



Town & Parish Briefing

Edition 4 | 14 June 2022



Welcome to the latest Town and Parish Briefing, bringing you a monthly 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

A fresh start for Highways services

Residents should start seeing immediate improvements to roads and signage in West Northamptonshire when the new highways service launches this autumn, according to proposals set out by our preferred contractor.

Cleaning road signs, removing vegetation, replacing worn road markings and providing better updates and information to residents, parish councils and businesses are among the plans for the first few months of the new highways maintenance contract, agreed between the council and the contractor, when it starts this September.

Under the new contract with Kier, our Council will deliver a brand new service with priorities and requirements specifically tailored to West Northamptonshire and a fresh flexibility to meet the changing priorities of the council and needs of our communities.



We are increasing investment to the service by more than £1million per year, and will also have greater control, putting in place its own contract management team to monitor performance, which will include clear, strong goals for improving customer focus and providing value for money.

In the run-up this summer, we will be working with Kier on developing and agreeing a programme of work for the first 100 days of the service, which will then lay firm foundations for continuous improvements.

The new contractor has also set a commitment to working with us on our sustainability goals to achieve net zero by 2030, including ensuring its fleet of vehicles are either ultra-low emissions or run using alternative fuels as well as plans to pilot future green solutions such as hydrogen.

Kier has also pledged to create additional social value benefits equivalent to 30% of the annual contract budget to benefit the wider West Northants community and economy.

This includes ensuring at least 70% of supply chain spending is with local businesses and SMEs by the end of the first year, employing 10% of the workforce as local graduates and apprentices, providing work opportunities for young people not in employment, education or training, and increasing the number of employees with disabilities year on year.

The new contract will run for seven years, with the potential to extend to a maximum of 14 years, based on performance and quality of the service.



The decision for West Northamptonshire was made under delegated authority by the Council's Executive Director Place, Economy and Environment and Executive Director Finance, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Transport, Highways and Waste Services, and the Portfolio Holder for Finance, using a necessarily rigorous process.

Our Council has worked closely with North Northamptonshire Council on the process for procuring the new highways contracts. This process started in November 2020 and has involved several selection stages to narrow down and shortlist prospective suppliers.

The highways contract will also be the subject for discussion at the forthcoming meeting on our Council's Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which will be held at 6pm on 28 June.

Council leader Jonathan Nunn said "Procuring a highways contract is an extremely complex process and is heavily controlled and regulated as we must adhere to strict, procurement regulations. The process started over 18 months ago, with councillors setting and agreeing the way in which the procurement route would be undertaken, but then they are required to stand back as that process is strictly adhered to.

"The whole process is highly confidential to ensure the outcome cannot be pre-judged, with only myself and our Highways Cabinet Member being informed of the successful bidder on the same day of the decision, which was just a couple of hours before the result was then publicly announced. However as soon as we were aware we immediately arranged for all elected members to be briefed on the process at the earliest opportunity, and also for our Scrutiny Committee to examine it as soon as they can, which will be 28 June.

"Flexibility to change and address residents' priorities with a positive attitude, stronger contract management, and more investment make this a better contract for West Northants than the previous contract, but we'll be reporting the performance of the contract on a quarterly basis publicly at our Cabinet meetings. We want people to see a real difference when this new contract starts, so we're working with Kier to come up with a plan that makes sure that they do."

Anglian Water offer help to vulnerable people

We're working in partnership with Anglian Water to help make sure communities are aware of the support they can receive if they're customers of Anglian Water.

Anglian Water offers a range of practical support for residents experiencing difficulty with their bills, and town and parish councils are encouraged to share information about the help that is available. It includes discounted tariffs, assistance schemes for those who have fallen behind on payments, as well as flexible and affordable payment plans.

They also offer a Priority Services Register, providing additional support to a wide range of people, from those with slight, hearing, or mobility difficulties, to parents with the babies under 12 months old

More information about the help available can be found on [Anglian Water's Extra Care support page](#)

We're here if you need help

love every drop
anglianwater

We have lots of ways to help you and your loved ones.

