

# Travel plan cash waiting for schools

Over 200 schools in Norfolk are working on school travel plans to reduce car use and congestion on the school journey and encourage walking and cycling. This work has benefits for the health of pupils and also for the environment.

Schools that complete a travel plan by March 2006 will receive a one-off capital grant from the Department for Education and Skills of around £5000 for primary schools and £10,000 for secondary schools to spend on their school sites.

This year, 117 schools that completed travel plans in Norfolk received £623,906 between them to spend on items such as cycle storage lockers and pedestrian shelters.

To complete a travel plan, schools start by surveying pupils and parents to discover how people are travelling to school and then identify ways to promote and encourage sustainable travel. Schools are taking

part in a wide range of initiatives including

- Road Safety Training,
- Walk to School weeks,
- Bike to School Weeks,
- Walking and cycling incentive schemes,
- Car share clubs
- Production of leaflets, posters and travel plan displays.

For more information, contact the School Travel Plan Team on 01603 638083, email [schooltravelplan@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:schooltravelplan@norfolk.gov.uk) or visit [www.schooltravelplan.net/norfolk](http://www.schooltravelplan.net/norfolk).

## Travel plan brings footpath

A £14,000 footpath built along an existing roadside verge is making walking to school easier and safer for Aldborough Primary School pupils. The need for the path was identified when the school worked with council officers to draw up a travel plan.

# Kickstart a career

Twenty mopeds are being made available to people seeking work or training in rural areas around Great Yarmouth.

The mopeds are available through Kickstart, which has won a new contract from the Department of Work & Pensions.

Kickstart now provides 200 insured, taxed and serviced mopeds throughout Norfolk and the Cambridgeshire Fens, an expansion of over 300% in two years.

Funding organisations include Rivers LEADER + , which is part funded by Norfolk County Council. Jason Middleton, Rural Development Officer for the county council, said, "for many living in Norfolk's rural areas travelling to work can be difficult. This may lead to people leaving to live in areas where there are better transport links, eroding the social fabric of rural communities."

To date, Kickstart has helped 121 people undergo work-related training and 558 people to find jobs. For example, Kickstart loaned a moped to an unemployed man from Dereham. Within three months he had found a job, saved money, bought a car and got married. He returned the moped the day before leaving for his honeymoon.

Anyone wanting further information should contact Kickstart on: 01362 699923, or email: [kickstartnorfolk@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:kickstartnorfolk@tiscali.co.uk).



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# Norfolk Matters

## The Newsletter of Norfolk County Council



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## A Vision for **Children**

Norfolk's Vision for Children has been launched by the new Norfolk Partnership for Children and Young People following months of consultation which included young people themselves.

The Vision underpins services that are being reshaped to ensure that they really meet Norfolk children's needs, giving them every chance of fulfilling their full potential. A new 'Norfolk hands' symbol will be used by organisations working with children in Norfolk to express their commitment to the Vision.

The Norfolk Partnership for Children and Young People, formed in July, brings together organisations such as primary care trusts, local councils, schools and voluntary groups.

**The Vision says: "We believe that all children and young people have the right to be healthy, happy, and safe; to be loved, valued and respected; and to have high aspirations for their future."**

Children's Services Director Lisa Christensen said:

"The vision is what we all want for all children and young people in Norfolk and to achieve that, we must all create opportunities and encourage and

support children and young people to take these opportunities. We must aim to give them the best possible chances in life."

Education and children's social services have already come together to form the new Children's Services department at Norfolk County Council. New Children's Trusts including health services for young people will also be developed.

In Norfolk activities include:

- Making schools the focus of their communities
- Developing a range of services to meet the needs of children whose development is impaired
- Making sure every family can access provision for 0-4-year-olds
- Giving more support to parents and carers to help them bring up children successfully
- Boosting the support for children from the communities they live in.

(See Children's Centres, page 4)



## Fire station under construction

Work is underway to build a new £1 million fire station for Downham Market in Ryston Close. It will open in Spring 2006.

The new fire station will enjoy much better access to all of Downham Market and surrounding area and the facilities will be a big improvement on the current fire station. Downham Market has just received a brand new rescue pump. When complete the new single-storey fire station will have an appliance bay, lecture room, offices, a kitchen and storage areas.

