

## Sports award

Pictured left to right:

Liz Delany, Norfolk County Sports Development Officer.

Mark Richardson, Olympic 4 x 400m athlete, presenting the Award.

Sarah Ward, Community Affairs Consultant, Norwich Union.



As a non statutory service, sports development needs the support of outside organisations to meet the Government's Agenda for healthier, more active communities in Norfolk.

Norwich Union has provided £50,000 worth of support through their sponsorship of the Eastern Daily Press Summer Tokens programme giving ten schools £5,000 each towards buying equipment.

This year Norwich Union has contributed an additional £25,000 matched funding towards the Government's Sportsmatch Scheme. Norwich Union's support to sport in Norfolk was recognised with an award from Sportsmatch and Sport England.

## Holt Hall Country House Weekends

**Spring events programme**  
19th, 20th 21st March

Sculpture for beginners

De-stress and relax

Some Norfolk Church Histories

£130 charge per person per course includes weekend accommodation, all meals, tuition/entertainment, tea, coffee and a sherry reception on the Friday night

**for details contact** David or Louise, Holt Hall Field Study Centre, Kelling Road, Holt NR25 7DU. 01263 713117 email

office@holtall.norfolk.edunet.gov.uk

## Forthcoming Events Norfolk County Council sports & social club

**February 14th**

**Valentine Party** with Euphoria, a romantic duo

**February 28th**

Tony Cann, male vocalist

**March 6th**

Sue Brooks 'Stars in Their Eyes' vocalist

**March 20th**

Eli the 2nd St Patrick's Day

**April 17th**

**Children's Easter Party** with Children's Disco

## ITtraining @CTD Responding to Your Needs!

CTD has taken over IT training at the Development Centre, County Hall, and are happy to announce the launch of the Spring 2004 programme.

You can see our Spring Programme on the NCC Intranet, under CTD IT training.

Course fees have been reduced, Full Day £110 per delegate\* and Half Day £65 per delegate, so that you get quality and cost effective training.

Over the next three months, we will be developing the service to make sure all our IT courses are meeting your needs. We will be looking at new courses, different ways of delivering courses and new technology and want your views..

Please contact Emma Ainger on 01603 222085 or email [emma.ainger@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:emma.ainger@norfolk.gov.uk) with your comments.

\* Project Full Day Course delegate rate is £120

If you would like 'Norfolk Agenda' in an alternative format please contact the Communications Unit on (01603) 222843 (minicom 223833) and we will do our best to help.



# Norfolk Agenda

The newsletter for Council Staff

## 'Services not cuts' says MORI poll

**More Norfolk people** questioned in a MORI poll which we commissioned would prefer to pay slightly higher council tax rather than see our services cut.

In a poll of 1,900 people from the Norfolk Citizens' Panel, and two discussion days people were asked if they would prefer

- An increase of 7% on council tax leading to cuts in our services
- An increase of 8% to see services stay the same
- An increase of 9% to see an extra £2.5million for services

In the poll 50% of respondents preferred either an 8 or 9% increase over 8% who preferred a 7% increase leading to a cut.\*

Overall most participants at the discussion days felt an increase would be acceptable, if:

- Council tax payers are told where the money is going
- They can see real results
- Key services improve.

All the results were presented to Cabinet at its meeting on December 15th.

A decision on council tax levels will be made by Full Council on February 23rd.

*\*22% said they would prefer 'other' - increasing or decreasing spending on a particular service. 19% said 'none of these'*

*MORI issued 2500 questionnaires and received 1,897 responses which were 'weighted' to match Norfolk's demographic profile*

## Your Norfolk . . . Your Say

How would you like Norfolk to become an even better place to live, work and do business? Take part in the Norfolk Ambition consultation by filling in a postcard when you see one or online at [www.norfolkambition.gov.uk](http://www.norfolkambition.gov.uk)



## Learning Lift-off takes root

**Charles Clarke, Secretary of State for Education**, plants a beech sapling in the grounds of County Hall to mark the success of Learning Lift-Off, a home-grown learning initiative that has benefited some 700 front-line council workers in Norfolk. One of them -

Cindy Bye - helped the Secretary of State plant the tree to celebrate Learning Lift-Off's success in the Business in the Community (BITC) Awards - an accolade quickly followed by a high commendation in the National Training Awards.