If you're finding it difficult to pay, we offer:

- Discounted tariffs
- Assistance schemes
- Affordable payment plans

Our **Priority Services Register** can help lots of different people with free practical support, such as:

- Letting you know about upcoming work in your area and help if your water goes off
- Helping protect you against bogus callers, which includes setting a password for your account
- Sending bills in different formats and communicating with you in your preferred language

Find out more

- anglianwater.co.uk/watercare
- 0800 011 3774
- BSL anglianwater.co.uk/bsl

Scan here

Communities join together for a jubilant weekend



It was great to see so many towns and parishes across West Northamptonshire staging their own celebrations for the Queen's Jubilee, as thousands of people turned out to enjoy a spectacular bank holiday weekend of events and activities.

From beacon lighting ceremonies to the countywide pageant, the Big Lunch at Delapré Abbey and the hundreds of street parties and community get-togethers that took place in honour of her Majesty, it was a weekend to remember.

The festivities got underway on Thursday evening, with a number of commemorative beacons simultaneously lit across our area, including the Northampton Lift Tower becoming a 'virtual beacon' lit up in red, white and blue. On Saturday the crowds turned out for a spectacular countywide pageant, which saw military and emergency services personnel, youth and community groups and businesses from across Northamptonshire parade through Northampton town centre.

Then on Sunday hundreds of people braved the damp conditions to hold big lunches and street parties, including attending The Big Lunch at Delapré Abbey, enjoying a range of live music, performances, activities and stalls.

Councillor Jonathan Nunn, Leader of West Northamptonshire Council, said: "It was a wonderful weekend across the whole country but especially Northamptonshire. With so many local street parties and some really big events taking place, it really has been a true celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee."

Find Jubilee photos from across the area by searching for #NorthantsJubilee on Twitter

There's still time to plant a tree for the Jubilee

The Jubilee weekend celebrations may be over, but towns and parishes can still get involved in commemorating this Platinum Jubilee year by planting a tree for the Queen's Green Canopy initiative.

From Scout and Girlguiding groups to parish councils, businesses and schools – thousands of people across the UK have come together to plant trees for the Jubilee.

In West Northamptonshire, a total of 5,686 trees were planted during the last official planting season between October last year and March this year.

One of those trees was planted at Silverstone race circuit, with another tree planted in Indianapolis on the same day as part of a cross-Atlantic twinning arrangement.

Northamptonshire is twinned with the city of Indianapolis through the Sister Cities International Scheme, as both locations have a strong focus on the motorsports industry, with the Indianapolis Motor Speedway and Silverstone Circuit well known for hosting world-renowned motorsports races.



An American Sweetgum tree was planted at the Silverstone circuit, while in Indianapolis an English Oak Tree was planted at Garfield Regional Park.

How you can get involved

The tree planting season gets underway again this October 2022, so groups that have not yet got involved have a further chance to do so.

As part of this, The Woodland Trust is once again offering free trees to schools and community groups. To request a pack for delivery in November, please [visit The Woodland Trust website](#)

Town and parish councils that plant a tree for the Jubilee can also get a free commemorative plaque from our Council. Find out [more information about the work taking place locally in support of the Queen's Green Canopy project](#)

You can also find out more on the [Queen's Green Canopy website](#)

Queen's Baton Relay passing through our county



The Birmingham 2022 Queen's Baton Relay will visit Northampton on Sunday, 10 July.

Held in the run-up to the Commonwealth Games taking place at Birmingham from 28 July to 8 August, the Queen's Baton Relay provides an opportunity for communities to experience the excitement in the run-up to the big event.

We are coordinating with local partners to build awareness of the event and to create activities that will generate atmosphere and engagement during and after the Relay. Members of the public are also encouraged to get involved with the celebrations and embrace the arrival of the Baton, so please spread the word! Find out more about the [Queen's Baton Relay](#)

Support Fund set to help our most vulnerable

Councillor Matt Golby, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Public Health

Pensioners, families facing financial hardship and older people with disabilities in West Northamptonshire are set to benefit from a second tranche of the Household Support Fund.

The £2,599,628, from the Department for Work and Pensions, will be distributed by our Council and is earmarked to continue to support the most vulnerable households and individuals, having helped thousands of families since its launch in September last year.

