



GELDESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Meeting Minutes

8th May 2024, 7.00 PM

At Geldeston Village Hall

Parish Councillors present: I. Ansell (chairman), J. Ashfield, P. Cracknell, R. Fogerty, T. Morton, P. Cracknell, S. Salt and A. Wade

There were 8 members of the public in attendance.

- 1. Welcome.**
- 2. To receive an update from chairperson on what we have achieved last year.** See Appendix 1
- 3. To approve the minutes from last meeting May 2023.** These were approved (Prop: AW; Sec: RF).
- 4. To receive reports from District and County Councillors:** See Appendix 2
- 5. Questions and answers:**

Meeting closed at 19.18

Appendix 1 Chairmans Report

Chairs report – Geldeston APM 8th May 2024

After a difficult start having a group of us reform the Parish Council, we now feel that we are moving in the right direction again.

I would like to thank those people that stepped up to help out. Without you all we would not have a parish council and would be merged with Gillingham.

During our current year we have achieved several objectives, for the benefit of parishioners. We have been asked for the following and have achieved:-

- More dog bins
- Grit bin
- Playground – Fencing and hedging have gone in
- Sensory Garden has been completed
- Village Green – We have had complaints about cars parking on the village green. Posts have now been installed to prevent this and preserve the village green. Many thank to Council Cracknell and volunteers from the village for doing this.
- Planning Applications – We have had a few planning applications which we debated in open Parish Council some were approved and some we were against.
- We have engaged an independent arborist to access all tress on all Parish land. Their report has been very thorough and has highlighted some action point which range from immediate (3 months) to 12 months (Review).
- We have started a village plan in conjunction with Gillingham Parish Council. There is currently a joint working party from both villages who are working hard to formulate not only terms of reference but also where our joint villages wish to see new developments.

Appendix 2 District and County Councillor Reports

No District Councillors reports were received.

Norfolk County Council Annual Report 2023/24

- 97.4% of highways inspections completed within timescale
- 96.8% of 'Priority A' defects (classified as dangerous/emergency) were fixed
- within the Transport Asset Management Plan timescales
- 95% Customer satisfaction (with Council Services)
- 96% of Looked after Children with an up-to-date Personal Education Plan
- Completed over 90,000 Adult Social Care Assessments for over 26,000
- people

Council agrees £528m budget

Councillors have backed a budget that “delivers for Norfolk”, in the face of major challenges facing local government.

Deputy council leader Councillor Andrew Jamieson, cabinet member for finance, told today's full council meeting that the budget would deliver for Norfolk. This is despite major cost and demand pressures facing all councils

He said: “Our priorities are stable and sustainable finances, well delivered public services, economic growth and protecting and enhancing Norfolk's heritage and environment”.

Cllr Jamieson said it was a budget for the future, with an additional £60m for adult social services and £35m extra for children's services, and savings from transforming how the council operates.

Cllr Jamieson pledged to continue to lobby the next Government for multi-year settlements, fair funding and reform of adult social care funding.

County Council leader, Councillor Kay Mason Billig, said the council would continue to be ambitious for Norfolk and had achieved many successes - against a tough economic backdrop.

She said: “We know that our residents will be concerned about the decisions we make and how that may affect them. This year's budget has been one of the toughest to determine but we have a statutory duty to provide a balanced position, and that is what we are presenting to you.”

The key headlines from the budget agreed today are:

- £122m of investment to meet demand and cost pressures next year - including £34.6m for inflation, £38m for legislative requirements, £39.7m for demand and demographic issues and £9.6m for policy decisions.
- £41.5m of new savings, including £9.6m from transforming how the council operates.

- A proposed 4.99% increase in the County Council's share of Council Tax, in line with the Government's capping level (2.99% for general Council Tax and 2% for adult social care). This would increase the Council's share of band D bills to £1,672.11. A 4.99% rise would generate £24.9m.
- A small number of the budget proposals have been identified as requiring
- consultation, as they may relate to a policy or service change. Cabinet will take decisions on these proposals in the summer, after considering the consultation results.

Councillors accept £600 million devolution deal

County councillors have voted to accept a county deal devolution agreement with the Government, to transfer significant funding and powers to Norfolk.

Government funding will start transferring to Norfolk next summer, if councillors vote in July 2024 to stage the first election for a leader in May 2025. The deal will mean that decisions can be taken in Norfolk, for Norfolk.

The full council agreed the following recommendations:

Council:

- Recognises the work carried out during 2023 to consult with the public, inform Members and prepare plans in relation to the 'in-principle' County Deal brought to Council in January this year
- Commends the work undertaken by the Leader and Officers to secure additional benefits for the Norfolk County Deal and resolves that the Deal should be accepted
- Agrees that the election for the Directly Elected Leader should be held alongside the county council elections in May 2025 to enable the widest possible engagement with the electorate
- Agrees that the resolution adopting the new governance arrangements should be brought to the Full Council meeting on 23 July 2024 to facilitate that election date

For further details go to www.norfolk.gov.uk/norfolkcountydeal

Background – what would a county deal mean?

Norfolk faces a major opportunity to gain new powers and funding from the Government, through an agreement called the County Deal.

We could make more decisions in Norfolk, for Norfolk and secure investment of more than £600m over 30 years. If councillors agree the in-principle deal, it will enable us to invest in areas such as transport, skills and job opportunities, housing and regeneration, tailored to the needs of local people.

A County Deal would mean:

- Having a Council Leader who is directly elected by the public, enabling Norfolk's voice to be heard by the Government
- Targeting funding and resources to Norfolk's own priorities
- Unlocking housing and employment sites
- Investing in the skills we need and attracting and retaining key businesses

- Opening the door to more – further powers and funding in future

Norfolk County Council provided extra support to households this winter

Earlier this year, Norfolk County Council announced it would receive further funding from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to run the Household Support Fund until 31 March 2024. The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced in the Budget that this funding would be extended by a further six months.

The council has received £13.4m from central government and adding an additional £400,000 to make the total programme of support worth £13.8m. It is working closely with district, borough, and city councils, VCSE and public sector partners to identify and implement a range of support measures to meet the needs of vulnerable households.

Norfolk's roads and footpaths to be fixed as part of £4.51m funding

Thirty-four roads and 20 footpaths across the County will be repaired by Norfolk County Council during this coming year as part of Government funding.

