

Norfolk Matters

The Newsletter of Norfolk County Council



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Children's Services

Norfolk County Council is moving ahead with plans to develop an integrated service for children and young people led by a Director of Children's Services responsible for both children's education and children's social services.

Cabinet has agreed to the recruitment of the new Director, who will replace the current posts of Directors of Education and Social Services and could be in post by December.

Members also agreed a draft vision for children and young people, developed with young people and partner agencies to underpin all future work, and the principles that will lie behind children's services: child focus, prevention and early intervention, local focus and integration.

It is estimated that at any one time, around 44,000 children in Norfolk will have needs that impair their development - and in about 8,500 of these cases the impairment will be significant.

To help deliver the vision through effective services, a new strategic partnership for children and young people will be established.

Further consultation with staff and stakeholders will be carried out before detailed arrangements for services are agreed.

Chief Executive Tim Byles said: "We are now bringing forward proposals from the second phase. We are working closely with staff, colleagues across the agencies and involving young people and I am very heartened by the continuing shared commitment to, and enthusiasm for improvements that will give children and their families a better deal and better outcomes in life".

Council Leader Alison King, said: "We want what is best for our children by making sure we deliver the very best services. It makes sense to bring services for children together for the first time, with one person responsible for the successful delivery of policies. There will be more opportunities for people to be involved in the changes as they develop."

Services currently provided for adults, and for both children and adults within Education and Social Services will be reviewed so that they are aligned and managed in effective and appropriate manner.

The special children's services edition, and other information on the proposals, can be found on the County Council's website.

New Chairman

West Norfolk county councillor Richard Rockcliffe is carrying on a proud family tradition as the new Chairman of Norfolk County Council - his late father, Harold, was Chairman in 1991.



Richard Rockcliffe, who lives in Watlington and farms with his brother Andrew, follows in his father's footsteps by representing Fincham Division. He is married to Lilian and they have two grown up children.

The new Vice Chairman of the Council is Brenda Ravencroft, county councillor for Reepham.

Bus Station progress

Demolition and clearance of the old Norwich Bus Station is well underway.

The new bus station - designed by Norfolk Property Services Ltd - is due to open to the public next spring and will be a dramatic improvement on the old facility. It will allow buses to enter and leave via both Surrey Street and Queens Road, significantly cutting journey times. It will include space for 12 buses, a new travel office with seating, toilets and vending machines, a secure bicycle store, and better access for pedestrians.

At the same time, work on improving bus connections through the city centre is continuing. The next stage is to make it possible for buses to travel in both directions between Agricultural Hall Plain and the new bus station. This means creating a south-bound bus lane along Red Lion Street (currently one-way northbound) as well as a number of other changes, including improved crossings for pedestrians.



Surface Dressing

Norfolk County Council's annual road surfacing programme is underway as part of the routine maintenance service of county roads.

Known as 'surface dressing', the work involves laying a thin layer of bitumen and stone chippings onto the road to provide cost-effective maintenance that improves skid resistance and prevents water penetration and the damage that can follow.

The four-month programme costs around £3m and takes place every summer to take advantage of the drier weather and warmer temperatures needed to carry out this sort of work.

Hospital Access Update

An alternative to dualling the B1108 to improve access to Norwich's main hospital and research park has been drawn up by the County Council.

Plans for a link road from the A11 Cringleford bypass are already underway, with work expected to start soon and be open next Spring.

There were also plans to dual the B1108 Watton Road from the A47 to the hospital, but this met opposition on the grounds of environmental impact. The new proposal would involve two lanes going into Norwich from the bypass to the Colney Lane junction and one lane going out. This would require less land and have a reduced impact on the environment.

Distributor Road support

The Norwich Area Transportation Strategy (NATS) consultation has revealed a high level of support (78%) for a Northern Distributor Road. The County Council is now looking into the route variations suggested by members of the public during the consultation. This involves detailed assessments of the

options, including environmental field work and investigations into the impact on the local economy and traffic.