Councillors will meet at a Cabinet Meeting on 14 June to determine how to best use the fund within the scope set out by government ministers. Previous funding has supported households with food, energy and water costs, and this extension will ensure that this support continues through to the end of September.

A third of the funding is already ring-fenced to support families with children, while another third is firmly dedicated to pensioners. This ensures the people who need it most will continue to receive vital support to meet essential household costs.

In line with our recently approved Anti-Poverty Strategy, we are proposing to distribute the remainder of the money to those households in most need of help towards significantly rising living costs and households demonstrating severe financial hardship.



Councillors will decide whether or not to back the proposal that the money will be distributed, via various packages, to families and individuals in specific financial hardship over the course of the summer period.

If proposals are approved, families who are eligible for free school meals will receive £20 per week school vouchers during the summer holiday. Eligible households could also get a £100 food voucher in a bid to offset the recent increases in food and fuel costs. More than 6,500 pensioners receiving Pension Credit could also receive £100, with a proposed additional Pension Credit Top Up of £50 for pensioners with severe disabilities.

School meal payments are expected to be made a couple of weeks before the start of the holidays, with payments for pensioners planned to take place in July. Work continues on shaping arrangements with community organisations to distribute food vouchers to eligible households, with a view to this being ready from late July/early August.

I am proud to have been a part of signing up to an Anti-Poverty Strategy for West Northamptonshire and this Household Support Fund presents an opportunity to start to progress on some of the actions and priorities we have already outlined as a council. We know the pressures many are currently facing, especially pensioners, people with disabilities and families with children, which is why it is proposed that this fund targets support to these most vulnerable households across the county.

Our Vision is for a fairer and more inclusive West Northamptonshire, where everyone is able to live their best life, prosperous and fulfilling, free from poverty and inequality.

If the proposals are accepted, details of how to access the available funds will be publicised in the coming weeks. Find out more about the [Household Support Fund proposals](#)

Boundary Commission conducting review

As a new authority, our Council is in the process of going through a local boundary review which is being run by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

They are running the review in two stages, firstly looking at the number of councillors, and then looking at how many wards there will be, and the names of those wards.

Our councillors have written a submission to the Commission, outlining how many Councillors we need to run the Council, and that submission will be reviewed by the Commission.

The outcome of that review will be known in late August, after which we will move onto the next stage.

The Commission will hold a consultation on the proposed arrangements from the end of August through to November, and the process will end in the autumn or winter 2023, when an Order is expected to be laid in Parliament.

We will also be writing to all Parish and Town councils in West Northants in due course, asking for interest in putting forward requests for a review of their parishes via a Community Governance Review.

A Community Governance Review is the process for making changes to parishes, and can include:

- Creating, merging or abolishing parishes
- Changing the boundaries between parishes
- Changing the style or name of a parish
- Changing the number of Councillors for a parish.

Look out for an email from our Elections Team in 2023.

We will also be conducting a polling districts, places and station review over this period and will be consulting with Parish and Town councils across West Northants to seek your views on the current arrangements.

Heritage Open Days offer a showcase for our area

Venues across West Northamptonshire will open their doors for free during the Heritage Open Days event this September.

A number of sites have come forward so far, including Brackley Town Hall, the Canal Museum at Stoke Bruerne, Canons Ashby House, Daventry Museum, Towcester Mill Brewery, Sikh Gurdwara in Northampton and the Charles Rennie Mackintosh House at 78 Derngate.

Venues have until 17 June to register, so that they can feature in our website and social media promotions in the lead up to the event.

We would like to encourage venues right across West Northamptonshire to get involved, so please urge sites in your Town and Parish areas to come forward.

Find out [more information about Heritage Open Days](#)



André is named the new Chairman of the board

Our Council's new Chairman is skating into his role with wheel enthusiasm – and a desire to get out and about in our towns and parishes as much as possible.

As you may be aware, Councillor André Gonzalez De Savage received the ceremonial chains of office from outgoing Chairman Cllr Ann Addison at the Council's Annual Meeting in May. Councillor John Shephard was confirmed as Vice Chairman of the Council.

