

BRISLEY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 1st May 2024 at 6.30pm in the Village Hall.

Present: Cllr Henry Collinge (Chairman), Hugh Fawcett (Parochial Church Council), Lindsey Wood (Brisley Cricket Club), Cllr Bridget Diggins (Pond Project), Cllr Peter Dennis (Higher Level Stewardship Scheme & Allotments), County Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris, and District Cllrs Gordon Bambridge and Bill Borrett, together with eight members of the public.

1. Welcome and to receive apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Chris Abel (Village Hall Committee), Mark Balman (Brisley Cricket Club) and Belinda Allen (Brisley School).

2. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 10th May 2023.

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true record and duly signed by the Chairman.

3. Parish Council Matters.

a) Chairman's Report.

The Chairman's report is attached.

b) Higher Level Stewardship Scheme Report.

The Higher Level Stewardship Scheme report is attached.

c) Allotment Report.

The Allotment report is attached.

d) Brisley Common Ponds Project.

The Pond Project report is attached.

4. Reports from Local Organisations.

a) Parochial Church Council.

The Parochial Church Council report is attached.

b) Village Hall Management Committee.

The Village Hall report is attached.

c) Brisley Primary School.

The Brisley School report is attached.

d) Brisley Cricket Club.

The Cricket Club report is attached.

5. Councillor Reports.

a) District Councillor.

The District report received from D/Cllr Bambridge is attached. D/Cllr Bambridge highlighted the four areas being targeted by Breckland – Breckland 2035, the carbon neutral aim, Thriving Places, to assist new businesses and communities, Inspiring Communities, hardship grants, housing etc, and Working Smarter, to achieve set performance indicators. D/Cllr Bambridge reported that he is no longer a cabinet member but sits on two Water/Flooding bodies. He supports the dualling of the A47 and the proposed Western Link, opposed the New Town nr Bintree and is always available to assist both the Parish Council and members of the public.

D/Cllr Borrett added that the Breckland Council Tax remains the lowest in England despite the spend being the same as the City Council. The Boundary Commission are looking at the Breckland wards, with a consultation later this year, and any recommendations being implemented at the next election in three years time. He also highlighted the threat of 2000 new homes at Swanton Morley, with a proposed link road through to the B1145 at North Elmham. Of those 2000 houses, 500 would be built on brownfield sites with the remaining 1500 being built on grassland, the old Swanton Morley Airfield runway. He is also always available to assist.

b) County Councillor.

The County report received from C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris is attached. C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris highlighted the 4.99% increase in Council Tax, with increases also for Adult and Children's Social Care.

The devolution deal has been agreed in principle and will bring in £600M over 30 years but it will mean a change in the constitution and this is being voted on in July. If passed Norfolk will have a directly elected leader.

An additional £34M was received from central government to support households over winter and £4.5M has been received to repair the roads. 27 new gritters have joined the Norfolk fleet. £1M has been set aside for the parish partnership scheme.

Flood protection and coastal erosion are ongoing matters.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and presenting their reports.

6. Open Forum - an opportunity for residents of the parish to express their views on matters of interest or concern relating to the village and to suggest ideas for the future.

A query re the replacement septic tanks was raised and this is an ongoing matter with the scheme hopefully in place in the near future.

C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris was questioned re the zebra crossing recently installed in Dereham but he had no knowledge of any complaints re the steepness of the crossing.

D/Cllr Borrett, in response to a question, confirmed that the 1500 houses would be situated on the old grass runway at the top of the hill in Swanton Morley.

C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris was questioned about the highways reporting system which did not appear to work, with the urgent repairs required for Gateley Road which despite being reported and white painted, were no longer on the system. The C/Cllr confirmed he will ensure the potholes are repaired.

There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and then closed the meeting at 7.20pm.

Signed:

Date:

Chairman Annual Report 2024

Over the last 12 months we have continued to thrive as a community with community events being held throughout the year.

The amenity and common continues to be maintained with regular maintenance and improvements undertaken, ensuring that we live side by side with the flora and fauna as well as grazing animals. We have been able to tighten rules on the common and have embarked on a practical approach for all users of the common whether animal, plant, villager, or visitor can work side by side.

We have continued towards the building affordable housing in the village, having identified a need for local families and workers to have first homes in the area last year. We have been working with Breckland and a local housing trust to identify sites and push the project forward, albeit at a slow pace. This remains an extremely exciting project and hopefully will continue to progress going forwards.

The play area on the amenity land continues to be well used and we regularly maintain to ensure safety and that it is a local hub for children and young people.

The parish's Christmas tree project continues; replacing trees that didn't cope with last year's drought and working with the local school on joint projects, instigated by Councillor Dennis and Irons. Now in its fourth year we are still looking to provide an income to the village in the years to come, as well as enhancing the allotment area.

The parish grass cutting has been maintained and we have received several compliments about the appearance of the village from both parishioners and visitors alike.

We have looked to solve several highway issues within the parish including introducing an increased 30 mile an hour speed limit on the B1125 which hopefully will come into force later this year as well as ensuring potholes and road issues are promptly reported.

The SAM2 sign is also in regular use checking average speeds and monitoring potential speeding issues in the parish.

As ever there are many more examples of both councillors and individuals who have given time, effort, expertise and energy to the village over the last 12 months, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone that has helped out, from taking part in picking up litter, cleaning road signs, making repairs, clearing scrub, writing funding applications, working with experts, clearing ponds, to sitting on our committees and running events for everyone in the village to enjoy.

Thank you, your efforts are what makes Brisley the thriving village in which we all live.

Henry Collinge

Chairman: Brisley Parish Council

Harpers Green HLS

Harpers continues to benefit from being in a Higher Level Stewardship scheme. During the year ongoing maintenance was carried out with the area being topped twice, the second time due to a late flush of thistles after the rains had started. Over winter further work with a mulcher was undertaken to control the spread of gorse and to preserve the grazing area. Also a bankside was cleared to enable access to an area where Himalayan Balsalm has become established so it can be dealt with.

The Green was grazed by cattle again which maintains the grazing area and helps the biodiversity of Harpers.

In July conservation volunteers cleared ragwort and later also installed bat boxes. Our thanks go to them.

Allotments

Another successful year for allotment holders and encouraging that all available plots are taken, to the point where we had to relocate some of the Christmas trees to make another plot. Despite our changing climate everyone manages to grow some very good produce. Once again there was stiff competition to grow the tallest sunflower and largest pumpkin which were judged on a very enjoyable afternoon in the first week of September. Alongside the measuring, on a very hot day, plot holders enjoyed an excellent barbecue.