Learning Lift-Off has been developed by NCS Ltd - Norfolk County Council's cleaning, catering, maintenance, transport and printing company - in collaboration with five Trade Unions and the Learning and Skills Council.

The beech sapling came from the Highgrove estate of the Prince of Wales, President of BITC.



photograph courtesy of:

**Have you got a story for the next issue?**

If so phone 01603 222843, or email: [christine.birchall@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:christine.birchall@norfolk.gov.uk)

 **Norfolk** County Council



# Fire service ..... at your fingertips

## Who are we?

**Norfolk Fire Service** has 842 operational and 86 non-operational staff.

Firefighters who work on a retained basis play a major part in what we do - in fact 38 of the 40 fire stations in Norfolk have at least one retained fire crew. These are people who live and work in their community and who carry a pager allowing them to respond to emergencies.

## Where are we?

We have 40 fire stations spread across the county, from Diss to Sheringham, Great Yarmouth to Outwell. Those at Norwich, Kings Lynn and Great Yarmouth are covered by full-time crews 24-hours a day and Thetford has a full-time day crew.

Our fire safety departments are based at Norwich, Kings Lynn, Great Yarmouth and Thetford.

The service's training centre is at Bowthorpe and our control room and headquarters are at Hethersett. The county is split into three areas Central, Western and Eastern and each has an area manager at the helm.

## What do we do?

Firefighters put out fires and save people from them don't

they? Well yes, but lots more besides.

In fact we may soon be called Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service to better reflect the work we do.

Most of our **rescues** are from road traffic accidents but we also free people from ice/unstable ground, lifts and escalators, sewers and trenches/pits.

*fact*

More fires start in the kitchen than in any other room in the house

**River rescues** have become another increasingly important part of our work.

We attend **accidents** on

the roads, on the railway, involving aircraft and marine accidents- inland and coastal.

**Other incidents** can involve high voltage electricity, acetylene and other compressed gases, chemicals and other hazardous materials, biological hazards and natural occurrences - flooding, lightning strikes, storm damage etc.

## New Dimensions

Time and money continues to be invested to ensure our staff are trained and equipped for the vital role they would play in the event of a major chemical, nuclear, biological or conventional terrorist incident.

## Non-emergency

We also carry out an increasing amount of non-emergency work; to reduce arson, fire risk assessing people's homes, giving advice on all aspects of fire safety and investigating reports of dangerous conditions (maybe blocked fire escapes or overcrowding at entertainment venues). Our control room staff are a vital part of our 24 hour service.

Add to that our fleet and workshop teams, administration, IT support, training and technical teams and many, many more and you soon realise there is much more to the fire service than meets the eye.

## Our future

Across the UK the fire service as a whole is changing to improve public safety.

The change is part of a major programme of national reform outlined in a recent Government white paper "*Our Fire and Rescue Service*".

In the new-look service there will be an even stronger emphasis on pro-active prevention work.

To find out more about what is being proposed and to have your say log on to the county council Intranet or Internet sites or to [www.norfolkfireservice.co.uk](http://www.norfolkfireservice.co.uk).

## Working together - Engaging with the community

• **Prince's Trust:** So far 35 students have completed our 12-week Prince's Trust personal development course with 100% gaining a City and Guilds '*Profile of Achievement*' qualification.

• **Fire Cadets:** Norfolk has eleven cadet units spread throughout the three service areas. The main aim is to provide somewhere for young people aged 13 to 18 from all sectors of society to learn basic fire service skills. This in turn leads many youngsters to continue their involvement by joining us.

There is much, much more to discover about the work of Norfolk Fire Service. If you would like to know more contact Martin Barsby on 01603 819759, [martin.barsby@fire.norfolk.co.uk](mailto:martin.barsby@fire.norfolk.co.uk).

## Member involvement:

Cabinet member for Fire and Community Protection is **Cllr Harry Humphrey**, Conservative.