It's a little-known fact that André has been a keen skateboarder and BMXer for as long as he's been a local councillor during the past 20 years – and he plans to be equally active and energetic in the year ahead, supporting local communities and businesses while also fundraising for his two chosen charities, The Air Ambulance and Northamptonshire Search and Rescue.

André, who represents East Hunsbury and Shelfleys Ward, said: "It's an incredible honour and privilege to be Chairman and I'm really looking forward to doing everything I can in the coming year to further raise the profile of West Northamptonshire and the many great things our area has to offer.

"It's really important that our council fully supports and connects with our residents, businesses and community groups and I will be working hard to continue to build these links as well as helping to showcase their amazing achievements.

He added: "I have chosen to help raise invaluable funds for the [Air Ambulance](#) and [Northants Search and Rescue](#) as I really admire the amazing work and heroic efforts of these two charities, sometimes in harrowing circumstances, to support our emergency services and make a difference to people's daily lives."



Originally from Barcelona and having previously lived in Switzerland, London and Bedfordshire, dad-of-three André moved to Northampton in 1987, immediately involving himself in local residents' associations and serving as a parish councillor for the East and West Hunsbury areas, then later becoming a Northamptonshire County Councillor for 17 years where he also held a number of Cabinet roles around Customer and Communities and Public Protection.

From bike chains to ceremonial chains, André is also Chairman of Northamptonshire BMX and skate park Adrenaline Alley as well as being heavily involved in promoting culture and heritage through

Surprise Northamptonshire and Royal and Dergate Theatres and the Made in Northamptonshire initiative which celebrates the county's food and drink creators, manufacturers and providers.

Inviting the Chairman to your events and activities

The role of Chairman is a non-political, civic role, which involves representing the Council and West Northamptonshire at events and functions, as well as chairing Council meetings to ensure they are properly run in accordance with the Constitution.

As part of the role, the Chairman is keen to meet and engage with local parish and town councils, businesses, schools, community and voluntary groups and other organisations. If you are organising an event, activity or function and would like the Chairman to attend, please contact the Chairman's Secretary at chairman@westnorthants.gov.uk

Parish helpdesk providing support to residents

Welcome to a new feature celebrating some of the great work taking place across our town and parish councils.

In this first edition, Deborah Rush, Clerk to **Cogenhoe & Whiston Parish Council**, talks about their new parish helpdesk, and the ways in which it is supporting residents.

What is the parish helpdesk?

The parish helpdesk is a facility Cogenhoe & Whiston Parish Council introduced for its residents to provide someone for residents to talk to face to face and to help solve any problems or issues they are having. It has been running at the café in our Village Hall since last October and is open from 11-12pm every Thursday morning.

Why was it introduced?

It became clear from talking to residents that many do not have any Internet access and cannot cope with the telephone options if you try to phone West Northants Council, so a more local, personal service was needed. Being so far from Towcester it is impossible for our residents to get to the Forum to speak to anyone face-to-face, so a more local approach was needed. As a Parish Council we have been working hard on community outreach post-pandemic and this facility forms part of that outreach and finding better ways to serve our residents.

How does it benefit the community?

We operate the parish helpdesk from the café in our Village Hall, it also offers prescription collections from our local surgery and the opportunity just to have a chat and cup of coffee, which really helps with resident's well-being, especially those on their own.

Who runs it and who uses it most?

It is run by the Parish Council's clerk and is mostly used by older residents. West Northamptonshire Cllr Stephen Clarke often uses the cafe and chats to residents who pop in.

What are you most proud of?

The most satisfying enquiry has been helping an elderly resident renew his bus pass. He was very worried about how he could do it, as he has no Internet access and no transport and is hard of hearing. He still calls in to see me and say hello and thank you, months later!

The introduction of the new garden waste service caused some stress for older residents and one morning I had a queue of six people all waiting for help to pay, so that was a pretty satisfying morning!



Please share your success stories with us

Have you got a success story to share with us and your fellow parish and town councils?

Perhaps you would like to highlight an innovation that has proved particularly beneficial? Or shine the spotlight on a new scheme you are developing?

Please submit your ideas for future articles by emailing us at communications@westnorthants.gov.uk

More sponsors needed to offer Homes for Ukraine

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

We are seeking more sponsors to support families and individuals fleeing the war in Ukraine.

