



Town & Parish Briefing

Edition 14 | 19 June 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

Fresh support for homes in hardship

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

Households experiencing hardship will receive over £5m of further financial support from the Government to be shared out in the year ahead by our Council.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has allocated £5,199,257 to WNC in the fourth round of its Household Support Fund, which will continue helping the most vulnerable with the ongoing cost of living challenges.

This latest package of support measures got under way over the May half-term holidays, with our Council distributing over £187,000 in school meal vouchers to help up to 12,500 families.

We are working with the community and voluntary sector to shape the arrangements, which include plans for:

- Around 12,500 families with children continuing to receive meal vouchers during the school holidays, as well as vouchers for uniforms over the summer
- Health visitors and midwives providing infant formula vouchers to new parents most in need of support to help give their little ones a healthy start
- Voluntary and community groups sharing out £1.2m in the form of £120 vouchers to support vulnerable households
- Over 1,500 households experiencing the most severe hardship receiving a £300 voucher
- £600,000 allocated towards food clubs and larders, with half of the funding to help upscale and improve their use of those facilities in a move towards providing more sustainable ongoing support
- £115,000 earmarked towards helping the most struggling households reduce their energy bills, with a further £110,000 to provide money and debt advice services to those facing severe financial hardship.

We know the impact and challenge that the cost-of-living crisis is continuing to have on residents and we are committed to doing all that we can to provide support.

It's essential we meet the needs of our residents in the best way possible and this package of measures has carefully considered how we can maximise the use of the DWP's latest round of funding to achieve this.

Our partners, including schools and local voluntary and community groups play a crucial role in this and we will be working with them to ensure this funding is received by those who need it most.



Tonnes of rubbish cleared from our roadsides

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



More than 3.5 tonnes of litter was collected from the verges of fast roads in Northampton throughout May.

Litter pickers from our Council and our waste services partners Veolia took to the verges to collect items which had been strewn on the roadside carelessly and illegally.

Over a course of four weeks, working while essential works were already being carried out in these areas to avoid disruption to road users, the team collected an impressive 3.5 tonnes of waste. This will now be disposed of responsibly and will no longer be causing a negative impact on the environment.

The litter picks took place at A43 Lumbertubs Way, A428 Bedford Road, A4500 Weedon Road, Mereway, Danes Camp Way, Upton Way, Oxford Road, Bants Lane, Rushmere Road, Talavera Way and Wellingborough Road

It is disappointing that some people show such little regard for the environment and their local community that they drop litter wherever they like.

We're committed to tackling this issue, and it is always heartening to see the great work of our partners, officers and volunteers who work so hard to keep their communities clean and green.

We want to do all we can to support their excellent work, as well as encourage and assist other groups to join them. By working together, we send a strong message to offenders that their actions are not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

People [can report fly-tipping and littering on our website](#)

Bin stickers to be distributed this week

Stickers promoting the correct use of waste and recycling bins are being distributed to households across West Northamptonshire from this week.

The stickers support three campaigns which aim to raise awareness of what people can and can't put into their collections, in a bid to reduce contamination in household collections, improve the quality of our recycling and maintain the safety of crews and residents by ensuring batteries are disposed of correctly.

The stickers will be placed on top of general waste bins, with clear instructions on what cannot go into that bin:

- No Batteries, use separate collection
- No Food Waste, use your food caddy
- No Recyclables, use your recycling bin

From Tuesday 20 June and into July, the stickers will be distributed by crews to every household across West Northants.

Everyone will receive these, and we will be notifying people of this work via social media. Our customer services team are aware of this work and can support with making residents aware.



New area planning committees are launched

Cllr Rebecca Breese, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Built Environment and Rural Affairs

The first meetings of the new-look North and South area planning committees took place this week.

As Members will recall, the new committees were formally adopted at the Annual Council meeting on 18 May, providing a simplified structure to replace the previous three committees which covered the former district and borough council areas.