Cabinet support member for Fire and Community Protection is **Cllr Larry Randall**, Conservative.

There are also 17 county councillors on the Fire and Community Protection Review Panel, which is chaired by **Cllr Wyndham Northam**.

*fact*

On average 39 people are rescued from fire each year in Norfolk

The two opposition review panel spokesmen

are **Dalmaine Dewgarde**, Liberal Democrat, and **Tony Luckett**, Labour.

## Principal officers



**Richard Elliott**  
Chief Fire Officer



**Paul Hayden**  
Deputy Chief Fire Officer



**David Worsley**  
Assistant Chief Officer



**Karen Palframan**  
Human Resources and Development Manager

## Q&A with James Rolfe

Social Services , Assistant Director (Performance & Resources)

**Q.** When did you join NCC?

**A.** June 2003

**Q.** What did you do before joining NCC?

**A.** Civil Servant, Ministry of Defence

**Q.** What inspired you to follow your current career path?

**A.** I have always been interested in public service, and it has been a common thread throughout my career. My current job, in Social Services, is particularly stimulating because it deals direct with the public, delivering much needed and valued services to Norfolk people. And the change/development agenda set by both Cabinet and central Government provides unique challenges, which I'm pleased to be part of.

**Q.** What and where was your first job in local government?

**A.** This one!

**Q.** What were your first impressions of Norfolk?

**A.** My first impressions of Norfolk are from my childhood and are very much the same as



*my first impressions now, second time around. Norfolk is one of the country's best kept secrets - outstanding countryside, plenty of open space, the very best beaches, big skies. As for the Council, it's very friendly, welcoming and ambitious.*

**Q.** Which person in public life do you most admire?

**A.** I've been lucky enough throughout my career to work with many outstanding people in many parts of the public service. To single out one person would be unfair, as I tend to admire different things in different people.

**Q.** What really makes your blood boil?

**A.** "It's not my job". Poor public service in restaurants, banks etc. Lack of compassion and understanding of the other person's perspective.

**Q.** What is your idea of happiness?

**A.** Wife, daughter, beach, sun, Guardian, laughter - all at the same time.

**Q.** What do you never leave home without?

**A.** Happy memories of the answer above.

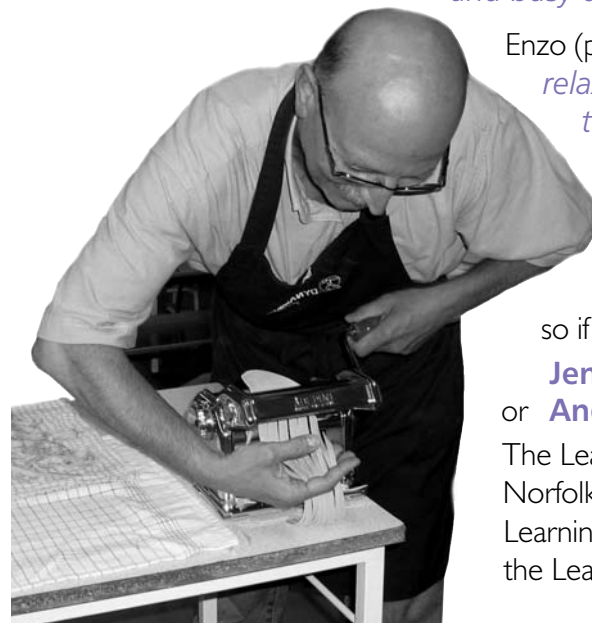
## Cooking with Enzo

### Do you fancy an Italian Tonight!

Learning Lift Off is an NCS project which arranges courses and training for Norfolk County Services 4,000 staff and their families - but last year one of its courses was enjoyed by many other NCC staff.

There was a lot of interest from county hall staff and when Italian cooking was advertised on the intranet ten people from other departments within Norfolk County Council came on the course tutored by our very own Enzo Cabrini (County Hall Restaurant)

**Joanna Hannam** (Head of Comms- Communications Unit) said. *"I thoroughly enjoyed 'cooking with Enzo', and I am happy to say that my family (including two permanently starving teenagers) loved eating the results. They were disappointed that the course had to end and so was I - all that chopping, beating and flattening is very good therapy at the end of a long and busy day"*.