One of the primary requirements is for accommodation to host those whose initial sponsorship didn't work out for a variety of reasons.

The Government's original plea for sponsors was made several months ago, so we recognise there might well be people who were not in a position to offer accommodation at the time of the original appeal, who might now be able to help.

There might also be people who signed up at that time and were not matched with refugees, and we'd like to hear from any who would still like to do their bit.

West Northamptonshire is an incredibly welcoming place, with many wonderful people who are willing to support those in need.

We're extremely grateful for all of the help so far, yet we could do with some additional help. The £350 per month thank-you payment is still on offer for sponsors who are successfully matched to Ukrainian guests.

We need some basic information to begin the process including:

- Name, address and contact details
- Who they would be able to accommodate (a family with children/couple/single female/single male)
- What accommodation they have available (including size and number of bedrooms)
- An indication of whether you have already registered your interest in becoming a sponsor on the government website.

Anyone who has space in their home, or an empty property that might be suitable can contact us at resettlement@westnorthants.gov.uk and we will provide full details of the scheme.



Management change for planning services

We have appointed a new Interim Assistant Director for Planning and Development. Colin Walker has taken on the role, taking over from Jim Newton, who has recently moved on to pastures new.

Colin, who has previous extensive experience in councils including Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole and Sheffield, will bring fresh drive as work continues to move forward to align our planning policy and development control services across West Northants.

Key future changes being shaped include proposals to further consolidate and centralise Section 106 and CIL services, which we know is an area that needs urgent attention. Colin will also oversee a focused recruitment drive for the service, which so far has seen more than 50 applications.

Progress continues on £150 energy rebates

Councillor Malcolm Longley, Cabinet Member for Finance

Work on distributing £150 Council Tax energy rebates across West Northamptonshire continues to make good progress.

The rebate is being paid to help with the rise in the cost of living, and applies to around 143,000 homes in Council Tax Bands A to D across the area.

The majority of those who pay their Council Tax by Direct Debit should have now received the rebate, and we have written to the remaining 42,000 homes who do not pay by Direct Debit, encouraging them to confirm their bank details so payment can be made. The letters include a unique passcode enabling residents to apply online, plus a paper application for those residents unable to access the internet.

We are only too aware of the cost-of-living increases people are facing, and our Revenues and Benefits Service has worked tirelessly to put new processes in place to distribute payments as quickly as possible.

The Government stipulation is that councils need to make a payment rather than simply crediting Council Tax accounts, which has resulted in both significant additional work for our staff and the need for changes to our IT systems.

To ensure that all eligible residents receive the rebate, any residents that have not made an application, online or by post, by 31 July 2022 and for whom bank account details are not known will have their Council Tax account credited with the £150 payment.

[More information on the energy rebate can be found on our website](#)

Campaign is stamping out illegal cigarettes

Our Trading Standards team is joining forces with others across the East Midlands to promote 'Operation June' which aims to raise awareness about the additional dangers associated with smoking illegal cigarettes.

The campaign was launched following the death ten years ago of 71-year-old Lincolnshire resident June Buffham, who lost her life in a house fire caused by an illegal unsafe cigarette.

In Northamptonshire, three people have died as a result of smoking related fires in the last four years.

Any cigarette could cause a house fire, but genuine cigarettes are designed to extinguish if not actively smoked. Fake or smuggled cigarettes may not.

All manufactured cigarettes must include a safety feature known as a Reduced Ignition Propensity (RIP). This consists of two bands of less porous paper within the cigarette paper which causes the cigarette to go out when not actively smoked.

In a recent prosecution by WNC Trading Standards, the owner of UK Monopol in Northampton was fined a total of £6577 for selling counterfeit and smuggled cigarettes of which some also failed to comply with the RIP test.

People can help stop the harm caused by illegal tobacco by reporting its sale to Trading Standards via the Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 0808 223 1133.



Commitment to helping domestic abuse victims

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

Services helping domestic abuse victims find safer accommodation across Northamptonshire will receive extra funding of over £273,000 this year.

Our Council, in partnership with North Northamptonshire Council, have set out plans to boost the funding provided to the [Northamptonshire Domestic Abuse Service](#) (NDAS) and [Eve Domestic Violence & Abuse support](#) services.