BRISLEY POND PROJECT 2024

Following one of the wettest winters in recent memory, the levels of water in all the village ponds are high and healthy. Ponds that have already been subject to degrees of restoration went into the spring in a strong position and already it is good to see the amount of plant life returning both as marginals and in the water itself.

Thanks to Foxburrow Farm we find ourselves in a position to restore the top two ponds on the South Green which have been a constant source of difficulty during the last few years. We are opting for a different approach with these two ponds due to the problems still being encountered owing to septic tank activity. The trees and overhanging scrub around the ponds will be removed this autumn followed by a big clear out which will remove much of the build up of silt from leaf fall and the pollution from the septic tanks. We propose to then keep these two ponds fairly shallow and use native water plants such as iris, bull rush, and water mint to create more of a wetland habitat which will eat the excessive phosphates causing the problems. The water going on down the system towards the Panford Beck should then be considerably cleaner.

We are hopeful of obtaining an additional piece of help from the Upper Wensum Cluster Farm Group to completely restore the pond outside The Stables which has "died" in the last twenty five years. This pond was a very vibrant with a good stock of Crucian Carp, our indigenous pond fish, but due to pollutants and a level of human interference these have sadly died out. The current resident of The Stables has been extremely helpful in removing a blockage and a man made level controlling device so we hope with the work higher up removing excess phosphate and sorting this pond out, we may find ourselves eligible for re stocking the Crucian Carp.

It is worth noting some critical changes in our pond and ditch systems on the common.

On the south side of the common we have not found any frog spawn in the usual places – this is the second year running – this could be due to several factors but it would be great if

people walking the common next spring could keep an eye open for some and if you find it please let us know. There has been an explosion of Fools Water Cress in the main ditches on the south side – it is known that this plant thrives on excessive levels of phosphates.

The restored pond on the North side is beautiful and our monitoring last summer with the Upper Wensum Cluster Farm Group showed a high level of improvement in insect, bird and plant life.

Some other good news for the future – a company called Norfolk Environmental Credits and a consultee called The Wensum Catchment Partnership are exploring the possibility of putting treatment plants into properties in this area still with old style septic tanks – of which there are several hundred! It is hoped that grant money will pay for the installation of the treatment plants with the householders prepared to pay the running costs and agree to an 80 year maintenance agreement.

Thanks as ever to anyone and everyone who volunteers to help with caring for our ponds, they are a vital part of the catchment system and it is important they provide healthy clean water going downstream.

Churchwarden Report on 2023 for Brisley PC 1st May 2024

Church of St Bartholomew

We have had a full year of events during 2023 with our services being led by our Rector, Robin Stapleford. To assist him we were most grateful to have had help of John Clark and Dennis Ackroyd, thus enabling us to maintain two main services per month. The Churchwarden has taken on the role of Worship Assistant for use when no member of the clergy is available. We enjoyed having three weddings and one Christening. Sadly we lost one of our staunch supporters, Roger Carden, who is sorely missed.

We were able to carry out two of our usual fundraising events with Walk with a Fork and the BBQ (very successful despite the rain). Unfortunately we had to cancel the Harvest Supper owing to lack of support. Our grateful thanks as always go to Iain and Nick for allowing us to use their barn area and to those who made their homes available: the Curl household and Graham Woodford. Thanks also go to all those who helped in various guises. Perhaps our biggest event for many years was the Creative Arts exhibition which ran for over a week from 29th September. This was superbly organised by Katie Longwill and supported by a number of people, many of whom came from outside the village. The Food Bank continues to be well supported by Brisley people, though more is always wanted, and grateful thanks go to those who have been generous enough to support it.

The setting up of The Friends of St Bartholomew's Church has been very successful in its first full year. Its committee has organised a number of events and has so far raised around £12,000. We are very grateful to all those involved and know that they will continue in the same vein during the coming year. Thanks also go to Gemma Bidewell for her second successful effort with the Yard Sale.

The major project during the past year has been the installation of new drains in the hope that damp, which has caused a lot of problems inside the church, will be reduced. We are currently awaiting the outcome of investigations into the state of the north aisle roof. This seems to be an exceedingly long and painful process which will ultimately mean applying for a grant from the Heritage Lottery fund for repairs to both aisle roofs. Our grateful thanks go to Mary Carden who has put in a huge amount of work in trying to coordinate matters.

Our thanks go to all those involved in the life of the church, whether offering the use of their homes or in assistance of one sort or another. Without those people, albeit the number is becoming smaller, life would be much harder. Thanks also must go to those who clean the church and the flower arrangers. More volunteers really would be most welcome.

VILLAGE HALL

Report to Brisley Parish Council

28th April 2024

This has been another busy year at Brisley Village Hall with many varied community events. Our loyal regular hirers – Christine, Amy and Dreaming Void – continue to provide us with a regular monthly income to pay our utility bills, keep the lights on and the hall heated.

Throughout the year we have held regular cinema showings, with a short break during the cricket season. We have had three quizzes – one with the Friends of Brisley School and two with the Cricket Club. We have provided a bar for a Church event and for a private party. In addition we have opened the village hall to support some Church events when toilets were required.

We have continued to support our purely 'community' events – Ian Edwards' monthly Chat 'n' Chips and Katie Longwill's Art Club for children. Both of these have been highly successful. The results of the children's efforts can be seen displayed on the boards in the hall.

Two stand-out events have occurred during the year, the first being the Coronation Tea to mark the crowning of Charles III. We were able to secure a grant from Breckland to support this event. Afternoon Tea was served to members of the community and music was provided by our local group Gardenia Swing.

The second highlight, held only ten days ago, was the world premiere of a new play written by the West End playwright, Simon Mendes da Costa, performed by Simon and Emma Dewhurst and directed by Ray Coulthard. All three are professional actors who gave their services for free. A pre-performance buffet dinner was served. All those who attended agreed that it was a thoroughly enjoyable evening.

Our thanks go to all our patrons – to those who attend classes or come to our regular events. Without their support we would not be able to maintain and run the hall. Personally I would like to thank our committee who give up huge amounts of time to plan, organise and run events at the hall.

