



Town & Parish Briefing

Edition 10 | 27 February 2023



Welcome to the latest Town and Parish Briefing, bringing you a round-up of news, activities and information about West Northamptonshire Council.

We hope you'll find this briefing informative, and we encourage you to share it widely within your organisations. If you have ideas and suggestions for future content, please email us at communications@westnorthants.gov.uk

Garden waste subscriptions are open

Cllr Phil Larratt, Cabinet Member for Climate, Transport, Highways and Waste

Residents across West Northamptonshire can now sign up for optional, chargeable garden waste collections from April 2023.

The annual subscription charge for the fortnightly service from April 2023 to the end of March 2024 is £55 per bin and [people can subscribe via the link on our website](#)

Residents also now have the option to sign up for an annual Direct Debit to save having to remember to renew every year. Residents who are unable to access the internet can subscribe to the service by phoning the council on 0300 126 7000.

Once households are signed up to the service, they will receive their new 2023/24 garden waste permit which they will be asked to stick on their garden waste bin. Any bins that have not subscribed will not be emptied after 4 April.



The communications plan to promote the service begins in earnest this week, and existing subscribers are being sent emails inviting them to re-subscribe.

Many people value the garden waste service, however there are others who don't need these collections. By ensuring that it is an optional service, only those who wish to receive the service have to pay for it, making it as fair for residents as possible.

People who do not wish to sign up to the service have the option of composting their garden waste at home, either in a traditional compost heap or by purchasing a compost bin by visiting www.getcomposting.com and typing in their postcode to see offers available.

People can also recycle garden waste for free at any of our household waste recycling centres.

A [comprehensive list of FAQs are also available on our website](#) and more information can be found on our [Garden Waste page](#)

Bus users can continue to get around for £2

People are reminded they can continue to take advantage of reduced bus fares. The Government-funded scheme has seen many single fares capped at £2, with a number of local operators taking part. [More information about the £2 bus fares can be found on our website](#)

Council sets out budget for 2023/24

Councillor Malcolm Longley, Cabinet Member for Finance

Our Council has set a balanced budget for the year ahead that will protect essential frontline services whilst addressing significant financial challenges.

At the Full Council meeting in Northampton's Guildhall on Wednesday, 22 February, members approved the final budget proposals, Housing Revenue Account and setting of the Council Tax for 2023/24.

In common with local authorities across the country, the Council is facing severe financial pressures due to factors including the current economic climate, high inflation rates driving up running costs and an increase in demand for services, particularly around supporting children in care and vulnerable adults.

Despite these pressures, the Council has worked hard to balance the books and has set a balanced revenue budget for 2023/24 of £383.5m (excluding grant funded schools spending of £443.7m).

The budget includes a Council Tax increase of 4.99%, well below current inflation rates and in line with the Government's allowance, crucially generating extra funding of around £12m – with 2% of the increase going towards funding adult social care. This represents an average increase on a Band D property of £80.50 a year, the equivalent of £1.55 a week.

The approved budget follows a strong commitment to making services as efficient as possible and reviewing income streams in order to maintain and protect services, with £32.0m of savings proposals put forward.

It also incorporates a range of additional measures to address people's feedback in the recent budget public consultation, which attracted over 3,000 comments from residents, businesses, partners and other stakeholders. It has also been subject to continuous review and scrutiny, including consideration by the cross party group of members of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The additional plans include investing an extra £1m in the year ahead towards repairing local roads and changes to car parking proposals include putting in place two hours' free parking on Saturdays and Sundays in Northampton's town centre off street car parks and a set weekend all-day charge of £2.20 for off street car parks, introducing free parking up to 10.30am on Saturdays at Daventry and Brixworth country parks and reducing the proposed maximum daily charge at the two sites by a third to £8.

In addition to this, the Council will be investing up to £215,000 in the year ahead towards bus services. This continues the funding allocated for the current year, while the Council shapes a new bus strategy and considers the most viable options for supporting and delivering the services in the future.

Next year's budget will see our Council invest an additional £30m in capital funding – money earmarked to improve local infrastructure and assets such as land, buildings, and equipment – on a range of projects, some of which will help reduce costs and generate income to support services in future years. Schemes set to move forward in the year ahead will help tackle speeding in rural areas, create new cycleways and footpaths for healthier travel, and improve local roads.