It means the two organisations will share in total just over £700,000 in 2022/23 to help them meet an increasing demand for services. It also ensures that grant funding to NDAS for their Specialist Drug and Alcohol Refuge continues.

The funding is distributed by the two councils from the Government's Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. The move reaffirms our councils' commitment to supporting victims of domestic abuse and moving forward the actions of the countywide Domestic Abuse Strategy for 2022-25. [Find out more about the Strategy on our website](#)



Working together to support our care leavers

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

A new protocol for supporting young people leaving care is in place thanks to a partnership effort. It has been developed by our Housing and Communities team, together with North Northamptonshire Council and Northamptonshire Children's Trust (NCT), and is a great example of how our Council is bringing agencies together in order to improve services for our communities.

Under the new protocol, a new Care Leavers Transitions Accommodation Panel chaired by the service or strategic manager for the NCT Leaving Care service, meets monthly to consider cases. Its membership is varied, to ensure that all services and partners are working together as the 'corporate parent' of young people leaving care.

The panel brings together representatives from a range of teams within our council - including housing, adult services and education – together with partners including the Youth Offending Service, health, and the police. Its objectives are to:

- Bring housing, health, social care, and all partners together to jointly plan early transitions with young people in care and preparing to leave care
- Support each other and the young person in making plans
- Improve the timeliness and breadth of accommodation, support & care planning
- Ensure Pathway Plans include support and accommodation services available from partners to meet all the assessed needs of the young person
- Create shared risk management plans for young people believed to be at risk of harm or exploitation.

Panels are held on the first Thursday of each month, with the first held in May.

Health and Wellbeing in our communities

By Sally Burns and John Ashton, Interim Directors of Public Health for West and North Northamptonshire

Now we are in the 'Living Safely with COVID-19' part of the pandemic we will be using these regular briefings going forwards to inform you about some of the health and wellbeing services and initiatives across Northamptonshire you may not be aware of.

This month we will focus on simple hand washing. Believe it or not the act of regularly washing our hands is the easiest thing we can all do to protect our own health and the health of those around us.

Unfortunately, it is expected that there will be a resurgence of COVID-19 in the autumn and winter of this year. So now, and the coming months, are vitally important to use as preparation time. As Directors of Public Health, we want to ensure the Northamptonshire population reach that point in the year as healthy and protected as you can possibly be.

Public Health is for the past, the present and the future. It has its roots in the sanitation systems introduced in big cities such as Liverpool, a measure which enabled infectious diseases such as Typhus and Cholera to be controlled, with countless lives saved and extended.

Nowadays clean water is something we perhaps take for granted. However, handwashing is still a vital public health intervention to help prevent the spread of illness.

Although COVID-19 cases in Northamptonshire are decreasing, it's important to not let those high standards of hygiene slip. Handwashing has already served the residents

Northamptonshire has coped well during the COVID-19 pandemic so far. We are pretty sure that never before has Happy Birthday been sung so often at sinks across Northamptonshire!

Hands are the gateway viruses use to enter your body, for example if you touch a contaminated surface and then proceed to touch your eyes, nose or mouth (something which we do unconsciously multiple times a day as its human nature). That leaves us open to not just COVID-19 but also other bacteria and viruses, particularly as we often touch food with our hands.

The simplest, most effective way is to simply wash them thoroughly with soap using running water before drying them. In doing so you can reduce the chances of getting sick from bacteria or viruses.

I urge you all to be the ambassadors of health and wellbeing in your communities and spread the word when and where you can.



Bounce into summer with a Covid-19 vaccination

The NHS continues to strongly encourage those who have yet to come forward for their first, second or booster doses, to do so.

Anyone aged 5 or over is eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine. Bookable appointments and several drop-in clinics continue to be open across Northamptonshire, including a mobile vaccination service visiting different locations around the county on a daily basis. First and second doses, first boosters for those over 16 years of age and spring booster doses are on offer for those eligible.

