



Latest update on events from your County Councillor Tom FitzPatrick

Fakenham Town Council

27th September 2023

Fakenham Library

Reading challenge

We held the presentation of Certificates and Medals to the young people who participated in the annual Summer Reading Challenge a couple of Saturdays ago. A huge thanks are due to the County Library staff and also Friends of the Library, the volunteers who do so much to make this event such a success in our Library.

The event is great fun for those who take part and helps foster a love of reading which is a hugely important skill throughout life. However, by encouraging children to continue to read during the summer holidays, it helps everyone taking part maintain their reading and literacy levels and this stands them in good stead when they return to school after the holidays.

Renovations

The works for Fakenham library have been delayed slightly and will now be taking place Monday 9th October and lasting for around ten weeks. This involves replacing and raising the level of the existing roof, new windows and rainwater goods. I am also requesting to have the garden cleared and the adjoining gable repaired while the library is closed. A pop up library will be set up in the community centre whilst the library is closed.

East of England All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG)

I recently travelled to Westminster to attend a meeting of the East of England All Party Parliamentary Group. I had been asked to be a panel member and to put the case for better digital for EELGA, the East of England Local Government Association (which comprises all fifty local authorities in Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Hertfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Bedfordshire). Also taking part in the debate was Simon Fell MP the Government's Rural Digital Champion, who represents a rural area. I presented the EELGA five digital asks and, among the points I raised was the urgent need for better mobile coverage, ensuring that innovative ways of ensuring that the areas still to receive fast digital to premises are not left behind. Also emphasised in my presentation was the need for national Government to work with local authorities to ensure that there is proper publicity for the "Big Switch Off" when analogue telephony and 3G mobile coverage are ceased. Publicity and education is required to ensure that everyone is aware of what will happen and no one is disadvantaged by these changes: this is something that should not just be left to service providers.

Norfolk County Council updates

Inaugural Flourish Awards

The inaugural Flourish Awards will be held on 25 September, celebrating the people, projects, teams and organisations who have made outstanding contributions to supporting children and young people to flourish.

Hosted by the [Children and Young People's Strategic Alliance](#) (CYP SA), 24 finalists with eight overall winners have been selected from nearly 300 nominations, representing businesses, charities, social enterprises and statutory services from across the county.

The event will also see young people take centre stage for the evening as five young people have been selected to host and present the awards, receiving bespoke training from Norwich Theatre Royal to act as comperes for the evening, and Norfolk County Council's Jazz Quintet, will play at the start of the evening.

The awards ceremony is being supported by Norse Group, New- U, Norwich City Football Club and Norwich Community Support Foundation, Norfolk Music Hub, Norwich Theatre Royal and Big Sky Creative, and will take place in The Gunn Room at Carrow Road.

Winners were selected by a panel of young people and parent carers from a variety of participation groups including the Youth Advisory Boards, DRAGONs, Family Voice Norfolk, Unity, The Matthew Project, NSFT Participation and the Norfolk In-Care Council.

Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service

A Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) programme which has educated more than 80,000 children about fire safety is marking its 20th anniversary. Crucial Crew, a popular fire safety and prevention initiative for Year 6 schoolchildren, aims to deliver seven events around the county this academic year reaching around 6,000 students.

The service's Protection and Prevention Team has played a key role in empowering children and young people to help spread crucial safety messages over the last two decades, with their vital work earning an award nomination at the inaugural Flourish Awards.

The free programme sees NFRS work alongside partners including Norfolk Constabulary, NHS, Road Safety, Norfolk Prepared, RNLI, East Anglia Air Ambulance, St Johns Ambulance, HM Coast Guard, and Cadent Gas.

The first of seven Crucial Crew events started on 18 September at The Nest, Horsford. Further details about the Crucial Crew events available [here](#).

Healthy Eating Campaign – update

The Healthy Eating campaign was launched on 18 September.

As part of the support to help people eat more healthily and lose weight, Norfolk County Council's commissioned partners Slimming World and Your Health Norfolk are offering free, in-person group support sessions over 12 weeks to help you make gradual changes towards a healthy lifestyle.

- People wanting to eat more healthily and improve their weight management are invited to [visit the We Can Do This webpage](#) to check if they are eligible to receive free sessions.
- For those people not meeting the eligibility criteria there are lots of other useful tools, tips and support available through our [Ready to Change](#) site.

Norfolk County Council is seeking more Travel Norfolk volunteer drivers

Norfolk County Council is looking for individuals who want to make a positive impact by becoming a volunteer driver for the Travel Norfolk Car Scheme.