See page 6 for views on the county's wider transport problems and issues.

New partnership for P&T

The new 10-year Strategic Partnership between the County Council's Planning and Transportation department, Mott MacDonald and May Gurney is well underway. Staff from all three organisations will work in teams to find innovative ways of delivering the full range of services, which includes roads, bridges, passenger transport, waste, environment and planning.

Worth around £400m, the new deal replaces the original partnership contracts with the same companies. Norfolk County Council was the first local authority in the country to ask the private sector to work so closely with a council workforce to deliver public services. The resulting partnerships have already saved Norfolk taxpayers more than £1m a year and also helped the County Council achieve Beacon status in Rethinking Construction.

Record Numbers at Roots

Visitor numbers at the Roots of Norfolk museum, Gressenhall, topped 49,000 in 2003-04 - a figure it was not expected to reach until 2006/07.



The museum and 1920s working farm has been growing rapidly in popularity since it was officially re-opened by Prince Charles in July 2001 after a £3.5 million re-fit. For more information visit www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk.

Time and Tide

Museum of Great Yarmouth Life

Norfolk Museums & Archaeology Service (NMAS) opens a new museum in Great Yarmouth this summer. Time and Tide is the result of a successful partnership between NMAS, Great Yarmouth Borough Council and Great Yarmouth Preservation Trust.

Housed in a Victorian herring curing works, saved for the community by the Great Yarmouth Preservation Trust, the new museum represents over ten years work and has attracted grants totalling over £4.5 million to the town.

The development is a key element in the regeneration of South Denes. The new museum will strengthen the town's heritage tourism status, enhancing the appeal of both the seafront and the South Quay.

The museum's collections are unique to Great Yarmouth, bringing the town's history vividly to life.

Anglo-Saxon & Viking Gallery

Norwich Castle is home to the finest regional collection of Anglo-Saxon material in Britain. A new gallery opens at the Castle in July to showcase this fine collection and to tell the story of life in East Anglia after the Romans left.



Norfolk Museums & Archaeology Service has attracted £285,000 in funding to build the new Anglo-Saxon & Viking Gallery. In addition, the Friends of the Norwich Museums pledged £10,000, opening the way for an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund and National Art Collections Fund for the purchase of the stunning 7th century Harford Farm Treasure costing over £91,500.

When the gallery opens in July, there will be 1,000 objects on show, with the Harford Farm Treasure forming the centrepiece. The British Museum, Victoria & Albert Museum and the National Museum of Denmark have also loaned treasures.



Business Recycling

A new scheme is set to provide recycling collection rounds all over Norfolk to enable local businesses to recycle their waste at a greatly reduced price.

NORWRAP*, which is supported by the County Council, is based on a similar successful scheme in Essex. Many businesses found that the overall cost of their waste disposal was significantly reduced by joining a collection round, as it enabled them to recycle more of their waste at a much cheaper rate.

NORWRAP is being piloted in Thetford with the help of local waste collection company Pearsons. Businesses which join will receive a free recycling bin and a weekly or fortnightly collection of paper and card at a reduced rate. It is hoped that the scheme will be trialled next in Great Yarmouth and then spread further around the county. Another aim is to extend it to include other recyclable materials.

For more information contact Karen Beales, Business Waste and Environment Assistant, on 01603-638076

Cash for trash

Not for profit organisations such as parish councils, churches and voluntary groups can earn £30 to £40 in recycling credits for every tonne of household rubbish they collect for recycling.

The money is paid by the County Council to reflect the saving in waste disposal costs when material is sent for recycling instead of disposal in landfill.

Any type of recyclable household waste (not business waste) can be collected once an organisation has been registered with the County Council. The material has to be passed to a registered merchant/recycler. The amount of recycling credit earned (£30 to £40 per tonne depending upon the collection area) is in addition to anything paid for the material by the collecting merchant.