Those eligible for a spring booster include adults aged 75 or over, adults that live in care homes for older adults and individuals aged 12 years and over who have weakened immune systems. Find out more about getting a [Covid-19 vaccination](#)

Our latest consultation & engagement activity

Our Consultation and Engagement Team has put together this overview of our recent consultation and engagement activities. Please remember that all of our consultations are published on the [Consultation Hub](#)



Open activities on the Consultation Hub

[ASC unit at Hunsbury Park Primary School](#): A need to provide additional specialist school places for children in receipt of an Education, Health & Care Plan in all areas of West Northamptonshire has been identified. To partially address the need for an increased number of ASC places in Northampton, the council is proposing that a new SEND unit be established at Hunsbury Park Primary School. Closes: 16 June 2022

[New free special school](#): Our Council has identified the need to provide additional specialist school places for children and young people, preferably to the south-west of Northampton, within reasonable travelling distance of Towcester, Daventry and Brackley. Closes: 10 June 2022

[Visitor Use of the Upper Nene Valley](#): We are currently undertaking a project to understand how people use the Nene Valley for recreation, so we can understand the impact on the important wildlife habitats in the area. Closes: 1 December 2022

Recently closed activities

[Housing strategy consultation](#): We are developing a new housing strategy which will be a high-level document that will explain our vision, plans and priorities for the next two years. Closed: 24 May and feedback is being analysed

[Woodford Housing Needs Survey](#): We carried out a study of the housing needs and requirements of all residents who have a close connection to the Parish of Woodford cum Membris through current or past residency, work or close family. Closed: 15 May and feedback is being analysed

[Canons Ashby Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan Consultation](#): Views of the draft appraisal and management plan were sought as part of a wider review of conservation areas in the Daventry area. Closed: 16 May and feedback is being analysed

[BT payphone in Whilton](#): BT is proposing to remove the telephony equipment from the K6 telephone box in Main Street Whilton. The box is a listed building (Grade II), and the parish council has expressed a desire to adopt the box which would ensure its long-term maintenance. Closed: 7 June 2022

Sharing outcomes – We asked, you said, we did

The 'We asked, you said, we did' outcomes for the Budget consultation has been published on the Consultation Hub: [Budget Consultation - we asked, you said, we did](#)

New app aiming to help businesses grow

Councillor Dan Lister, Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Town Centre Regeneration and Growth

From village shops to High Street stores, B&Bs to stately homes, we are encouraging businesses right across West Northamptonshire to sign-up for a new e-commerce and tourism app to boost footfall, increase local spend, and shine a spotlight on everything our area has to offer.

Our Economic Development Team has worked with award-winning technology company Bubltown to create the new ExploreWN app.

The app is set to be launched later this summer, but businesses are invited to sign-up to it for free now, so they can set up their profile on the app and be ready to engage with customers from day one.

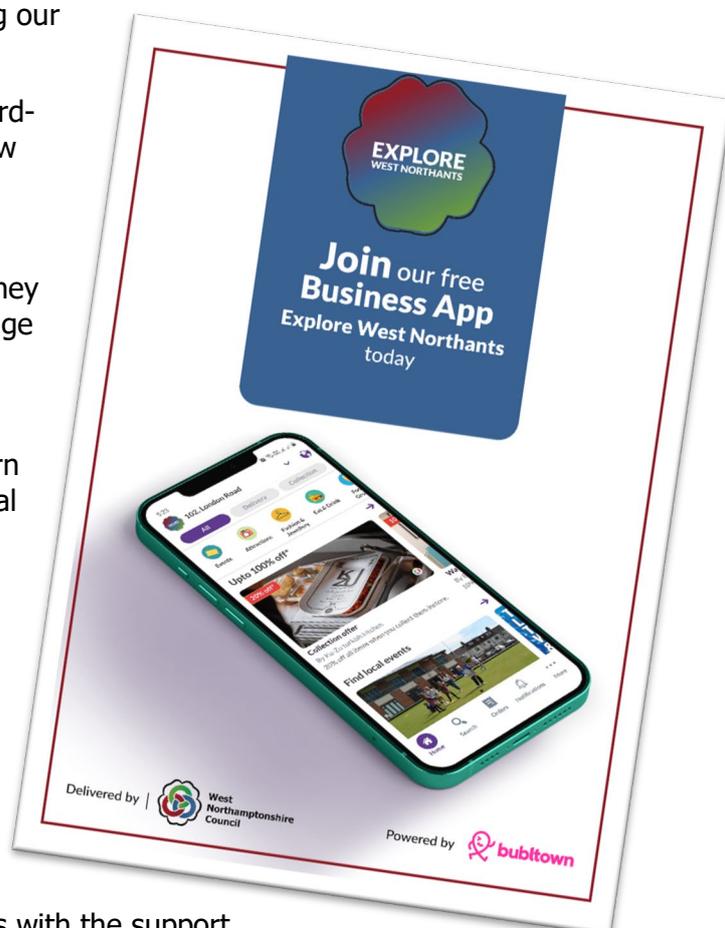
Funded by the Welcome Back Fund with the aim of helping businesses recover from the pandemic and return to growth, the platform offers a digital showcase for local businesses and attractions

