

District Cllrs Report January 2025

All best wishes to everyone for a peaceful and happy New year.

From NNDC

Coastal

The new Climate Change and Coastal Transition Lawyer is in post and working to identify legislation policy and coarse law to ascertain how councils can help businesses, homes and infrastructure away from the coast.

The rock defences on Cromer beach have been completed. The Mundesley rock placement is ongoing.

Planning

The new National Planning Policy Framework has been published with a revised annual target for North Norfolk for housebuilding of 932. This is approximately double what has been built in the district in previous years.

31 new homes have been built through the mitigation to nutrients in watercourses by upgrading of householders' septic tanks to new ones which release less nutrients.

I am now NNDC's representative on the board overseeing the Norfolk wide Green Infrastructure and Recreational Impact Avoidance Mitigation Strategy (GIRAMS). This strategy addresses the mitigation of increased recreational impact on Habitats Sites (such as the salt marshes) in our area.

Cabinet has approved the revised Planning in Health Protocol which recognises the need for greater collaboration between local planning authorities, health service organisations and public health departments in planning for further growth.

The time limit for enforcement action against an alleged planning breach has been extended to 10 years.

Benefits

We are still very keen to identify residents eligible for pension credit. To check your eligibility for pension credit go to gov.uk/pension-credit, call 0800991234, or contact the Financial Inclusion team ([financial.inclusion@ north-Norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:financial.inclusion@north-Norfolk.gov.uk) or 01263516221).

The financial Inclusion team are absolutely the best place to start for any money worries, problems paying bills etc. They have claimed over £1.4mill in missed benefits or funding for residents. They also might be able to put you in touch with help to fill your oil tank and can help you obtain other benefits and allowances eg disability living allowance.

Households will be contacted by the Benefits Team if they are eligible for payments under the Household Support Fund.

Discretionary housing payments are available for rent arrears, rent deposit, moving costs and on going rent shortfall. So far 91 households have been helped.

Housing

As of 31st October 2024, there were 2315 households on the council waiting list, with 483 having the most urgent housing needs. In comparison, only 196 houses were let from 1st April to 30th November. As of 30th November, there were 207 open cases of households at risk of homelessness and 60 households in temporary accommodation. NNDC now owns 25 units for temporary accommodation which is far preferable to nightly paid accommodation.

Two rural housing schemes were opened this summer and four more are in build, and new affordable homes are coming on stream in Holt. Planning applications for two large

affordable housing sites and with a high percentage of affordable homes have also recently been approved.

The housing adaptation scheme has funding, so do please come forward if you need modifications to stay in your own home. Not all grants are means tested so you may be eligible! Urgent home repairs (eg emergency boiler replacement) are also covered. Contact me if you have any questions.

Environment

An abandoned vehicle needs to be in place 21 days before it is considered abandoned, unless burnt out or dangerous. Abandoned vehicles can be reported via the website, search for 'abandoned vehicle'.

Licensing

There has been an increase in requests for taxi licences, to the extent a new licensing team member is required.

Leisure

All 6 blue flag North Norfolk beaches (Cromer, East Runton, Mundesley, Sea Palling, Sheringham and West Runton) have had their bathing water classified as excellent which means they can be put forward again for blue flag status.

Finance

The end of year forecast for 2024/25 is for a £995k deficit. This is largely made up of additional borrowing costs and the cost of temporary accommodation.

NNDC is still in discussion with NCC as to how a proportion of the additional council tax on second homes can be put towards social housing.

Customer service

The average wait time to contact Customer Services at NNDC has come down to 6 mins 19 secs in November.'

Blakeney Surgery

The planning application for a 24hr medicines vending machine at Blakeney Village Hall has been approved. I've asked for an update as to how long Blakeney surgery will remain open for medicines collection and will let you know.

Boiler Upgrade Scheme

Through the Government sponsored Boiler Upgrade Scheme you can get a grant of £7.5k towards replacing a fossil fuel heating system with a heat pump, or £5k towards replacing with a biomass boiler. This grant is not means tested. Visit <https://www.gov.uk/apply-boiler-upgrade-scheme/print> for more information.

Victoria Holliday

District Councillor

Coastal

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