



## Welcome to the Local Link from North Northamptonshire Council

**Issue 15. Friday 20 February 2026.** Featuring: North Northamptonshire Council shortlisted for 'Most Improved Council' at the prestigious LGC Awards 2026. Final budget for 2026/27 approved.

### Top story

#### **North Northamptonshire Council shortlisted for 'Most Improved Council' at the prestigious LGC Awards 2026**

I am proud to announce that North Northamptonshire Council has been shortlisted for 'Most Improved Council' at the Local Government Chronicle (LGC) Awards 2026, one of the most respected and competitive awards programmes in the UK local government sector.

This recognition is a powerful endorsement of the extraordinary journey our council has been on. In just a few years we have moved from stabilising a newly formed organisation to delivering real transformation that is improving lives.

In May 2025, the council welcomed 47 brand new councillors, and I proudly became the Leader of the Council. We harnessed this new energy and perspective to the council's advantage, and we are seeing improvement and a pace of change that is unprecedented.

We have done this whilst also creating a positive and united culture between councillors, officers and our partners. I couldn't be prouder of our progress so far, but we will not rest until we have delivered our newly adopted, ambitious Corporate Plan and have become the exemplary council that our residents deserve.

### Latest news

#### **Final budget for 2026/27 approved by North Northamptonshire Council**

The council has approved its 2026/27 budget, setting a net revenue budget of £432.5m to fund essential services including adult and children's care, education, waste, highways and housing.

An additional £47m will support rising demand in key services, notably £17.7m for adult social care and £12.2m for children's services.

Savings, efficiencies and extra income of £20.3m, alongside improved funding from business rates, Council Tax and government grants, enable a balanced budget.

The annual garden waste charge will rise to £62 from April 2026.

A £278m capital programme for 2026/30 includes major investment in highways, housing, schools, disability facilities and digital infrastructure.

Read the full press release: [Final budget for 2026-2027 approved by North Northamptonshire Council](#).

I would like to thank everyone involved in delivering this budget – our staff, councillors, partners and residents – and I look forward to working together to make our area the best it can be.

### **Community workshop sets the foundations for Cornerstone's new identity**

Earlier this week, I attended a workshop to discuss the future identity and name of an important site in Kettering, currently referred to as Cornerstone.

Thirty-five representatives from the council and local partners, including the town council, Civic Society and Friends groups, took part.

As we gear up to fully open the site to the public, sessions like this are essential in helping us understand what matters most and how we move forward with the identity of this cultural asset.

We are considering all options to ensure any new name fits the site and surrounding area.

The workshop was a positive start, and we will now review all feedback before returning to the group with proposals ahead of a final decision.

### **Changes to postal vote validity and renewal process**

New postal vote provisions introduced under the Elections Act 2022 came into effect on 31 October 2023, reducing the validity period of postal votes to three years.

From July 2025, postal voters received renewal reminders by SMS, email and letter.

Where no renewal was submitted, the postal vote was cancelled, and the elector was advised that they would be required to vote in person. A new application form accompanied the Cancellation Notice.

Electors who did not renew may [reapply online](#) via GOV.UK. Applications close at 5pm, 11 working days before polling day.

### **Volunteer as a Pride in Place Chair**

Pride in Place is a national initiative investing up to £20m over the next ten years to support neighbourhoods that need it most.

Here in North Northamptonshire, this funding will help strengthen [Avondale Grange](#) (Kettering), [Kingswood, Hazel Leys and Exeter](#) (Corby), and [Queensway](#) (Wellingborough).

The council is looking for a Chair in each of these places. Chairs will play a key role in championing their areas, leading the Neighbourhood Board, working closely with the local MP, council teams and partners, encouraging local involvement and helping to shape long-term improvements.

This is a voluntary and flexible role, requiring around 8 to 10 hours a month, with reasonable expenses covered.

Expressions of interest are open until 5pm on Monday 23 February.

For further information, please visit: [Pride in Place Programme](#).

### **Watch upcoming Executive and Full Council meetings**

You can watch upcoming Executive and Full Council meetings live or on catch-up on our official [Democratic Services YouTube](#) channel.

Meeting dates, agendas and papers are available on our [ModernGov](#) meetings portal, where you can also browse upcoming sessions.