The meetings, on Wednesday and Thursday, were both [streamed live on our Council's YouTube channel](#)

These two new planning committees for West Northamptonshire will enable us to continue to improve our planning services for residents and partners. We will be able to make decisions more quickly and improve our communications with residents by livestreaming meetings, enabling them to watch from anywhere.

This forms part of our wider planned improvements to the planning service, which has already seen us implement a new planning portal for Daventry, Towcester and Brackley areas – with Northampton to follow this summer.

Businesses urged to enter county awards

Entries are open for the prestigious Northamptonshire Business Awards 2023.

Recognising and celebrating the very best in Northamptonshire, the Awards are free for all businesses to enter and can help local firms increase their visibility, attract new customers, help with future marketing, boost the morale of their employees and attract new talent.

Businesses can enter any of the 15 categories, including the two that have been sponsored by our Council:

- West Northamptonshire Business of the Year
- West Northamptonshire Sustainability Award

This is a fantastic opportunity for local businesses to raise their profile so if you are aware of any businesses in your area that may be interested, please encourage them to enter.

[Entries to the awards close on 30 June](#)

Accreditation underlines value in fostering

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

I am delighted to report that our Council's commitment to being fostering friendly has been recognised as part of the recent accreditation by the Fostering Network.

Our official accreditation as a Fostering Friendly employer shows the importance and value the Council places on this role for children, young people and families.

To receive this important accreditation, we updated our HR policy to provide colleagues who foster children and young people the extra support they need to balance work and caring responsibilities.

We have many amazing foster carers, who go above and beyond to support our children and young people, offering a safe and nurturing home and supporting them to reach their full potential. Fostering can be challenging, but it can also be very rewarding. More information about fostering can be found on the [Northamptonshire Children's Trust](#) website or by calling 0300 126 1009.

Heat health advice as temperatures soar

Cllr Matt Golby, Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Wellbeing and Health Integration

Our Council launched a new 'Heat Health' webpage ahead of the recent heat health yellow alerts that were issued by the UK Health Security Agency.

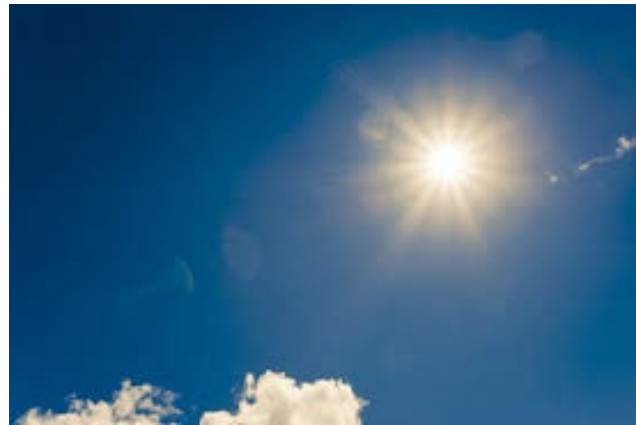
The alert was put in place earlier this month as temperatures hit 30C.

Our new page aims to give residents practical advice to help them look after themselves and those around them who may be vulnerable – including the elderly and those with long term health conditions.

Some of the simple steps that can be taken include:

- **Look out for people who may struggle to keep themselves cool and hydrated** – such as elderly relatives or neighbours, get in touch with them and check in that they are doing ok
- **Staying cool indoors is important** - taking action like closing curtains on rooms that face the sun can help reduce indoor temperatures, but remember that it may be cooler outdoors
- **If you're out and about, try to keep out of the sun and avoid physical activity** – especially between 12 midday and 3pm as this is the hottest part of the day. Always make sure you have applied sun cream before heading out into the sun to help protect your skin from sun damage.
- **Good food hygiene is a must to avoid contamination** - follow our steps to make sure you and those around you are eating safely as well as making the most out of your leftovers! It is also important to get rid of food waste correctly, especially during the hotter months.

