

MONTHLY NEWS REPORT OCTOBER 2024



E-Newsletter Issue 10/2024
Launch of Hackleton Parish Forget-Me-Not Group
At Horton Cricket Club, Denton Road, NN7 2BE
2 September 2024

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NEWS REPORT OCTOBER 2024

Monthly Highlights

WNC is proposing to implement a 50-mph speed limit to replace the derestricted signs on the entrance to and exit from Little Houghton. WNC will proceed to final design, pricing and scheduling. Once I have further news, I will be in touch.

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.

Kier Transportation, working together with West Northamptonshire Council, will be undertaking repair works to a damaged surface water drain on Nene Rise, Cogenhoe, from 14 October-22 October 2024

Highways response teams for Kier and West Northamptonshire Council have been out and about supporting emergency services, having attended 200 incidents during the recent flooding, three quarters of which were flooding related with the remainder a mix of emergencies, such as fallen trees and dislodged/broken manhole covers.

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 2024.

Residents, businesses, and community groups are invited to take part in an online pre-planning consultation for the proposed Wantage Park crematorium and celebration facility. The online engagement will run until Wednesday 16 October 2024.

We are in the process of finalising our Tree and Woods Strategy, setting out how we will manage, protect and expand tree and woodland cover across West Northants to 2045, as well as how we intend to collaborate with partners and the wider community. The deadline for comments is Sunday 13 October 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.

We have launched a survey for anyone in West Northants who has experienced domestic abuse. See my Monthly Report.

We are looking for feedback on Heritage Open Days. This survey closes at midnight on 31 October 2024

Adult Social Care will be at Welcoming Spaces, Towcester Library on 8 October 2024 from 10am – 12pm, no appointment is needed.

The council's annual canvass is now well underway. If we do not receive a response to our form, we will make every attempt to get a response from you. This may include sending reminder forms, text / email, telephone calls, or visiting your property between September and November 2024.

Trading Standards team is encouraging livestock owners in the county to familiarise themselves with the signs to look out for in relation to bluetongue virus. See Monthly Report.

At the WNC Planning Policy Meeting on 18 September 2024, we considered the Council's response to the current Government consultation on Reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). For West Northamptonshire, this would see the annual requirement increase from 2,124 to 2,584 per annum, a total additional requirement of 13,000 dwellings by 2041. See my quote, which was picked up by 'Cambridgeshire Live' in their article of 23 September 2024 in my Monthly Report. For WNC to comply with the new changes to the NPPF then there would need to be a thorough analysis of the shortfall of infrastructure to include roads, rural transport, schools, electricity, water, heating supply, hospitals and other medical facilities together with a report on green space with a view to creating buffer areas to prevent our village boundaries coalescing and avoiding ribbon development. We need to acquire this infrastructure ahead of any development as we cannot continue to ignore the existing deficit in essential infrastructure in our rural areas.

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.

West Northamptonshire is gearing up for an unforgettable weekend as the newly revitalised and reimagined Northampton Market Square prepares to reopen with a spectacular celebration on Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 October 2024.

WNC has supported a campaign calling for the 'Women Against State Pension Inequality' (Waspi) women adversely impacted by changes to the state pension age to be compensated. See My Monthly Report.

Ability, a community transport service is expanding its fleet thanks to a grant of £477,181 from West Northamptonshire Council (WNC). Ability has used the money to buy four new minibuses increasing the size of its fleet to 14 vehicles. Ability is one of seven community transport operators to receive money from a £951,000 pot set up by West Northamptonshire Council thanks to the Government's Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) and UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). In Ability's case, the majority came from REPF. Brackley Volunteer Car Scheme, Cogenhoe & Whiston Parish Council's Village Hopper service, the Comm Minibus, Daventry Area Community Transport, Northampton Door to Door and Towcester Area Door to Door all also benefited from a share of the funds.

More than 100 people have been referred to the 'Immediate Justice Scheme' helping to repair the damage they have caused to local communities by anti-social behaviour. See My Monthly Report.

September has been an exceptionally busy month with lots of Parish Meetings, Visits and casework together with lots of Council Meetings. 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.

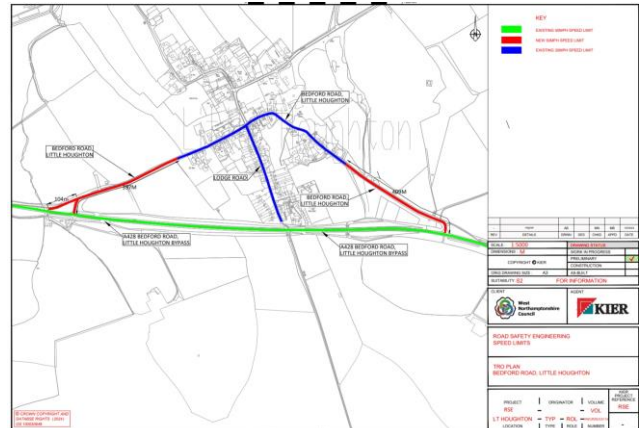
All the Best, Steve

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 further news, I will be in touch.

Quinton & Preston Deanery 40th Home Produce Show 1 September 2024

On 1 September 2024, I attended the Home Produce Show. This well-loved annual event returned to the



village green, and everyone enjoyed seeing all the amazing entries. There were award classes for flowers, fruit and vegetables, preserves, cookery, handicraft and more. There was also a children's class for children of 12 years and under to enter. The event



provided a wide variety of opportunities to show off your garden produce and your culinary and baking skills. The weather was good as the rain held off and the anticipated thunderstorm did not arrive. We were all chatting and munching on hot dogs to order. Afterwards Andy provided a fun auction of the flowers and produce items which remained. Some of my bids

were challenged by phone entries! It was a great way to spend a sunny afternoon in Quinton. Thank you to the judges including Alice Gadney who had agreed to help judge the Children's class and well done to Pippa Ronson and all who worked so hard to make it such a huge success.

Cogenhoe Community Lunch 2 September 2024

On 2 September 2024, I attended the Community Lunch at the Village Hall, Cogenhoe. It is a very good event which runs every 2 weeks and is the perfect opportunity to chat with others whilst having something to eat. In addition to delicious food and friendship there are activities for everyone to enjoy. The Community Lunch runs from 12.30 -2.30 pm and costs £7 but you do need to let Deborah 07512 045418 know beforehand. The following Lunch Club took place on Monday 16 September 2024.

There was Community Outing on 30 September 2024 to take a trip along the canal from Stoke Bruerne to Blisworth. Don't forget the mobile



vaccination clinic will be visiting on Wednesday 9th October 2024 for Winter boosters and will also be carrying out NHS Health Checks in a separate room.

Hackleton Parish Council 'Forget Me Not Group' Launch 2 September 2024

On 2 September 2024, I was privileged to attend the launch of the 'Hackleton Parish Forget Me Not Group' at Horton Cricket Club, Denton Road, NN7 2BE. Imagine my surprise when I came across Bertie the Forget Me Not Mascot, beautifully dressed in 'Forget Me Not' ribbons. He was exceptionally calm and friendly



when he came inside and introduced himself to everyone.

I met the amazing volunteers and heard about how the group intends to run its sessions. I also met some of the Forget Me Nots and heard just what it means to have a local group. The Group will meet on 1st and 3rd Monday of each month from 2-3pm and their first session is on 16 September 2024. We finished our

session with a Community Sing Song. Thank you to Wendy, Sue, Alison, Tina and many others who have worked diligently to bring this initiative forward. I can't wait to come back and support you all again soon.

St Margaret's Church Coffee Morning 6 September 2024

On 6 September 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. We enjoyed catching up with Sheila, Russell, Pat, John, Liz, Pam and others. There was a quiz underway when we arrived. The church is still looking extremely bare as all the pews had been removed whilst they await the delivery of new chairs. This will make the church more flexible and will allow



them to use the space better.

Yardley Hastings Annual Horticultural & Handicraft Show 7 September 2024



On Saturday 7 September 2024, I attended the Annual Yardley Hastings Horticultural & Handicraft Show at the Memorial Hall, Yardley Hastings. The show opened at 2.00pm and they had a fine horticultural exhibition. The vibrant range of colours of the floral displays caught my eye together with the size and scale of the first prize onions which were quite impressive, as were the tall 'skittle- like' shallots. They had beautifully made handicraft items, wonderful cakes and other refreshments. They had several stalls outside including 'Sausage Sizzle'



from 3.30pm.

I was pleased to meet Fiona to arrange my tickets for the St Andrews Harvest Supper on Monday 7 October 2004. Well, done to all who participated in the show by exhibiting their creations and to everyone who manned the stalls and prepared and served the refreshments.

DENTFEST 7 September 2024

I was delighted to attend the first family music festival in Denton entitled DENTFEST on 7 September 2024 at Denton Village Hall. There were several performers scheduled throughout the day on the two stages for bands and acoustic acts. It all started at 12pm and ended at 11pm. All proceeds were to support the Denton Village Hall and the Football Club.



I joined DENTFEST in the afternoon after the Horticultural Show in Yardley Hastings and it goes without saying that a festival with kids is different. Seeing how kids were naturally soaking up the atmosphere, and the sense of freedom they got dancing on the grass made it so worthwhile. There were many adults who

demonstrated their dance moves too. Well, done to Omar, Bob, Ben, Alan and everyone involved in bringing this event to Denton.