Chris Abel

Chair, Brisley Village Hall



Hope Federation
Enabling our children to flourish
through the field of life



Diocese of Norwich
Education and
Academies Trust

Hope Federation of Church of England Primary Academies

Executive Headteacher: Mrs Belinda Allen

School Road, East Rudham, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE31 8RF

Tel: 01485 528230 Email: office@rudham.dneat.org Web: hopefederation.org.uk

Brisley Parish Council report- Brisley Church of England Primary Academy.

Over the last academic year the school has had an extremely exciting time.

In March 2023, we took a group of children from Years 5 and 6 to France for an overseas residential. The children were joined by their peers from our Federated schools (Rudham and Weasenham).

We had the most amazing time- visiting the landing beaches in Arromanches, Bayeux, Disneyland Paris as well as staying in a chateau for 3 nights, enjoying the French culture and visiting the local area. This was the first time that the children from Brisley had been able to experience an overseas residential. It has been part of the Rudham/Weasenham visits for nearly 20 years. We have booked to go again in March 2025.

Our Year 3/4 children spent a night away at Hilltop residential centre last year and have our current Year 3/4 children have just returned from a 2 night stay again. They also went with the children from Rudham for this visit and all children had the most amazing time.

In May 2023 Brisley school had a 2 day Ofsted inspection. This was the first inspection since joining the Diocese of Norwich Education Academies Trust, DNEAT.

We were extremely happy with the outcome of the inspection – the school was given a 'Good' judgement across all areas. This has given the school a huge boost.

Below is just a section from the report.

Pupils are happy and enjoy attending Brisley Church of England Primary Academy. They flourish in an environment where their education and wider development are valued equally. Pupils learn how to be 'ready, respectful and safe'. This can be seen in the way pupils show a strong sense of community, where everyone is included and expected to achieve well. Older pupils take care of younger ones at breaktime. They share lunches together and read with one another each week. Bullying is rare, but pupils and staff know what to do should it occur. In recent years, the school has been transformed as pupils respond well to leaders' high expectations. Pupils are polite and confident. They typically show good levels of concentration in class as they learn from a well-planned curriculum. Most pupils learn well. By the end of Year 6, they are ready for learning in secondary school. Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to take on responsibility, and they are proud and keen to play a role in charity fundraising, looking after the school grounds and leading whole-school worship.



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As you will be aware, Brisley is part of Hope Federation which was a 3 school federation, however at the end of the last term Weasenham school merged with Brisely. This was due to drop in pupil numbers at Weasenham. I am pleased to say that 10 children joined Brisley from Weasenham. The children are transported to school by coach. The children have settled in extremely well. We also welcomed some of the teaching and support staff from Weasenham as part of the merger process.

In March 2024, Brisley has their church inspection. This is a statutory requirement for all Church Schools. Again, we were delighted with the inspection report.

Below a just a few highlights from this report.

Pupils are challenged to develop deep resilient roots enabling them to grow in aspiration, wisdom and dignity.

- The vision is re-visited each September and pupils participated in drama and workshop activities leading to a deeper understanding of the vision.
- Pupils become skilled at asking 'why' questions, thinking more deeply to seek answers.
- Pupils understand that teaching staff and assistants will only give "the smallest possible clue" in order to grow self-belief. As a result, they thrive.
- Time is provided for all teachers to speak to specialist SEND providers enabling pupils to progress. • Opportunities are taken for spiritual flourishing to be specifically identified, planned for and monitored by subject leaders across the curriculum (it's rare not to see 'developing spirituality' as an area for development so well done!)
- Pupils confidently explain how collective worship impacts on their life and behaviour in school and beyond. • Pupils and families are supported in a Christian manner by empathetic and caring staff.
- In keeping with Christian principles pupils are ready to reconcile, forgive and resolve difficulties.
- Staff are encouraging and caring of each other, acting as positive role models to pupils.
- RE has a high priority in the school and is effectively led.
- The school makes every effort to expose pupils to a multicultural and diverse world.



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We continue to think about the education and curriculum we offer the children. Working as part of a Federation means that we are able to join forces for educational visits, staff can plan and support each other, and staff feel support.

Brisley continue to be support by the wonderful Friends of Brisley School (FOBS) who fundraise for various in year events/treats for the children, including a trip to the pantomime in King's Lynn, visitors in school, a Waffle Van at the end of last year and many more things.

We are also very pleased that we have been able to grow our own talent. We have had 2 teachers successfully complete their Early Career Teacher training. We are very proud of the hard work that the whole staff team put in to making school a place where our children feel supported and happy.

Belinda Allen
Executive headteacher
Hope Federation of Church of England Primary Academies

April 2024

Brisley and North Elmham Cricket Club Report to Brisley PC 1.5.24



Season 2023 saw the inaugural year of the formal union of Brisley CC and North Elmham CC after a very successful trial partnership the previous season. Overall, the transition proved smooth and effective and has maintained the core aim of providing local community cricket for players of all abilities, ages, and gender. In an age where recruitment and retention of players is a major challenge across all team sports, a significant marker has been the introduction of a Saturday second team for the 2024 season. Despite the wet weather over the winter the ground is in good condition, and we are grateful to the Parish Council Chairman for the loan of his sheep! With the League season starting one week later than 2023 it is hoped that there will be no delays at the home ground.

- The Saturday team played in the Norfolk Cricket League Division 2 West and enjoyed a highly successful season winning a third successive promotion as champions and winning the T20 Cup having beaten many Division 1 teams on the way. At the Norfolk Awards evening in October the Club picked up a record-breaking 5 team and individual awards. The upcoming season will see a more challenging schedule in Division 1 West.
- The Ladies team had a challenging season and although they were competitive in many fixtures a victory eluded them. This season sees a revamped format based on geography and the arrival of new teams.
- Social team played fewer games than in past seasons, but a highlight was the Saturday friendly against a military veterans Eleven lead by Lord Dannatt. This was enormously successful and will be repeated this coming September.

In October, over 40 members attended the Awards Evening kindly hosted by Marcus and Amelia at the Brisley Bell and presentations made to individual players and volunteers.

The Committee with representation from all sections of the Club met several times and overall carried out its functions effectively in their first year. A review of roles saw some changes introduced

for the 2024 season in particular the creation of a marketing and media position which has been taken by Tom Donnelly and the separation of the Grounds and Facilities role with Dave Pearson leading a Groundforce team and a sub-committee from the Ladies section organising the clubhouse and catering. Other roles have continuity from last season: Playing (Ollie Hall) in addition to the more regular duties of Chair (Mark Ballman) Secretary (Lindsey Wood) Treasurer (Billy Fordham) and Safeguarding (Iain Sinclair). Josh Hall and Sophie Hall have stood down for family reasons and the Club is grateful for their valued contribution.