More advice, top tips, and links to our services can be [found on our Heat Health webpage](#)



Parishes' role in wellbeing is highly valued

Recently town and parish councils were asked for their views in relation to the development of a health and wellbeing strategy for West Northamptonshire. The strategy is being developed within the context of the Integrated Care System in Northamptonshire, and its focus on 10 'Live your Best Life' ambitions.

Town and Parish Councils were specifically targeted during this consultation due to the recognition that you know your areas in much more detail, and can play a role relating to health and wellbeing.

Our Council's Director of Public Health, Sally Burns, is a parish councillor on Lund Parish Council in the East Riding of Yorkshire and has been a councillor for nearly 3 years now.

While Lund Parish Council is a very small council, in a very rural area, they have an awareness of the wellbeing role of their council, and ensure they monitor and champion issues such as: rurality and bus services; the general environment in the village such as its millennium walk, benches and local pond; and the use of an old phone box as an information point.

They also support their village hall committee which does a lot of cultural and wellbeing type activities in the village.

So, at the heart of the public health team there is an awareness of the important role parish councils can play in improving the health and wellbeing of their population and the ambition to work more closely with you to enable us all to work in partnership to achieve the 10 Live Your Best Life Ambitions.

You should recently have received an invitation to join a virtual workshop on 26 June that has been jointly prepared by our Council and NCalc to provide further details on Local Area Partnerships and the health and wellbeing strategy. Around 60 local councils have so far confirmed their attendance.

New coat of arms aims to instil civic pride

West Northamptonshire has a new Coat of Arms, acting as a symbol and celebration of civic pride across our area.

In line with strict royal tradition and procedure, the heraldic design was hand-drawn and granted to West Northamptonshire Council by the College of Arms, a centuries-old authority which acts for the Crown on all official heraldic matters.

In a highly traditional process that took nearly two years to complete, the Arms have been granted by the Kings of Arms, the three senior Officers of Arms, who act on behalf of the Crown and were subject to the approval of the Earl Marshal, who has overall responsibility for the College of Arms within the Royal Household.

Presented at our Annual Council meeting in May, it was specially drawn to reflect and represent West Northamptonshire's proud history and heritage, taking a number of elements from the Coats of Arms of the former Northampton Borough, Daventry and South Northants districts and county.

Key elements of the Coat of Arms include the following:

- A Golden Lion, taken from the arms of Northampton, with a scallop shell on its foot in reference to the arms of the Spencer family who have owned Althorp for 500 years
- A Black Bull, from the county council arms, signifying Edward IV's historic marriage at Grafton, with an iron collar representing agriculture, leatherwork and shoemaking and a horseshoe at its foot in reference to the area's history of metalworking, horseracing at Towcester and horsepower of the motorcars at Silverstone.
- A crest featuring a white castle from the arms of Northampton, on a ring of red roses symbolising county history and wheatsheaves representing the area's many rural settlements and agricultural heritage
- Four traditional rose symbols of Northamptonshire representing Daventry, Brackley, Towcester and Northampton, wheatsheaf for agricultural heritage and a lion's face in allusion to the lions in the respective arms of Northampton and South Northants and the common seal of Brackley. Lines across the shield represent Watling Street (straight) and Grand Union Canal (wavy).

The green and gold, considered interchangeable in heraldry, also reflect the colours used by the previous district and borough authorities alongside the traditional county red rose of Northamptonshire.

Find out more about [West Northamptonshire's Coat of Arms](#)



Shining a spotlight on rural community needs

Northamptonshire Community Foundation is inviting people to join its next Community Conversation supporting its Shining a Spotlight on Rural Community Needs appeal.

This Wednesday 21 June at 10.30am they will be joined by [The Prince's Countryside Fund](#), who will give an update about their Village Survival Guide, & [Milly Fyfe](#) who will be chatting about their background in farming & living in Northamptonshire's rural communities.