Green Machine, Coffee@Carey, Hackleton 11 September 2024



On 11 September 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

GREEN MACHINE

Reduce : Reuse + Refill

September Schedule

SEPTEMBER						
Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
26	27	28	29	30	31	01-Sep
HOLIDAY						
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Maidford Deliveries		Towcester Mill	Syresham		Greens Norton	Wolverton Market
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
		2-4pm Hackleton; Deliveries: Wootton, Hartwell etc		Towcester Market		
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
		Towcester Mill	Syresham	Newport Pagnell Market	Greens Norton	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
		Towcester Mill	Wolverton Pop-Up	Stony Stratford Market	Deddington Market	
30	01-Oct	02-Oct	03-Oct	04-Oct	05-Oct	06-Oct
		Towcester Mill	Syresham		Greens Norton	

Bringing zero-waste to your doorstep

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/>

Cogenhoe Community Support Desk 12 September 2024

On 12 September 2024, I went to the Tea Room, Cogenhoe & Whiston Village Hall for the Community Support Desk. Deborah was handing out lots of prescriptions this week and we spoke briefly about recent events. Afterwards, I had to go to a meeting at the Caring and Sharing Trust, Cottons Farmhouse, Cogenhoe. On Monday 16th September we have the Cogenhoe Community Lunch Club at 12.30pm in the York Room, then the next Forget-Me-Not Group for anyone living with dementia (or similar condition) is on Monday 23rd September 2024 at 1.00pm-2.45pm in the York Room. On Monday 30th September 2024 there is a Community Outing from Stoke Bruerne to Blisworth by canal boat. Please contact the Clerk to book, 07512 045418 Email clerk@cogenhoeandwhiston-pc.gov.uk



Don't forget that the new village hopper timetable can be downloaded at:

<https://www.cogenhoeandwhiston-pc.gov.uk/.../village...>

The extended route now means you can get to Rushden Lakes, Weston Favell, Northampton Town centre & Wellingborough every day with new stops in Castle Ashby & Billing Aquadrome.

Great Houghton Coffee Morning 13 September 2024

On 13 September 2024, I attended the Community Coffee Morning run by the WI at the Great Houghton Village Hall. It is held on 2nd Friday of each month and a cup of tea or coffee with cake will cost you just £2.50.

It was great to meet with Mike Billingham, Clerk Great Houghton Parish Council and we briefly discussed recent events. Before leaving, I was able to speak to Revd Irene Cobley and others. Very soon, the hour and a half flew by and then, I helped pack up tables and chairs. The next meeting of this friendly and welcoming group will be 11 October 2024, when I look forward to catching up with everyone again.



Ride & Stride 14 September 2024

Saturday 14 September 2024 was the day that all of Northamptonshire's Historic Churches (NHC) were open for the annual sponsored Ride and Stride. It is a sponsored event for cyclists, joggers, walkers and horse riders. Indeed, any mode of transport can be used if your sponsors are happy. I did a combination of car and walking. Half the money you raise comes directly to your chosen church and the other half to the NHC Trust to give grants towards the restoration of churches in the County. The event ran from 10am to 6pm.

This year is the fourth year that I have taken part. However, I couldn't start until after a meeting of WNC Councillors, which took place in Northampton that morning. My first stop was the Church of St Mary

Blessed Virgin at Great Houghton. Little is known of the medieval church, which was dedicated to the Assumption and described by Bridges in his history of Northamptonshire as having had a chancel and aisled nave.



Saturday 14th September 2024
between 10am and 6pm

a day in the open air ... plan your own route
350+ stunning churches and chapels to visit -
many of them open and welcoming



All sponsorship money received will be divided equally between
the NHCT and the church or chapel chosen by you
Sponsorship forms and a list of open churches and chapels are
available from your local organiser: -

Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust
Registered Charity No 1021632 For more details see our website: www.nhct.org.uk

My second stop was at the Church of St Mary the Virgin, Bedford Road, Little Houghton. I am very familiar with this church as we attend lots of community events here. The Church is thought to be C13-C15, but altered late C18/early C19. The body of the church was rebuilt in 1873 and otherwise restored by Charles Buckeridge.

I had missed their monthly coffee morning earlier when the church would have been quite full. Now there was just one person signing forms as we arrived following the same cyclists we had seen at Great Houghton.

Our third stop was the Church of St Laurence, Brafield on the Green. The oldest part of the church is some seven hundred and fifty years old, however much of the church was changed and rebuilt in the Victorian times. This time, I did see the small statue of St. Laurence which is over the porch on the South side when you approach by the main path through the Churchyard.

Afterwards, we continued to our fourth stop which was St Margaret's Church Denton. We are frequently at the Church of St Margaret of Antioch, for their village coffee morning on a Friday so we were on very familiar territory. The Church is C13, rebuilt in C17 and again in 1827-8 by Charles Squarhill. The small 3-stage tower has a lancet window to the bottom and there is a large 12-sided cast iron clock dial above. The mural scheme of 1976, devised by Reverend Eltoft, by William Bird with scenes from the Bible, the lives of saints and village history with foliage backgrounds evoking the months of the year. Bird was a well-respected theatrical scene painter and anybody attending the Theatre Royal in Northampton will be familiar with his safety curtain. Denton was his largest project and his masterpiece. The Church was originally a chapel-of-ease of Yardley Hastings.



After a most delightful cup of tea and much chat with our friends who also attend the Friday Coffee Morning we carried on to our next stop in Castle Ashby. Our fifth stop on the NHCT Ride & Stride was at the Church of St Mary Magdalene, Castle Ashby. The church is thought to be C14 and C15 with older origins. It was restored in 1869 by G.E. Street. There is a complete set of tiled floors by Minton to designs by Lord Alwyne Compton. Once inside, you can't fail to notice the large monument at the west end of the church made by Pietro Tenerani (1789-1870), who was the principle Italian sculptor following the death of Canova. It was sculpted in Rome and shipped to England in 1856. The over life size Angel of the Resurrection, carrying his trump (for the last) and his book of the saved, dominates the inscribed plinth. It's such a fine church and we have been there several times for different organ recitals. But today the church was very silent.

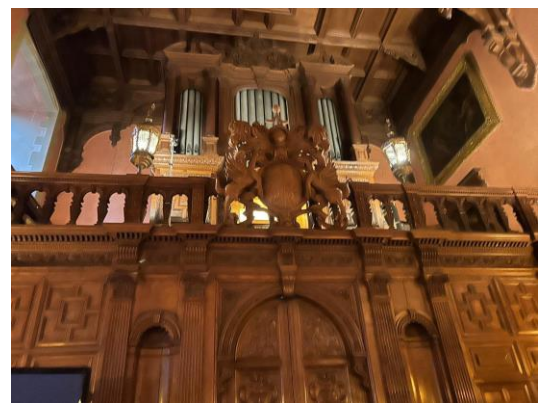
Our sixth Ride and Stride visit was to the Church of St Andrew, Church Lane, Yardley Hastings. The Church is C13-C14 and restored during the period 1883-1889. The architect for the restoration of the church, George Sutherland, was clerk of the works to the Castle Ashby estate. The work was carried out by the estate at the expense of 4th Marquis of Northampton. Yardley Hastings. It is a fine example of a great South Northamptonshire village, and the church is hidden away.

Our seventh stop on the NHCT Ride & Stride was at the Church of St Peter, Cogenhoe. We were able to get some refreshments and the opportunity to get our sponsor forms signed. The Church is thought to be C13 with older origins, C14 and C15. It was restored in 1868 by C. Buckeridge.

In previous years we had visited more churches as we started our journey at 9.30am. Despite setting off at 1.45pm we still managed to support seven churches. We were pleased with our efforts, as those churches will benefit from our sponsorship. All money raised during 'Ride and Stride' helps Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust (NHCT) to continue supporting our marvellous churches across the county with essential repairs and improvements.

Castle Ashby House Organ Concert 21 September 2024

On Saturday 21 September 2024, I attended an Organ Concert with Daniel Mould at the Great Hall, Castle Ashby House. I would like to thank the Castle Ashby Trustees for their kind permission to host this event in Castle Ashby House to sustain the work of St Mary Magdalene, Castle Ashby. Whilst Castle Ashby House is not open to the public, in recognition of the 150th anniversary of the church organ, another Nicholson (1872), the Castle Ashby Trustees had generously agreed that the organ of the Great Hall could be heard in a special concert on 3 September 2022. So here we were two years later enjoying another very special evening.



Daniel Mould is an outstanding international organist and is one of the finest organists of our time. He gave an excellent performance as he took us through a varied and exhilarating programme. I particularly enjoyed his Handel-La Rejouissance and Largo together with his Bach-Trio in G. I was fortunate to be able to talk to Daniel during the interval again. He was very engaging, and I was able to talk to him about the Phelps organ which I heard being played whilst visiting Hexham Abbey last month.

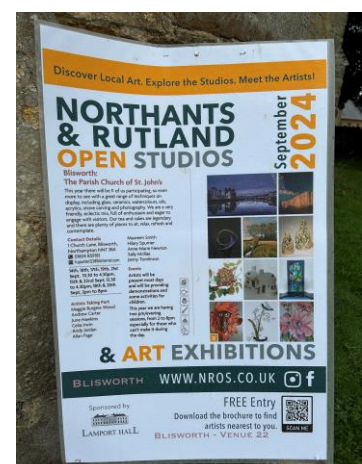
Daniel is the Head of Organ Studies at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, where he directs the highly acclaimed organ department. He has spearheaded the commissioning of and is the main consultant for the five new organs at the Conservatoire. The first of these is the recently installed Wolfson Flentrop organ in the style of Arp Schnitger, which was joined by a new Drake organ in Summer 2024.

Northants & Rutland Open Studios 22 September 2024

On 22 September 2024, I joined many others at St John the Baptist Church in Blisworth to meet and chat with local artists. It was the last day and there was a range of techniques on display including glass, ceramics, watercolours, oils, acrylics, stone, carving and photography. It was great to catch up with June, Anne Marie and others again.

The Northants and Rutland Open Studios Visual Arts Festival is an annual event, which turns the spotlight on artists and their creative process, showcasing the talent of over 220 artists across 116 venues throughout Northamptonshire.

