

Norfolk County Council Updates – 17-10-25

Healthy Ageing

The county council's Public Health department has launched a new campaign to encourage residents aged 50 and over to prioritise their health so that they can live healthier, more connected lives as they age.

The campaign is centred around a brand-new Healthy Ageing website, called 'It's never too late', which highlights resources, guidance and opportunities to help residents make positive changes to their health and wellbeing.

Norfolk is home to one of the highest ageing populations in the UK. Evidence shows that staying physically active, keeping up with recommended vaccinations and screenings, and maintaining social connections are among the strongest predictors of how well people age. These actions play a direct role in preventing illnesses, reducing the risk of falls and long-term conditions, and supporting mental wellbeing.

Whether you are already active and well, or you are beginning to feel a shift in how you feel, investing more in your health now can help positively shape your next 10 years.

Members are encouraged to find out more and to signpost others to the new healthy ageing webpage www.norfolk.gov.uk/healthyageing.

Norfolk's SEND survey findings

The results of [Norfolk's latest survey of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities \(SEND\)](#) show both encouraging progress and ongoing challenges, reflecting national concerns about the SEND system.

Norfolk County Council's latest survey on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), conducted in January and February and published by the Local Inclusion Partnership, received 2,386 response - almost double the number from 2023.

The survey reflects both encouraging progress, and ongoing challenges in line with national concerns about the SEND system.

Key findings include:

- Children and young people with SEND in Norfolk share similar aspirations to their peers but face greater barriers in education, mental health, and inclusion.
- Families reported emotional and financial pressures, while professionals highlighted ongoing challenges with capacity, funding, and public understanding.

The survey forms a key part of the Norfolk SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), which combines statutory data with lived experiences to provide a comprehensive view of SEND for children and young people aged 0–25 in Norfolk.

Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service

Consultation on fire and rescue priorities

Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service (NFRS) has [launched a public consultation](#) on their proposed priorities to reduce risk and improve safety in Norfolk.

Residents, businesses and organisations are encouraged to provide feedback on areas the service has identified as priorities for 2026-2031 in their Community Risk Management Plan.

The consultation is available online and NFRS staff will also be hosting events around the county to hear your views.

Residents are encouraged to pop along, meet the team, and find out more about the plans and their work. Come and meet the team on:

- Wednesday 5 November 2025, at Thetford Library, 10am-12pm
- Thursday 6 November 2025, at Norwich Millennium Library, 10am-12pm
- Friday 7 November 2025, at Great Yarmouth Library, 10am-12pm
- Friday 21 November 2025, at King's Lynn Library, 10am-12pm

The closing date for the consultation is 26 November 2025.

Further details are available in our press release [here](#).

Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service – staff achievements

The dedicated long service and recent achievements of fire and rescue staff working across Norfolk have been recognised at an awards ceremony in Norwich Castle.

Frontline firefighters, professional services staff and Trading Standards colleagues recently came together with invited guests for the annual Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service awards.

Prestigious awards for specialist categories were handed out to staff and supporters of fire and rescue/ trading standards, as voted by their peers.

Further details and a list of long service and special award winners are available in our press release [here](#).

Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance update

Residents of Saham Toney near Watton are now better protected from flooding thanks to the completion of new flood storage basins and other nature-based solutions.

The Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance (NSFA) prioritised the village after decades of repeated flooding. By getting together key partners across local government, water authorities, and drainage boards, the NSFA laid the groundwork for a multi-agency response that culminated in the delivery of a 22,000m³ flood storage basin - completed ahead of schedule and under budget.

In addition to reducing flood risk, the new basins are expected to support local wildlife and improve water retention for agriculture during dry periods.

Walking Aid scheme nominated for a national award

A partnership between Norfolk County Council, the NHS, HM Prison and Probation Service, and Norse Environmental Waste Services (NEWS) has been recognised by the prestigious National Recycling Awards.

The scheme allows people who have an old walking aid at home and no longer need it to recycle it at one of Norfolk's 19 recycling centres. Local hospitals the NNUH in Norwich and James Paget in Great Yarmouth have seen hundreds of walking aids handed over. The aids are then given to prisoners at HMP Norwich who help to refurbish and clean the equipment before the aids are delivered back to the NHS to be used by new patients.

The winners of the National Recycling Awards will be announced at a ceremony in London on Tuesday 25 November 2025.

To find your nearest recycling centre visit the [Norfolk County Council Find your local recycling centre webpage](#).

National Updates

Proposed amendments to the Planning & Infrastructure Bill

The Government has [announced a 'pro-growth package'](#) of amendments to the Planning and Infrastructure Bill aimed at 'unshackling' the planning system to enable faster building. The changes give the Secretary of State new powers to potentially stop local councils from rejecting major planning applications and to fast-track key projects like reservoirs, onshore wind farms, and large housing schemes. The reforms are to help deliver government targets for 1.5 million new homes and to achieve clean power by 2030.

The Local Government Association (LGA) has responded to the reforms, stressing that councils must remain at the heart of the planning process, despite new central powers being proposed. In a [statement on 14 October](#), an LGA spokesperson acknowledged the need to build homes more quickly but argued that "the democratic role of councillors in decision-making is the backbone of the English planning system" and should not be diminished.

Changes to judicial reviews on infrastructure projects

The [Chancellor is proposing changes](#) to judicial reviews of major infrastructure projects, by cutting the amount of time cases spend in court.

The chancellor says that new roads, reservoirs, airports, and railways held up by lengthy legal challenges will be completed more quickly under new proposals, thus fast-tracking national renewal.

One of the examples of the current system cited by the Chancellor is the Norfolk Offshore Windfarm judicial review, which she says took two years, causing delays to the delivery of energy to the equivalent of more than 1.3 million homes

Countryside stewardship

Farming Minister Dame Angela Eagle [confirmed that farmers will continue to be rewarded](#) for their role in sustainable food production and nature recovery , with the offer of targeted one-year extensions to Countryside Stewardship Mid -Tier agreements, which were set to expire on 31 December this year. The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) will write to eligible farmers with details about their extension offer.