



Cllr BILL BORRETT

Parish Report for the Elmham and Mattishall Division

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This month the County Council will vote on **the Government' Devolution proposals**. This will decide whether we get one Mayor for Norfolk and Suffolk on top of the existing County and District Councils.

I have listened to your feedback as it has now been discussed for many months and will be voting against the proposals for all the reasons that you have given me. Not least the increased complication, increased cost and loss of democratic accountability. A number of tasks currently carried out by Breckland Council and Norfolk County Council will go up to the new Mayor who will be elected by one and a half MILLION people, so diluting your opportunity to hold him/her to account in your Parish.

As before if you want to know more about the Government's plans, **please go to** www.futureeast.com where you can find more information.

Norfolk County Council Invites Communities to Grow Greener with Discounted Tree Packs

Tree planting in Norfolk is set for another boost this season as Norfolk County Council continues its drive towards 1 million trees for the county.

The Council's subsidised tree scheme is also open again, offering individuals, Parish Councils, community groups, businesses, schools and landowners the chance to apply for tree packs and protection materials at up to **50% off the original price**.

For those who want to do their bit to boost the number of trees in Norfolk but don't have space for woodland, subsidised tree packs are available to order now.

For the first time this year, a limited number of 'Taller Tree Packs', grown at Gressenhall Community Tree Nursery, are also available. These include larger beech, oak, and birch trees, making it possible for more people to take part and be 1 in a million.

For more information on Norfolk's One Million Trees initiative visit www.norfolk.gov.uk/milliontrees.

The Local Plan

The Local Plan is coming to the Cabinet meeting on Monday 20th October. If it is agreed, then the next stage of Consultation will begin on 31st October for 6 weeks until the 12th December. **All Parish Councils will be contacted** and emailed details of the Consultation and how to get involved.

I do urge everyone to have a look at what is proposed because now is the best time to influence the Plan before it goes off to the Planning Inspectorate for adoption next year.

Start the new school year with the Safe School Run Pledge

As the new academic year kicks off, Norfolk County Council's Public Health Road Safety team is inviting schools, parents, and carers across the county to take part in the **Safe School Run pledge**, an initiative promoting safer, healthier, and more sustainable travel during school drop-off and pick-up times.

Last year, nearly sixty schools joined the pledge, making a real difference. Participating schools reported a **10% increase** in walking, scooting, or cycling, fewer cars at busy times, and greater road safety awareness among children and their families.

This year, schools will receive **updated resources** to support safe parking, reduce engine idling, and improve air quality around school entrances. These free materials, created by Norfolk County Council's Public Health Road Safety team with input from Norfolk Constabulary and Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service, are designed to help schools engage their communities in making streets safer and cleaner for everyone.

The pledge encourages simple but effective actions such as parking a short distance away and walking the last stretch, switching off engines while waiting, and choosing active travel options like walking, wheeling, or cycling whenever possible.

Schools interested in joining the pledge or accessing the free resources can visit the [Norfolk County Council's website](#) or contact the Road Safety team for support.

Strong progress in transforming SEND education in Norfolk

Norfolk County Council is making significant strides in improving education for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), according to a recent report.

New teams and initiatives are enhancing support for inclusion within mainstream schools, while hundreds of additional places in specialist resource bases (SRBs) are enabling more children to remain in their local mainstream schools with tailored support.

The report, presented to the council's cross-party Children, Families and Communities Select Committee, highlights the council's substantial progress despite national delays in SEND reform and ongoing funding challenges.

Thanks to Norfolk's Safety Valve agreement, the council has secured over £130 million in joint investment with the Department for Education. Despite managing a cumulative Dedicated Schools Grant deficit of £131.9 million, Norfolk has committed more than £15 million in additional funding to bolster SEND services and continues to collaborate with the DfE to secure further funding aimed at reducing the deficit.

Councils launch package to support staff at Lotus Cars

The taskforce set up by Norfolk County Council and South Norfolk Council has launched a comprehensive support package designed to help employees and their families impacted by the recent announcement of redundancies at Lotus Cars.

The package that will be offered to Lotus employees and those affected in its supply chain, provides a holistic range of services designed around three key pillars of support, hardship and financial stability, employment and skills, and business start-ups.

The taskforce will use the time between now and the end of the financial year, when the redundancies are expected, to work with Lotus and its staff and help them navigate their next steps. The comprehensive support package, detailed below, offers practical assistance focused on three key areas: hardship and managing finances, finding a new job and business start-up.

Best wishes

Bill

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