Thank you to everyone who is involved in making this event such a success.



Yardley Hastings MacMillan Coffee Mornng 27 September 2024

On 27 September 2024, I joined lots of residents at the Yardley Hastings MacMillan Coffee Morning at the Memorial Hall, 7 Northampton Road, Yardley Hastings, Northamptonshire, NN7 1EX. Everyone had decided to venture out after having stayed at home during the recent heavy rain and flooding.

MacMillan Coffee Mornings are usually on the last Friday of September each year and this year's Coffee Morning Day is Friday 27 September 2024. However, you can host any time of the year, whenever it suits you best. It is the biggest fundraising event to support people living with cancer and since 1990, the annual coffee morning has brought together millions of people from across the UK to have fun and raise money for a good cause. It was great to catch up with so many friends in Yardley Hastings today, who like us were supporting such a good cause.



Brafield MacMillan Coffee Morning 27 September 2024

I joined the MacMillan Coffee Morning at Brafield-on-the Green Community Sports and Social Club, 35 Bedford Road, Brafield-on-the Green earlier today. They had a great variety of cakes with refreshments, which we all enjoyed whilst supporting a very worthy cause. Well, done to the team who worked hard to make the baked treats for today and to everyone who supported MacMillan which helps them to do whatever it takes to help people living with cancer.



Fish & Chip Supper Cogenhoe, 27 September 2024

On 27 September 2024, I attended the St Peters Church, Harvest Supper at the Cogenhoe Sports and Social Club. Harvest Festival normally falls towards the end of September,

or early October, and the whole community comes together to celebrate the event. On Friday, this tradition was truly alive in Cogenhoe. Everyone inside the hall was in high spirits whilst we had a delicious meal of fish and chips followed by two rounds of bingo. Although not all the nicknames known by the rhyming phrase 'bingo lingo' were used. A big thank you to those who made and collected the Harvest Supper for nearly sixty residents, a night to remember.



Coffee@Carey 2 October 2024

On 2 October 2024, I popped in for a Coffee and a catch up at Coffee@Carey, the village coffee shop set up in Carey Chapel in Hackleton. It was very busy with lots of residents dodging the rain. I was on my way to sort out some casework in the ward and I bumped into Bob Atkinson who was looking for some support. It was great to catch up with Bob, Elaine, Mike, Wendy and others. There were lots of plants, spring bulbs and handmade cards for sale.



Don't forget you can meet the WNC Customer Service Team on Monday 14 October and Tuesday 19 November 10.00am-12.00pm. They will be there to answer any WNC related matters that you may have.

I was pleased to hear about the progress made with the Hackleton Parish Good Neighbours Scheme-see the Hackleton Parish Mag. For more information, please contact GNS Helpline 07503 944 700. Well, done to everyone who has worked so hard to bring this Group together.

Nene Rise Cogenhoe 14 October-22 October 2024

Kier Transportation, working together with West Northamptonshire Council, will be undertaking repair works to a damaged surface water drain on Nene Rise, Cogenhoe. See the full factsheet attached for more information.

Temporary Traffic Lights on A428

On 12 August 2024, I promised to give you a further update on the temporary traffic lights on the A428.

On 2 September 2024, I received the following explanation from Highways:

"As soon as Kier was made aware of the vehicle accident which destroyed all of the parapet at the end of June, WNC took immediate action to arrange the



temporary exposed

protection of the edge of the bridge. WNC then contacted its parapet sub-contractor to supply a new parapet. However, due to the age of the bridge, the parapet systems available now don't match the fixings of the old parapet. There is a lead-in time for the parapet manufacturer to both design and fabricate the replacement parapet. After this has been completed, WNC will then programme the works. The accident also damaged part of the concrete support to the parapet, and

this will be repaired when the new parapet is installed.

Cogenhoe Village Hopper in Castle Ashby

Don't forget that the new village hopper timetable can be downloaded at:

<https://www.cogenhoeandwhiston-pc.gov.uk/.../village...>

The extended route now means you can get to Rushden Lakes, Weston Favell, Northampton Town centre & Wellingborough every day with new stops in Castle Ashby & Billing Aquadrome.



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.

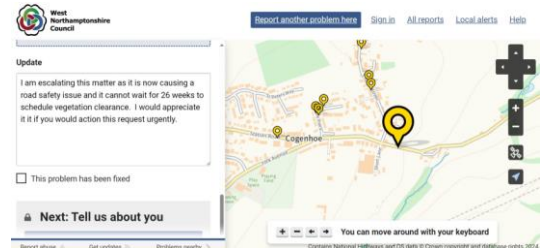
Residents are concerned about the current sight line which is masked by vegetation overgrowth and is making the junction to and from the A428 dangerous. As it is a Highway Safety issue, I have escalated the matter to Highways, and I am asking that this item be resolved

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

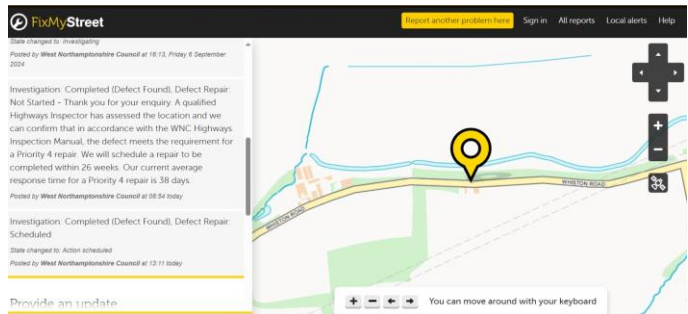


I escalated 6107432 on 17 July 2024 and I was advised that they were currently awaiting a Greens Report. I have chased them again on 29 August 2024. On 12 September 2024, I was advised that this has now been assessed as a Priority 4 and our current average response time for this category is 38 days.



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.



Fix My Street Cogenhoe 6444479.

Repairs are now scheduled for this item: "Lengths of subsidence from previous repairs all along the road, getting very dangerous especially for cyclists / motorbikes. If they hit this in the dark, there will be a nasty accident." The work was completed on 18 September 2024.

Fix My Street Cogenhoe 6356539

I have asked Highways to investigate this as a matter of urgency as it is a child safety issue.

Drain cover loose. Corner of bramley close, station road.

Reported via iOS in the Loose / Raised/Sunken category anonymously at 09:23, Tuesday
Sent to West Northamptonshire Council 3 minutes later.
ref: 6536539.



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

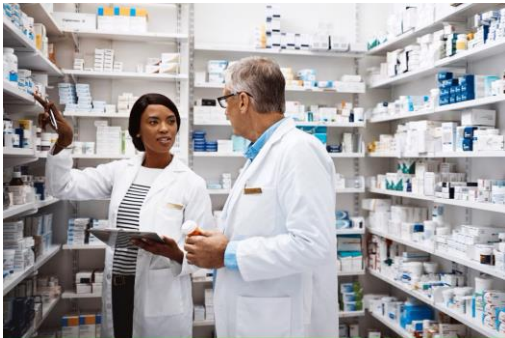
application with an open mind and are prepared to consider any new matters or any new arguments in favour of or against the proposed development until the decision is made otherwise, they should not take part in any decision on the application in question.

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.

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.../>

Wantage Park Online Consultation Now Open

Residents, businesses, and community groups are invited to take part in an online pre-planning consultation for the proposed Wantage Park crematorium and celebration facility. The online engagement launched on Wednesday 25 September 2024 and will run through until Wednesday 16 October 2024. Visit our Wantage Park pages to review the plans and then head to our consultation portal to share your views before a planning application is submitted for the scheme in November 2024.

<https://westnorthants.citizenspace.com/.../have-your-say.../>

Earlier this month the Council set out plans for a state-of-the-art and sustainable new facility on land at Wantage Farm, in the Round Spinney area of Northampton. The facility will feature sustainable design



elements, including energy-efficient electric cremators, heat recovery systems, and green roofs, all aimed at supporting local biodiversity and contributing to a greener Northampton. The development of Wantage Park will also bring numerous benefits to the local community. The surrounding land will be transformed into recreational spaces, including walking paths and green areas, encouraging outdoor activities and community well-being. Careful planning will ensure minimal visual,

traffic, and noise impacts. Infrastructure improvements, such as a new independent access road, enhanced public footpaths, and boundary screening, will further support the local area. In addition to providing essential services, the construction and operation of Wantage Park will create jobs and support local businesses. Wantage Park will offer a range of features designed to meet the diverse needs of our community, including level access across the site, accessible parking, adaptable lighting for neuro diverse individuals, and multi-functional spaces for community use. The proposed design will be inclusive, accommodating various faiths and providing spaces that respect the privacy and dignity of all users.

Find out more about Wantage Park on the West Northamptonshire Council website:

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/parks.../wantage-park>

Plan to Enhance Trees and Woodland

We want to hear views on a strategy that sets out a vision for the future treescape of West Northamptonshire. We are in the process of finalising our Tree and Woods Strategy, setting out how we will manage, protect and expand tree and woodland cover across West Northants to 2045, as well as how we intend to collaborate with partners and the wider community.



<https://westnorthants.citizenspace.com/.../tree-and-wood.../>

Deadline for comments: Sunday 13 October 2024.

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.

A Drop-in event will be held across the area and online on the following dates:

- 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/>



Send Local Offer Online Information

It has been a year since the Council launched the new Local Offer website, an online resource to find services for children and young people (aged 0 to 25) with special educational needs and disabilities in West Northamptonshire.

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

Take the time to fill out this short survey by 31 October and tell us your views on what you find helpful and how we can improve. <https://westnorthants.citizenspace.com/cet/e982a637/>

There is an exciting opportunity to have a 'Chatbot' or online help - you can let the development team know how you might use this when searching the Local Offer. Please share this with anyone else you know who has used the Local Offer website. We welcome feedback from any young people who have helped us with the Local Offer so far, and any who have ideas for the future.