Over the last 12 months since we set our budget for this last year, we have worked hard to address the unprecedented challenges we've faced. We could not have predicted the national picture we're facing with demand on services and rising costs; however, we have acted on this quickly and put robust processes in place to manage this year's budget.

To ensure the future sustainable delivery of services, we must do what we can to ensure we continue this work to manage our budget going forward.



Please join Coronation weekend celebrations

Town and parish councils are being encouraged to get involved in a Bank Holiday weekend of special events being planned to mark the Coronation of King Charles III.

His Majesty will be crowned at Westminster Abbey in London on Saturday 6 May 2023, the first of three days of celebrations as communities across the country are invited to come together to mark the historic occasion.

Plans are under way to organise a packed weekend of festivities in West Northamptonshire from 6 to 8 May, including street party-style activities and big screens in Northampton town centre on the Saturday, a Big Lunch at Delapre Abbey on the Sunday and local volunteering opportunities for the Big Help Out on Bank Holiday Monday.

A countywide Coronation Service at All Saints' Church in Northampton is also planned for 30 April.

Residents are encouraged to come together and celebrate too - by holding coronation street parties in their communities, parishes and neighbourhoods.

We have set up a [Coronation information hub on our website](#), containing information and advice on holding an event.

Those thinking of holding a street party may need to [apply for a temporary road closure](#). There is no charge for this between 6 and 8 May 2023, though applications must be made by Monday 27 March.

Communities planning larger parties are also urged to [let us know about the event](#), so we can provide guidance on licensing, safety and traffic management.

Communities are also being encouraged to [join in The Big Help Out](#) on Monday, 8 May, which will provide an opportunity to reflect on the legacy of His Majesty's service and showcase the impact of volunteering within communities.

More information will be published on the [Coronation information hub on our website](#) in the lead-up to the event.



Businesses join workplace wellbeing forum

Industry leaders from warehouse, transport and logistic businesses across West Northants joined West Northamptonshire Council to learn more about wellbeing in the workplace.

WNC's health protection, public health and regulatory service colleagues held the forum for businesses at the Ford Motor Company, in Daventry earlier this month. Representatives from Ford Motor Company Ltd, DHL and Pristine International attended to encourage and share best practice with businesses.



The forum provided businesses with information on future health and safety priorities and initiatives, to encourage change and reduce accidents that result from occupational behaviour.

Key topics included staff training, a focus on wellbeing and how this can reduce accidents in the workplace, as well as how to manage workplace hazards.

Businesses in your parish areas who might be interested in joining future forums can find out more on our [workplace health and wellbeing pages](#)

Emissions report starts journey to sustainability

Councillor Jonathan Nunn, Leader of West Northamptonshire Council

Our Council has presented its baseline emissions report for 2021-22, as we strive to meet our sustainability goal to be net zero by 2030.

Sustainability is high on the agenda for our Council, with work underway to meet the Government's call for local authorities to support the delivery of the UK's sustainability agenda.

Our baseline report provides a robust set of baseline CO₂e emissions data for the Council's first year, April 2021 – 31 March 2022 and outlines our intentions to eliminate or reduce these. Establishing the baseline for our emissions will enable the Council to develop a detailed emissions reduction plan and monitor progress towards our targets.

This is a pivotal step to ensuring we not only meet our target of being net zero by 2030, but go above and beyond this. This will be challenging, and it will involve all of us across West Northants. But by understanding our current CO₂e emissions, we can ensure we take the right steps to reduce these and put measures in place to protect our environment for years to come.

Whilst the emissions report is vital in tracking our environmental sustainability, a great deal of work is also being done to ensure future social and economic sustainability, for both present and future generations.

We are embarking on a bold new approach to make West Northamptonshire a more sustainable place to live and work. The steps we have taken so far are many and varied, from removing single-use cups in our offices, to increased solar energy, and considering how we can invest in electric powered waste vehicles to reduce our outputs.

I would like to encourage town and parish councils to visit our website and review the emissions report, and individuals are also urged to make a pledge to live a more sustainable lifestyle, inspiring others to come on this journey with us.