Enzo (pictured) said, *"The course was friendly, relaxing and had a great atmosphere. I felt that as the weeks went by the students were more aware of how important cooking is in everyday life. It was a pleasure in showing them"*

We are planning another course with Enzo, so if you are interested call either;

**Jenny Forder 07876 038703**

or **Andy Wade 07876 038704**

The Learning Lift-Off is a three-year project at Norfolk County Services Ltd, funded by the Union Learning Fund a partnership between NCS Ltd and the Learning Skills Council.

## Welcome to Charles House Services

After months of careful planning, Capita staff who were based at Charles House have begun working for NCC.

Alan Browne, Director of Charles House Services, said: *"Charles House Services staff are looking forward to a closer working relationship with NCC. They also welcome the opportunity to reach a wider audience for their many charitable fund raising events. The most recent of these was a "Wear it pink" event, which raised over £400 for breast cancer research."*

The staff moved to NCC control from Capita after our partnership arrangement with the company ended in December.

## Agenda Survey Results

Only a rather disappointing 44 people returned the survey concerning Norfolk Agenda in the September/October 03 edition. All but six of those who responded were regular readers, and the majority of those found it interesting, informative, helpful and well designed.

There was a clear preference for stories about what's going on at Norfolk County Council, and what is going on within different departments. Some interesting suggestions were made for future developments.

### Electronic Agenda

*"Send it electronically. Some people just bin it and it's a waste of paper"*

With more than 50 % of our staff either not office based or working temporary shifts without access to their own PC it is not practical to move

to an entirely electronic newsletter. However when the new content management system comes online in the summer we will be changing the format of the online newsletter and will look to reduce copies to some areas where staff are entirely office based. See the Norfolk Agenda electronically now at <http://intranet.gov.uk/cex/communications/agenda.htm>

Results continued after e-agenda

cont.

### Content

*"More on National/local government, e.g. 'Every Child Matters'"*

*"Articles too long to read"*.

We are trying to keep most articles to 150 words or less and encourage everyone who submits an article to include pictures or illustrations to make the articles livelier. A feature on Every Child Matters has been included since the survey and more features are planned on particular departments and on important issues for us as local government employees.

### Design

*"Contrast could sometimes be better"*

### "Showcase our accessibility standards"

We have looked at the colour palette again and increased the number of colours available to use for Norfolk County Council publications to 10 (see the corporate design guide online or contact Christine Birchall 01603 222843). This means we won't use the lighter colours any more for the magazine. The Agenda always will always meet our accessibility standards.

### Cost

Currently each copy of Agenda costs 13p to print and produce and it is the only information about Norfolk County Council which goes to everyone who works for the authority regardless of their job or location. We will continue to keep the price under review



# Equalities

**Norfolk County Council** is committed to valuing all our staff and those who use our services equally. Our Comprehensive Equality Policy sets out how we should be doing this.

The Corporate Equalities Working Group is chaired by Lisa Christensen, director of Norfolk Social Services, supported by Joan Emerson the county's Senior Policy Officer (Equalities), and includes county councillors from all three political groups. How well we are doing in delivering equal opportunities is measured through the Equality Standard for Local Standard for Local Government. The Working group ensures that this standard is used as the framework for equalities development in the County Council. Here are some examples of how we are putting the standard into practice. For further information look at equalities documents on line [http://intranet.norfolk.gov.uk/cex/miscellaneous/equalities\\_home.asp](http://intranet.norfolk.gov.uk/cex/miscellaneous/equalities_home.asp)

The **equalities working group** is helping **Norfolk County Council** towards its **equalities targets**

## Becoming More Family Friendly

**Family friendly working environment** - as a performance indicator we are looking at staff retention and the number of women in senior management positions

We measure the percentage of our top 5% of earners that are women.