West Northants Domestic Abuse Survey

Northamptonshire Neighbourhood Watch Association (NNWA) has been requested to assist in raising awareness of West Northamptonshire Council's domestic abuse needs assessment. The aims of this are to understand how they can develop the local response, including shaping the future of services for those that require support. The approach is rooted in understanding the views of local people, with lived experience of the issues we are seeking to respond to. As such we have launched a survey for anyone in West Northants who has experienced domestic abuse. By its nature, not everyone with experience of domestic abuse will disclose what is, or has, happened to them. In fact, part of the survey explores what barriers exist that prevent people seeking help. A wide range of organisations and community groups are being asked to share the survey, so that anyone (even if they haven't ever told anyone), can share their views on what a good response should look like. The survey itself can be found here on Citizen Space.

<https://westnorthants.citizenspace.com/.../you-views.../>

My partner takes my money and makes all the decisions.

We want to hear from you

Davis and Associates is an independent organisation working with West Northamptonshire Council to gather insights from anyone over 16 who lives or works in the area and has experienced any form of abusive or harmful behaviour from someone they love, such as a partner, friend, or family member. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential and will help shape the future of support services in West Northamptonshire, ensuring they meet the needs of the community.

Use the QR code to take our anonymous, short survey.

Davis and Associates West Northamptonshire Council

Heritage Open Days

If you are happy to share your experiences with us, please complete this survey. We carry out a yearly survey following the open days to gather feedback, this helps us in making West Northamptonshire Heritage Open Days even better for the next year. The data will only be used for the purpose of this



West Northamptonshire – Heritage Open Days Visitor Experience 2024

consultation and will not be passed on to a third party. Any information given to us is treated as confidential, and your personal information will not be shared with event organisers.

If you have been an organiser of an event for Heritage Open Days this year and would like to leave feedback, please email us at economy@westnorthants.gov.uk and we will send you a separate survey link. This survey closes at midnight on 31 October 2024.

FINANCE ADMINISTRATION AND TRANSFORMATION

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>

Support where you live.

Local Voluntary and Community Organisations have been able to apply for grants funded by the Household

For advice on cost of living support

Visit: westnorthants.gov.uk/cost-of-living

call: **0300 126 7000***
*Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

or scan:

West Northamptonshire Council COST OF LIVING SUPPORT

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

Households requiring energy saving advice.

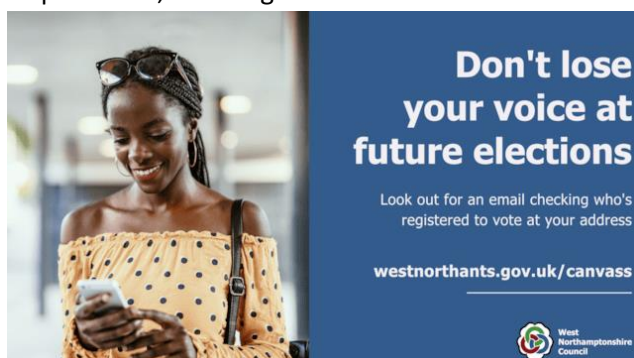
Households can also access support with energy saving advice. This service is provided by our partners at Community Law who specialise in this form of support. <https://www.communitylawservice.org.uk/energy-advice/>

about the support available.

REGULATORY SERVICES

Complete Annual Canvass Paperwork Promptly

West Northamptonshire Council is reminding residents to complete their annual canvass paperwork as soon as possible. The council's annual canvass is now well underway, with every property in the area having received a canvass communication either through email or letter. The canvass is a legal requirement, enabling the council to maintain a current and precise electoral register. Being on the register



is essential for adults to be able to exercise their right to vote in elections and referendums. Additionally, it plays a crucial role in jury service selection and is often used in credit checks for mortgages and other financial purposes.

Residents who have provided their email addresses to the council should have already received a branded email from West Northamptonshire Council. The email, sent from <mailto:electoralservices@westnorthants.gov.uk>,

contains step-by-step instructions on how to check, confirm, and/or change your details online. Those who did not respond by Monday, 9 September, will receive a reminder letter at their property. Some households will also receive a form to complete. We urge you to respond promptly to the email or form to save the cost of sending reminders. This year, the council is also required to review all European citizens registered to vote. If we cannot confirm that an EU voter has resided in the UK before 31 December 2020 by checking historical electoral records, a letter or email will be sent to the voter to confirm their eligibility under the new criteria.

EU citizens who receive a letter confirming their eligibility to vote do not need to take further action. They remain eligible and can vote in upcoming elections, excluding UK Parliamentary elections.

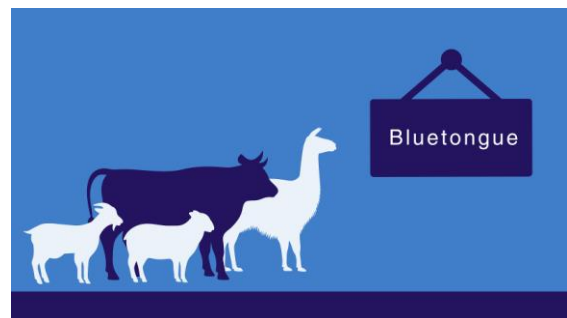
If you're not currently registered to vote, you can easily register online or call 0300 126 7000. People are also reminded to be cautious of phishing, scams, or spam emails during this time. West Northamptonshire Council will never ask for personal or banking details via email. If you have any concerns or doubts, please contact us on 0300 126 7000.

If we do not receive a response to our form, we will make every attempt to get a response from you. This may include sending reminder forms, text / email, telephone calls, or visiting your property between September and November 2024. For more information about the canvass and its purpose, please visit the West Northamptonshire website.

More details about the eligibility confirmation and review for European Union Citizens are also available on West Northamptonshire Council website.

Please watch out for Signs of Bluetongue Virus

Our Trading Standards teams are encouraging people to be aware of the signs of the bluetongue virus, following the recent discovery of cases in some parts of the UK. Bluetongue is transmitted by biting midges and affects cattle, sheep, goats and deer as well as camelids such as llama and alpacas. The impacts on these animals can vary greatly but, in the most severe cases, can be fatal. It does not affect human health or food safety. No confirmed cases have been found in Northamptonshire, however restricted zones have been set up in the East Riding of Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, as well as in Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Kent, East Sussex and part of Greater London following the identification of cases in those areas.



As a precaution, our Trading Standards team is encouraging livestock owners in the county to familiarise themselves with the signs to look out for. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/bluetongue>

The Government website also contains a range of guidance, including information on the latest situation.

<https://www.gov.uk/.../bluetongue-information-and...>

Anyone who suspects bluetongue must report it immediately by calling 03000 200 301.

RURAL SERVICES NETWORK (RSN)

National Rural Conference 2024

I attended the online sessions of the RSN Annual Conference.

- 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

Rural Economy & Regeneration-16 September

On 16 September 2024, I attended the Rural Services Network (RSN) Rural Economy & Regeneration Session on-line and I heard Till Specht, Head of Funding Design & Strategy MHCLG tell us 'What's next for Local Growth'.

On 29th July the Chancellor made a statement to the House of Commons setting out the current fiscal position whilst launching a Spending Review. This means that MHCLG alongside other departments, is:

- Looking to deliver more efficiently.
- Preparing a budget pitch for 30th October
- Developing proposals for the multi-year Spending Review in April.



**What's next for
local growth**

Till Specht - MHCLG

Over the last Parliament, MHCLG launched and delivered a large variety of local growth funds:

- Future High Streets Fund
- Town Deals
- Community Renewal Fund
- Levelling Up Fund
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund
- Long Term Plan for Towns

Alongside many other funds launched by other departments, which has made the funding landscape complex and hard to navigate.

As a result, Government is now seeking continuous improvement of delivery models, whilst they continue to pursue devolution deals and to deepen existing ones. MHCLG and HMT introduced the Funding Simplification Doctrine at the beginning of the year, which requires government departments to consider the impact of their fund design on Local Authorities. Government's ambition is to design a simplified funding landscape, delivering better returns than our current set of funds while providing an incentive for further devolution.

This means that they are looking at:

- Reducing the monitoring burden on places
- Integrating capital and revenue funding
- Reducing the number of funding pots with individual rules
- Focus on activities that boost local growth

Future funding is subject to the Spending Review in April 26. Funding models will need to complement our devolution agenda and the government's five missions. We know that rural areas face different challenges and opportunities to enhance growth and prosperity and funding design will need to reflect those to enable place focused and place led solutions.

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**

WNC Planning Policy Meeting 18 September 2024

At the WNC Planning Policy Meeting on 18 September 2024, we considered the Council's response to the current Government consultation on Reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and other changes to the planning system. Government has published tables identifying what the changes would be for each local authority - for West Northamptonshire, this would see the annual requirement increase from 2,124 to 2,584. For the current plan period (to 2041) this would increase numbers by 7,820 (17 x 460), assuming the base date of the Local Plan was moved from 1st April 2023 to 1st April 2024. The additional work required to meet this need will extend the period required to produce the plan and therefore the plan period will need to be extended. For every year extension there will be a requirement of a further 2,584 dwellings. For illustrative purposes an extension of two years would see a total additional requirement of approximately 13,000 dwellings. Planning officers warned that they will have to go back to the drawing board to identify sites for the 8,000 additional homes required by 2041.



During the meeting, I said:

“According to the Rural Services Network (RSN) the NPPF proposes a 70% increase in Housing Targets in the Rural Areas and a 6% increase in Urban Areas. This brings a significant challenge to WNC to deliver Housing in the right place and of the right tenure”. “There are a huge number of issues if we are to deliver housing that meets local needs outside of the planning system. We need to clearly identify the key issues for delivery in West Northamptonshire. Just saying we will increase the numbers by 13,000 dwellings won't just solve the problem. We need to get across to Government that planning is a critical factor but not the critical factor”.