Roads from Great Yarmouth to King's Lynn, from Hunstanton to Thetford and many in between the entire County will receive reclamite spray or resurfacing along with footpath construction to ensure Norfolk's infrastructure can best help people to get to work, travel to services and access Norfolk's natural and cultural assets through effective highways maintenance.

Twenty-seven brand new gritters joined Norfolk's fleet

Twenty-seven brand new gritters took taking to the roads for the first time later this winter in a £3,238,000 boost to the annual push to help keep Norfolk moving safely during the winter months.

The news comes as crews completed their first gritting runs of the season at the weekend, treating routes in the west, inland north and south and east coast areas of the county.

Norfolk's fleet of 58 winter vehicles treat 2,200 miles of roads on each full 3-hour gritting run. All A and B-class roads and some C-class roads are treated with a focus on commuter and major bus routes and as far as is possible one route into all villages. The A11 and A47 are gritted by National Highways.

In addition to the 49 gritting routes, a number of pedestrian areas and main pavements are treated in the centre of Norwich, Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn, and more than 2000 grit bins are available around the county for people to use on roads, pavements and cycle paths.

Find more information via www.norfolk.gov.uk/winter

Norfolk flood protection took centre stage in Westminster

The threat posed by flooding and coastal erosion in Norfolk has been laid out starkly for MPs as Norfolk County Council has taken their case for change to the heart of Westminster.

The delegation from Norfolk, led by Norfolk County Council Leader Cllr Kay Mason Billig and the Chair of the Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance (NSFA), Henry Cator, met with MPs, on the 71st anniversary of the 1953 North Sea Flood, to explain the risks Norfolk faces and how those risks could be addressed.

As demonstrated over this winter, our county faces regular risks of flooding, with Norfolk ranked tenth most at risk of surface water flooding out of 149 local authority areas. In addition, the county's position on the North Sea exposes it to tidal threats as well as significant coastal erosion: without action, it's estimated that in North Norfolk alone approximately 1,030 residential and commercial properties could be lost to erosion by 2100. That number could be up to 10,000 in all of Norfolk.

These risks threaten both Norfolk residents and the contribution Norfolk makes to the wider country, as home to 54% of the offshore wind generation capacity in the UK and a major producer of food.

In a presentation delivered in Portcullis House, part of the Parliamentary Estate in Westminster, Norfolk's delegation made the case for MPs to:

- Push for legislative permission to build reservoirs designed to capture excess water in times of flood, for use in times of drought
- Advocate for Property Flood Protection measures to be granted directly to the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for faster allocation for those who need it
- Reduce bureaucracy by granting greater autonomy in funding allocation for surface water flood mitigation schemes
- Combine enforcement and maintenance powers and responsibilities for LLFA's
- Support the creation of a dedicated Minister for the Coast

Challenges of coastal erosion and flooding discussed by councillors

Norfolk councillors are being invited to renew their call for a dedicated Minister for the Coast, as well as funding from central government for flood defences for Norfolk.

Norfolk County Council's Infrastructure and Development Select Committee considered a report on Coastal Erosion and Flooding in the county at their meeting in February, forming an update to the previous examination of the issue by the council's Scrutiny Committee in November last year.

The report recommends that councillors support the lobbying of central government for more funding for coastal erosion schemes, as well as support the appointment of a Minister for the Coast to give coastal communities a champion sitting within

government who can take a holistic view of the challenges and opportunities that such communities face, especially coastal erosion and flooding.

Securing a commitment to such an appointment would give confidence that coastal issues are recognised at the heart of government and that solutions to the threats these communities face will be addressed

The report spells out the challenge posted by coastal erosion along Norfolk's 90 miles of coastline, including the predictions of possible sea level rises of up to 1.15m by the end of the century. To compound the challenge, Norfolk has part of the fastest eroding coastline in North-West Europe.

Without action, it's estimated that in North Norfolk alone approximately 1,030 residential and commercial properties could be lost to erosion by 2105.

The Infrastructure and Development Select Committee meeting was held just over three weeks after the Leader of Norfolk County Council, Cllr Kay Mason Billig, visited Westminster to lay out the need for a new Minister for the Coast to MPs.

£1 million boost for Highway Parish Partnership Schemes

Schemes totalling over £1m will be distributed across Norfolk to deliver the wants and needs of local parishes and residents as part of the Highway Parish Partnership.

The Parish Partnership scheme began in September 2011, when Parish and Town Councils were invited to submit bids for local highway improvements, with the County Council funding up to 50% of bid costs. The key benefits of the scheme are that it:

- Delivers local priorities identified by local people.
- Draws in additional funding for small scale highway improvements, enabling us to collectively deliver more schemes.
- Gives local communities an opportunity to directly influence the improvements in their local area. The programme continues to be well received by Parish/Town Councils, Local Members, and communities. Information about the number of bids received through the scheme over the past twelve years demonstrates there is a good spread across Norfolk.

A County Council contribution £467,884 and a Safety Camera Partnership contribution of £43,760 along with funding from Town and Parish Councils, will enable a programme of local works totalling £1,040,586 to be delivered.

For information on current schemes and if there are Parish Councils who wish to apply for future schemes then contact your County Councillor in the first instance. For further information please see <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/parishpartnerships>

More people 'choose the bus' in Norfolk after first year of bus service improvement plan

It's been just over a year since Norfolk County Council received £49.55m of funding from the Department for Transport (DfT) to improve bus services across the county. There have been huge numbers of improvements already made across the county, and the latest figures show that passenger numbers have increased throughout the year with the number of fare-paying passengers now exceeding pre-covid levels.

Passenger numbers across the UK fell dramatically during the covid-19 pandemic with an average drop across the UK of 50.3% but in many areas even more.

Latest figures for Norfolk show that overall bus passenger numbers have increased by 18% in the last year with the number of fare-paying passengers now at 107% compared to pre-pandemic baseline figures. Norfolk is bucking the trend as nationally bus usage figures are at between 89% to 98% of pre-pandemic levels*.

Concessionary pass holders, who have been the slowest to return to using the bus since the pandemic, are now at 83% of pre-pandemic levels and have increased by more than 12% since January this year.