Season 2024

- The success of the Club and consequent recruitment of new players resulted in a successful application to enter a second Saturday team into the Norfolk Cricket League. This will be a challenge as the second team has unexpectedly been assigned to Div 4 North East and will have to travel far for some away fixtures.
- Clubhouse clean and ground preparation Day took place in April.
- A full set of fixtures is in place, with currently 27 home games across the 4 teams.
- Winter nets were held for all players at Greshams School and Taverham Hall School. Most sessions were well attended.
- Fundraising events this year (Quiz Night, Race Night) have already contributed to income.
- A new mower has been purchased at some expense, but which will assist considerably the Groundforce team.
- New sponsors on board including notably Aspire Mortgages who have financed the purchase of an electronic scoreboard. Payne Crop Nutrition continue their valued support of the Club and negotiations with Premier Seeds and FG Personal Trainers are ongoing to continue their support.
- Links continue with girls' cricket at Litcham HS and the club will host two school fixtures in May. The club will explore development of links with Boys cricket at the school.

ANNUAL REPORT OF GORDON BAMBRIDGE - BRECKLAND COUNCILLOR UPPER WENSUM WARD.

Year 2023/24

Report for villages of

[#Bawdeswell](#) [#Billingford](#) [#Bintree](#) [#Brisley](#) [#Bylaugh](#) [#Elmham](#) [#Elsing](#) [#Foxley](#) [#Gateley](#) [#Guist](#) [#Hockering](#) [#Lyng](#) [#Sparham](#) [#Tuddenham](#) [#Twyford](#)

This year has been for me personally a year of change and for Breckland Council a year when many achievements have been made and new goals set. To Breckland first.

The council has made real progress on over 50 areas where promises were made and kept from our manifesto at the last election. I have attached as a separate document the list for you to consider, but they fall into the four main areas where we promised to work for the whole community. Some of these may apply to all of you, and some to only some of you but I am proud that during my time in Breckland we have always achieved movement for the community as a whole

The four areas are

Breckland 2035

Which is the overarching name for getting a carbon neutral council by 2035, and by and large not by buying credits. So from community and individual composting, to planting thousands of trees, to car charging points, to supporting businesses, to litter pick and enforcement to keep our community clean - we have made a start on achieving this goal

Thriving Places

Is our target for ensuring established and new businesses can thrive and that our communities can grow in all ways and be more pleasant places for us all to live in. In doing this we have managed to lever in much additional funding across the district despite this being 'hard times' all around, Some of these you may have seen announced in the media, some still to be announced. Breckland has always been a council that is not too proud to seek outside funding and partnerships to ensure we provide the best for our communities, whilst at the same time keeping the district council tax the lowest.

Inspiring Communities

From individual grants to families in hard times, to housing advice and supporting abused people. To promoting mental wellbeing with over 300 mental health champions trained in the district. The Food Bus, and the community supermarket, to helping 3000 residents with housing advice. Working with young people and the police, with dog wardens and local charities Breckland are fulfilling their commitments

Working Smarter

We have performance indicators and are continually holding ourselves to these, debated in most council meetings - which you can watch, all key meetings are online live or recordings. We seek to work transparently, and if you have a case going with the council you will be increasingly able to follow progress online. Already we are offering advice on many matters online with AI and by telephone 24/7 using electronic systems whilst maintaining the office hours human contacts. Gaining many national awards for the council over the last year building on the time we spent during the pandemic modernising the building and workplace Breckland is now number one on preferred places to work.

The complete list is attached as a pdf file

To me as a councillor.

I have represented around half of the ward now for 21 years, and the other half for around 13 years since the last reorganisation of council ward boundaries, and as I have shared with some of you that is all happening again this year for the next election in 2027.

Since May 2023 I am no longer a cabinet member at Breckland but as your representative I do still attend most council meetings and actively represent every resident of Upper Wensum within the district council system. I am also in regular contact with our MP George Freeman, where necessary also contacting government departments directly, and with the County Council supporting Bill Borrett

who doubles as a district and county councillor. However on matters concerning the ward I also lobby directly as is deemed necessary.

Many councillors also represent the district in other areas (it's called an outside body) For my part I represent Breckland on the Norfolk Rivers Internal Drainage Board. This obviously impacts on our ward, but also many other wards across Northern Breckland so it involves working with them also to a certain extent. Because I have held this position for over 20 years I have progressed up and sit on other organisations and attend meetings on drainage management in Westminster and across the region dealing with both government and shadow ministers and with such as the EA from time to time. These additional positions for the council are entirely unpaid, and do of course take up time, but I find that apart from expanding my horizons it does enhance my ability to better represent you to Breckland and beyond. This could be seen for example when Storm Babet caused flooding in Breckland last October, I was able to extend the reach of our influence supporting both individuals and communities.

In a normal time Planning matters take up much of a councillors time, Breckland is the planning authority for the area, but lately Nutrient Neutrality has slowed down all housing related applications, this has tended to make more work for me rather than less. Whatever your view on this may be, the fact of an organisation like Natural England bringing in regulations like this without attention to mitigation I find appalling. We do now seem to be edging towards some sort of solution. On planning matters I generally take my lead from the parish but always also have to hear all sides of every situation so will speak to applicants and developers alike

On a similar subject, most councils, indeed whole communities are against unchecked development. However the district has targets for housing to meet. On this matter I tend to stand with the individual parish council, which leaves me sometimes a bit schizophrenic, some want a little growth, others a bit more, others perhaps substantially more growth. And all of this is predicated on the size of the community and the facilities within. I believe within this ward we do have some very mature and tolerant opinions on the matters of growth.

My stance on the matter is that I will always support the view of the parish, but that most communities (not all) do need a little growth, to support their shop/pub/bus/school etc.

I do believe that most larger villages should consider a neighbourhood plan.

I do believe that most communities would support an exception site which is where a small development of truly affordable dwellings are built with local support for local people in perpetuity. And I am happy to talk through these issues.