For WNC to comply with the new changes to the NPPF then there would need to be a thorough analysis of the shortfall of infrastructure to include roads, rural transport, schools, electricity, water, heating supply, hospitals and other medical facilities together with a report on green space with a view to creating buffer areas to prevent our village boundaries coalescing and avoiding ribbon development. Then we would need

to acquire this infrastructure ahead of any development. We cannot continue to ignore the existing deficit in essential infrastructure in our rural areas.

Cambridgeshire Live 23 September 2024

See my quote, which was picked up by Cambridgeshire Live in their article of 23 September 2024.

<https://www.cambridge-news.co.uk/news/uk-world-news/thousands-extra-homes-under-government-29989131>

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

Joint Agency Flooding Update

Agencies are continuing to support Billing Aquadrome's management with their evacuation plan whilst it remains temporarily closed due to flooding and with further flood warnings in place. Around 28 people and 5 pets stayed at the rest centre overnight and were provided with emergency bedding, toiletries and hot food and drink and supported by community volunteers from the British Red Cross and Re: Act and WNC staff. A further 21 people and their pets left the centre having planned to stay with family and friends. All agencies including the Fire Service, Police and Environment Agency are continually assessing the conditions at the site and the ongoing weather however with more rainfall expected, a flood warning remains in place for the site. Having ordered the evacuation of the site, the park's management is working with electricians, plumbers and other contractors with a view to ensuring preparations are made to move people back once the flooding risks have passed and it is safe to do so.



Water levels across the area remain very high, with flood warnings currently in place on the River Nene at Billing and Cogenhoe to Great Doddington, as well as the River Tove at Towcester and Cosgrove and low-lying areas close to the River Great Ouse and River Ouzel at Newport Pagnell.

<https://check-for-flooding.service.gov.uk/>

In the event of an emergency where someone is in danger, they should dial 999 or 112. Further information and guidance on flooding and to report it visit Report a flood:

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/its-emergency/report-flood>

Further Progress on Sustainability Efforts

WNC has continued to make progress in its sustainability journey by retaining a national environmental accreditation. We are pleased to have retained the Bronze Award accreditation with the Investors in the Environment scheme (iE) following an independent audit, showing our commitment to reducing our environmental impact. iE is a national environmental accreditation scheme designed to help organisations save time and money, reduce their impact on the environment, and get recognition for their progress.



As a Council, we have worked to improve on the foundations put in place to achieve the bronze

award for the first-time last year. Over the past 12 months, this has included:

- 1) Publishing our first Sustainability Report, setting out priorities against the UN Sustainable Development Goals
- 2) Focussing on embedding sustainable thinking into all our job roles, projects, and policies rather than it being looked at as an addition to or adaptation.
- 3) Continuing to grow a sustainability staff network and councillors net zero action group to guide, influence and involve communities, colleagues, and partners.
- 4) Refreshing the online Sustainable West Northamptonshire information hub and social media channels to promote, share and encourage good practice.
- 5) Actively supporting staff with additional training, including members of the Sustainability Team undergoing a Pathways to Net Zero course.
- 6) Consulting the public on a draft electric vehicle infrastructure strategy that will be published in early 2025 to support the increase in EVs.
- 7) Participating in the national No Mow May campaign for the first time, leaving areas of green spaces to grow naturally in a bid to increase biodiversity.

We are dedicated to making changes that will have a positive impact on the environment and the lives of our residents, to make a difference today and in the future. We are taking steps in the right direction and are keen to continue building on the work that has already been done.

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/sustainable-west-northants>

Update on Severe Weather from WNC

Residents were urged to continue to take extra care during the month as flood warnings and road closures remained in place across West Northamptonshire following the extreme weather.

Although the intense rainfall has eased off, water levels across the area remain very high, with flood warnings still in place at Dallington, Grendon Brook, Wootton Brook and Cogenhoe Mill.



<https://check-for-flooding.service.gov.uk/alerts-and...>

In the event of an emergency where someone is in danger, they should dial 999 or 112. Further information and guidance on flooding and to report it visit:

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/its-emergency/report-flood>

The stormy conditions have put extreme pressure on the road network, causing localised flooding and overwhelming ditches and brooks due to the rapid and intense rainfall not able to drain away fast enough across the system.

Highways response teams for Kier and West Northamptonshire Council have been out and about supporting emergency services, having attended 200 incidents during the recent flooding, three quarters of which were flooding related with the remainder a mix of emergencies, such as fallen trees and dislodged/broken manhole covers.

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 Silverstone
- 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 22nd October 2024 at 13:00 to 14:00pm.

At the last meeting on 23 September 2024, we reviewed the LAP progress over the last month, details as follows:

Children & Young People (CYP)

Towcester had come onto the radar due to an individual having links with a Birmingham gang, B4. In addition, at the Schools Contextual Safeguarding meeting they raised concerns that Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) had increased significantly over the last few months and there were concerns this would further increase over the summer whilst schools had no oversight. Child Exploitation Risk Assessment Framework (CERAF) forms had been completed where appropriate. A Task & Finish group was brought together to better understand the issue and seek some solutions.

- There is some ASB on the Rec and down through the brook area to the back of the leisure centre. A group of 'Not in Education, Employment or Training' (NEET) young people was the catalyst.
- There was an Incident related to the County Lines issue where some young people were chased.
- Young people are gathering in the Water Meadows drinking, smoking weed and swimming in the weir.
- There is a core group of young people not currently in education who would not engage with regular youth clubs or sports activities.
- Parents need support/advice/awareness of grooming and gang issues.
- There had been an assault on the owner of Mega Bounce which occurred on the evening of Saturday, 10th August 2024 when he was setting up with his team for the following day.
- Vandalism/desecration of graves/anti-social behaviour at the Cemetery took place in the early hours of Sunday 4th August 2024. Towcester Town Council has asked the SN Policing Team to include Towcester Cemetery in its regular patrols due to ongoing issues with anti-social behaviour and threatening/intimidating behaviour over the past 12 months or so. However, there is a concern that local Police do not have sufficient resources to allocate resources to this.



Action from last meeting

Guiding Young Minds (GYM) Intervention is a confidential service that strives to establish credible, life-altering relationships with vulnerable Children and Young People through delivery of a specialist, holistic service. The GYM bus attended Towcester on the following dates:

- a) Mon 5, 19, August
- b) Thurs 8, 15, 22, 29 August

SNYE fun day on 30 August was a good opportunity to engage with young people.

At the Rec/Brook area and Water meadows there are increased patrols and Park Ranger patrols at Water meadows.



Crime

Inspector Johnny Davis-Lyons is putting on a week of action and looking at the probability of a date in late October. The following activities scheduled by the Serious Violence Prevention Team in November are.

- w/c 11th – Op Sceptre
- w/c 18th – asb
- w/c 25th – County Lines Intensification & 16 Days of Activism (which does not end until 10 Dec).

Older Residents

Dementia Support

The Rural South and East insight data tells us that we have a higher number of over 75's and pensioner households than average. We have an aging population. With age being the biggest risk factor for dementia.

The LAP will be supporting a fundraising campaign for Dementia UK.

Please see the details below:

- Dementia UK November Knitting Challenge, 1st November 2024 - 30th November 2024

There is no fundraising target for this challenge – we just ask you to raise as much as you can for families affected by dementia. We are challenging you to knit for 30 minutes a day in November. Get your knitting needles out and take on the ultimate crafting challenge for families facing dementia.



From beginner to pro, everyone is welcome, so challenge yourself to set aside some time each day to knit some amazing creations. Whether you sell your items for Dementia UK or ask family and friends to sponsor you for taking on 30 days of knitting, your fundraising will help our specialist dementia nurses offer a lifeline to more families when they need it most.

Is this something any of your social groups would support?

It would be a worthy challenge to bring people together and help a great cause along the way. We look forward to hearing your thoughts and we will then send out emails with all the joining details etc.

Women Over 50 Returning to Work

We are starting a project within the Rural LAPs to support women over 50 re-entering employment. This will align with the Governments 'Returnership' program. A 'returnership' is a new offer which brings



together three programmes to help get older workers back to work. These include Apprenticeships, Skills Bootcamps and Sector-Based Work Academy Programmes (SWAPs). 'Returnerships' will raise awareness of these pathways, providing a clear route back into work and encouraging employers to hire older workers. David Yarnall discussed the services offered. For the next year up to April 2025, we have funding where we can help with social isolation and get people back into employment. There are different

coordinators who can specialise in different skills. We will be getting Adult Learning into the Rural East to provide residents with more opportunities. These would be free of charge. It will make a positive difference to social cohesion and isolation, as well as educate the community to return into employment. Dates are now being firmed up with all parties to design a scheme of work and commence delivery.

Carers

Northamptonshire Carers are embarking on a roadshow of one stop shops across all LAP areas to offer information, advice, and guidance to unpaid carers. These one stop shops are funded by the Accelerated Reform Fund and will include: an informal café style area staffed by Carer Support Workers and Volunteers, information about Northamptonshire Carers and the services we provide with the option to register with Northamptonshire Carers should they wish to do so, IT equipment and a printer for carers to use to complete forms, blue badge applications etc, a private room for pre booked carers assessments to take place and each one stop shop will include a form of holistic therapy i.e. hand massage.



Our aim is to be as accessible as possible to unpaid carers, bringing information and advice more rural areas of the county as well as out towns. We are yet to confirm a venue for the Rural East.