Norfolk received the sixth highest allocation in the country and the funding consists of £30.9m of capital funding and £18.6m of revenue funding.

Approximately £12 million of the funding was allocated to providing new or expanded bus routes and increased service frequencies on key routes, including more evening and weekend services and this has been very much the focus of the spend in this first year of funding.

- A total of 31 enhancements have been made to services this year bringing more regular bus services to 93 parishes with a population of more than 306,000 people.
- There are now more evening services on key routes across 21 parishes in the county including to Dereham, Watton, Thorpe St Andrew and Horsford.
- 49 parishes have an improved Saturday service while 5 parishes are benefitting from improved Sunday services.

In addition to the service enhancements year one of delivering the bus service improvement plan for the county has also seen the following infrastructure improvements.

- The first Travel Norfolk Travel Hub opened in North Walsham providing improved waiting areas with real-time information and integration with walking and cycling facilities.
- A county-wide review of bus stops has started with stops in Hunstanton and Swaffham and Hellesdon being upgraded to our new gold standard.
- 84 accessible bus stop boarding points have been delivered countywide.

Bus travel has also become cheaper this year and offers great value for money thanks not only to the Government fare cap which most operators in Norfolk have

signed up to but also 4 local fares offers delivered thanks to the bus service improvement plan:

- £1.50 flat fares for King's Lynn
- £1.50 flat fares for Thetford
- 25% off group, weekly and monthly tickets
- Reduced park & ride fares

*taken from DfT Usage of transport by mode report

More evening bus services out of Norwich thanks to bus service improvement plan

A number of bus services operated by First Eastern Counties have been running more often from thanks to money that Norfolk County Council secured from the Department for Transport (DfT) to improve bus services across the County.

The changes to timetables which started on Sunday 29th October are:

- More evening journeys between the City Centre and Hethersett via Norfolk and Norwich Hospital on the Pink Line 11/11a/12. Hourly journeys will operate every day and these replace existing 13A and 13B journeys to and from the hospital.
- New evening and Sunday journeys on the Green Line to Wymondham and some routes have been extended to Silfield and Harts Farm.
- Sunday and evening journeys on Service 13 shortening journey times between Norwich, Wymondham and Attleborough.
- Green Line services have been renumbered, to make it easier to identify your destination when travelling to the east of the city.
- Services 14 and 14A will operate to and from Dussindale.
- Services 15 and 15A will operate to and from Blofield Heath.
- Services 16 and 16A will operate to and from Lingwood.
- The Purple Line 36/37/38/39 is getting later evening services and improved Sunday services – as well as an extension to the Horsford services to operate to Memorial Road and Flagcutters Way on the Kingfisher Meadow development.
- Thorpe St Andrew will get a new hourly evening service as well as new Sunday journeys on the Red Line 23/24. Previously no evening service the last bus will now depart the city centre for Thorpe St Andrew at 23:08.
- Spixworth will be getting a new hourly service on a Sunday on the Turquoise Line 13 (previously just five journeys on a Sunday).

24/7 free travel to all disabled bus pass holders in Norfolk

From 1 February 2024 all Norfolk residents who hold a disabled concessionary travel pass will be eligible for free bus travel 24 hours a day, seven days a week when travelling within the county.

The decision, which was published today by Norfolk County Council, means that more than 14,500 people across the county who hold a concessionary bus pass due

to disability, and their eligible companions, will now be able to travel on any bus at any time free of charge across Norfolk.

Previously concessionary pass holders with a disability were only able to travel for free on buses off-peak (all day on Saturdays and Sundays but only from 09:30 Monday to Friday) except for those registered blind or visually impaired.

Offering free travel at all times is over and above the minimum requirement set by government, and is something that a local authority can choose to do but doesn't have to do. The change was recommended following an updated equality impact assessment of the scheme which concluded that it is now unfair to offer a discretionary enhancement to just one group of disabled people (i.e. those who are blind or visually impaired).

The recommendation agreed by the individual cabinet member was to 'extend the concessionary travel discretion of free travel at all times to all eligible disabled passholders and eligible companions, from 1 February 2024'.

The cost of providing this enhancement is estimated at £50,000 which will be funded by the Council's ring-fenced public transport budget provided by the Department for Transport.

Householders can have free DIY waste disposal for small projects

Norfolk residents have been able to dispose of small amounts of DIY waste at Norfolk's Recycling Centres free of charge from 31st December following changes made by Norfolk County Council.

The change applies to small-scale projects carried out by householders on their own home, allowing them to bring a maximum 100 litres (must fit into 2 x 50l bags) for free or one single item (maximum size of 200cm x 70cm x 75cm). Each household is allowed four free visits with DIY waste every four weeks. Anything beyond this will still be charged at normal rates.

The change in policy follows Government abolishing charges for the disposal of limited amounts and types of DIY waste at recycling centres across the UK. Prior to 31st December, customers with DIY-type construction and demolition waste will continue to be directed to the 'Pay as you throw service' which is available at all centres.

Traders must continue to pay for DIY waste. For more information visit www.norfolk.gov.uk/DIYwaste

Climate Strategy was launched at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse Museum

Norfolk County Council's Climate Strategy, adopted by Cabinet last May, was launched at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse Museum with special guest Kate Strong, world record holder and endurance cyclist.

The Climate Strategy sets out how the council will work not only to reduce its own carbon emissions, but to drive down emissions across the county, protect the unique environment of Norfolk, and to seize the opportunities the move to a green economy represents, securing investment and growth for Norfolk.

Key proposals include:

- Supporting active and sustainable transport, including further bus improvements and electric vehicle charging
- Providing space for nature and developing a nature recovery strategy
- Retrofitting council buildings to take out gas and oil heating and improve insulation – and encouraging businesses, residents and other organisations to do the same
- Reducing emissions from the council's companies, such as Norse
- Developing the green economy, with support for green skills, sustainable tourism and businesses
- The development of a nature recovery strategy to protect our natural assets and encourage greater biodiversity
- Working with the Tyndall Centre for climate change research at the University of East Anglia, to understand climate change impacts and how Norfolk might adapt to them
- Close collaboration between public sector, business, community and voluntary groups

Norfolk and Suffolk councils given authority and funding to help nature's recovery

Norfolk County Council and Suffolk County Council have been formally appointed by Government as responsible authorities for preparing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for their respective counties.