On wider matters:-

I have opposed the proposed New Town on land encompassed Billingford/Bintree/Elmham mainly in two wide ranging areas encompassed by infrastructure and environment, I noted that some 45 communities opposed this many in Breckland but also from North Norfolk and Broadland areas, and I am happy to discuss this (it was the most raised matter during the recent election)

I have supported the dualling of the A47 on the basis that it improves access will enhance all of our communities. (It does affect me personally)

I support the proposed Western Link Road on the basis that every one of the fifteen villages in the ward are adversely affected by its lack to a greater or lesser extent. The A1067 and every Southward road off it to Guist and beyond have become rat runs because it is not there. All of Northern Norfolk suffers because the Norwich Northern Bypass was not made a complete circular road around the city. Again I am happy to discuss these matters

I am acutely aware that with fifteen villages I do miss a lot of parish meetings, I am sorry for that. In addition to your parish councils and other necessary meetings I do also need to keep up with the few Breckland meetings held in the evenings and others such as the police SNAP. Also sometimes there are two, three or even four parish meetings on the same night.

What I will say is that I am always available to meet with parish clerks, chairmen or councillors outside of the usual parish meeting. Day or evening. I will also make time to meet parishioners singly or preferably in groups. This can be in your parish or at Breckland office, or on site if appropriate.

Gordon Bambridge

01603 881364

07540 973229

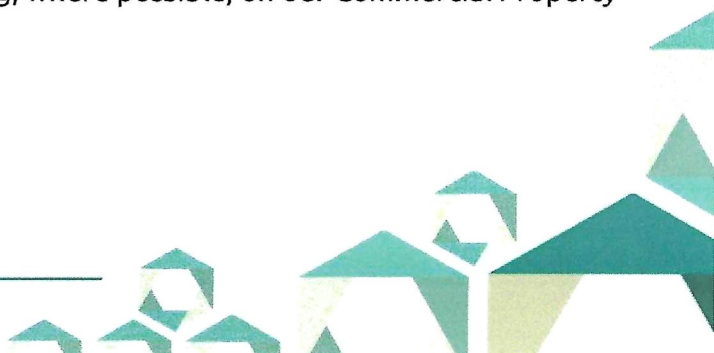
gordon.bambridge@breckland.gov.uk

Our Corporate Plan Achievements 2023/2024



Breckland Council has recognised that there is a climate emergency that needs our attention.

- ❖ To recognise the public sector staff who worked tirelessly during the COVID pandemic, we've funded £25,000 to plant 2,400 trees for a Woodland of Thanks at Oxburgh Hall. The trees will also help with biodiversity and removing greenhouse gases from the atmosphere.
- ❖ To help reduce CO2 emissions, we have:
 - continued work to roll out electric vehicle charging points in our District.
 - approved the installation of solar panels at Dereham Leisure Centre, saving 47,000 KG of CO2 per year.
 - agreed a New Green Tariff reducing our CO2 emissions for electric to zero.
 - secured £530k in decarbonisation grants to reduce carbon emissions in our leisure facilities.
 - worked with partners to deliver new environmentally friendly eco-bus shelters in Swaffham.
 - Replaced 1673 streetlights with energy efficient LED bulbs.
- ❖ To keep our communities pleasant and clean, we've supported over 30 community litter picks and taken over 160 informal actions against fly tippers.
- ❖ To enable composting, we've grown our garden waste subscribers to over 25,818 residents. This is nearly 40% of our households benefiting from the service, and together composting nearly 10,000 tonnes of garden waste each year.
- ❖ By providing a flexible, reliable, and cost-effective business waste collection and disposal service for Breckland, we've exceeded our customer growth target by 15%, now having more than 305 customers and £220k gross income.
- ❖ To increase our tree canopy cover, we've secured, and have started to distribute, DEFRA funding of £26,400 for the planting of community orchards within our District.
- ❖ To reduce our CO2 emissions and to attract and retain our workforce, we've approved a Car Salary Sacrifice Scheme to allow employees to lease an electric or hybrid car.
- ❖ To support Breckland businesses, we've launched the Low Carbon Regeneration Programme, providing tailored advice and support for their journey to reducing CO2 emissions and becoming Net Zero.
- ❖ We've improved the energy performance rating, where possible, on our Commercial Property portfolio.

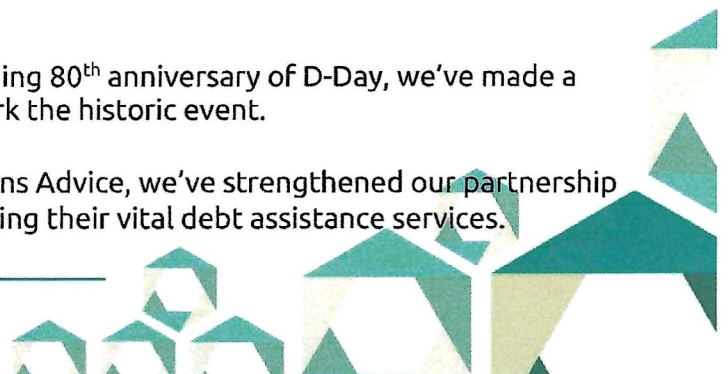


Thriving Places

We will play an active role in creating the right conditions for new and existing local businesses to thrive.

- ❖ To keep our communities safe, we've repaired or replaced over 70 streetlights.
- ❖ We've successfully generated over £30,000 in surplus land sales, helping us maintain a balanced budget.
- ❖ To make a more pleasant area for residents, we've completed works on the Thetford underpass improvement scheme.
- ❖ We've decided 90% of major planning applications within their timescale, in order to facilitate economic growth in our District.
- ❖ To bring the community of Thetford together, we've successfully delivered the Stage and Screen festival with Thetford Town Council.
- ❖ To revitalise local market towns, we've launched our Love Your Market Town scheme, awarding £5k grants to support ideas and initiatives which will generate footfall and activity into local town centres in Breckland.
- ❖ We've managed our £45 million commercial property portfolio, allowing the right environment for businesses to flourish and to attract inward investment into the District.
- ❖ Recognising the power of partnership working and the hard work in regenerating the Queen Mother's Garden in Dereham, we were awarded the British Association of Landscape Industries Regeneration Scheme Award.
- ❖ With the aim of creating jobs, supporting local businesses and boosting the towns economy, partnership working between the Wayland Partnership and Breckland Council, with funding from Norfolk County Council we are forming plans to develop a Digital and Creative Media Centre in Watton.
- ❖ We've supported local communities to celebrate the King's Coronation.
- ❖ We've continued our collaborative working to support the delivery of power distribution infrastructure at Snetterton and to build upon the success of the new primary substation.
- ❖ To foster economic growth, community development and improved rural infrastructure, we've launched a new Business Support Scheme for small businesses and community organisations. The funds help businesses diversify or grow, bring more customers to the area or to support social economic and local growth through innovation.
- ❖ To enhance accessibility, we've secured £60,000 in national funding for Banham Zoo to develop new, fully accessible Changing Places Toilets.
- ❖ To promote training and employment opportunities in manufacturing, we've launched the 'Make it in Thetford' initiative with Partners.
- ❖ We've completed the restoration of four of Swaffham's historic buildings with funding from the Heritage Action Zone