Design and project management is by NPS Property Consultants Ltd, the County Council's property services company, and the main contractor is May Gurney.



# Norwich Bus Station

Norwich's state-of-the-art £5million bus station opened for business at the end of August.

The new facility, which has been provided by Norfolk County Council and designed by NPS Property Consultants Ltd, is part of a £9.5m Government-funded scheme to improve the bus network in and around Norwich. The bus station has twelve bays, with buses able to enter and exit from both Queens Road and Surrey Street. The car collection and drop-off point is at Queens Road end of the site.

The County Council-run travel centre enables passengers to find out about bus routes and times

in Norfolk and buy tickets for local services, and also for National Express coaches.

The travel centre contains a waiting area, café, toilets and baby changing facilities. An electronic screen gives details of the next 18 buses due to leave the bus station. Similar screens are in each bay, telling passengers the routes and times of the next three buses to leave that bay.



# King's Lynn Bus Station

The £350,000 improvement of King's Lynn bus station, led by Norfolk County Council, has provided nine new boarding areas, new shelters and a friendlier, safer environment for pedestrians. There are wider walkways, new signs, safety barriers and new paving. The area has been landscaped, the main bus area has been resurfaced and a new dedicated taxi area is now closer to the stops and shop.

The bus station now complies with the Disability Discrimination Act.

Work to refurbish the bus station's information centre should be finished by Christmas.

The project has been paid for by the County Council, with contributions from the Borough Council and Caddick Developments.

# £1 for evening football park and ride

The County Council has organised later bus services at three Norwich park and ride sites for all Norwich City evening home games this season. The extended services run to and from Thickthorn (from Morrisons), Airport (from Castle Meadow Stand A) and Postwick (from Thorpe Road, opposite railway station), with late buses returning at 2145, 2155 and 2205.

People arriving in the city centre will also be able to transfer to service 25 and use their park and ride ticket to get to Morrisons on Riverside at no extra charge. During weekdays, after 1230 park and ride charges drop to just £1 for up to five adults and three children.

Park and ride costs £2.80 per vehicle on Saturdays and before 1230 Monday to Friday.

# Making disaster bearable

Ninety new recruits have joined Norfolk County Council's fire service - but they won't be putting out any fires.

The recruits in question are cuddly Blaze Bears dressed as firefighters who will be used to soothe children in distress at incidents.

Money to buy the bears was raised by staff at North Walsham Woolworths and the 90 bears will travel on fire engines based at North Walsham, Stalham and Mundesley. Blaze Bear is the official mascot of the Fire Services National Benevolent Fund.



Watch Manager Gary Miller from North Walsham Fire Station and daughter Victoria (3) get to know a few of the new arrivals.



## £25 million target in Value for Money drive

Getting the most from the public purse that we spend on behalf of local taxpayers is at the top of the County Council's agenda for action. Councils throughout the UK must find efficiency savings of £6.45 billion over three years. The aim is both to find ways of providing more and better services without adding to the cost, and to rein back demands on the Council Tax.

Delivering value for money is one of Norfolk County Council's core values, and last year (2004/05) efficiency gains of over £12 million were found, with £5.2 million in cash savings. The Council wants to maintain this drive and in the current year has set itself an ambitious target of £25 million, around half in cash savings.

The Council is also developing a longer-term view of achieving savings and efficiency gains. An efficiency strategy has been incorporated into the annual business planning and budget-setting process.

The appointment of efficiency consultants was questioned by some people responding to the 2005/06 Norfolk Matters budget consultation. The council decided to go ahead on the basis that in a complex organisation spending £1 billion a year, an expert outside view would help find savings and efficiencies that would benefit services and tax payers for years to come.

PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) are providing this expertise and support, giving the council an efficiency 'health check,' and bringing experience of how services are delivered by other authorities.

The County Council's delivery of value for money and efficiency has received national recognition. We host the Regional Centre of Excellence and our Chief Executive is the National Procurement Champion.

For further information contact Richard Archer. [richard.archer@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:richard.archer@norfolk.gov.uk).

