## West Northants Stage Route for Men's Cycle Race

For the first time, Northamptonshire will host part of the 2024 Lloyds Bank Tour of Britain Men's cycling competition. Stage five will take place on 7 September 2024 starting from the University of Northampton



and finishing with a sprint into the town centre by the Guildhall. The rest of the 91-mile route will see riders cycle through Daventry and nearly 30 villages. While it is the first time the men's tour has come to Northampton, the town hosted the first-ever stage finish of the women's tour in May 2014, and Daventry has twice hosted the women's race, in 2017 and 2018. During this year's race, the men's route will go through Daventry, followed by a loop south of the town through villages including Abthorpe, Wappenham, and Helmdon. Cyclists will

then go through Culworth, Byfield and Hellidon, before looping around Northampton via Watford, West Haddon, Naseby, Kelmars and Brixworth for the approach to the finish via Sywell and Ecton.

The race begins in the Scottish Borders on 3 September 2024 followed by stages in the Tees Valley, South Yorkshire and East Midlands. Following the West Northamptonshire stage, the race concludes in Suffolk on 8 September 2024.

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

During the stage riders will tackle a pair of categorised King of the Mountains climbs at Newnham Hill and Bulls Hill, just south of Daventry, and an intermediate sprint at Holcot, at the eastern end of the Pitsford Water causeway.

Please find attached more information about the route including a map.

It would be great if you can give your support in helping to make the event a great success by encouraging residents in your area to turn out as spectators on the day.

In preparation for the event, we are pulling together a commentary for on the day which will be shared with ITV4 commentators, international broadcasters, and other media. To help us make this as accurate and interesting as possible, we are asking Towns & Parishes to share any interesting historic or cultural information about the areas of West Northants on the route.

The route includes:

- Northampton
- Nobottle
- Whilton Locks
- Norton
- Daventry
- Preston Capes
- Little Preston
- Maidford
- Blakesley
- Abthorpe
- Wappenham
- Helmdon
- Thorpe Mandeville
- Culworth
- Byfield
- Charwelton
- Hellidon
- Catesby



- Welton
- Watford
- West Haddon
- Cold Ashby
- Naseby
- Kelmarsh
- Harrington
- Lamport
- Scaldwell
- Pitsford
- Holcot
- Sywell

We would also encourage you to share our dedicated web pages about the Tour coming to West Northamptonshire Tour of Britain <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/tour-britain-men> which will include useful information such as event updates, timings and local road closures. Please also feel free to help us spread the word by sharing news and information updates on our website and social media channels.

### **Olympic Gold Medallist to Compete in Tour of Britain**

Team GB Olympic gold medallist Tom Pidcock is set to be among the riders when the Lloyds Bank Tour of Britain cycling race visits West Northamptonshire on Saturday 7 September.

Pidcock, who won the thrilling cross-country mountain bike race in Paris, will compete in the Tour for INEOS Grenadiers. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/olympics/articles/c29dkdrxnro>

The 25-year-old joins the likes of double Olympic champion Remco Evenepoel, and former race winner Julian Alaphilippe (both racing for Soudal Quick-Step) on the provisional start list for the 20th edition of Britain's biggest professional cycle race.

The West Northants stage <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/tour-britain-men> will start from the University of Northampton at 11am and weave its way around West Northants before finishing at the Guildhall in Northampton from around 2.20pm.

The route will visit Daventry and around 30 villages across West Northants, and communities are encouraged to come out and cheer on the cyclists as they race towards the finish line.

The stage will feature two 'King of the Mountain' climbs - at Newnham Hill and Bulls Hill, just south of Daventry. There will also be an intermediate sprint on Pitsford Causeway - offering plenty of opportunities for spectators to find the perfect spot from which to witness the race.

Events and activities will be taking place at the University of Northampton's Waterside Campus throughout the day.

And in Daventry, Daventry Town Council will be hosting their annual Foodies Market <https://www.daventrytowncouncil.gov.uk/daventry-foodies...> and the free Daventry Heritage Bus Rides, meaning visitors will really be able to make a day of it. <https://www.daventrytowncouncil.gov.uk/heritage-open-days...>

A range of other events are also taking place in West Northamptonshire that weekend, and more information, including the route map and estimated times of arrival, can be found on our Men's Tour of Britain webpage <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/tour-britain-men>

People can also find out more on the Tour of Britain site.

<https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/tourofbritain/men?c=EN>



The Lloyds Bank Tour of Britain Men begins in the Scottish Borders on Tuesday 3 September followed by stages in the Tees Valley, South Yorkshire, and the East Midlands before it visits West Northamptonshire. It concludes in Suffolk on Sunday 8 September after six stages of action-packed racing. In total 18 teams, including six that participated in this summer's Tour de France, from 12 countries will line-up in Scotland for stage one on Tuesday 3 September for a field of 108 riders.