Welcoming Spaces

These are the Welcoming Spaces in Rural East

- Cogenhoe & Whiston Parish Council
- Towcester Library
- Deanshanger Library
- Tove Benefice
- Roade Community Library
- Blisworth Baptist Church
- Yardley Gobion URC Chapel
- renew169 Wellbeing Cafe
- Nether Heyford Parish Council
- Bugbrooke Parish Council
- Blisworth Baptist Church
- Hackleton Baptist Church/ Coffee@Carey
- Grange Park Church
- Towcester St Lawrence PCC (Church)
- Space 2 Talk Training CIC
- Deanshanger Man's Club (Deanshanger Parish Council/Good Neighbours)
- St Margaret of Antioch Church Denton pcc
- Nether Heyford Community Lounge
- Denton Church

Social Isolation- Bereavement

Our Social Prescribing Link Workers (SPLWs) have expressed a concern that there is a gap in support for those suffering from bereavement and grief. They mentioned that there is a feeling that 8/10 referrals for loneliness are a result of bereavement. WNC are in the process of drafting a business case for the pop-up Grief cafes – The Good Grief Trust. Our aim is to utilise the Welcoming Spaces to host these pop-ups. The long-term goal is to empower communities to sustain and manage these groups from within.

The impact on the residents will be support and companionship during times of bereavement and loneliness. We are currently in early conversations and seeking funding.



Towcester Health and Wellbeing Strategy

We have been working with Parish and Town Councils to create health and wellbeing strategies and to maximise their impact in promoting health and wellbeing for their communities. We have met with Towcester Town Council and provided data and insight which supports this. The key strengths and weaknesses of the parish were created from an AI summary of the full local insight data report. The data itself is very comprehensive. This was used to give an overview during our meeting of the priority areas for Towcester. We are all working together to co-produce a comprehensive strategy. A large Community Centre is being built within the new housing development. There is an opportunity to add groups and events within this space.

Economic Growth Plans

Working together with Samantha Hoskings, Brackley & Towcester Town Manager, we are looking to implement a programme of work to energise the High Street. Our aim is to identify and develop areas which could provide 'pop-up' retail areas for local entrepreneur and SMEs. We are planning to work with Business and IP Centre (BIPC) to support this project.

To give an overview, the BIPC is delivered via the Northamptonshire Library service and offers several free business support resources including workshops, webinars, 1-2-1 support and access to business information / market research databases. The BIPC Northamptonshire's new Build Your Business Programme may also be able to support business's with a £2,000 grant. They can also talk with you about the basic principles of intellectual property (IP) and how these might relate to protecting your business.

Young Enterprise

Following on from the highly successful 2-day delivery of the business and life skills at EWS, Roade Campus which comprised of,

- Fully funded delivery agreed for whole of year 8 from both EWS Campus` to take part in a business skills workshop.
- The aim is to grow workplace skills, confidence, finance, presenting, problem-solving real-life scenarios.

This presents a valuable chance to influence the school curriculum to reflect the needs of the local community.

A second workshop is planned for the Deanshanger Campus in the Autumn term.



Community Connect

The Community Connect project was recently launched to improve the wellbeing and welfare services in West Northants. Recognising the value of partnerships, we are working together to maximise the impact of Community connect and our commitment is to connect individuals with essential advice and support. We know that by collaborating we can create a stronger, more resilient community and our community connects advisers are trained in various aspects of health, social care, and welfare, which enables them to



provide top notch support and advice to those in need. Our annual goal is to support, advise and assist around 300 individuals within the community and since April we have already signposted, referred, or directly assisted 78 people which includes 10 families who were in urgent need of access to food and other necessary resources. The community connect

team are out and about at various welcoming spaces, they are also using our minibus to go out to the rural villages to try and encourage and enable the community members there to approach them with their concerns. We also recently launched our club, which is where we are facilitating opportunities for our most vulnerable and isolated members to participate in various activities throughout the year. This helps to give them a sense of connection to their communities while also combating social and rural isolation and helps to promote the active engagement. So far, we've run three activities which have positive feedback and has prompted a demand for additional activities, which help to enhance community connections. The initiative also motivated members to explore new experiences which they may not have tried before, and they said

that it has really improved their sense of well-being and their desire to do more socialising now that they are able to increase their confidence coming out of the COVID pandemic.

From a volunteering point, we've had more than 500 volunteers participating in various community initiatives. These individuals have dedicated their time and effort to assist members with needs of their local community. They make a substantial contribution and make a greater impact through the work that they've been engaged with. Some of the projects they've been involved with have been the maintenance of the grounds at Towcester church and Greens Norton Church, as well as the decoration of two storage rooms at Towcester Primary School, which will be used as chill out areas for students with special educational needs. Finally, on to the healthy active ageing, which is what we're now calling the reducing health inequalities in older population project. Last Wednesday, we presented to over 120 community members aged 65 and over about ways in which they can live a healthy and active life. We discussed in depth the concept of health inequalities and explored various ways in which we could address them within our local community using the local assets that we have available to us. We agreed that by fostering collaboration, communication, and coordination we can engage others so that together we can ensure that everyone within our community is living a healthy and active life. We've got more community conversations to have. These will be completed by the beginning of August and once we've got all the findings from these community conversations, we will be producing a report that will enable us to plan a strategy on how you can reduce those health inequalities in Brackley.

Partner Updates

Police update

Sergeant Lorna Clarke gave the following update:

Immediate justice is the latest government push to get offenders for low level offences completing essential community service. They provide four hours of work back into the community and we've got a



team of people who will coordinate this. The initiative takes a low-level offence like criminal damage, common assaults, other things that the Police are dealing with, and then refers them to get an out of court disposal and refer them to the immediate justice team. The Police are looking for work for them to do in South Northamptonshire. They are gradually getting themselves set up. It must be public place it cannot be a private place. They are looking for projects now, the officers have also got to put the offenders into referral.

They are looking at fly tipping and things that are going on in this LAP. They have all their own transport, fully independent and government funded. It is a pilot project but they're looking to roll it out from October 2024. We are a pilot force and they're looking to push it out to all other forces. They've got new people in the team. Sergeant Lorna Clarke updated that we're struggling with South Northamptonshire volume of offenders. They have focused their efforts on Northampton because they have a big volume of crime turnover there and it's working well. They are gradually finding their feet there and they are trying to spread out to South Northamptonshire.

GP update

Dr Philip Stevens gave an update on PML. PML is a not-for-profit healthcare provider delivering NHS primary healthcare contracts in Oxfordshire and Northamptonshire. "We have been conscious of patients accessing urgent care and we had a presentation from NGH Urgent care, Chris Pallot at the health and well-being board and there was a relative lack of information about what it's going to do for Daventry and South

Northants in their county wide plan". He admitted for the rural area, we should develop a plan which we can share as part of the project. This has been done, and at the present time the GP Federation are going round the practises to look at capacity, both in terms of manpower and in facilities to see what we can develop. The county is meant to have based it on population size between eight and nine urgent care centres and of course we've got one. The idea is there are these urgent care centres, maybe run by paramedics or nurses with medical backup to save people having to go to A&E for assessment and treatment. Principal medical run the urgent care centre some reports inside said it is exceptionally busy until 11:00 o'clock at night. It's been very successful in looking to extend it initially to 2 o'clock in the morning and then all night. In terms of financial modelling, the Northamptonshire system is grossly overspent.

Dr Philip Stevens had discussions with the Northampton Borough GPs about how we can put a bid together with them to cover the whole area. It's early days, the whole process will take the rest of this year and that is the way the care work is going anyway for the ICS. So, we're looking to have hubs in Daventry, Towcester and Brackley. There will be savings in A&E and to take the pressure off A&E of NGH. We are looking to expand it so we're looking to do it on a basis which is cost neutral at best.

Jackie Power introduced herself to the LAP. She works for PML, Parkwood, which is Denton, Wootton and the parks surgeries, including Grange Park and Blisworth. Anyone in the GP surgery or any member of primary care, or mental health can refer patients. Patients can self-refer. They can spend more time on non-medical issues. So, people can be referred with issues such as low-level anxiety, social isolation, bereavement and benefits, financial stuff. Social prescribers run well-being groups in collaboration with adult learning and Northamptonshire sport. They have set up a coffee morning in Hackleton.

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: -

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

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

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



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 Hamblly on 0300 126 7000 or email Towcester.Library@westnorthants.gov.uk

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

Help with 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

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

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>



be found on our website here:

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 around the county in the future (If you would like to see one set up in your area, please e-mail sends4dad@gmail.com)

Further information about SENDS 4 Dad can be found on their website: www.sends4dad.org.uk



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

24-Hour Mental Health Text Message Service Launched

Northamptonshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) along with North and West Northamptonshire Councils have partnered with charity Mental Health Innovations to offer free, confidential and 24/7 mental health support to those across the county through the charity's text messaging support service Shout.



The partnership has been funded through North and West Northamptonshire Public Health services and ICB to provide this innovative digital offer for anyone in Northamptonshire to enable them to access 24-hour mental health support, 365 days a year from their mobile phone. The service launched on Monday 2 September and people in the county can text the word 'IMATTER' to 85258 to be connected to a trained Shout Volunteer. The service is open around the clock and can help with issues

such as anxiety, stress, loneliness, depression and suicidal thoughts. The conversation, which takes place entirely by text message, aims to help the texter reach a calmer place with a plan to move forward. It will also signpost them to further support available locally.

Shout is a free, confidential and anonymous service, designed to provide people with in-the-moment support. Texting Shout does not appear on phone bills and all messages are confidential unless there is concern about someone's safety. Shout is available and free in the United Kingdom.

Vaccination for Pregnant Women & Unborn Child

Pregnant women across West Northamptonshire are being encouraged to take up the free flu vaccine offer ahead of the winter months. Pregnant women, and their unborn child, are at a higher risk of complications and more severe conditions such as pneumonia, as the immune system naturally weakens during pregnancy. Flu can also affect the growth of their baby, which could lead to still birth. There is a higher risk of pregnant women being admitted to hospital due to flu than the general population.