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## New way to explore Peddars Way

The County Council is encouraging more people to walk or cycle the 46-mile Peddars Way National Trail by launching the Peddars Wayfarer bus service. The bus, which tows a bicycle trailer, runs between Thetford rail station and Swaffham marketplace, calling at villages and major access points along the old Roman road. The Peddars Wayfarer runs twice daily, seven days a week - a day rover ticket costs just £3 for one person, £4 for a couple and £6 for a family. The service links at Thetford with regular trains from both Cambridge and Norwich. At Swaffham, the X1 bus service provides frequent links to King's Lynn, Peterborough and Norwich. For further information: Tim Lidstone-Scott, National Trail Manager, on 01328-850530.



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## Recycling success

Norfolk County Council's improved recycling centres are posting monthly recycling rates of up to 81%. The top rate was at Wereham Recycling Centre but the centres at Blackborough End, Ketteringham, Morningthorpe, Heacham and Mayton Wood all recycled more than 75 per cent.

Recycling centres across Norfolk have been improved as part of the County Council's Second Nature campaign. The aim is to make the three Rs - reduce, reuse, recycle - part of everyone's daily routine.

Norfolk has already met a Government target to recycle 30 per cent of all household waste by the end of this year. Last year's figure was just over 30%.

# Better mental health information

The County Council is working with Age Concern and other agencies to improve the public information available to older people with mental health problems, and their carers.

The Public Information Group for Older People with Mental Health Problems includes carers as well as caring agencies. It has been reviewing the information currently available, to establish where there are gaps, and consider what kind of leaflet, booklet or pack would ensure that service users and carers have easy

access to full, clear and accurate information.

The group would like to hear from service user or carers about the information they have received, and from professionals about the information already being distributed by different organisations.

Contact Linda Gill at Age Concern on 01603 787111, email [linda.gill@acnorfolk.org.uk](mailto:linda.gill@acnorfolk.org.uk)

Or Mary Highe at Adult Social Services on 01603 223583, email [mary.highe@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:mary.highe@norfolk.gov.uk)

## Children's Centre Update

Norfolk is carrying out a consultation process for Phase II Children's Centres.

The strategy is to develop and open up to 26 new centres by March 2008, with the focus being on developing services for the 30% most disadvantaged areas.

Local Authorities are taking the lead on Children's Centre developments, and will be working in partnership with key agencies and parents and carers to create permanent, mainstream community services.

The government has identified areas where centres need to be located. The Early Years and Childcare team, in consultation with partners and stakeholders has been identifying the needs in these areas and looking at existing services. By early October 2005, it is expected that these will have been identified and

the consultation paper and options document will be published. The consultation deadline will be the 18th November 2005 and by the end of November all new Children's Centres will have been identified, with more detailed plans being available by March 2006.

For further Information about Phase II of the consultation please contact Sarah Spall Childcare Development Officer, [sarah.spall@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.spall@norfolk.gov.uk), County Council's Consultation Helpline 0844 8008010, or your local Early Years and Childcare Area Development office:

<b>Norwich</b>	<b>- 01603 62 22 92</b>
<b>North</b>	<b>- 01603 62 22 92</b>
<b>East</b>	<b>- 01493 33 57 40</b>
<b>South</b>	<b>- 01493 33 57 40</b>
<b>West</b>	<b>- 01553 66 76 20</b>

### Contacting Norfolk County Council

General Enquiries: **0844 800 8020**

**0844 800 8011** (Textphone)

**0844 800 8012** (Fax)

Adult Education Brochure Line: **0844 800 8002**

Consultation helpline: **0844 800 8010**

Education General Enquiries: **0844 800 8001**

Library Renewals: **0844 800 8006**

School Transport: **0844 800 8003**

Social Services: **0844 800 8014**

Street Lighting: **0844 800 8008**

Trading Standards: **0844 800 8013**

Waste Management: **0844 800 8004**

You can also contact the county council via the website: **[www.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk)**.

Or by email: **[information@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:information@norfolk.gov.uk)**



### Listening to care leavers

'Looking Beyond the Label', a conference steered by a group of Norfolk care leavers, will help Children's Services staff to improve the education of young people who have been in care.

Workshops discussed what does and does not work for young people in care, and changes which could improve the education experience of this vulnerable and sometimes isolated group of young people.

