

Leader's Update

17 April 2025

Issue: 98

Introduction and welcome

Welcome to my latest Update.

This issue includes:

- Cornerstone: Work starts on the replacement library roof.
- Support Northamptonshire wins Healthwatch contract for North Northamptonshire.
- Places allocated for children starting in Primary, Infant and Junior schools in North Northamptonshire in September 2025.
- North Northamptonshire elections: Key information.
- VE Day 2025.
- Fire & Rescue Service's Community Risk Management Plan.
- Visitors invited to take part in Northamptonshire Heritage Fair this April.

In addition, you will find below some useful information about forthcoming meetings, Your Voice Matters (our consultation and engagement hub), all the latest press releases and our top social media posts.

Whatever your plans are, I hope you have a great weekend!

Cornerstone: Work starts on the replacement library roof

This week Messenger Construction have started to set up for works to commence, with scaffolding due to start going up from 28 April 2025. Whilst the scaffolding is erected, there will be a road closure in place along Sheep Street, Kettering with the closure dates to be publicised beforehand.

A timeline for the project has now been [published on the Cornerstone website](#) and updates will continue to be shared as we move forward with the project.

Due to the nature of the project, hoardings will be installed around the building with access maintained for the entrance into the temporary library, but residents are advised to follow all signage and staff advice on site to stay safe.

Residents should be assured that both Messenger and North Northamptonshire Council are making every effort to minimise disruption throughout the duration of the project - which is expected to take just over a year to complete.

Once work on replacing the slates begins, Messenger will be using a mixture of new, and where possible, reclaimed Collyweston slates on the roof.

The library remains temporarily relocated in the upper floor of the modern extension of Cornerstone for the foreseeable future and the library team continue to offer a full range of services and group activities.

Support Northamptonshire wins Healthwatch contract for North Northamptonshire

Following public and stakeholder consultation, North Northamptonshire Council's commissioning process to identify the new provider of Healthwatch services for North Northamptonshire residents has concluded, with the contract awarded to Support Northamptonshire.

Aligning with recommissioned public health services for North Northamptonshire, the former countywide Healthwatch Northamptonshire service will be delivered as two separate contracts, for North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire Councils, from April 2025.

Places allocated for children starting in Primary, Infant and Junior schools in North Northamptonshire in September 2025

A total of 3789 reception places have been allocated to children across North Northamptonshire.

92.7% of applicants; 3514 children, have been allocated a place at their first preference school in 2025 (93% for 2024).

4.9% of applicants have been allocated a place at their second preference school in 2025 (4.5% in 2024) while 0.7% have been allocated a place at their third preference school in 2025 (0.6% in 2024).

98.3% of applicants have been allocated a place at one of their preferred schools in 2025 (98.1% in 2024), while 98% of applications were made online in 2025 (98.5% in 2024).

Parents/carers who applied online before the closing date for their places in reception are able to [check their offer](#) on the council's website.

Junior school places (Year 3)

There were 972 applications, with 100% of pupils being allocated a place at their first preference in 2025 (99.8% for 2024).

Where children have not been successful in getting a place at a preference school, parents have the right to appeal (through the independent appeals process).

The next round of primary school place allocations (for late applicants) will take place in May 2025.

North Northamptonshire elections: Key information

We are now less than two weeks away from the North Northamptonshire Council elections and Town and Parish Council elections.

Candidate lists are now available on our [elections pages](#).

Poll cards have now started landing on doorsteps. Please read yours carefully as your polling station might have changed, due to changes in wards and boundaries.

Here is a reminder of the key dates:

- **Thursday 1 May:** Election day – polling stations will be open between 7am and 10pm. Don't forget you now need to bring [an accepted form of ID](#) or a [Voter Authority Certificate](#) (You can still apply for a Voter Authority Certificate until 5pm on 23 April.)
- **Friday 2 May:** The results for the North Northamptonshire Council elections will be announced.

- **Saturday 3 May:** The Town and Parish Council elections results will be announced.

Make sure you are following the council's [Facebook](#) and [X](#) pages for all the results and updates from the counts.

A reminder - we employ casual staff to help run elections. If you would like to work on election day (Thursday 1 May) or the counts, please see: [Election jobs](#).

Please visit our website for more information on [North Northamptonshire elections](#).

VE Day 2025

On Thursday 8 May 2025, communities across North Northamptonshire will mark 80 years since the end of the Second World War, with Victory in Europe (VE) Day.

Communities are planning events to mark this momentous anniversary to ensure that the service and sacrifice of the Second World War generation is remembered.

A [list of activities](#) taking place across Northamptonshire is available on our website.

Fire & Rescue Service's Community Risk Management Plan

Our partner, Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service has launched a public consultation on its Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), which identifies the risks to the community and sets out how resources will be used to mitigate them and keep people safe.

At the same time, it is also consulting on changes to how response times are measured.

We work closely with the fire service in many different capacities.

If you're interested in sharing your feedback, please take a look at the [draft CRMP and survey](#). The survey is open until 21 May.

Visitors invited to take part in Northamptonshire Heritage Fair this April

From spinners and weavers, to lacemakers and museums - the Northamptonshire Heritage Fair returns this April, hosted at The Chester House Estate. Visitors can meet more than 47 heritage organisations, societies and visitor attractions, showcasing the county's rich diversity of history and heritage. This free-to-enter event, in partnership with Northamptonshire Family History Society and Discover Northamptonshire, is on Sunday 27 April, 10am - 4pm.

Exhibitors include many archaeological societies, local and family history groups, narrowboat preservation charities, Naseby Battlefield, Lord Robartes' Regiment of Foote, Wicksteed Park, Deene Park and wildlife groups. There will be guided tours of the Archaeological Resource Centre, free children's activities, film shows by Northamptonshire Film Archive Trust and five different talks. You can see a full list of exhibitors on the [Northamptonshire Family History Society website](#).

Visitors are advised to park at the Estate's main visitor car park (NN8 2DH). Accessible parking is available on a first-come, first-serve basis at the Lime Avenue car park (NN29 7EZ).

The Farmhouse cafe will be open serving food and drinks between 10am - 3pm.

For more information, visit [The Chester House Estate website](#).

Your Voice Matters

Please find below details of our other current consultations and engagement activities. Please use the links below to provide your feedback and inform council decisions and share with family and friends who may be interested in shaping future plans.

Details of all open and closed consultation and engagement activities are available on the North Northamptonshire Consultation and Engagement Hub, [Your Voice Matters](#).

- Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment - [Have your say](#). Closes 6 May 2025.

Forthcoming meetings.

Executive

- Thursday 22 May from 6pm.

The agenda and papers will be published on the [Council meetings](#) section of our website in the week before the meeting.

These meetings will be live streamed on our [YouTube](#) channel.

Press releases

To help you stay abreast of the key things the council has been doing, I have included some links to the latest press releases below (starting with the most recent):

- [Places allocated for children starting in Primary, Infant and Junior schools in North Northamptonshire in September 2025](#)
- [Visitors invited to take part in Northamptonshire Heritage Fair this April](#)
- [Support Northamptonshire wins Healthwatch contract for North Northamptonshire](#)

Thank you

Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter. If you have any ideas for items to include in future updates, please email me at executive@northnorthants.gov.uk.

With Best Wishes,