In 2023-2024 64% of pregnant women, in West Northamptonshire did not get vaccinated against flu, increasing the likelihood of them catching the seasonal flu infection. This year, West Northamptonshire Public Health are encouraging pregnant women to get vaccinated as soon as they can. We are starting to see an increase in respiratory infections within the community and with the colder weather there will be more mixing and movement indoors, which will lead to an increase in the spread of all viruses, including flu. It is, therefore, important that those who are pregnant get vaccinated as soon as possible.

It is also encouraged that women take up other vaccinations offered whilst they are pregnant, including Whooping Cough (Pertussis), so they and their unborn child are protected against vaccine preventative infections. For further information, visit the West Northamptonshire Council Immunisation page.

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

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.

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.

Apply for School Places for September 2025

It's time to apply for your child's school place for September 2025

Parents and carers of children living in West Northamptonshire can now apply for a reception place in a primary or infant school, a year 3 place in a junior school, or a Year 7 place in a secondary school, for the September 2025 intake.



Parents and carers can apply for a place in reception if their child will be four years old on or before 31 August 2025. The closing date for applications for places in reception (and year 3 at junior school) is 15 January 2025 at midnight.

The closing date for applications for Year 7 places is 31 October 2024 at midnight. If you are unsure of how the process works or are not sure where to

start, please do look at the information available on our website.

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/school.../appeals-process>

All applications, whether postal or online, must be received by the closing date to be considered as on time. Late applications will not be processed until after National Offer Days and will be processed in monthly rounds. All on-time applicants will receive an offer of a school place on National Offer Days – 3 March 2025 for secondary places and 16 April 2025 for reception/junior school places. Applicants will then be provided with information on the next stage of the process.

There is a separate application process for children who have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, details of which can be found on the SEND admissions page.

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/.../school-admissions...>

An independent admission appeals process is available for families who wish to appeal against refusal of a place at any school for which they have applied. To find out more about applying for a school place in West Northamptonshire and to submit an application, visit: www.westnorthants.gov.uk/school-admissions.

Send School to Create an Extra 230 Places

The delivery of the new 230-place school in Tiffield, Northamptonshire, has reached a significant milestone. Following the demolition and clearance of the site, which took place this spring, the steelwork for the school is now complete.

Being built on St Johns Road, on the former St Johns Centre site, the construction project is being led by national contractor Willmott Dixon for West Northamptonshire Council, Greenwood Academies Trust and the Department for Education. The new school will provide additional special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) spaces in the local community.



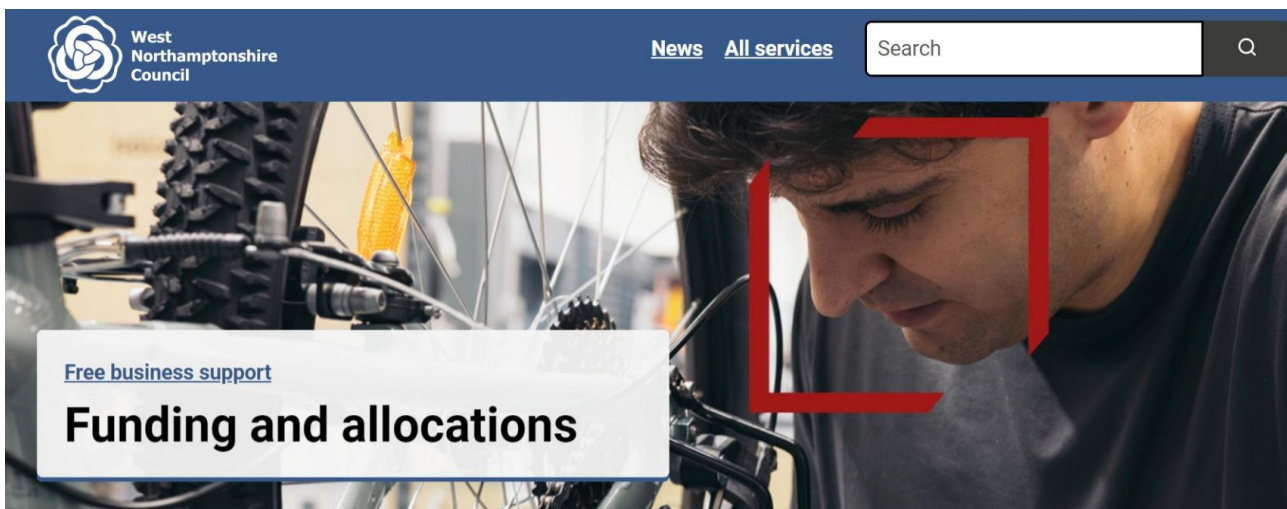
Set to complete in Summer 2025, the specialist school will improve access to education and increase the support available to families. Pupils aged four to 18 years old will benefit from a variety of facilities including specialist teaching spaces, a soft playroom, a sensory room and a rebound therapy room.

A playground, outdoor soft and hard play areas, and staff and visitor car parking are also included within the plans. A drop-off area and additional queuing space will also be available, making drop-off and collection easier for pupils and parents. Due to the rural landscape surrounding the school, landscaping has been prioritised on the 20,217sqm site to ensure the school blends in with the surrounding area. Joining Willmott Dixon on the project team are Associated Architects, Hexa Consulting, JEH Planning, Ares Landscape Architects and SVM Building Services Design.

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.



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 900m² 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/>

Headline Acts Revealed for Market Square Reopening

West Northamptonshire is gearing up for an unforgettable weekend as the newly revitalised and reimagined Northampton Market Square prepares to reopen with a spectacular celebration on Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 October 2024.



The two-day event promises to be a vibrant display of community spirit, culture, and live entertainment that residents and visitors won't want to miss, with ABBA tribute the Magic of ABBA and Britain's Got Talent 2024 finalists Northants Sings Out announced as the headline acts. BBC Introducing and Northampton Music Festival will also provide music and entertainment throughout both days, bringing some of the best emerging talent from across the country to the main stage, creating an energetic and festival

atmosphere. Hosted by West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) and supported by Northampton Forward, Northampton BID and Northampton Town Council, the grand opening will mark the transformation of the town's historic Market Square into a thriving hub for the whole community. The space, revitalised as part of a major regeneration project funded by the Government's Towns Fund, is set to become a landmark that will serve as the beating heart of Northampton for generations to come.

But the celebration doesn't stop with live music! Attendees can look forward to a host of family-friendly activities, from creative musical performances and cultural displays to historic exhibitions and mouth-watering food and drink from local vendors, all spaced out in a variety of accessible Zone areas. People will also have the chance to explore a diverse range of offerings from local businesses and market traders; from fresh, locally produced goods to handmade crafts and expert services like bicycle repairs, key cutting, floristry, and more, the market will showcase the best of Northampton's small businesses and will provide an excellent opportunity for visitors to support local traders and discover unique products.

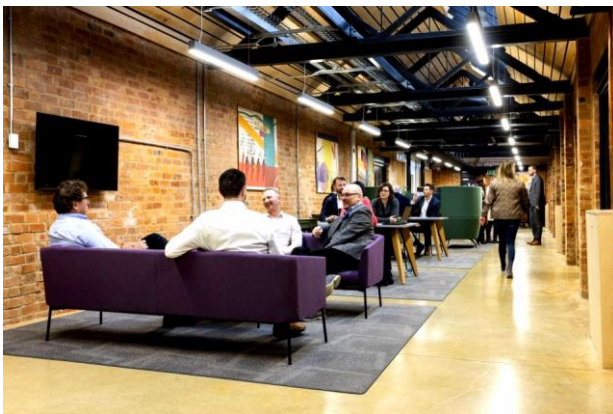
Starting with the phased return of traders on 20 September, the newly transformed Market Square will become a bustling marketplace with high-quality stalls, enhanced lighting, new seating, and an impressive interactive water feature. The space is designed to be inclusive and accessible, offering a welcoming environment for all.

Mark your calendars and come along for a weekend of fun, flavour, and festivities as we celebrate the reimagined Northampton Market Square. This is a not-to-be-missed event that will leave a legacy for the town. For more information on the grand opening and the event schedule, please visit the WNC website.

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

Vulcan Works Shortlisted for a Hat Trick of Awards

The Vulcan Works has been named as a finalist in three separate categories of the Northamptonshire Business Excellence Awards. The centre, which offers office space, business support, hotdesking and co-working opportunities at the heart of Northampton's Cultural Quarter is up for the Land and Development, Community Project of the Year, and Venue of the Year awards at the event, which celebrates the best of



the county's business community. Since Vulcan Works opened in spring 2023, the dedicated team have supported numerous fledgling businesses and startups in the digital and creative industries. They have also partnered with Barclays and NatWest, as well as local business support organisations like Growth Hub, Careers Hub, The Marketing Meet Up, Northampton BID, NNBN and Digital Northants to offer practical business support, networking and workshops. The Vulcan Works is a fantastic example of the regeneration we're delivering in Northampton, and to have this work recognised by being shortlisted

in three categories at the NBEA awards is fantastic. The Northamptonshire Business Excellence Awards will be held on Thursday 7 November at Northamptonshire Country Cricket Ground in Abingdon Avenue, Northampton.

Waspri Women Supported

WNC has supported a campaign calling for women adversely impacted by changes to the state pension age to be compensated. Tens of thousands of women in Northamptonshire were among millions affected by a government decision in 1995 to increase the state pension age from 60 to 65, and again to 66 in 2012. The Women Against State Pension Inequality (Waspri) group wants women to be compensated over the government's failure to tell them - or provide adequate notice - about the changes.



A motion to support the campaign was unanimously supported at a meeting of West Northamptonshire Council last week.

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

Earlier this year, the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) found communications from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) on the age increase were flawed.