This means that they will be working together to help improve wildlife habitats and reverse the decline of biodiversity across the region, working with local communities to develop a tailored nature recovery strategy for their areas.

They will also work with other local planning authorities, the Broads Authority, Natural England, and a wide range of stakeholders and partners, including farming and landowner groups.

This is all part of Government's ambition to further drive nature recovery, with 48 individual local authorities across the country receiving allocations from a £14 million funding pot. Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils will receive £333,000 and £282,000 respectively over two years to fund this work. With the best ways to support nature recovery depending on local character and geography, Local Nature Recovery Strategies will help communities map out the action needed in their area to restore nature.

Norfolk County Council environmental credentials praised in review

Norfolk County Council is doing better than almost every other county council in the country at moving towards net zero, according to an independent assessment.

Campaign group Climate Emergency UK produced scorecards marking action by councils on climate change, including areas such as buildings, transport, planning and biodiversity.

Norfolk was placed joint second with Devon among county councils, with only Oxfordshire ranked higher, after a nine-month assessment process.

Councils were marked according to responses to questions around issues such as retrofitting properties, whether they used electric vehicles, whether they have climate action plans and how high recycling rates are.

Ready to Act new Public Health plan to improve health and wellbeing in Norfolk

Norfolk's new Public Health Strategic Plan prioritises prevention and identifies where Public Health and partners need to focus to improve health and wellbeing in the county.

The plan, being presented to Norfolk County Council's Cabinet, identified opportunities for organisations and communities across the county to promote good health and support people's wellbeing.

These include promoting stop smoking initiatives and encouraging people to take up their free NHS health checks.

The strategic plan, called Ready to Change, Ready to Act details how the Council will work with key partners to help the people of Norfolk to make positive changes to their physical and mental health. It includes work to address the longer-term impacts of the pandemic, such as mental wellbeing, supporting healthy weight and promoting engagement with public health services.

Find out how you could get help from the Household Support Fund at www.norfolk.gov.uk/costofliving

Launch of Working Well Norfolk employment programme

Working Well Norfolk, a £2.7M scheme funded by the Department for Work & Pensions set to help Norfolk residents with long-term health conditions or physical impairments get into work and to stay in work, was officially launched by Cllr Fabian Eagle at the Work, Skills and Wellbeing Fair.

The scheme, managed by Norfolk County Council and run by delivery partners Seetec Pluss and Standguide Ltd aims to provide free personalised 1:1 support to 1,100 people who have physical disabilities or who are experiencing mild to moderate mental health difficulties, and to people who are experiencing other long term

sickness or disabilities that impact their daily activities. Participants can be unemployed or currently in work. Interested individuals or businesses should contact Seetec Pluss on 07933 818 986 or www.seetecpluss/working-well-norfolk to register their interest.

Annual awards recognise dozens of outstanding contributions to Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service

Achievements including saving a village from the clutches of wildfire, helping transport a horse mannequin called Brandy, and restoring a fire station flower garden, all received recognition at the Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service Annual Staff Awards.

The ceremony recognised the efforts of fire fighters, fire staff, their friends and families and community partners and volunteers, showing how everyone has a unique part to play in to make in making the service great.

A total of 16 awards were given in nine categories: Cadet of the Year – Charlie Mirfin of Hunstanton Fire Cadets; On-Call Employers of the Year – Howdens and MN Landscapes; Fundraiser of the Year – Wymondham Watch Manager Tom Diaper; Volunteer of the Year - Dylan Steggles of Hingham; Making a Difference Award – Watch Manager Michelle Lowe, Chris Baker, Let’s Talk Mental Health team, and Blue Watch King’s Lynn; Partnership Award - Redwings Horse Sanctuary, Inspirational Leader Award – Western Group Manager David Copeland and Prevention Manager Llio Wyn Knight-Griffith; New Employees of the Year Award - Lucy Goldsmith and Jessica Graves; and Team Achievement Award – Crucial Crew and Payroll team.

For more on the individual stories of these awards, which were sponsored by Norfolk Safety CIC and Brancaster Parish Council, [visit our Facebook page](#).

Award-winning Adult Learning service rated ‘Good’ by Ofsted

Norfolk County Council’s Adult Learning has been rated as ‘Good’ following their latest Ofsted inspection.

The inspection report praised the ambition of the service, which provides community-based and online learning for around 6,000 adults a year. The service achieved a ‘Good’ rating across all six areas that were inspected, alongside the overall ‘Good’ rating.

Inspectors commented that learners are ‘highly motivated’ and committed to their studies. They praised the number of people who have a ‘clear plan’ for their future careers and that they want to improve their economic prospects.

In particular, inspectors highlighted the work with residents of retirement homes who have increased their confidence, self-care and resilience after completing courses in basic cookery. They commented how, following the course, learners felt less isolated and ‘excited to prepare and eat their own meals’.

It was also recognised that the service has responded effectively to the growing demand for English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) courses.

There was praise for the work with Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service apprentices. The inspectors saw how the course helps them to work safely while learning about the importance of health and nutrition. The report concluded that the 'apprenticeship is well matched to the needs of the fire service.'

This inspection result comes on the back of Norfolk County Council Adult Learning being named 'Further or Higher Education Provider of the Year' at this year's Norfolk Education Awards. This followed national recognition in 2021 where the service was named adult and community learning provider of the year at the Tes Further Education Awards.

Norfolk County Council Adult Learning offers a wide range of courses for adults of all levels and interests. Whether you want to change your career, improve your skills, or pursue your passion.

Find out more about Adult Learning and browse the course catalogue at www.norfolk.gov.uk/adultlearning.

More than ten thousand Norfolk children benefit from mental health programme in first year

A children's mental health and wellbeing programme, funded by Norfolk County Council, has supported more than 10,000 in its first year.

The Rise Up programme gives children and young people valuable knowledge and strategies to support their mental health and is being delivered in secondary and special schools across the county. 93% of young people said that their ability to manage their wellbeing improved after completing the programme.

Created and delivered by Future Action, in partnership with Norfolk County Council's Virtual School for Children in Care, Previously in Care and Children with a Social Worker, the course aims to help children build confidence, reduce their anxiety, and create a sustainable wellbeing programme within 90 days.