To find out more contact the County Council's Waste Management team on 01603-223130.

Beacon shines on Norfolk

The past year has been a very busy one since Norfolk became the only county council to be awarded Beacon status for Rethinking Construction - the national initiative which aims to improve practices and performance in all types of construction.

The new approach achieves better value for money, especially in whole life terms. By involving all parties in projects at an early stage, buildings can be delivered on time, on budget and defect-free, meeting the needs of clients and users.

Gaining Beacon status has directly benefited Norfolk by raising expectations and consolidating higher standards. As a Beacon authority, Norfolk has taken the lead in sharing good practice so that councils learn from each other and deliver better services to their communities.

Some 30 local authorities attended two one-day seminars to find out how we approach construction projects, share their own experiences and discuss new methods and ideas. A series of workshops on the benefits of an extranet for use in complex projects attracted over 20 local authorities from as far afield as Cornwall.

In addition, Tim Byles, Chief Executive, Mike Britch, Managing Director of NPS, and Sam Ralph, Director of Planning & Transportation, have become recognised speakers on Rethinking Construction and one-to-one help has been given to several authorities.

Waxham Barn

After 15 years to restore Grade 1 listed Waxham Barn to its former glory, the County Council has now granted a 50-year lease to the Norfolk Historic Buildings Trust.

The Tudor barn is of national importance and although the County Council has led the restoration effort, most of the funding for its restoration has come from national sources, including English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund. The restoration has also been used for the training builders in traditional skills.

The latest phase of the repair work has concentrated on the barn's four single-

storey wings, which date from the late 18th, early 19th centuries. Once used to house cattle and turnips, one of the wings has been converted into a café. The 56 metre-long main barn dates back to the 1580s.

It is open to the public six days a week, 10.30am to 4.30pm (closed Wednesdays). Entry will cost £2.50 for adults, with accompanied children going free. Find out more online at: www.norfolk.gov.uk/environment/conservation/historicbuildings/waxham



Forward Plan

The council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions is updated every month and is published in full on our website (www.norfolk.gov.uk). .

Key decisions to be considered by Cabinet on June 21st include:

Review of School Organisation in the Norwich Area

Report from Cabinet Working Group and final decision on schools (follow on from May meeting)
Contact: David Lennard Jones (01603) 223474
david.lennard.jones@norfolk.gov.uk

Norfolk Learning Difficulties Pooled Fund Recovery Plan

Contact: Amanda Reynolds (01603) 223960
amanda.reynolds@norfolk.gov.uk

Street Lighting PFI

Contact: Chris Kutesko (01603) 223457
chris.kutesko@norfolk.gov.uk

Thetford Southern Link Road

Contact: Philip Wishart (01603) 223461
philip.wishart@norfolk.gov.uk

Options for Management of Norwich Bus Station

Contact: Gordon Hanning (01603) 223831
gordon.hanning@norfolk.gov.uk

Fair Access to Care Services

Contact: Richard Tucker (01603) 223352
richard.tucker@norfolk.gov.uk

Changes to Cranmer House Residential Home for Older People

Contact: Karen Wadham (01263) 714993
karen.wadham@norfolk.gov.uk

Sixth site

Work has begun on a sixth park and ride site for Norwich, making it the city with the most park and rides in the whole country.

The £3.6 million Cringleford site - due to open in March 2005 - is being built off the A11 Thickthorn roundabout and will provide spaces for around 736 cars. Total park and ride capacity for Norwich will then be nearly 5,000 cars.

Archaeological investigations have already been carried out and work will now begin to build the park and ride site and a new roundabout on the B1172 Hethersett road.

Norwich currently has five park and ride sites:

Harford - 1,088 spaces

Airport - 620 spaces

Postwick - 525 spaces

Costessey - 1,100 spaces

Sprowston - 800 spaces

The Cringleford park and ride site is being built by May Gurney, as part of the Planning and Transportation department's new strategic partnership.