A full conference report is being prepared by Karen Searle, Leaving Care Project Officer [karen.searle@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:karen.searle@norfolk.gov.uk).

# Youth mentoring goes county-wide

Norfolk Youth Offending Team's youth mentoring scheme is being extended throughout the county. The aim of mentoring is to find someone who can 'get alongside' a young person who has been through the courts, helping them to recognise that there is a better way of life. Mentors come from all walks of life and are both young and more mature. They are carefully matched with a young person.

The mentor team in Norwich, now 15-strong, recently received the 2005 Norwich City Council Civic Award for Voluntary Service in the group category.

Elsewhere in the county recruitment of mentors has been going well, although there are vacancies in Great Yarmouth. Contact Juliette Mee on 01493 847400 to find out more.

## Forward Plan

The County Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions is updated monthly and can be viewed in full on our website ([www.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk)). Cabinet meetings are scheduled for October 17th and November 14th. Final agendas, reports and minutes can also be viewed online.

Key decisions expected to come before Cabinet in the autumn include:

### **Integrated Community Equipment Service**

Proposals for hosting a joint health and social services community equipment service.

Graham Robinson, 01603 223435  
[graham.robinson@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:graham.robinson@norfolk.gov.uk)

### **Update on Learning Difficulties Pooled Fund.**

Planning the future financing of the fund, which comprises contributions from health and the county council.

James Rolfe 01603 222179  
[james.rolfe@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:james.rolfe@norfolk.gov.uk)

### **Future use of the EMI unit at Ellacombe**

This is a proposal to turn the NHS-run mental health unit at Ellacombe into a modern residential unit with en-suite facilities. Ellacombe would then become entirely a County Council residential home, with 42 beds.

Mary Highe 01603 222250  
[mary.highe@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:mary.highe@norfolk.gov.uk)

### **Self directed support - 'In Control'**

Learning Difficulties service. 'In Control' is a development of direct payments, offering individuals and their families greater flexibility and control over support planning, as well as a fair and transparent method of allocating resources to fund the support.

Steve Sargent, Norfolk Learning Difficulties Service  
01263 835200  
[steve.sargent@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:steve.sargent@norfolk.gov.uk)

### **Rayleen, Group Home for People with Learning Difficulties, Long Stratton**

Replacement of sub-standard premises with housing scheme developed with South Norfolk Housing Partnership.

Geoff Howell 01603 223082  
[geoff.howell@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:geoff.howell@norfolk.gov.uk)

### **Publicity for Trading Standards Service Enforcement Policy**

David Collinson - Head of Trading Standards  
01603 222253  
[david.collinson@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:david.collinson@norfolk.gov.uk)

Cabinet November 14th

### **Enlargement of Scarning Primary School**

Proposed extension of Scarning Primary from 210 to 315 places and replacement of three mobiles to provide additional primary places in the Scarning and Dereham area.

Helen Bates 01603 638168  
[helen.bates@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:helen.bates@norfolk.gov.uk)

## A149 safety scheme

Major work to improve the A149 between Smallburgh and Dilham is underway and will be complete early next year. The scheme realigns the road to avoid a dangerous double bend and to take vehicles away from nearby properties. The work will cost around £700,000.

# Outdoor Education Centre

Norfolk's new £1.6million outdoor education centre, funded by Norfolk County Council, Sport England and the Big Lottery Fund, is now open at Whitlingham Country Park in Trowse, near Norwich.

The centre, run by the County Council, is the base for a range of exciting outdoor pursuits including sailing, windsurfing and canoeing, power-boating, sculling, off-road biking, climbing and abseiling.

As well as changing rooms, teaching and meeting rooms and a workshop, the centre features 115 square metres of decking sheltered by sail.

The centre is located within 280 acres of Whitlingham Country Park, already a popular destination for families, cyclists and walkers. Anyone wishing to find out more can contact the centre directly on 01603 632307 or visit the web site at [www.nccoutdoorededucation.co.uk](http://www.nccoutdoorededucation.co.uk).



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## Seatbelt campaign

Failure to wear seatbelts is increasing the number of people who are killed or seriously injured in accidents on Norfolk's roads.