There are three key Sustainability Pledges which outline our primary commitments, which are to:

- Net Zero the Council's own emissions by 2030 and those of residents and businesses by 2045
- Take a community leadership role for Sustainability in West Northants
- Ensure all Council strategies and policies are aligned to and contribute to the delivery of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

View the emissions report, make your sustainability pledge, and find out more on our [Sustainable West Northants page](#)



Funding awarded to improve air quality

Our Council has been successful in a bid to secure funds as part of the Government's £10.1 million project towards air quality improvement.

We have received **£292,378 from Government to roll-out new initiatives to improve air-quality in Northampton**. This complements a further grant awarded in 2021/22 for £148,297 which is focused on active traffic management to improve congestion and poor air quality in existing air quality management areas.

The new grant will provide funding to develop an evidence base for possible action to deal with particulate pollution in the West Northants.

Struggling households can access support

Cllr Matt Golby, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health

Struggling households in West Northamptonshire who work but are on a low wage can apply for the Government's Household Support Fund and potentially receive £250 in cash.

We are urging residents on a wage of £400 or less to visit the [Household Support Fund page on our website](#) or call on 0300 126 7000 to check if they are eligible for the payment, which is paid into a bank account in two instalments.

This scheme aims to support those who have not received any of the £650 Cost of Living Payment and the previous phase of the Household Support Fund.

People will need to be earning less than £400 a week and must provide:

- Two of their most recently monthly payslips or four of their most recent weekly wage slips
- Identification such as a recent bank statement, driving licence or recent utility bill.



The first award of £125 will be credited to the applicant's bank account at the point of approval of the application. The second payment will be credited to the same bank account 60 days later.

To qualify, people must be employed, have a valid bank account, live in the region, not been in receipt of the recent £650 government Cost-of-Living payments and be over 18.

The rising cost of living is causing uncertainty, worry and concern for many of us right now, but we want people to know – you are not alone and there is lots happening both in the local community and nationally that can offer support.

Our Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy sets out how we will work with partners to support people struggling financially, what we will do to stop people falling into poverty and how we will work to get the best deal for the people of West Northants. This work is underway, and we are committed to its delivery.

Residents can access a full range of Cost-of-Living assistance on our [Cost of Living Support Hub](#), which is full of information and advice to help residents find support and help.

We continue to offer our thanks to all Town and Parish Councils offering [Warm Spaces - non-judgemental, safe and welcoming places where people in West Northants can come together](#)

Have a say on rural cost of living survey

People living in rural areas are being urged to complete a survey on the cost of living.

The Rural Services Network (RSN), in partnership with the Citizens Advice Rural Issues Group, has launched the Rural Cost of Living Household Survey to understand more about rural household budgets during what is a very difficult time for many.

Independent research commissioned by the RSN in the summer last year showed rural areas are suffering more acutely from the cost of living crisis compared to urban areas.

To lend more weight to the argument for more funding for rural areas the RSN is calling on as many rural residents as possible to complete a Rural Cost of Living Household Survey.

Research has shown that those living in rural areas face extra costs and the RSN wants to explore the impacts for households. Town and Parish Councils can help spread the word by forwarding the survey link to contacts and networks: [Rural Households Survey on the Cost of Living](#)

Say hello to our customer service team

Cllr Mike Hallam, Cabinet Member for HR & Corporate Services

Our Customer Service Teams visit locations across West Northamptonshire on a monthly basis, offering advice and guidance to residents on a range of issues.

We are grateful for your support in promoting these events to residents, but Town and Parish Council Clerks, and your local councillors, are also very welcome to attend for help with any casework or other queries you may have.

Sessions coming up over the next month include:

- **Brackley Library** (Manor Road, NN13 6AJ): Fri 31 March from 10am to midday.
- **Crick Old School** (Church Street, NN6 7TP) Thurs 23 March from 3-5pm.
- **Southbrook Community Centre** (Hood Rd, Daventry, NN11 4JS) Weds 22 Mar 12.30-2.30pm.
- **Moulton Library Plus** (Moulton Reedings, NN3 7AX): Fri 24 March from 10am to midday.
- **Weston Favell Library** (Weston Favell Centre, NN3 8JZ): Fri 17 March from 12.30pm to 3pm.
- **Woodford Halse CE Primary Academy** (The Nest, NN11 3SU): Tues 14 Mar 12.30-2.30pm.