More than 350 teachers across 62 secondary and special schools in Norfolk have taken part in the online training programme, which delivers a nine-step programme to help support the mental wellbeing of children and young people.

The RISE Up toolbox of strategies, physical activities and comprehensive set of resources allows teachers to deliver classroom and small group-based work which helps young people improve their wellbeing, understanding the challenges facing their mental wellbeing and approaches to overcoming them.

Following the successful partnership between Future Action and the Virtual School for Children in Care, Previously in Care and Children with a Social Worker, Norfolk County Council has commissioned the programme for a second year.

In its second year, the programme aims to embed the programme across more schools and staff to enable teachers:

- To identify individual young people struggling with their mental health and direct them to the specialist support they need as early as possible
- To provide more young people with a range of self-care strategies to protect and build their mental wellbeing to transform their life chances and reduce the pressure on upstream services
- To teach the link between physical activity and mental wellbeing
-

In addition, the council has commissioned a 'Trauma Informed PE' programme, also delivered by Future Action. The aim of the programme is to:

- Educate PE teachers about the impact of childhood trauma and the eight protective factors
- How colleagues can create psychological safety to transform outcomes in the short and long term
- The link between physical activity, play and mental wellbeing

Secondary and special school teachers or teaching assistants within Norfolk can contact futureaction.co.uk to access the courses.

Further information about the Virtual School and the offer to Children in Care, Previously in Care and Children with a Social Worker can be found by emailing Virtual.SchoolsCwSW@norfolk.gov.uk or

Appendix 1

Geldeston Parish Council Annual Meeting Chairpersons Report

This last year has been a busy one for the PC.

More equipment has been installed at the playpark and it is looking fantastic.

I would like to say a thank you to all the people who gave up their time to help with this, without their help and enthusiasm this would not have been so far forward.

Members of the Parish Council assisted by volunteers from the village are regularly inspecting the equipment and reporting their findings back to our Clerk

I would like to thank the Chapmans for continuing to cut the Green project for the PC.

And Margaret and Joe Langren for their hard work with the Green project and allotments which are an ongoing success.

The PC have been asked for more litter bins and dog bins these have been obtained and will be installed shortly.

There will also be another grit bin installed at the top of Geldeston hill following a request for one.

I hope that the residents of our village have been happy with the work carried out on their behalf by the PC, And will be in the future.

I would like to thank Tina our Clerk for all the help, support and wise guidance given to me and the rest of the PC, Without Tina's expertise things would have been much more difficult.

Ian Ansell
Geldeston Parish Council Chair

Appendix 2

GELDESTON VILLAGE PARK REPORT

(May 2023)

Background

Geldeston Village Park (GVP) began life as Let's Play when it was recognised that the children of Geldeston had no local play facilities after the original playground had fallen into disrepair. Play facilities are expensive and whilst the Parish Council (GPC) had some CIL monies this was insufficient for its needs. A small subgroup of local volunteers set about fund raising and creating an awareness amongst local businesses and residents. They responded and made generous cash donations and the contributions of materials. Slowly but surely the coffers began to grow.

Then unfortunately Covid hit. Not to be deterred the subgroup diligently kept going and continued with Covid friendly fund raisers which not only raised funds but also morale. At about the same time SNDC transferred the surrounding recreational area into GPC ownership. This provided the opportunity to transform a neglected public area into a universal space for people of all ages and abilities. The project could incorporate not only a fully equipped playground for children but also a cross generational wheelchair accessible sensory garden and boule court. It offered a place where people can come together, unwind, and exercise. This however needed additional money. The subcommittee set about making a bid for national lottery funding which was more difficult than envisaged due to extenuating circumstances.

The committee had never put together such a bid before and requests for help fell on deaf ears. The after math of Covid 19 combined with Brexit and to some extent the Ever-Green container ship blocking the Suez Canal caused great difficulties in obtaining quotes for necessary work. There is/was a national shortage in acquiring materials and labour is/was in high demand causing prices to rise. Quotes obtained prior to the pandemic could no longer be relied upon and it was difficult to use quotes gained by others for comparison as these would also have become out of date. It was not easy to gain quotes from landscape gardeners and contractors who either couldn't come out for some time to come or failed to send their quotes. Thus, the subgroup was to a large extent working in the dark when putting together the figures which they considered would give an idea of the costs involved.

The hard work of the subcommittee paid dividends however and they won the bid for funding. The National Lottery commenting on how much they liked the "community element" of the bid. Let's Play subsequently became GVP.

Sub Committee

The subcommittee are not from business backgrounds and represent the wider community at large. The group consist of people with "life experience" including working mothers and experienced health professionals. This ensured community involvement and minimised the risk of a subliminal hidden agenda.

The Project

The project identified and addressed several gaps in provision of services for the Geldeston community. By creating a positive environment GVP concentrates on inclusivity and provides a common ground where people across the demographic spectrum can interact therefore promoting their mental and physical health.

Local volunteers from the community pulled together and cleared the site. A local reputable landscape gardener prepared the site in preparation for the installation of playground equipment. The work involved filling in the large potholes and craters left by the old playground equipment with topsoil donated from British sugar. Grass seed was purchased from a local supermarket and planted by local children.

Progress made.

With the combination of CIL money, fund raising, donations and lottery funding GVP now encompasses children's play equipment including sensory equipment, adult gym equipment, a basketball hoop and hard surface area and a boule court. Thanks to local builder James Bromley and volunteer Snowy Rolt the beginnings of the sensory garden have been dug and are awaiting planting out. Saffron Housing have promised two volunteers for the day once the necessary shrubs and plants have been ordered. The benches and friendship bench have been purchased from donations made by the wider community. A group of volunteers have been trained to regularly survey the site and report any damage or defects found,

Social Media

The subcommittee have established a successful social media group that promotes a synergy between the businesses in the village and puts GVP on the map.

<https://www.facebook.com/geldestonvillagepark> A new email account has been created where people can keep up to date or organise Boule tournaments, establish teams or set up outdoor exercise classes.

Future Events Planned

After the resounding success of the Easter egg hunt an Elf trail has been planned for this year on the 16th of December at the village hall.