The Highways Agency is currently looking at designs for improvements to the Thickthorn roundabout. Work is expected to start early 2005 and includes the installation of new traffic signals, as well as widening of circulatory and approach roads.

[See page 2 - Hospital Access Update](#)

Award for Park & Ride

Norfolk County Council has won the prestigious British Parking Association 'Park and Ride 2004' award for its Norwich park and ride schemes.

The Council was congratulated on its overall approach to the management of its park and ride schemes, including emphasis on providing a quality service with purpose-built sites, bus priority measures and maintenance programmes for landscaping and infrastructure.

The award was collected by Tina Rust, Asset Manager, Passenger Transport Unit.



Children's Fund

Almost 30 Norfolk Children's Fund projects are facing a brighter financial future for the year ahead following top-level talks with central Government.

It had been feared that the nationally-funded projects - which focus on family support, helping children and young people to do well at school and improving rural access to services - faced budget cuts averaging 4.7%.

But, after a delegation to Children's Minister Margaret Hodge, the Fund has been granted extra financial flexibility, allowing projects' grant figures to be confirmed. Cuts which had seemed likely earlier in the year have been reduced or removed altogether.

For further information: Nicky Dawson, Project Manager, on 01603 495130 or nicky.dawson@norfolk.gov.uk



Every three-year old

Every three year old in Norfolk is now entitled to a free part-time early education place, and Norfolk County Council is keen for the county's parents to make the most of this opportunity.

Children become eligible the term after their third birthday. Parents can choose the sort of early education place that best suits them and their children. Options include local authority nurseries, private nurseries, voluntary playgroups and pre-schools, and independent schools.

Three year olds are entitled to 55 sessions a term - that is, a minimum of five 2½ hour sessions a week, for 33 weeks a year.

For more information: Childcare Information Service on 01603 622292

Congested roads

Norfolk people's priorities for transport improvement have emerged from the latest round of consultation on the county council's Local Transport Plan.

Workshops and questionnaires showed that traffic congestion - especially around the school run - was seen as the biggest problem, and better quality public transport was regarded as the best solution.

Other ideas for tackling congestion were ranked as follows:

- Greater promotion of public transport, walking and cycling,
- Managing demand through travel plans, flexible working patterns and other measures,
- Increasing road capacity,
- Traffic management,
- Measures such as shifting road freight to rail and extending park and ride times were also suggested.

Accessibility, safety and environmental impact were seen as the other major transport issues for Norfolk.

Access to schools and work was seen as generally difficult. Suggested improvements included careful planning to reduce the need to travel, better integration between modes of transport, and improved public transport information.

To improve safety, education, engineering and enforcement were all seen as necessary, with more 'home zones' and traffic calming, more flashing speed signs and targeting young drivers to improve driving.

Suggestions for tackling environmental issues ranged from the promotion of walking, cycling, public transport and alternative fuels to a Polluting Vehicles Hotline for reporting dirty exhausts.

Opinion was split on whether winter road gritting is adequate - most people thought footways and cycleways should also be gritted, as well as being better lit.

The Quiet Lanes initiative was seen as good value for money and worth extending to other areas.

The information gathered during this consultation will contribute to Norfolk's second Local Transport Plan, running from April 2006 to March, and the fourth Annual Progress Report on the current plan.

Long Stratton Centres

Two purpose-built centres providing care for children and young people with learning and physical disabilities have been opened by Sir Timothy Colman at Long Stratton.

Created through a £1m partnership between Norfolk County Council Social Services, BREAK and the Norfolk Autistic Society, around 60 families a year will benefit from the centres.

Nelson Lodge is a six-bed short stay unit for young people aged 5-18 with special needs including autism. Trafalgar Lodge is a four-bed long-stay unit for young people aged 14-25 with a range of special needs. This centre will help equip young people with general life skills.