### **Upcoming sessions:**

- **Council:** Thursday 5 March from 6pm.
- **Executive:** Tuesday 17 March from 10am.



## **Community matters**

### **Free tailored energy advice now available for residents**

Last week saw the launch of our free Tailored Energy Advice Service (TEAS) to help residents make their homes warmer, more energy efficient and cheaper to run.

Powered by the Energy Saving Trust's Homewise tool, TEAS provides personalised recommendations based on each property.

Residents can access the tool on any device by entering their postcode and answering a few short questions, enabling the tool to analyse over 90 verified data points on home energy use.

The service supports the council's wider work on tackling fuel poverty, improving housing quality and moving towards a low-carbon future.

Residents in North Northamptonshire can begin their personalised plan via the [Homewise](#) website.

### **Have your say on the future of leisure services**

The newly launched Your Leisure, Your Future consultation will help shape how leisure and active communities' services are delivered across North Northamptonshire.

Everyone is encouraged to take part – whether you're a regular gym-goer, an occasional swimmer or someone who doesn't currently use leisure facilities.

The survey asks for views on sport, physical activity, wellbeing opportunities and wider health programmes.

Residents can also comment on three proposed service models: a Core Offer, an enhanced Community Plus option, and a Transformational model focused on improving health and wellbeing.

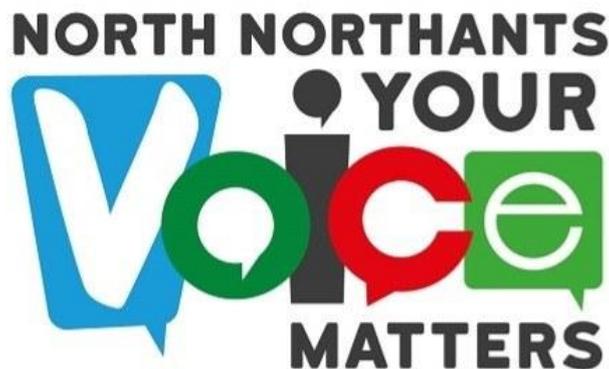
Have your say today by completing the [Your Leisure, Your Future survey](#) – your feedback will help shape the services of tomorrow.

The survey will close at midnight on Tuesday 10 March.



## Your Voice Matters

**View and respond to current consultations, and take part in engagement surveys and discussions**



- [Gating Public Spaces Protection Order \(PSPO\) - Hillside, Little Harrowden, Wellingborough](#) - Closes 10 March 2026.
- [North Northamptonshire Community Governance Review](#) - Closes 12 March 2026.
- **NEW:** [Young People Smoking and Vaping survey](#) - Closes 31 March 2026.

View all consultations and engagement activities online at: [Your Voice Matters](#).



## More to explore

**Stay informed with our latest press releases**

- [North Northamptonshire Council shortlisted for 'Most Improved Council' at the Prestigious LGC Awards 2026](#)
- [Final budget for 2026-2027 approved by North Northamptonshire Council](#)
- [Fine of over £53,000 for unlicensed dog breeder](#)
- [Council aims to be best 'extra parents' it can be](#)

- [Northamptonshire counts down to the first ever countywide tourism awards](#)
- [Parents and carers are invited to HPV and MMRV vaccination information sessions across North Northamptonshire during the half-term holiday](#)
- [Millions of Government investment into Avondale Grange, Kettering, Kingswood and Hazel Leys Corby and Queensway, Wellingborough, to be discussed next week](#)
- [Smoker's journey to quitting 'life-changing' thanks to support](#)
- [Improved school waiting list process being considered](#)
- [HIV Testing Week highlights free and confidential testing options in Northamptonshire](#)
- [Share your experiences of home to school travel](#)
- [A plan of action to reduce crime and disorder across North Northamptonshire will be discussed by Executive Members next week](#)
- [Sale of assets across North Northamptonshire set to be discussed by Executive](#)
- [Moulton College students get hands on work experience through roof replacement project](#)

View all Council news and updates on our website at: [News](#).



Thank you

Thank you for taking the time to read my newsletter. If you have any questions, please email [executive@northnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:executive@northnorthants.gov.uk).

Kind regards,

**Cllr Martin Griffiths**

**Leader of the Council**

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