- ❖ To provide individuals and families who are homeless with a safe and secure place to stay, we've purchased new temporary accommodation units within our District.
- ❖ Ensuring residents have a say in how the land within Breckland should be used in the future, we've successfully adopted an update to the District's Local Plan.
- ❖ Acknowledging the impactful work in delivering mental health youth projects, we were nominated for a Norfolk Flourish Award, hosted by the Children and Young People's Strategic Alliance (CYPSA).
- ❖ We've helped over 3,000 residents who've contacted us for Housing advice and helped over 150 households access temporary accommodation.
- ❖ In recognition for supporting the health and well-being of residents, we won the Health and Social Care Award at the 2023 Local Government Chronical Awards. The award recognised work by the council, NHS, charities and partners to tackle health inequalities in Breckland.
- ❖ Acknowledging our exceptional care and dog warden services, we received the RSPCA Platinum PawPrints award; the only Council in Norfolk to receive this accolade.
- ❖ To maintain our area's cleanliness and having continued our commitment to reduce environmental crime and increased the maximum penalties, we are now ranked in the top 100 Councils for tackling fly tipping.
- ❖ To support survivors of domestic abuse in the local community we've committed to continue to support and fund the Daisy Programme until 2026.
- ❖ To promote mental well-being within the local community we've continued to grow our Mindful District Programme by adding a third village and a new training partner and trained over 300 mental health champions.
- ❖ Aimed at fostering well-being among young people in the district, we've begun to deliver a new youth mental health programme through the Breckland Mindful District Partnership.
- ❖ Providing access to fresh and affordable food options for our community, we've expanded the Breckland Mobile Food Store to three additional locations.
- ❖ To provide financial assistance to those grappling with the aftermath of the devastating effects of Storm Babet, we've allocated grants and council tax and business rate relief.
- ❖ To enhance leisure facilities, we've been granted planning permission to bring improved recreational opportunities for residents and visitors of Attleborough.
- ❖ To continue to deliver services which support people who have experienced domestic abuse, declining mental health or financial hardship, we've invested £1.1M of council funding over the next 3 years.
- ❖ To help local groups commemorate the upcoming 80th anniversary of D-Day, we've made a total of £25,000 available to celebrate and mark the historic event.
- ❖ In addition to our annual contribution to Citizens Advice, we've strengthened our partnership by funding two Debt Advisors, further supporting their vital debt assistance services.



Working
Smarter

We put our residents and businesses at the heart of everything we do.

- ❖ To better manage the Council's business and ensure transparency for our residents, we've delivered a new suite of performance indicators and new performance framework.
- ❖ To help customers track their enquiry and utilise officer time effectively, we've launched a new case management system
- ❖ To ensure everyone can vote in an election, we undertook a successful 2023 annual canvas.
- ❖ We've launched an Amazon Alexa skill to help residents access information about local services more easily.
- ❖ To provide another way for customers to contact us and have their questions answered 24/7, we've developed and launched a telephone chatbot, an extension to our web-based resident service.
- ❖ Recognising our innovative ways to recruit and onboard our new employees, the council was a finalist in the Local Government Chronicle Annual Workforce Awards.
- ❖ To help seek new funding opportunities, we've created a new Corporate Strategy Team
- ❖ We've delivered training for our new intake of councillors on their duties and our new code of conduct.
- ❖ To enable our workforce to deliver exceptional services to our residents and businesses, we've delivered over 80 projects designed to enhance learning and development, culture & leadership and health and well-being.
- ❖ We've helped ensure occupancy of 97% of our commercial property portfolio.
- ❖ To develop skills of our own workforce and creating opportunities for local talent, we've supported over 20 apprenticeships across the Council.
- ❖ We've successfully delivered the 2023 local elections and onboarding of new Members.
- ❖ In recognition of how we develop our workforce and support their health and well-being we were finalists in two awards for the PPMA (Public Services People Managers Association) People Management awards.
- ❖ To ensure our top priority projects are delivered on time and on budget, we've created a new Corporate Projects Service.

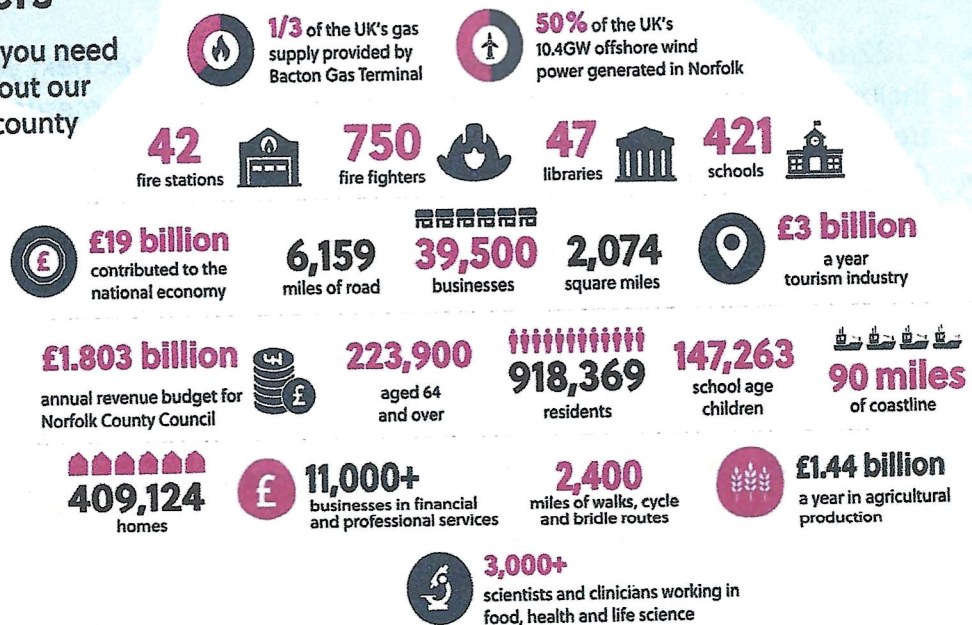


Norfolk County Council Annual Report 2023/24

- 97.4% of highways inspections completed within timescale
- 96.8% of 'Priority A' defects (classified as dangerous/emergency) were fixed within the Transport Asset Management Plan timescales
- 95% Customer satisfaction (with Council Services)
- 96% of Looked after Children with an up-to-date Personal Education Plan
- Completed over 90,000 Adult Social Care Assessments for over 26,000 people

Norfolk in numbers

Everything you need to know about our incredible county



Council agrees £528m budget.