The County Council and Police have been campaigning to persuade people that it is far better to spend a few seconds putting on a seatbelt than face an eternity of regrets after an accident.

A recent survey in Norfolk showed that in urban areas the average number of people not wearing seat belts can be as high as 20%, yet wearing a seatbelt can improve the chances of surviving a serious crash by around 50%.

The campaign has been using enforcement and

education to make people understand the law, and the risks they are taking with their own and other lives if they fail to comply.

Drivers have particular responsibility for children in their car, yet 90 per cent of injuries to children in vehicles could be avoided if child restraints and seat belts were used correctly. The campaign has included checks on the fitting of child seats, "Seatbelt On?" signs on major roads, touring drama productions in schools and radio and cinema advertising.

To obtain posters and information, contact the Customer Service Centre on 0844 8008020 or email [information@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:information@norfolk.gov.uk).

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## Appointments

Recent key appointments at Norfolk County Council include:

### **Children's Services**

Fred Corbett has been appointed Deputy Director of Children's Services, supporting the Director, Lisa Christensen, who took up her post in February. He will have special responsibility for early years, school performance and extended schools, and communities.

Paul Fisher has been appointed Assistant Director for Resources and Efficiency, directing the service's operational support functions including finance, efficiency, ICT, buildings, admissions.

Peter Mann has been appointed Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager.

Meera Spillett has been appointed Deputy Director of Children's Services supporting prevention, early intervention and specialist support services.

### **Planning & Transportation**

Mike Jackson has taken up his appointment as Director of Planning & Transportation following the retirement of Sam Ralph in September.



# Views needed on Fire Safety Plan

Norfolk is already a safe county - help us make it even safer.

That's the message from Norfolk Fire Authority as it begins a three-month consultation on its Safety Plan 2006.

Nationally the fire service continues to change with the aim of improving public safety. In Norfolk this is seen as an exciting opportunity to make a safe county even safer.

Norfolk Fire Authority was recently rated as Good by the Audit Commission but is continually looking to improve. As part of that improvement process the authority annually issues a draft Safety Plan outlining what it is planning to do and why.

Norfolk's draft plan has been published and suggests a few important changes to the way the fire service works.

The three-month public consultation (Oct 1 to Dec 31) plays a major part in the Safety Plan process and shapes the final plan. This gives everyone the chance to shape their fire service for the future and your views count.

To find out more and to have your say log on to the county council websites or to [www.norfolkfireservice.co.uk](http://www.norfolkfireservice.co.uk).

Alternatively contact the County Council's Consultation Helpline 0844 8008010.

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## The Right to Roam?

What will the Countryside and Right of Way (Crow) Act 2000 mean for Norfolk when part one comes into force in October 2005?

It will not give people the right to roam anywhere they want or affect existing public access but it will open up an extra 9,000 hectares areas of land including heath, down and commons. Maps of these areas have been developed by the Countryside Agency with advice from the Norfolk Local Access Forum (NLAF).

The NLAF is an independent advisor on this issue and rights of way improvement, set up and supported by Norfolk County Council. It brings together the views of walkers, riders, landholders, county and parish councils and others with an interest in common rights and disabled access.

The NLAF believes that potential conflict between landowners and visitors has been exaggerated. However, farmers are worried as the working countryside is potentially dangerous. Access land is, therefore, subject to measures that protect stock, privacy and safety and the NLAF advises on these restrictions.

The NLAF believes that most people are more likely to follow well-used paths than to fight through undergrowth. It therefore recommends that landowners with serious concerns for wildlife and livestock provide paths and information. It also urges visitors to show respect to landholders and the environment.

The maps and the new Countryside Code, with tips for walking, birdwatching and picnicking, are available

from the Countryside Agency, which has the main responsibility for implementing the Act. Go to [www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk](http://www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk), or contact the Countryside Agency on 08451 003298

Norfolk County Council's Countryside staff and the Norfolk Local Access Forum can offer advice and assistance. Contact Dominic Doble on 01603 222786, email [dominic.doble@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:dominic.doble@norfolk.gov.uk), or visit [www.localaccessforum.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.localaccessforum.norfolk.gov.uk) online.