Town and Parish councils can [find out more and register for the event here](#)

Have your say via our Consultation Hub

Town and Parish councils are reminded that consultation and engagement activities taking place across West Northants are published on our [Consultation Hub](#)

Visit the hub to check new consultations, have your say, and sign up to receive alerts and updates.

You can find out the results of recent surveys on our [We asked, you said, we did page](#), and [sign-up to receive emails whenever a new consultation opens on the West Northamptonshire Consultation Hub](#).

Live consultations taking place at the moment include:

West Northamptonshire Parks Visitors Feedback Survey

Deadline for comments: 30 June

West Northants Council manages over 160 parks and open spaces. We would like to know your thoughts on certain major parks that exist in West Northamptonshire if you have visited one lately. The information we receive back will be used to help us to identify improvements and understand what is working well.

[Complete the Parks Visitors Feedback Survey here](#)

Local Area Planning Consultations

Deadline for comments: 31 July

Our Council is reviewing conservation areas in parts of West Northants, as well as considering new designations. Draft appraisal and management plans have been prepared for both the Scaldwell and Holdenby conservation areas, and people have an opportunity to have their say on them.

[Local Area Planning Consultations](#)

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 30 June from 10am to midday.
- **Briar Hill Community Centre** (The Springs Walk, NN4 8SX) Weds 5 July from midday to 2pm.
- **Hunsbury Library** (Overslade Close, NN4 0RZ) Thurs 6 July from 1pm to 4pm.
- **Moulton Library Plus** (Moulton Reedings, NN3 7AX): Fri 23 June from 10am to midday.
- **Weston Favell Library** (Weston Favell Shopping Centre NN3 8JZ): Fri 14 July 12.30pm to 3pm.



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

Community grant funding now available

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

Voluntary and community sector organisations who deliver important services in West Northamptonshire can now apply for grants of up to £15,000.

Our Council opened a fresh round of Discretionary Community Funding Grants last month, applications for this round of funding should be submitted no later than Wednesday, 28 June.

The grant scheme is open to local voluntary and community sector organisations, registered charities and not-for-profit organisations, for projects or services that support one or more of the Council's strategic aims, objectives and priorities.

Groups can [find out more about the grant on our website](#) and in the our [Community Funding Grants Framework](#).

For more information about eligibility contact call Peter Worth on peter.worth@westnorthants.gov.uk or 0300 126 7000.

Further rounds of Discretionary Community Funding Grants of up to £5,000 will be [announced later in the summer and autumn](#).

Raising the flag to honour our armed forces

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

Residents across West Northants are invited to join in celebrations to mark Armed Forces Week.

In the week leading up to Armed Forces Day (Saturday, 24 June) our Council will be organising a series of events aimed at celebrating and supporting the local Armed Forces Community, including veterans, serving personnel, reserve forces, cadets, and their families.

The celebrations will kick off on Friday, 16 June from 12.30pm with the Armed Forces Community event being held on the historic grounds of Delapr  Abbey. The afternoon will feature a series of activities and workshops delivered by VR Therapies, The Frank Bruno Foundation and Models for Heroes.

Local Armed Forces charities and support services will also be on hand to provide advice and guidance including the Department for Work and Pensions, Veterans Community Network, Goodwill Solutions, the West Northants Public Health team, Citizens Advice, Northamptonshire Adult Learning and Pets as Therapy.

Delapr  Abbey will also be offering wellbeing walks and fishing taster sessions. All activities are free of charge, but prior booking is recommended. People can book their place at [Eventbrite](#) or by emailing covenant.ncc@westnorthants.gov.uk

To mark Armed Forces week WNC will host flag-raising events at Sessions House in Northampton, Lodge Road in Daventry, and at the Forum in Towcester from today (Monday, 19 June at 10.45am).