- At Mar 03 this was 39.34%
- Our target for 03/04 is 41%



Simon Pomfret's **work/life** balancing act

**With three young children**, two properties to renovate in France, responsibilities as a school governor AND a full time job in Planning and Transportation,

**Simon Pomfret** decided to change his relationship with work.

*"We all have busy and complex lives and sadly what often loses out in this situation is the family. I didn't want to be one of those people who looked back and wished they had done things differently, "*

Simon wanted to develop his own business, having successfully completed his MBA, but didn't want to

leave a career with Norfolk County Council that he had enjoyed for 15 years.

*"I thought it through and came up with a proposal which I discussed with Tim (Malynn) and Sam (Ralph) suggesting how I could change the way I worked. Luckily they were both very supportive."*

*"I now work 3 days a week for P&T and run my business on the other days. I visit France five or six times a year and try to pick my children up from school more often."*

*"I have benefited - I am less stressed and more empowered. I also have a lot of respect for my part time colleagues. When you only work part time you really make your hours count."*

## Nursery places

Kid Ease Nursery which opened last month in the grounds of County Hall offers places for up to 61 children under the age of five years, with a self contained baby unit. Norfolk County Council has priority on 40 of these places including all places in the baby unit. To find out more contact Kid Ease on 01256 698019 or email at [childcare@kidease.co.uk](mailto:childcare@kidease.co.uk).

## Childcare Vouchers

Childcare vouchers can be used to pay for all registered forms of childcare plus close family members and nannies. National Insurance savings of up to 10% can be made on the cost of childcare if you order vouchers through your salary. We are running a voucher scheme trial and if this is successful, we hope to extend it across the Council in April, subject to Inland Revenue approval. If you want to know more now contact Hayley Smith, Corporate Personnel on 01603 222918

## People with Disabilities

**We aim to increase** the % of people with disabilities in work, and we look at the number of our employees declaring they meet the disability Discrimination Act definition of disability.

- At Mar 03 this was 2.61%
- Our target for 03/04 is 2.75%

Nicki Freeman, team librarian at Sprowston contracted rheumatoid arthritis at college, but the condition has not prevented her from building a 20 year career.

*"The condition attacks every joint in your body. I have had operations to replace hips, knees and elbows, straighten toes and fuse my shoulders," said Nicki.*

*"I started working in Norfolk in 1984 and in those days I didn't have the courage to say there were some things which I found physically very difficult."*



*"However my colleagues and line managers have all been great. My job has been kept open for me whilst I've had time off for operations. New equipment such as special chairs, an adjustable footrest, a raised loo seat and an easy reach gadget have been bought for me."*

*"I think employers benefit from having people with disabilities in the workforce. It helps increase people's understanding of disabilities and to realise that a disabled person has as much to contribute to society as anyone else."*

## People from Minority Ethnic backgrounds

**We aim to increase** the % of people of minority ethnic background in work and we measure the percentage of our employees who come from minority ethnic communities.

- At Mar 03 this was 0.83%
- Our target for 03/04 is 0.9%



**Arit Essien is a social worker** who has worked for Norfolk County Council for six years. She is a member and chair of the Racial Equality Group in Social Services

*"This group is able to offer a pool of knowledge and information on race equality issues," Arit explains.*

*"I have not met with any strong issues either from colleagues or from the general public in my life as a social worker. This does not*

*mean that it has always been plain sailing, but being a very philosophical person, I try not to read too many meanings into comments made by people."*

Arit thinks things are changing for people working for Norfolk County Council, and those using our services from minority ethnic groups. *"Taking ethnic monitoring seriously helps services to meet the needs of service users from minority ethnic groups."*

*"I just want everyone from an minority ethnic background to be treated and respected as professionals with the same rights as everybody."*

**Joy Ademola is also a social worker** and has worked for NCC for two and a half years. Her experiences of coming from a minority ethnic background and working for the county council are that people often 'overdo' things for her or try and avoid issues of racism

She has been involved within Social Service with providing advice and information on cultural issues - when requested, but hasn't seen much change within the county council on racial issues over the past two years.

*"There is some 'colour blindness' within Norfolk County Council and I would like to see more support for black staff."* Said Joy.