Councillors have backed a budget that "delivers for Norfolk", in the face of major challenges facing local government. Deputy council leader Councillor Andrew Jamieson, cabinet member for finance, told today's full council meeting that the budget would deliver for Norfolk. This is despite major cost and demand pressures facing all councils.

He said: "Our priorities are stable and sustainable finances, well delivered public services, economic growth and protecting and enhancing Norfolk's heritage and environment." Cllr Jamieson said it was a budget for the future, with an additional £60m for adult social services and £35m extra for children's services, and savings from transforming how the council operates. Cllr Jamieson pledged to continue to lobby the next Government for multi-year settlements, fair funding and reform of adult social care funding.

County Council leader, Councillor Kay Mason Billig, said the council would continue to be ambitious for Norfolk and had achieved many successes - against a tough economic backdrop. She said: "We know that our residents will be concerned about the decisions we make and how that may affect them. This year's budget has been one of the toughest to determine but we have a statutory duty to provide a balanced position, and that is what we are presenting to you."

The key headlines from the budget agreed today are:

- £122m of investment to meet demand and cost pressures next year - including £34.6m for inflation, £38m for legislative requirements, £39.7m for demand and demographic issues and £9.6m for policy decisions.
- £41.5m of new savings, including £9.6m from transforming how the council operates.
- A proposed 4.99% increase in the County Council's share of Council Tax, in line with the Government's capping level (2.99% for general Council Tax and 2% for adult social care). This would increase the Council's share of band D bills to £1,672.11. A 4.99% rise would generate £24.9m.
- A small number of the budget proposals have been identified as requiring consultation, as they may relate to a policy or service change. Cabinet will take decisions on these proposals in the summer, after considering the consultation results.

Councillors accept £600 million devolution deal.

County councillors have voted to accept a county deal devolution agreement with the Government, to transfer significant funding and powers to Norfolk.

Government funding will start transferring to Norfolk next summer, if councillors vote in July 2024 to stage the first election for a leader in May 2025. The deal will mean that decisions can be taken in Norfolk, for Norfolk.

The full council agreed the following recommendations:

Council:

- Recognises the work carried out during 2023 to consult with the public, inform Members and prepare plans in relation to the 'in-principle' County Deal brought to Council in January this year.
- Commends the work undertaken by the Leader and Officers to secure additional benefits for the Norfolk County Deal and resolves that the Deal should be accepted.
- Agrees that the election for the Directly Elected Leader should be held alongside the county council elections in May 2025 to enable the widest possible engagement with the electorate.
- Agrees that the resolution adopting the new governance arrangements should be brought to the Full Council meeting on 23 July 2024 to facilitate that election date.

For further details go to www.norfolk.gov.uk/norfolkcountydeal.

Background – what would a county deal mean?

Norfolk faces a major opportunity to gain new powers and funding from the Government, through an agreement called the County Deal. We could make more decisions in Norfolk, for Norfolk and secure investment of more than £600m over 30 years. If councillors agree the in-principal deal, it will enable us to invest in areas such as transport, skills and job opportunities, housing and regeneration, tailored to the needs of local people.

A County Deal would mean:

- Having a Council Leader who is directly elected by the public, enabling Norfolk's voice to be heard by the Government.
- Targeting funding and resources to Norfolk's own priorities.
- Unlocking housing and employment sites.
- Investing in the skills we need and attracting and retaining key businesses.
- Opening the door to more – further powers and funding in future

Norfolk County Council provided extra support to households this winter.

Earlier this year, Norfolk County Council announced it would receive further funding from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to run the Household Support Fund until 31 March 2024. The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced in the Budget that this funding would be extended by a further six months.

The council has received £13.4m from central government and adding an additional £400,000 to make the total programme of support worth £13.8m. It is working closely with district, borough, and city councils, public sector partners to identify and implement a range of support measures to meet the needs of vulnerable households.

Norfolk's roads and footpaths to be fixed as part of £4.51m funding.

Thirty-four roads and 20 footpaths across the County will be repaired by Norfolk County Council during this coming year as part of Government funding. Roads from Great Yarmouth to King's Lynn, from Hunstanton to Thetford and many in between the entire County will receive reclamite spray or resurfacing along with footpath construction to ensure Norfolk's infrastructure can best help people to get to work, travel to services and access Norfolk's natural and cultural assets through effective highways maintenance.

Twenty-seven brand new gritters joined Norfolk's fleet

Twenty-seven brand new gritters took to the roads for the first time later this winter in a £3,238,000 boost to the annual push to help keep Norfolk moving safely during the winter months.

Norfolk's fleet of 58 winter vehicles treat 2,200 miles of roads on each full 3-hour gritting run. All A and B-class roads and some C-class roads are treated with a focus on commuter and major bus routes and as far as is possible one route into all villages. The A11 and A47 are gritted by National Highways.

In addition to the 49 gritting routes, several pedestrian areas and main pavements are treated in the centre of Norwich, Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn, and more than 2000 grit bins are available around the county for people to use on roads, pavements and cycle paths.

Find more information via www.norfolk.gov.uk/winter

Norfolk flood protection took centre stage in Westminster.

The threat posed by flooding and coastal erosion in Norfolk has been laid out starkly for MPs as Norfolk County Council has taken their case for change to the heart of Westminster. A delegation from Norfolk, led by Norfolk County Council Leader Cllr Kay Mason Billig and the Chair of the Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance (NSFA), Henry Cator, met with MPs, on the 71st anniversary of the 1953 North Sea Flood, to explain the risks Norfolk faces and how those risks could be addressed.

As demonstrated over this winter, our county faces regular risks of flooding, with Norfolk ranked tenth most at risk of surface water flooding out of 149 local authority areas. In addition, the county's position on the North Sea exposes it to tidal threats as well as significant coastal erosion: without action, it's estimated that in North Norfolk alone approximately 1,030 residential and commercial properties could be lost to erosion by 2100. That number could be up to 10,000 in all of Norfolk.

These risks threaten both Norfolk residents and the contribution Norfolk makes to the wider country, as home to 54% of the offshore wind generation capacity in the UK and a major producer of food.