Sir Timothy, Lord Lieutenant of Norfolk, help set up the original fund-raising appeal back in the early nineties. BREAK will manage both units - the charity's first new build projects.



Mile Cross Library

Mile Cross library in Norwich has re-opened after a £100,000 makeover including:

- **A new roof with velux roof lights;**
- **Improved access, including automated front doors;**
- **A new counter, furniture and some new shelving;**
- **New carpets and redecoration.**

Quiet Lanes

Norfolk's second network of Quiet Lanes is to be established in an area between Attleborough, Diss and Thetford, bounded by the A11, A1066 and B1077, the B1134, and the A140.

Quiet Lanes schemes aim to make minor rural links better for all road users, including walkers, cyclists and horse riders. They encourage motorists to use the most suitable routes and ask all users to be considerate towards each other.

Norfolk County Council pioneered the concept of Quiet Lanes with a successful national pilot scheme in North Norfolk, between Cromer and North Walsham.

Wash and North Coast Guide

A new guide to the Wash and North Norfolk Coast is being launched to make visitors aware of how important this site is and how their behaviour can help protect it.

The Good Practice Guide has been put together through the Wash and North Norfolk Coast European Marine Site Management Scheme, working with local groups including fishermen, watersport enthusiasts, conservation site managers and local people. It will be widely available and can be seen online at

www.esfjc.co.uk/ems.htm

Wherryman's Way

Wherryman's Way - a project comprising a 35-mile walking trail, a 35-mile cycle trail and much more - has successfully secured funding of £190,000.

Working with the Chet Development Partnership and local parish councils, Norfolk County Council will establish the route in partnership with South Norfolk Council and the Broads Authority.

Wherryman's Way is primarily a walking route running between Norwich and Great Yarmouth and a cycle trail linking the villages and communities on both sides of the Yare Valley.

£119,000 of the funding has come from Leader+, a part Government, part European initiative, and the remainder has come from the partners.

Delivering the changes

when contacting Norfolk County Council

People are now finding it much easier to contact us and get information about county council services thanks to the Customer Service Centre at County Hall.

Callers speak to specially trained staff who provide information and advice about Trading Standards, Social Services, Street Lighting and general enquiries all at a standard cost - no matter where in Norfolk people are calling from.

To make sure that people know which service to call to get the information they need, we have ordered the services into groups. This means that the following services are currently available from the centre:

School Transport (information and guidance)	0844 800 8003
Street Lighting	0844 800 8008
Trading Standards	0844 800 8013
Social Services	0844 800 8014
General Enquiries	0844 800 8020

Staff who work in our Council Information Centres - where people can come in and speak to us in person with their enquiries - will also be able to provide detailed advice about our services

We are making even more services available to people over the coming months, including:

- General Waste enquiries
- Library book renewals for the Norfolk & Norwich Millennium Library
- Education general enquiries
- Library Service general enquiries

For more information about how we are providing better access to our services, contact

- Anna Graves on (01603) 223254
or e-mail anna.graves@norfolk.gov.uk
- Richard Archer on (01603) 638067
or e-mail richard.archer@norfolk.gov.uk

Beverley Evans



Beverley Evans has joined Norfolk County Council as the new head of Adult Education.

Before coming to Norfolk, she was Deputy Chief Executive of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), a Government body responsible for the quality and standard of the curriculum, examinations and tests in school, colleges and at work.

New NCC company

A new County Council owned company is being established to run the council's Customer Service Centre and 'back office' services such as payments, staff payroll and technical support.

The county council's existing companies - NPS and NCS (featured in previous editions of Norfolk Matters) - trade successfully for the county council and other public and private clients, returning profits that can be used to support front-line services. Over time, the new company would also be able to work on behalf of other public sector clients.

The company will be set up from next April. It is seen as a timely response to a national drive for councils to become more efficient and direct more money to frontline services. Sir Peter Gershon has concluded that councils can be much more efficient if they share some 'back office' functions, make better use of technology, and free front-line staff from basic administrative and support tasks.

