

District Cllrs Report May 2024 (update)

From NNDC

‘Planning

Biodiversity net gain of 10% applies to certain small scale sites from April 2024. More details are available on the NNDC Planning webpage.

Benefits

The Household Support Fund has been extended to September 2024. This helps the most vulnerable households with the cost of essentials. NNDC operates an emergency support fund for help with grocery costs.

There is a handy online checker on the Benefits page on NNDC's website so you can find out yourself if you are receiving all the benefits you should. Attendance allowance seems to be the most commonly missed out on, with pension credit coming second. The Financial Inclusion team has achieved over £1.2 million in increased benefits to residents. We estimate there are a further £4 million in unclaimed benefits we could help residents claim.

Over £100k has been allocated in Discretionary Housing Payments to support tenancy issues, homelessness prevention and to support people to stay within the community.

Housing

A new Housing Allocations Policy will be going out for consultation shortly. This will make the allocation of social housing fairer and hopefully simpler, but you will be able to give us your views.

As of 31st March, there were 53 households in emergency accommodation, down 21% from previous year. 89% of those houses went to those with an urgent housing need. The number of homes let was down 20% at 258.

The Task and Finish Group on finding solutions to reduce homelessness in North Norfolk will be reporting its findings June. We've had stimulating discussions with various organisations from the Eastern Landlords Association to Emmaus.

Finance

A new Economic Growth Strategy has been adopted.

Long term empty homes will now pay a 100-300% council tax premium. NNDC offers a wide range of assistance to bring long term empty properties back into use. Please contact ctax@north-norfolk.gov.uk for more details.

Leisure

Six beaches in North Norfolk have been awarded Blue Flag or Seaside Award status: Sheringham, Cromer, West Runton, East Runton, Mundesley and Sea Palling.

Environmental Services

The new waste rounds which started April 8th seem to have gone quite well so far. You can contact Serco on 03301099220 or norfolkwaste@serco.com, or get in touch with me with problems.'

Other news

Blakeney Surgery

The decision to close Blakeney Surgery was made on May 7th. It is proposed the surgery works with the community to provide a solution to the cessation of the medicines collection service. Sadly no attention has been paid to the cessation of the face-to-face appointments at Blakeney which is what really upsets residents. We have written to the Secretary of State for Health to ask for her intervention against the closure.

Digital switchover

I am meeting with BT/EE and our MP to talk about mobile coverage in hard-to-get villages in the hope we can reduce mobile 'not spots'.

Broadband connectivity

I have been in touch with Openreach to ascertain what their plans are for full fibre roll out to the villages which are not connected. Mostly it seems the fibre is still to the cabinet (FTTC) rather than the premise (FTTP) so speeds are about 80mbs. Plans vary from exchange as to when they will be upgraded to FTTP. Get in touch if you would like more information.