A DWP spokesperson said: "This was a serious report, requiring serious consideration. "We will continue to listen respectfully to the women involved and ensure we take on board any lessons learnt."

All 68 members at Friday's meeting voted in favour of alerting Northamptonshire's newly elected members of parliament and pushing for compensation.

TRANSPORT & HIGHWAYS

Traffic Enforcement Rules

Motorists who continue to flout road restrictions in three busy areas of Northampton now face immediate fines for doing so, under enforcement measures to help keep traffic moving there. In February this year, West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) started to enforce the hatched yellow box at the junction of St John's Street and Victoria Gardens, as well as no Right turns allowed from Fishponds Road into Great Billing Way and the bus only route at Hermitage Way.

The measures were put in place to help reduce traffic congestion after the Department for Transport (DfT)



changed legislation to enable local authorities to apply for powers to enforce against moving traffic contraventions. During the first six months of enforcement measures going live, a warning notice was issued for first offences to any vehicle, however from 1 August (St John's Street) and 16 August (Fishponds Road and Hermitage Way) onwards, anyone who has breached the rules at these sites has received a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) of £70, reduced to £35 if paid within 21 days. Deanshanger Road went live on

10 June so warning notices are still being issued to motorists for their first occasion breach only.

During August, 796 motorists received immediate PCNs across the three sites:

- St John's Street Box Junction – 415 PCNs
- No right turns from Fishponds Road into Great Billing Way – 316 PCNs
- Hermitage Way bus only route – 65 PCNs

Community Transport Set to Expand

A community transport service which provides a lifeline to its users is expanding its fleet thanks to funding from West Northamptonshire Council (WNC).

Towcester-based Ability was awarded a £477,181 grant by West Northamptonshire Council, out of the Government's Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) and UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).



The community transport provider has used the money to buy four new minibuses, increasing the size of its fleet to 14 vehicles and allowing the service to reach even more people and places across the West Northamptonshire area.

The not-for-profit Community Interest Company has so far taken delivery of two Mercedes-Benz Sprinters, and officially launched them at an event at the Council's offices at The Forum in Towcester this week. The two new vehicles will soon be joined by

two Mercedes Cityliners. It's all a far cry from Ability's humble beginnings in 2018, when Directors Lynn and Nigel Hinch raised money for a single minibus with the aim of helping to reduce isolation and loneliness for those without access to public transport, or who might otherwise struggle to get out and about.

Today the organisation operates a wide range of on-demand bus services across West Northamptonshire, linking villages and towns via regular routes as well as taking people on shopping trips and outings, and even offering door-to-door transport for those who need it.

Ability's impact on the communities it serves was recently celebrated by BBC Radio Northampton, who awarded the service the Great Neighbour Award in its Make a Difference Awards 2024.

Ability is one of seven community transport operators to receive money from a £951,000 pot set up by West Northamptonshire Council thanks to the REPF and UKSPF funds. In Ability's case, the majority came from REPF. Brackley Volunteer Car Scheme, Cogenhoe & Whiston Parish Council's Village Hopper service, the Comm Minibus, Daventry Area Community Transport, Northampton Door to Door and Towcester Area Door to Door all also benefited from a share of the funds.

People can find out more about REPF and UKSPF funding on the WNC website.

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/funding-and-allocations>

More information about ABILITY can be found at abilitycic.org.uk

POLICE FIRE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

Road Safety Fund

Supported by the Northamptonshire Safer Roads Alliance (NSRA), grants of between £500 and £5,000 are available for initiatives that support road safety priorities. This includes speed reduction, anti-social road use, drink or drug driving, educational initiatives that lead to positive behavioural change on the roads, and projects that improve road safety near schools.

Since the start of the 2024/25 financial year in April, this grant pot has awarded nearly £60,000 to local parish councils and schools to improve road safety. This has helped fund both the purchase and installation of vehicle activated speed signs, signage and various other traffic calming measures.



<https://northantspfcc.org.uk/.../road-safety-community-fund/>

Serious Violence Partnership Awards

Northamptonshire Serious Violence Prevention Partnership (NSVPP), has awarded £68,642 to Family Support Link, supporting the expansion of the Northamptonshire Parents under Pressure program (PuP). The NSVPP first supported the program in 2023 and this new award extends the program to support additional families with complex needs, including parental substance abuse and children either currently



engaged with child protection or those who are at imminent risk of going into care. It focuses on working with the parents to develop emotional regulation skills, confidence and be emotionally supportive so they can support their children in developing their own self-regulation.

The expansion of the programme will target early intervention within families that have high risk factors for becoming involved in serious violence. This project is a part of the NSVPP's proactive public health

approach to serious violence, aiming to not just tackling the problem but preventing its occurrence.

It will help protect children and young people from experiencing adverse childhood experiences while building resilience and other protective factors. Addressing these challenges reduces the potential for children to become involved in a life of crime, violence and drugs.

Northamptonshire Serious Violence Prevention Partnership (NSVPP), formally NSVA, was formed in 2023 to tackle serious violence in Northamptonshire. The partnership includes Northamptonshire police, Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service, Youth Offending and Probation Services, Northamptonshire

Integrated Care Board, North Northamptonshire Council, West Northamptonshire Council with the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. The NSVPP aims to stabilise and reduce serious violence, and to understand the underlying causes of violence in the county. Their focus will be on preventing violence from occurring because it is not inevitable but preventable.

For more information: <https://northantspfcc.org.uk/the-serious-violence-duty.../>

Immediate Justice Having Positive Impact

More than 100 people have been referred to a scheme helping to repair the damage they have caused to local communities by anti-social behaviour. The Immediate Justice Team, which sits within the Office of the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, has helped to facilitate more than 380 hours of community improvement work across the county since December 2023.

This work has been carried out by people who have been referred to the scheme by Police Officers and PCSOs after committing offences such as criminal damage, being drunk and disorderly, harassment and causing a public nuisance. The Immediate Justice scheme sees those who have carried out low-level crimes swiftly and visibly pay for the damage they have caused. People who have been dealt with, carry out reparative work such as litter picking, removing graffiti, and repairing public property, instead of being charged through the courts for their crimes.

Of 108 referrals to the Immediate Justice programme:

- Seventy-nine have completed their penalty, with a further sixteen pending.
- Nearly two thirds were referred to the scheme because of drug possession.
- Most people to take part were men.
- Most were aged between 18 and 24.
- Thirteen have refused to take part and will be referred to the arresting officer.

Starting from mid-September, young people aged between 13-17 can now also be referred to the service and complete community improvement work.



CULTURE, HERITAGE & SPORT

Park's New Mountain Bikes for You to Try Cycling

Twenty new mountain bikes have been donated to Northampton Bike Park by West Northamptonshire Council (WNC). The bikes,



together with a set of 20 helmets, will allow more people the opportunity to try mountain biking without the commitment of buying a bike. They have been gifted to the park as part of the Council's partnership with British Cycling – a two-year initiative funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF) with the aim of encouraging more people to ride and making cycling more accessible for everyone. The partnership recently saw West Northamptonshire successfully host a stage of the men's Tour of Britain race when one of the competitors was Tom Pidcock, who won Olympic gold for Team GB in the men's cross-country mountain bike race in Paris over the summer. Communities across West Northamptonshire came out to show their support for the Tour recently and were hopefully bitten by the cycling bug. We're delighted to

be able to gift these bikes to provide an opportunity for people who may not have previously been able to use the park to come along and enjoy all the benefits it has to offer.

Opened in September 2022, Northampton Bike Park is a joint project between WNC and Northamptonshire Sport and features a multi-user green trail, off-road mountain bike trails of varying difficulties, plus climb sections and a skills area. Situated on the site of the old Delapre golf course, the Park is well connected to the local cycle network, town centre and neighbouring housing areas, including the Norbital, National Cycle Route 6, and is accessible to people of all ages and abilities.

Cycling is a great way to be active and the donation of the bikes is a step forward in helping even more people to enjoy the bike park and the trails. We run a programme of courses for beginners to the sport, being able to offer a bike as part of the package opens the opportunity to try Mountain Biking without the commitment of buying a bike. The donation also means we can invite local schools and community groups to come and try the facilities in pre-arranged visits.

Find out more on the Northampton Bike Park website.

<https://northamptonbikepark.org/>

Residents invited to get involved with New Exhibition

Residents are invited to get involved in the curation of a new major exhibition exploring and celebrating Northamptonshire's rich past at Northampton Museum and Art Gallery (NMAG). A History of Northamptonshire in 100 Objects is set to open in September 2025 and will cover an extensive period; from when life first appeared on Earth millions of years ago, up to the present day.



The exhibition will be the culmination of West Northamptonshire Council's (WNC) three-year Arts Council England-funded Histories of Northamptonshire project which involves collaborating closely with individuals, groups, and communities across the county to celebrate and share Northamptonshire's heritage. The exhibition will highlight 100 objects selected by guest curators and the museum, providing a wide-ranging exploration of the people, places, events, and items

that have shaped the county's identity.

NMAG is seeking Guest Curators to help choose the objects and stories that will be featured in the exhibition and work alongside the museum team to research, present, and tell the story behind each object, with their contributions not only forming part of the exhibition but also featuring in an accompanying book, website, app, and podcast series.

Guest Curators can be individuals, groups, or societies proposing an object for inclusion. No prior historical knowledge or expertise is required, and the objects can represent any period of Northamptonshire's history, from ancient times to the present day.

If you are interested in becoming a guest curator, selecting an object, and telling its story for the exhibition, or if you'd like to learn more about the many exciting elements of the Histories of Northamptonshire project, visit the museum's website <https://www.northamptonmuseums.com/> or email hon@westnorthants.gov.uk for more information.

The deadline for guest curator submissions is 7 October 2024. Submission forms can be requested via email or completed online on the WNC website.

<https://www.northampton.gov.uk/xfp/form/562>