All authorities are likely to be set challenging targets to achieve these improvements. Norfolk is making progress already, and in some areas - such as construction where we earned Beacon status and procurement where we have been chosen to establish a centre of excellence - we are leading the way.



If you would like 'Norfolk Matters' in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language, please contact the Communications Unit on (01603) 222972 (minicom 223833)

Is **Norfolk Matters** working?

It is 15 months since we last asked for your views on Norfolk Matters and we would like to find out if it is still fulfilling its aim of keeping you in touch with Norfolk County Council. Our last survey told us that by and large people found it one of their best sources of useful information. They did not like space to be used for trumpet-blowing by the County Council.

We would particularly like your views again because it is a year since the County Council launched its residents' magazine 'Your Norfolk'. Norfolk Matters has a smaller, more targeted distribution and is very different in style and purpose. Each copy costs about 18 pence to produce and distribute.

Could you please return the questionnaire by the end of July. Post it to Freepost NFK County Council - you do not need to use a stamp.

1. Have we got the balance of articles right in Norfolk Matters. Please say whether you would like more, the same or less information on the following topics.

Please tick one box only.

	More	Same	Less	No opinion
Forthcoming Consultations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Forward Plan Summary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Decisions that the County Council has taken	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helpful names and contact numbers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
News stories	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Do you keep copies or cuttings from Norfolk Matters for future reference?

☐ Yes, whole copies ☐ Yes, cuttings ☐ No

If you receive a number of copies how do you distribute them?

☐ To individuals ☐ By allowing anyone interested to pick one up ☐ Not at all (if you are receiving too many, contact Anna Stubbings on 01603 224471).

Since the last survey, all copies of Norfolk Matters have been made available on the County Council's internet site (www.norfolk.gov.uk).

Do you have access to the internet?

☐ At home ☐ Elsewhere (including work) ☐ Not at all (Free internet access is available in all our libraries)

Have you ever viewed Norfolk Matters online? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Would an online index of subjects/contents in back editions be useful? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ No opinion

Would a web page version - avoiding the need to download PDF files and allowing search facilities and easier access to articles - be better? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ No opinion

3. From which of these sources do you get your information about what Norfolk County Council is doing? Please tick as many as you want.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family and Friends | <input type="checkbox"/> Leaflets produced by the Council |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local radio | <input type="checkbox"/> National newspapers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Daily Press | <input type="checkbox"/> Evening News |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other local paper | <input type="checkbox"/> Your Norfolk magazine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Norfolk Matters | <input type="checkbox"/> Norfolk County Council website |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Posters produced by the Council | <input type="checkbox"/> Local television |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Council Staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Elected members / county councillors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |

4. Which one of these would you pay most attention to for information about what Norfolk County Council is doing? Please tick up to 3 boxes only.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family and Friends | <input type="checkbox"/> Leaflets produced by the council |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local radio | <input type="checkbox"/> National newspapers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Daily Press | <input type="checkbox"/> Evening News |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other local paper | <input type="checkbox"/> Your Norfolk magazine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Norfolk Matters | <input type="checkbox"/> Norfolk County Council website |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Posters produced by the council | <input type="checkbox"/> Local television |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Council Staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Elected members / county councillors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |

5. If there is anything else that you would like to see covered in Norfolk Matters please write this in below.

6. Lastly, please can you give some information about yourself

What is the name of your organisation?

What type of organisation do you represent?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parish Council | <input type="checkbox"/> Business |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing Association | <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary Organisation / group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Town Council | <input type="checkbox"/> District / Borough Council |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Primary Care Organisation | <input type="checkbox"/> MP / MEP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other - please state | |

Thank you for taking time to complete this questionnaire. Please send it to Freepost NFK County Council before the end of July. You do not need to use a stamp.