Current challenges

- Part of the land has been used over the years by residents gaining prohibited access to their properties which over time has become difficult to challenge. A safety barrier has been erected which needs to be planted out to offer greater security.
- Damage has been caused by the grass cutters whilst strimming around the equipment and this needs to be addressed.
- There is some confusion surrounding the outstanding balance of lottery monies available as reclaimed VAT monies seem to be in the wrong account

and an error looks to have been made regarding over payment of VAT monies by the national lottery. Clarification is needed regarding the current balance Before further purchases can be made.

- As GPC has responsibility for the management of local facilities such as parks and playgrounds all potential expenditure must be ratified by them which can delay progress by up to 2 months.

The subgroup has had to work amid tensions between certain factions of GPC. This in combination with undeserved criticism has had the adverse effect of demoralising the team and potentially triggering disharmony between the subgroup and GPC. Examples of (but not limited to) are listed below.

- Due to the difficulties mentioned above when applying for lottery monies certain financial aspects of the project may have been understated or not claimed for.
- At certain busy times of year, it is difficult to find meeting times convenient for all.
- Claims have been made for the provision of items / services not quoted for in the original bid.

Conclusion

The main core of the work has been completed and the emphasis is now on completion of the sensory garden. Once we are aware of the available budget necessary plants shrubs and equipment can be purchased for stage one of its completion. The subgroup plan to meet again on Wednesday to finalise events.

Appendix 3

Barry Stone – County Councillor for the Clavering Division

Annual Parish Report – Spring 2023



Norfolk County Council highlights for 2022/23

It has, as always, been a busy and demanding year at County Council and this report covers some of the main highlights of the issues that have dealt with during the year.

Norfolk County Council Budget for 2023/24 approved by councillors

Norfolk County Council has set its latest budget, which tackles spending pressures and protects key services.

The budget approved today includes:

- A net spending increase of £29.6m to meet rising costs
- A Council Tax increase in line with the Government's cap of 4.99 per cent – 2.99 per cent for general Council Tax and two per cent for the adult social care precept. This would increase the County Council's share of band D bills from £1,516.95 to £1,592.64.
- A "significant proportion" of the £59.7m savings coming from "doing things better for less", including £17m from the first phase of a strategic review of the council

The proposed spending for each department is:

- Adult social services, £249.5m
- Children's services, £232.6m
- Community and environmental services, £177.1m
- Strategy and transformation, £12.8m
- Finance and commercial services, £35.8m

The same meeting will consider its £956.9m capital investment in buildings and equipment, funded by grants and property sales. In addition to a range of existing

schemes, like the Great Yarmouth Third River Crossing and investment in special education needs (SEND) schools, there are new investments totalling £35m:

- County Farms refurbishment and carbon reduction schemes (£9.4m)
- The rolling Technology Improvement programme (£8.2m)
- Scottow Enterprise Park refurbishment (£8.6m)
- Estate Buildings Decarbonisation initiatives (£4m)
- Highways improvements (£2.5m)
- Fire and Rescue services equipment and site improvements (£1.2m)
- Expansion of waste recycling sites and services (£0.51m)
- One Million Trees for Norfolk (£0.5m)

Have your say on the county deal

A series of events have and are continuing to taking place so you can have your say on a £600 million-plus deal to unlock opportunities to deliver more jobs, housing and investment.

Consultation takes place until 20th March at www.norfolk.gov.uk/norfolkcountydeal on the in-principle county deal devolution agreement that Norfolk County Council signed with the Government last December.

£133m for highways and transport in Norfolk over the next year

Carbon-cutting transport schemes are set for a £29 million boost in Norfolk, despite the tough financial climate.

Norfolk County Council's Cabinet will be considering a forward looking and carbon-cutting transport budget for the new financial year at a meeting on Monday 6 March.

At £133m the 2023/24 highways and transport budget represents a £29m increase on the previous year's budget. Despite inflation being expected to dent the authority's spending power the highway and transport team have been focusing on maintaining and improving the network and continuing strong investment in carbon cutting transport strategies as the council moves towards net zero carbon by 2030.

Details of the location and cost of 120 walking, cycling, and road improvements across the county, and how £45.6m will be spent on maintenance of bridges, roads, drains and paths, are available in the papers for the meeting.

Cabinet will consider the report when it meets at 10am on Monday, 6 March.

£50m Bus Service Improvement Plan Funding for Norfolk

Norfolk County Council was only one of around 30 authorities who successfully received an allocation from the Bus Service Improvement Plan from government, receiving one of the largest allocations at £50m. The first £10m phase of this funding was received in November 2022. Through our Enhanced Partnership, we are now working closely with the Bus operators to implement enhanced routes and services as well as reviewing infrastructure and fares to encourage passenger growth and improved bus journey reliability. This should enable bus routes to be more sustainable in the long term. Following the receipt of the first payment, measures have already been implemented, which includes an increased frequency on the Coastliner 36 service, more frequent buses from North Walsham to Norwich and new late night bus services serving Thorpe St Andrew, Thorpe End, Rackheath, Salhouse, Wroxham and Watton.

Thousands more trees and hedgerows to be planted in Norfolk this winter

As part of the [1 Million Trees for Norfolk project](#) Norfolk County Council is preparing to plant more than 75,000 young trees and hedges across the county in the months ahead.

In 2019, Norfolk County Council agreed an ambitious scheme to plant a million trees over five-years. The pandemic brought many challenges and caused delays which meant at the end of last year the total planted trees stood at just over 68,000.

Now the project is picking up pace rapidly, and early in 2023 the Council's Hedge Restoration Fund will plant 55,000 hedge and tree plants on six County Farms owned by Norfolk County Council.

The hedges will see improvements in nature connectivity across the farms by filling in gaps in hedgerows. This is particularly good for our wildlife as it helps join up habitats and provides corridors for wildlife to safely travel along. The project is funded by a grant from The Tree Council.

£1.5m boost for 12 pioneering jobs and skills projects

From commercial use of seaweed to improving home insulation – 12 projects to boost Norfolk’s economy are set to receive £1.5 million from the county council.

Cabinet will consider funding 12 pilot projects to shape Norfolk’s economic future, using £1.5 million from the local business rates fund.

The proposed projects are the first phase of the Norfolk Investment Framework (NIF), which will identify long-term investment priorities for the county, to boost the economy and improve public services.