On Saturday 24 June, the Council will be supporting Northampton Town Council for the county Armed Forces Day parade through the town centre. The event will provide an opportunity for members of the public to find out more about the Armed Forces, including the local Reserve unit, 103 Battalion REME who train at Clare Street in Northampton.

This annual celebration of our Armed Forces is the nation's opportunity to thank our brave serving military, reservists, veterans, cadets, and their families.



Safety partnership launches new strategy

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

The West Northamptonshire Community Safety Partnership (CSP) has launched its 2023/24 strategy, reinforcing its commitment to reducing crime, serious violence, and anti-social behaviour.

The responsible partners for the CSP include our Council, Northamptonshire Police, Northamptonshire Probation Trust Northamptonshire Integrated Care Board and Northamptonshire Fire Service.

The strategy has been co-produced with members of the community, elected members and the Voluntary and Charity Sector to help refresh the priorities for the partnership. The current volume of crime and community concern, and impact on communities and victims were also taken into consideration.

Key priorities of the strategy include:

- Working with communities to ensure our neighbourhoods are safe spaces for everyone
- Targeting those causing the greatest harm and tackling the causes of crime through prevention and early intervention
- Reducing incidents of serious violence including domestic abuse, sexual offences and knife crime
- Protecting vulnerable people and safeguarding those at risk of exploitation



The [Strategy is available to view on our website](#), and updates will be issued quarterly to show how the CSP is delivering against its key priorities.

Keeping residents safe is one of the Council's top priorities and it's really important to us that people feel safe wherever they are, whether it be in their homes, businesses and their communities.

I'm delighted we have been able to strengthen our commitment to achieving this by working with partners to deliver this strategy and enforce measures to help reduce crime across our area.

Survey will help police focus on priorities

People are being asked for help in promoting Northamptonshire Police's Local Identified Priority Survey.

It is questionnaire for the people of Northamptonshire to tell the police what they want from their Neighbourhood Policing Teams at a local level.

It is a good opportunity for communities to tell the police what matters most to them so that Neighbourhood Policing Teams can recognise and respond to the needs of the areas they police.

The results will help police make a decision as to what the top three issues are, so they can run regular events on that topic area. For instance if people highlight road safety as a concern, they will look to run fatal four enforcement sessions in focussed areas.

Scan the QR code to go to the survey, or [complete the Local Identified Priority Survey here](#)



Accessible traffic-free route to be delivered

Cllr Adam Brown, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing, Culture and Leisure

Our Council has been awarded £642,871 funding from Active Travel England to roll-out a new traffic free route in Northampton.

We are excited to be working with Delapré Abbey Preservation Trust and other local partners to deliver the 1.3km accessible route through Delapré Park to link Far Cotton with Brackmills.

This new traffic-free route will be safe and accessible for all and will enable residents living in Far Cotton and the town centre to connect with employment opportunities in Brackmills Industrial Estate on foot or by bike.

We believe this will help to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality.

We also hope it will improve residents' mental and physical health and wellbeing by encouraging outdoor activity, as well as helping existing businesses to grow and develop.

The funding will also provide covered cycle parking, wayfinding and information boards in the area and support the social prescribing and cycling hub project, which aims to promote mental and physical wellbeing, based at Delapré Abbey.

The route is set to be delivered by March 2024 and forms part of the Active Quarter, a collaborative partnership of key public, third sector and private stakeholders who have come together around a shared ambition to pioneer active travel in the south-west area of Northampton.

Progress has been achieved already with the delivery of projects such as the award-winning Northampton Mountain Bike Park, wheelchair accessible angling platforms around the Nene Valley water-skiing lake, and a partnership between the University of Northampton (UON) and Public Health West Northants to develop Waterside as an 'Active Campus' for staff and students.



Council success recognised at awards night

The achievements of West Northamptonshire were recognised on a national stage with the Council receiving two accolades at the Local Government Chronicle Awards, having been shortlisted for four awards.