It is free for any West Northamptonshire business to join and use, and allows them to create a profile, raise their reputation, boost their brand and increase sales.

The app will give residents easy access to local goods, services and discounts right on their doorstep and will include features to promote events, walking routes and local attractions.

This is a powerful platform which will provide businesses with the support they need to thrive in a more digital future as well as enhance the local quality of life, grow the local economy and support our vision of a thriving West Northamptonshire.

Businesses can find out more and sign up for free by [visiting the Explore WN app](#)



Planning referendum to take place in Pitsford

Residents of Pitsford will go to the polls next week to decide whether they agree with proposed neighbourhood development plans for their area.

The referendum in Pitsford on Thursday, 16 June will ask residents whether we should use their neighbourhood development plan to help decide future planning applications in their area.

If more than 50 per cent of those who vote are in favour of the plan, then we are required to consider it alongside any future planning applications in the village.

Village residents can cast their vote at Pitsford Village Hall between 7am and 10pm on Thursday, 16 June.

This development plan has been subject to public consultation before being reviewed by an independent examiner, who recommended that it goes to a referendum.

For more details, including the public consultation and the examiner's recommendation, visit our [Neighbourhood Development Plan page for the Daventry area](#)

Recent news releases from our Council

Here's a monthly roundup of the news releases and updates published by our Council in recent weeks. Don't forget you can keep up-to-date with these and search the news archive by [visiting the News section of our website](#)

In the past month, we issued press releases on:

- [Prosecutions brought for fly-tipping](#) – 6 May
- [Residents reminded to recycle batteries after bin crew saves lorry from fire](#) – 6 May
- [Deadline extended: Get crafty for the Queen of Arts Platinum Jubilee Activity](#) – 11 May
- [Meal vouchers for May half-term announced for children in West Northamptonshire](#) – 11 May
- [Have you applied for home to school transport for September 2022?](#) – 10 May
- [West Northamptonshire Council to fund market move](#) - 13 May
- [Birmingham 2022 Queen's Baton Relay to visit Northampton](#) - 16 May
- [Museum appeal to find missing Lockgate paintings](#) - 17 May
- [Councils set out funding commitment to help victims of domestic abuse](#) - 18 May
- [Progress continues on Council Tax energy rebates](#) - 18 May
- [Signing stars to open Northampton Music Festival](#) 23 May
- [Discover fantastic produce and services at Northampton Market](#) 23 May
- [Beacons to light up West Northants for Queen's Platinum Jubilee](#) 24 May
- [Get your neighbourhood Clean for the Queen](#) – 27 May
- [Northampton Music Festival FULL line-up revealed](#) – 30 May
- [Transatlantic tree planting as county gets ready for a weekend of jubilee celebrations](#) – 31 May
- [National changes to bus lane enforcement to affect West Northamptonshire](#) – 31 May
- [Nearly 130 road closures as West Northamptonshire prepares to celebrate](#) – 31 May
- [Nation's sandwich maker set to nourish Jubilee Pageant participants](#) – 31 May
- [Firm lays foundations for a more diverse community with first Pride sponsorship](#) – 1 June
- [Increased investment for new highways contract will deliver improvements](#) – 1 June
- [West Northamptonshire comes together for a right Royal celebration](#) – 6 June
- [Cost-of living support for West Northants' most vulnerable residents to be proposed](#) – 9 June