[View listings for all of the drop-in sessions on our website](#)

Update on our building control services

Plans are progressing to bring Building Control services back in-house to West Northants Council from the beginning of April 2023.

Back in 2015 the Building Control function for the former Daventry District Council was transferred to a shared service with Warwick and Rugby Councils.

Following the establishment of West Northamptonshire Council, work has been ongoing with partners, officers and stakeholders to bring this service back in house to enable a single consistent service to be provided across the whole of West Northants. These plans are well underway and are now nearing completion, as part of this work we are in the process of recruiting for new colleagues to join the new structure.

We will continue to keep you updated on the progress of this work and anticipate that contact details and more information about the service will be shared later this month.

Event marks anniversary of Ukraine invasion

Ukrainian families and their hosts in West Northamptonshire joined people across the UK to observe a minute's silence to mark the anniversary of the conflict in Ukraine.

A ceremony was held at The Guildhall in Northampton on Friday, 24 February, while The Ukrainian flag was raised at our office buildings in Towcester, Daventry, and Northampton.

Information on how to support the crisis and make a donation can be found on our [Homes for Ukraine support page](#)



Excitement at launch of ten-year care strategy

Cllr Matt Golby, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health

We were excited recently to launch Integrated Care Northamptonshire's (ICN) new 10-year strategy to support people in Northamptonshire.

This strategy has been developed together by NHS providers, local councils, voluntary and community organisations and other partners, with a focus on enabling residents to benefit from equitable opportunities to live their best life, whoever they are and wherever they live in the county.



It carries a bold vision for partners to work better together in Northamptonshire, to create a place where people and their loved ones are active, confident and empowered to take personal responsibility for good health and wellbeing, with quality integrated support and services available for them if and when they need help.

As we move forward, plans are under way to engage and involve our local communities with the delivery of the strategy, to ensure the voice of our people remains at the centre of all we do.

Our new Local Area Partnerships, representing neighbourhoods and localities of between 30,000 and 50,000 people across the county, will give a voice to residents, involving them in new services and solutions for their local area.

We know the strategy is ambitious, however by working together we believe we can make a positive difference and bring needed change to help people live their best lives. The steps we take next are important to help us meet our shared ambitions and aims, and community feedback will be essential.

I would like to say a thank you to all involved in the development of this strategy and I look forward to continuing to work with partners in its delivery. You can [view the Strategy in full here](#)

Pledging support for armed forces community

Cllr David Smith, Cabinet Member for Community Safety & Engagement & Regulatory Services

We were delighted to be joined by Maj Jess Marengo of 103 Battalion REME recently for a [special event to re-sign the Armed Forces Covenant](#)

The event, which took place at the Northampton Museum and Art Gallery, was an opportunity for the Council to reaffirm its commitment to the Armed Forces community by introducing some new pledges under the Armed Forces Covenant.

Under these new pledges, the Council has now established a guaranteed apprenticeship interview scheme for Cadets and has introduced additional paid leave to support staff members who are Cadet Force Adult Volunteers.



If your town or parish council is interested in signing the Covenant, please visit the [Armed Forces Northants website](#) for more details

New SEND provision to help children succeed

Cllr Fiona Baker, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education

New facilities providing specialist teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs in Northamptonshire have been officially opened.

Butterfly Meadow at Hardingstone Academy was opened by East Midlands Academy Trust in partnership with our Council and provides much-needed additional school places for children in Key Stage 2 with social and communication difficulties.

A second department – Caterpillar Pod – for Key Stage 1 learners with special educational needs has also been opened at another school within the Trust, Castle Academy.

The two departments support children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) for communication and interaction needs, specifically Autism Spectrum Disorder.

It is important that our children and young people access the best possible education and health provision that support their needs, and Butterfly Meadow provides just this.

The opening of this provision is part of our Council's commitment to increase the number of specialist school places by 2024 which are built around the latest understanding of what's best for children with special educational needs and provides them with a learning environment that will help them thrive.