WNC was among only a small number of finalists out of hundreds of entries from councils across the country for the awards and celebrated after being highly commended in the Health and Social Care category for its work with partners as part of the new Northants Integrated Care System.

This is recognition of the work we have done to improve hospital delays with health partners.

Tiffany Diaz-Delgado was also recognised for her outstanding efforts within the organisation, receiving the highly commended accolade in the Rising Star category.

Our Council was also shortlisted for its work on sustainability, and in the Large Team of the Year category for our Customer Services Department.

Council colleagues attended the awards ceremony in London last night, where the organisation had also been finalists for the Climate Response category and Large Team of the Year for Customer Services.



Say hello to our Parish Council liaison officer

Did you know? Town and Parish Councils have a new dedicated officer at our Council who they can contact for help and support with all things WNC.

Our Parish Council Liaison Officer Alan Burns has been in post since January 2023 with a remit to maintain and enhance good working relationships between West Northamptonshire Council and our Town and Parish colleagues.

Find out more on the [Town and Parish Council help centre on our website](#), or email alan.burns@westnorthants.gov.uk for more information.

Children encouraged to enter arts competition

Schoolchildren of all ages in Northamptonshire are being asked to display their creative skills and share what inspired them about the King's Coronation by taking part in the countywide Coronation Art Competition.

James Saunders Watson Esq, His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire, is inviting pupils to create a work of art based on their take on the Coronation celebrations that took place across the country in May.

Children can submit drawings on size A3 canvas, paper, board, or you use oil or water-based paint, pencil, pastel, crayons, collage or even photography to show what the Coronation meant to them.

Children aged between four and 16 are invited to enter for a chance to win a £100 cash prize, to be awarded at the final exhibition that will take place at The Stables at Lamport Hall on Thursday, 26 October.



There are four age categories, and the top ten entries in each category will be invited to exhibit their artworks at the exhibition, which will run from Thursday, 26 October until Sunday, 29 October.

Entries must be sent to coronationart@outlook.com by Wednesday, 30 August, and include the entrant's name, age, the school, and the school's postcode.

Our Council in the news

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

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:

- [West Northants Council celebrates Armed Forces Day 2023](#) – 23 May
- [Community Safety Partnership reinforces commitment to make communities safer](#) – 23 May
- [Historic and cultural sites invited to take part in Heritage Open Days](#) 26 May
- [Exhibition of Ukrainian Art comes to Northampton for first UK showing](#) – 26 May
- [Grant funding for West Northants voluntary and community sector is now available](#) – 30 May
- [Commissioning of Healthwatch Northamptonshire: have your say](#) – 31 May
- [Expansion to Northampton's iconic 78 Derngate reaches new heights](#) – 31 May

- [Blue badge day of action – supporting our disabled road users](#) – 1 June
- [Travis Perkins to sponsor Northampton Pride for second year](#) – 1 June
- [Public Health team urges residents to receive the Pneumococcal vaccine](#) – 1 June
- [Update on Northampton Market](#) – 6 June
- [Councillors to discuss further £5m funding package to help households](#) – 6 June
- [Fly-tipper pays a heavy price following prosecution](#) – 7 June
- [West Northamptonshire Council receives fostering friendly accreditation](#) – June 7
- [Changes to the planning committees at West Northamptonshire Council adopted](#) – June 8
- [600kg haul of litter collected in just one shift along A43](#) – June 12
- [New car park facility unveiled in Towcester](#) – June 12
- [Three found guilty of dumping waste pay the price](#) – June 12
- [Daventry to host first Pride event](#) – June 13
- [Cabinet approve proposals to bring Station car park back on track](#) – June 14
- [Children and young people asked to get involved in the Coronation Art Competition](#) – June 14
- [Litter pickers take to the busy roads to remove waste](#) – 15 June
- [Abbey Centre and Daventry Library closed until further notice](#) – 16 June