The county council’s cabinet will consider 12 pilot projects, which include:

- Exploring development of a seaweed industry to support food, fertilisers, animal feed, biofuels and bioplastics
- Investigating water storage and desalination and the efficient movement of water supplies around Norfolk
- A digital and creative media centre in Watton, to improve skills and encourage start-up businesses
- Working with colleges to support recruitment and retention of skills tutors, including the development of a bursary to support graduates in taking up tutoring jobs
- Investigating the development of a rooftop solar panel network across greater Norwich
- Carrying out a feasibility study on retrofitting homes to maximise energy efficiency

Norfolk’s Social Infrastructure Fund gives 10 organisations money to improve community impact

Norfolk County Council has awarded £770,000 to organisations who will be able to make a large positive impact in the communities in which they operate.

This is the third round of Social Infrastructure Funding, which has provided capital grants to organisations who can use the money to improve facilities for communities and boost the level of local community services. This year’s funding pot totalled £1 million, with £225,000 to continue the successful partnership with Norfolk Community Foundation in expanding their Nourishing Norfolk food hubs across the county, and £775,000 available for individual projects to improve communities across Norfolk.

Examples of successful projects this year are:

- Whitlingham Charitable Trust who will get £100,000 to resurface and restore the wheelchair accessible path at Whitlingham Country Park
- North Lynn Methodist Church will get £50,000 to renovate and create new space to become an accessible community asset to host a variety of social events
- Banningham and Colby Community Hall will receive £39,790 to complete refurbishments of the hall to offer a welcoming space to bring the community together
- The Charlotte Harvey Trust in Watton will get £38,000 to refurbish and improve their toilets to make the community centre more accessible and fit for the future
- Castle Acre Village Hall in West Norfolk will receive £37,604 to make improvements such as refitting the kitchen and installing solar panels and batteries to invest in the future of the village
- Aylsham Community Church will receive £28,000 to refurbish the Jubilee Family Centre so it can once again offer a warm, welcoming, and safe space for the community
- Silver Road Community Centre in Norwich will get £18,500 to build accessible toilets and make the well-used community space more welcoming
- Sutton Parochial Church Council will receive £12,000 to add a kitchen and toilet to the church to enable it to be used as a community space

Five projects had their applications fast-tracked during the winter of 2022 to enable them to make the maximum impact as soon as possible.

Care farm among six new tenancies for Norfolk's County Farms

Norfolk County Council has welcomed six new tenants to its county farms estate later this year.

Among the new tenants are two couples who are set to join forces to create a new care farm in west Norfolk. NHS workers Alex and Ed Webster will be working with Ben & Gemma Human to set up Ingleborough Care Farm after they discovered both parties were interested in applying for the same tenancy.

In total the six new tenants have taken on just under 750 acres of county farms land from October last year. This follows a thorough application process that began at the end of last year and recently concluded with an interview with a panel of experts.

Norfolk Museum Service secures further funding

In November 2022, Norfolk Museums Service secured £4.126 million of Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation funding for the period 2023-2026. The funding will enable Norfolk Museums Service to deliver new Early Years' programmes across the County, expand our formal learning offer, deliver new targeted programmes to young people 11-25, along with a range of new health & wellbeing activities for residents of all ages. The funding will also support the delivery of new community learning programmes through the NCC Environment Hub at Gressenhall.

New Adult Learning Construction Training Facilities open in Norwich and King's Lynn

In 2022, Adult Learning's vision to support the construction industry and Norfolk's economy by establishing a construction and environmental sustainability curriculum offer for adults in Norfolk, became a reality. A successful tender to the Community Renewal Fund (CRF), which secured £568,000 of central government funding, has enabled Adult Learning to establish two new construction skills training centres in Norwich and King's Lynn. These two hubs are now, in early 2023, receiving the first adult learners on site.

To gather momentum, whilst the two new sites were under development, in January 2022 Adult Learning opened a temporary construction training room at Wensum Lodge, Norwich and delivered a variety of trades, including plumbing, tiling, brick laying, plastering and carpentry, with 400 adult registrations (January to October 2022). The participation rate of female learners was over 30% which compares to a construction industry participation figure of less than 15% in the UK.

No Cold Calling Zones introduced

308 individual No-Cold-Calling Zones (NCCZ) have been set up in the county with 11 new zones being launched in 2022. The 308 NCCZs protect 14,474 individual households across the county.

NCCZs are designated areas where residents have declared that they will not accept traders calling at their homes without an appointment, and act as a deterrent to traders and bogus callers who don't want to be recognised as working in a particular area. The zones are particularly useful and effective in areas where residents might be at a higher risk from cold calling, such as neighbourhoods with a large number of vulnerable or elderly residents. Creating an NCCZ is an effective way of helping to

protect them and send a clear signal that residents do not wish to be approached in their homes.

NCCZs are effective as demonstrated by the feedback we receive. Households in NCCZs feel safer, cold calling is reduced or eliminated and residents feel better equipped to manage should traders call:

- *“Since becoming a no cold calling zone area myself and my neighbours feel safer”*
- *“On behalf of myself and residents I wish for you to know our inclusion in this scheme has made our lives more comfortable. The cold calling factor has been very minimal since (shortly after) we joined”*
- *“It is a very good idea. We feel much safer”*

Trading Standards follows up all reports of cold calling in an NCCZ, which may simply involve finding out why a trader has ignored the zone but may include more formal action. While there is no law preventing cold calling, consumers have 14 days to cancel contracts which have a value of more than £42 when signed at their home or place of work. Traders who do not issue a cancellation notice allowing the 14-day cooling off period are breaking the law and Trading Standards may be able to take enforcement action in these case

£1m funding for out of school activity facilities

Active Norfolk, who are hosted and supported by Norfolk County Council, have secured £1m to support schools to open their facilities outside of school hours to enable local communities to be more active.

Working with the Integrated Care System through 2022, Norfolk County Council will be launching an ongoing programme to enable people to access physical activity opportunities as part of the treatment pathway for long-term conditions such as diabetes, stroke, and cancer. The programme will also build community capacity to support greater equity of access to opportunities for people all across the county.

Working closely with Children’s Services, we provided holiday activities and food at Easter, during the summer holidays and over Christmas, for around 10,000 children in 2022. Around 1 in 5 of those children were those with a disability or SEN. This was delivered by c.100 local community providers and invested c.£2m into local organisations.