Support service for young people is changing

The Northamptonshire Information Advice and Support Service (IASS) is changing.

From 1 April it will split into services for West and North, with the West Northants SEND IAS Service covering the West Northamptonshire area.

Operating at arm's length from the Council, it will continue to provide free, confidential, impartial advice, guidance and support to families and young people. Staff will continue to be independently trained and have an understanding of the local offer, schools and local resources.

Its branding is also being changed following consultation with the Northamptonshire Parent Forum Group (NPF) and with the IASS Young People's Advisory Council. The change in branding will support people to know they are contacting the correct team for their locality.

In the meantime the service continues to provide advice and support and can be contacted directly on 01604 364772 and at www.iassnorthants.co.uk or by emailing iass.ncc@northnorthants.gov.uk or contact@iass.co.uk

Sign up to our business newsletters

Businesses or those looking for employment opportunities across West Northamptonshire are urged to sign-up for our free newsletters.

The Employment Newsletter promotes our free West Northants Employment Support Service and includes job vacancies, upcoming events, training opportunities and more for every local resident to benefit from.

The Business Newsletter, meanwhile, promotes our free business support and includes funding opportunities, events, recruitment support, local good news and more to help our employers grow their business within West Northants.

[People can subscribe to both newsletters here](#)

Pride sponsorship opportunities available

Cllr David Smith, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Engagement, and Regulatory Services

Sponsors and other organisations and individuals who would like to take part in this year's Northampton Pride event have until 1 March to express an interest.



The event, which is organised by the Northampton Pride Committee and West Northants Council's LGBTQ+ and Allies Forum, celebrates the LGBTQ+ community and encourages acceptance and equality for all.

It takes place in Northampton town centre on Saturday, 8 July from 11am to 6.30pm.

Sponsorship opportunities are available to anyone who wants to support the event and demonstrate their commitment to inclusion for everyone.

Local bands, performers, small businesses, and residents who would like to take part in this year's event can also register their interest by 1 March, 2023.

[More information and sponsorship opportunities can be found on the Northampton Pride page on our website](#)

Please share the link with any local organisations of businesses you think might be interested.

Community voting days for Well Northants

People in the Kings Heath, St David's and Blackthorn areas of Northampton are invited to join voting events to help decide on projects that could be carried out to make a difference in their communities.

The Well Northants project has been asking people in those areas to submit ideas for projects, with a chance of receiving up to £2,500 to make their idea happen.

Now those ideas will be decided on at community voting days taking place in March:

- **St David's:** Saturday 4 March, 2pm to 5.30pm at Saint David's Church, Eastern Avenue South, Northampton, NN2 7QB. [Book your place at the St. Davids event](#) or call 078144 22696.
- **Blackthorn:** Saturday 11 March, 10am to 1.30pm at Growing Together Northampton, Longmead Court, Northampton NN3 8QD. [Book your place at the Blackthorn event](#) or call 078144 22696.
- **Kings Heath:** Saturday 11 March, 2pm to 5.30pm at Kings Heath Primary Academy, North Oval, Northampton, NN5 7LN. [Book your place at the Kings Heath event](#) or call 078144 22696.



The events are for residents in each area to come along and vote on ideas that they think are the most needed.

Find more information on the community voting days on our [Well Northants page](#)

West Northants to play a key role in Arc

Cllr Daniel Lister, Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Town Centre Regeneration and Growth

Proposals for a locally-led partnership for the Oxford to Cambridge Arc have been given the green light by the government.

The partnership, which includes Northamptonshire, will champion the region as a world leader of innovation and business, acting to achieve environmentally sustainable and inclusive growth. It will strengthen the cross-boundary collaboration among its partners to focus on tackling the issues that matter to the people who live and work in the region.



The partnership's initial programme is to:

- Develop a set of propositions to attract international investment and profile the region on a global stage
- Continue the work underway to embed shared environment principles

West Northants is right at the heart of the arc and we want to make sure we play a key role in helping shape its future, to the benefit of our residents.

We have ambitious plans to continue to deliver high-quality jobs, boost economic growth and attract world-class employment and innovation opportunities to our area, and this partnership will enable that.