In a presentation delivered in Portcullis House, part of the Parliamentary Estate in Westminster, Norfolk's delegation made the case for MPs to:

- Push for legislative permission to build reservoirs designed to capture excess water in times of flood, for use in times of drought.
- Advocate for Property Flood Protection measures to be granted directly to the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for faster allocation for those who need it.
- Reduce bureaucracy by granting greater autonomy in funding allocation for surface water flood mitigation schemes.
- Combine enforcement and maintenance powers and responsibilities for LLFA's.
- Support the creation of a dedicated Minister for the Coast.

£1 million boost for Highway Parish Partnership Schemes

Schemes totalling over £1m will be distributed across Norfolk to deliver the wants and needs of local parishes and residents as part of the Highway Parish Partnership.

The Parish Partnership scheme began in September 2011, when Parish and Town Councils were invited to submit bids for local highway improvements, with the County Council funding up to 50% of bid costs. The key benefits of the scheme are that it:

- Delivers local priorities identified by local people.

- Draws in additional funding for small scale highway improvements, enabling us to collectively deliver more schemes.
- Gives local communities an opportunity to directly influence the improvements in their local area. The programme continues to be well received by Parish/Town Councils, Local Members, and communities. Information about the number of bids received through the scheme over the past twelve years demonstrates there is a good spread across Norfolk.

A County Council contribution £467,884 and a Safety Camera Partnership contribution of £43,760 along with funding from Town and Parish Councils, will enable a programme of local works totalling £1,040,586 to be delivered.

For information on current schemes and if there are Parish Councils who wish to apply for future schemes then contact your County Councillor in the first instance. For further information please see <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/parishpartnerships>

24/7 free travel to all disabled bus pass holders in Norfolk

From 1 February 2024 all Norfolk residents who hold a disabled concessionary travel pass will be eligible for free bus travel 24 hours a day, seven days a week when travelling within the county.

The decision, which was published today by Norfolk County Council, means that more than 14,500 people across the county who hold a concessionary bus pass due to disability, and their eligible companions, will now be able to travel on any bus at any time free of charge across Norfolk.

Previously concessionary pass holders with a disability were only able to travel for free on buses off-peak (all day on Saturdays and Sundays but only from 09:30 Monday to Friday) except for those registered blind or visually impaired.

Offering free travel at all times is over and above the minimum requirement set by government and is something that a local authority can choose to do but doesn't have to do. The change was recommended following an updated equality impact assessment of the scheme which concluded that it is now unfair to offer a discretionary enhancement to just one group of disabled people (i.e. those who are blind or visually impaired).

The recommendation agreed by the individual cabinet member was to 'extend the concessionary travel discretion of free travel at all times to all eligible disabled passholders and eligible companions, from 1 February 2024.'

The cost of providing this enhancement is estimated at £50,000 which will be funded by the Council's ring-fenced public transport budget provided by the Department for Transport.

Householders can have free DIY waste disposal for small projects.

Norfolk residents have been able to dispose of small amounts of DIY waste at Norfolk's Recycling Centres free of charge from 31st December following changes made by Norfolk County Council.

The change applies to small-scale projects carried out by householders on their own home, allowing them to bring a maximum 100 litres (must fit into 2 x 50l bags) for free or one single item (maximum size of 200cm x 70cm x 75cm). Each household is allowed four free visits with DIY waste every four weeks. Anything beyond this will still be charged at normal rates.

The change in policy follows Government abolishing charges for the disposal of limited amounts and types of DIY waste at recycling centres across the UK.

Prior to 31st December, customers with DIY-type construction and demolition waste will continue to be directed to the 'Pay as you throw service' which is available at all centres.

Traders must continue to pay for DIY waste. For more information visit www.norfolk.gov.uk/DIYwaste

Climate Strategy was launched at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse Museum

Norfolk County Council's Climate Strategy, adopted by Cabinet last May, was launched at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse Museum with special guest Kate Strong, world record holder and endurance cyclist.

The Climate Strategy sets out how the council will work not only to reduce its own carbon emissions, but to drive down emissions across the county, protect the unique environment of Norfolk, and to seize the opportunities the move to a green economy represents, securing investment and growth for Norfolk.

Key proposals include:

- Supporting active and sustainable transport, including further bus improvements and electric vehicle charging

- Providing space for nature and developing a nature recovery strategy.
- Retrofitting council buildings to take out gas and oil heating and improve insulation – and encouraging businesses, residents and other organisations to do the same.
- Reducing emissions from the council's companies, such as Norse.
- Developing the green economy, with support for green skills, sustainable tourism and businesses.
- The development of a nature recovery strategy to protect our natural assets and encourage greater biodiversity.
- Working with the Tyndall Centre for climate change research at the University of East Anglia, to understand climate change impacts and how Norfolk might adapt to them.
- Close collaboration between public sector, business, community and voluntary groups.

Award-winning Adult Learning service rated 'Good' by Ofsted.

Norfolk County Council's Adult Learning has been rated as 'Good' following their latest Ofsted inspection. The inspection report praised the ambition of the service, which provides community-based and online learning for around 6,000 adults a year. The service achieved a 'Good' rating across all six areas that were inspected, alongside the overall 'Good' rating. Inspectors commented that learners are 'highly motivated' and committed to their studies. They praised the number of people who have a 'clear plan' for their future careers and that they want to improve their economic prospects.

Inspectors highlighted the work with residents of retirement homes who have increased their confidence, self-care and resilience after completing courses in basic cookery. They commented how, following the course, learners felt less isolated and 'excited to prepare and eat their own meals'.

It was also recognised that the service has responded effectively to the growing demand for English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) courses.

There was praise for the work with Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service apprentices. The inspectors saw how the course helps them to work safely while learning about the importance of health and nutrition. The report concluded that the 'apprenticeship is well matched to the needs of the fire service.'

This inspection result comes on the back of Norfolk County Council Adult Learning being named 'Further or Higher Education Provider of the Year' at this year's Norfolk Education Awards. This followed national recognition in 2021 where the service was named adult and community learning provider of the year at the Tes Further Education Awards.

Norfolk County Council Adult Learning offers a wide range of courses for adults of all levels and interests. Whether you want to change your career, improve your skills, or pursue your passion.

Find out more about Adult Learning and browse the course catalogue at www.norfolk.gov.uk/adultlearning.

Mark Kiddle-Morris.
Member for Necton and Launditch.
Norfolk County Council.