This scheme offers a chance for people to contribute their spare time while providing essential transportation for those who may face challenges in getting to where they need to go.

The Travel Norfolk Car Scheme plays a crucial role in ensuring eligible adults can reach vital health, social, and wellbeing services through essential journeys.

Passengers contribute 45p per mile towards the cost of the journey plus any car parking fees.

Celebrating voluntary services across Norfolk and Waveney

Local residents across Norfolk and Waveney are invited to special volunteering “Wellfest” events to celebrate the difference voluntary activity makes across health and social care this October.

The events will feature interactive stands and displays with opportunities to speak to current volunteers about what they do in their own words

Events will be held from 11am until 2pm on:

- Thursday 12 October at Norwich Quaker Meeting House, Upper Goat Lane, Norwich, NR2 1EW
- Tuesday 17 October at Duke’s Head Hotel, Tuesday Market Place, King’s Lynn PE30 1JS

These events have been jointly organised in collaboration with NHS Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board, Voluntary Norfolk and Community Action Norfolk. Voluntary Norfolk, Community Action Norfolk and Norfolk Community Foundation are funded by Norfolk County Council to provide support for voluntary groups in Norfolk and the wider VCSE (voluntary, community and social enterprise) sector in the county.

Support for getting into employment

A new programme from the Business & IP Centre Norfolk (BIPC Norfolk) is offering free support for getting into employment.

There will be three short webinars run by MENTA Business covering the skills required to seek employment and grasp the opportunity:

- 21 September 9.30am - Getting the opportunity
- 27 September, 2pm - Getting the interview
- 4 October, 9,30am - Getting the job

These can help with everything from where to find job opportunities and adverts, how to prepare and present a good CV and job application, and how to present yourself appropriately at an interview to give you the best chance of securing the job.

- Find out more and book your online place, [here](#).
- [The Business and IP Centre \(BIPC\) Norfolk](#) is part of the British Library Business & IP Centre national network, the main centre is at the Norfolk and Norwich Millenium library, and there are six local hubs at libraries across Norfolk.

Public information notice

The Norfolk Coroner's Service are appealing for help to trace the family of a gentleman who died at his home address earlier this month. 48-year-old James Christopher Gibbs who lived at an address in Brampton Court in Norwich died on Friday 15th September 2023. There were no suspicious circumstances and despite carrying out enquiries no next-of-kin have been identified.

Anyone with information relating to James should contact the Coroner's office in Norwich on 01603 774773, or by emailing coroner@norfolk.gov.uk

Government updates

UK Commission on Covid Commemoration

The UK Commission on Covid Commemoration was established to secure a broad consensus from across the UK on how to commemorate the COVID-19 pandemic and mark this distinctive period in our history at a national and community level.

Following a period of public consultation on how the pandemic should be remembered, the Commission's report was published on 18 September 2023. The Commission's recommendations to the government include preserving existing memorials, holding a national day of reflection every year and identifying green spaces across the UK to serve as Covid memorial spaces.

The Commission has also recommended that a national symbol be created to represent the pandemic, and a Covid commemoration website be set up to promote the proposed day of reflection and provide details of local memorials. The Commission's report is available [here](#).

Online Safety Bill

The Online Safety Bill passed its final Parliamentary debate on 19 September and is now ready to become law.

It includes firm protections for children, the empowerment of adults to take control of what they see online and new laws to decisively tackle online fraud and violence against women and girls.

The government have produced a guide to the contents of the Online Safety Bill, available [here](#).

Government support for refugees

Refugees, including people from Syria, Iran, Eritrea and Sudan, can now apply to a new government programme to gain the skills they need to enter the UK job market and lead independent lives.

The government's new £52 million Refugee Employability Programme aims to overcome the barriers faced by refugees to integrate into local communities and society, including language and cultural differences, and speed up their contribution to the UK economy. Afghans resettled in England under ACRS or ARAP will also be eligible to apply to the programme.

- The programme will operate for two years and will provide enhanced support to refugees and Afghans across employment, English Language training and integration, to build up their confidence and skills to find work and secure better prospects for themselves and their families.
- Further details about the government programme and information on how people can apply available [here](#).

In the East of England, Get Set are delivering the government programme and they have provided further details on their website. This includes information for refugees looking for employment support, businesses looking to hire skilled refugees and referral partners looking to place refugees into employment. More information available [here](#).

Tom FitzPatrick

County Councillor for Fakenham Division

(Dunton, Fakenham, Helhoughton, Hempton & Pudding Norton, Raynham and Tattersett)

My contact details are:

Email: tom.fitzpatrick.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk
Phone: 01603 989809
Mobile No: 07803 166293