This is an exciting opportunity to work with partners to improve our region and demonstrate all of the benefits we can bring to this initiative.

Following the official commitment from government, the Partnership will begin active recruitment of an independent Chair. In the interim, a Shadow Board has been set up to oversee the Partnership's programme and agree governance and funding.

Temporary new location for town market

Communities are being urged to support traders at Northampton's Market temporary location at Commercial St Car Park.

The market will trade from Commercial Street, near TK Maxx in the town centre, for around 18 months while the multi-million pound redevelopment of Market Square works take place.



Traders will not pay any rent or utility fees while they are based at their temporary home, but continue to offer the same fantastic produce and services, and we are urging everyone to continue to support them at the new location before we welcome them back to a revitalised Market Square next year.

The Square is to be rejuvenated over the next 18 months, with new high-quality paving, a flexible event space, bespoke fixed stalls, more trees, tiered seating and a water feature. Once completed, it will offer an exciting new focal point for shoppers and visitors to the town centre.

Our Council in the news

Here's a roundup of the news releases and updates published by our Council during December.

Don't forget you can keep up-to-date with these and search the news archive by [visiting the News section of our website](#). You can also [sign-up to receive our newsletter](#)

In the past month, we issued press releases on:

- [Landowners reminded of funding scheme to support fly-tipping removal](#) – Jan 25
- [Northampton Market opens at temporary home next week](#) – Jan 25
- [Man banned from Northampton Town Centre for anti-social behaviour](#) – Jan 26
- [Northampton Market set to open at new temporary location](#) – Jan 30
- [Government backs new Oxford to Cambridge pan-regional partnership](#) – Jan 30
- [Share your views on taxi licensing policy](#) – Feb 1
- [Northampton library launches reading programme to combat loneliness](#) – Feb 1
- [Applications now open to be part of Northampton Pride 2023](#) – Feb 2
- [International Women's Day event set to be biggest yet](#) – Feb 2
- [Council sets out budget proposals for year ahead](#) – Feb 3
- [Celebration marks official opening of new provision for SEND pupils](#) – Feb 6
- [Children's Mental Health Week sees schools art competition launched](#) – Feb 6
- [Earn while you learn scheme boosts career progression](#) – Feb 6
- [Work starts to transform Northampton's historic Market Square](#) – Feb 7
- [Important information on industrial action](#) – Feb 7
- [The Northamptonshire Information Advice and Support Service \(IASS\) is changing!](#) – Feb 7
- [More Northampton fly-tippers ordered to pay over £7,000](#) – Feb 7
- [Support for those affected by Turkey-Syria earthquakes](#) – Feb 7
- [Notable figures commemorated with blue plaques](#) – Feb 8
- [Repair works to take place at Northampton Bike Park](#) – Feb 8
- [Pupils learn about road safety and name West Northants gritters](#) – Feb 13
- [Start Up Day 2023 at Northampton Central Library](#) – Feb 13
- [Cabinet sets out key changes to budget proposals](#) – Feb 13
- [West Northants Council re-signs Armed Forces Covenant](#) – Feb 13
- [Rising sports stars urged to apply for sponsorship scheme fronted by Olympians](#) – Feb 13
- [Council takes step forward in meeting sustainability pledge](#) – Feb 14
- [Survey launched to help shape the future of tourism and visitor economy](#) – Feb 14
- [Get involved in a big bank holiday weekend of Coronation celebrations](#) – Feb 15
- [West Northamptonshire awarded funding to improve air quality](#) – Feb 16
- [West Northants to mark anniversary of conflict in Ukraine](#) – Feb 16
- [Inspirational Women's Award 2023 shortlist announced](#) – Feb 20
- [Have your say on plans for new Heritage Park](#) – Feb 23
- [Delapré Abbey set to host Northampton's first NNBN meeting](#) – Feb 24
- [Industries come together to learn more about workplace wellbeing](#) – Feb 24
- [West Northamptonshire Council sets out budget for 2023/24](#) – Feb 24
- [New provision for children with SEND is officially open](#) – Feb 24
- [Work well under way to improve trails at new bike park](#) – Feb 24