Adult Learning leads the delivery of numeracy skills of adult residents in Norfolk

The need nationally to improve the numeracy skills of both children and adults has been highlighted recently both through central government and the media.

Norfolk has received £4.7 million to improve the numeracy skills of adult residents through a government initiative called Multiply. This funding will last until the end of March 2025, and by then our target is to secure 11,000 adult registrations onto Multiply programmes in Norfolk.

Adult Learning is leading the delivery of this major new programme, delivering both in-house and through grant funding arrangements with the colleges and other, smaller organisations and grassroots providers. The funding enables us to work with small groups and even individuals on a one-to-one basis.

The funding targets adults who need support with and lack confidence in their numeracy skills and a wide range of interventions are already taking place across the county. These include:

- Introductory courses which help increase people's confidence with numbers
- Courses designed to help people understand and manage their money, particularly during the cost-of-living crisis
- Specific workplace courses, delivered with employers to provide skills relevant to the workplace
- Numeracy courses aimed at parents who want to increase their own skills to be able to better help their children
- Additional maths modules built into existing vocational courses
- Intensive and flexible courses which lead to a Functional Skills Qualification.

While we are in the early stages of the programme, this funding has already made a difference to some of the first learners to complete a course.

Norfolk to benefit from new Family Hubs and Start for Life funding

Children and parents in Norfolk are to benefit from a new cradle to career approach to family support.

The government has just announced that Norfolk County Council will be one of 75 local authorities receiving some of the £302m new Family Hubs and Start for Life funding.

It means the county will receive approximately £6m to further develop its prevention and early help services for families with children and young people up to the age of 19 (25 if they have special educational needs and disabilities).

This is not about introducing a new service or opening new buildings but to allow the county to further develop support for families. Using a whole family approach, the Family Hubs network will give families a single access point to support services that are integrated across health (physical and mental health) and social care as well as voluntary and community organisations and education.

Whilst there will be at least seven physical Family Hub sites in existing community buildings, which families will be able to walk into, services will be delivered largely on an outreach basis. The Family Hub approach will bring together a wide range of services so that families can access support in the spaces and places that they live and visit, such as libraries and community buildings.

The Family Hubs network will provide simple access to 'Start for Life' services, providing the best support for babies in the first 1,001 critical days from conception to the age of two, setting them up to maximise their potential for lifelong emotional and physical wellbeing including:

- Perinatal mental health and parent-infant relationships support for families who are expecting a baby or have a baby under the age of two
 - Infant feeding support services
 - Parenting support for parents of children aged 0-2
 - Home learning environment support for parents of children aged 3-4
-

District Councillor's report received late

Subject: Annual District Councillors Report - b. Bernard and C.Brown

ADCR

Main headlines:

- Collaboration between South Norfolk District Council and Broadlands has continued to reap benefits for the District, culminating in the two Councils under one roof. Long Stratton offices are under offer and Broadlands offices will also be sold in the near future. The new offices at Broadlands Business Park will provide an annual saving of £700,000 pa and help reduce the likely rates increases in the future.

- The District Council has finally accepted that we have to be more proactive on Environmental issues and has set objectives which have to be achieved by 2035.

- The District council has encouraged the increase in EV charging points in the District, doubling the number of EV charges in the Council run car parks.

- Leisure facilities has continued to make progress to improve utilisation and membership, with the hope that we can get back to levels seen before 2019.

- A balanced budget was agreed for 2023/24 and to help with the cost of living crisis, District rates have not been increased for this year.

District Councillors for

Ditchingham and Earsham Ward

Brendon Bernard and Chris Brown
01986893240

Report from Catherine Bickmore PCC

Report to Geldeston PC: Restoration works at St Michael and All Angels Church, Geldeston

1. Background

'As well as being places of worship and buildings of beauty, churches sit at the heart of the community. In many ways they stand between the past and present' (Paul Ramsbottom, Chief Executive of the Wolfson Foundation).

Our village church is an attractive grade 2* listed round tower building of flint construction dating from the 14th to 15th centuries with additions 1860s. It was built by the local community, and remains an important part of our cultural heritage and for use by the community.

The church has some high-quality internal and external wood and stone carvings from medieval and Victorian periods including, an East Anglian octagonal font with smiling lions round the stem, a 15th century porch decorated with scenes of the Passion, fine carvings by John Philip of London and 20C stained glass window by Leonard Walker RA. In the churchyard there is a rare World War I Memorial decorated with the crests of various regiments. The high quality additions in the 1860's are well documented in contemporary church terriers.

2. Restoration works

The Quinquennial survey of the church identified that the condition of the roof, rainwater goods and windows had deteriorated with a pressing need for their repair, together with re pointing, rendering, and internally lime works. The works needed to be undertaken as soon as possible to keep the church wind and watertight thereby preventing further deterioration so that the heritage of church fabric could be restored, fit for use by the local community and visitors alike such that its heritage can be more easily interpreted and appreciated. With the works costing over £70,000 a Restoration Appeal was launched.

3. Restoration Appeal

We are most grateful to have the support of a number of charities, private donors and help in kind from a large number of volunteers as part of the Appeal.

Grant aid was provided by the following charities:

Benefact Trust

Geoffrey Watling Charity

National Churches Trust

Norfolk Churches Trust

Paul Bassham Trust

Round Tower Churches Society

Wolfson Foundation

A series of fund raising events (all reported in Tidings Mag) included garden open day and plant sale, a garden party, a promenade concert, tours of the church, and the restoration works. These were made possible by a large number of volunteers including from Geldeston, the Village Hall who provided loan of plant, with volunteers helping set up, catering and attendance. Also, volunteers have assisted with some of the works in the church.

The events were well attended by local residents as well as those from further afield.

4. Progress of the works

The majority of the works have been completed using a specialist contractor William Tyrrell such that the church can be opened again for regular use and visitors. However, still £10,000 is required to complete the restoration of some further windows.

In celebration of the completed works a Geldeston church festival is being organized for the weekend 30 Sept /1 October 2023. The Bishop of Norwich will take a service on 1 October to which all are welcome.

We thank all those involved.

Catherine Bickmore, Church Warden 9/05/23