

Leader's Update

22 March 2024

Issue: 72

Introduction and welcome

Welcome to my latest Update.

This issue includes:

- More than £800,000 funding for homeless people with complex needs across North Northamptonshire.
- Advice on homelessness and rough sleeping.
- North Northamptonshire Council set to receive nearly £3m for electric vehicle infrastructure.
- New measures from April 2024 to manage houses in multiple occupation in parts of Corby.
- Hop down to town and show your support for local businesses this Easter.
- Household Waste Recycling Centres this Easter bank holiday.
- Fly-tipping warning issued by council.
- Safer Communities: Community Engagement Hub reopens in Wellingborough.
- Tourism strategy for Northamptonshire officially launched.
- Join the Northamptonshire Police, Fire, and Crime Panel as an independent member.
- Your Voice Matters: Consultation launched on air quality in North Northamptonshire.

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!

More than £800,000 funding for homeless people with complex needs across North Northamptonshire

Executive members have approved £802,562 funding over the next three years to support the increasing number of homeless people with complex needs in North Northamptonshire.

The decision, taken at the Executive meeting of Thursday 14 March, means that a government funded programme of assistance, the Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme (SHAP), will provide suitable supported accommodation for rough sleepers with high levels of complex needs. These individuals are often challenging to place in other provisions because of their complexities and/or presenting risks to themselves and others.

The three-year programme provides funding to schemes which will support adults with a long history of cyclical rough sleeping, with the most complex needs, to recover from rough sleeping and its associated traumas.

Funding will be directed to areas where a robust data analysis, carried out by the council, has suggested high levels of need for accommodation and support towards target groups. These are:

- Those with the longest histories of rough sleeping or the most complex needs (including those known to councils as the Target Priority Group), to help them recover from rough sleeping and its associated traumas.
- Vulnerable young people (aged 18 to 25) who are experiencing, or are at risk of, homelessness or rough sleeping.

A service provider will manage the accommodation on behalf of the council and now be procured. It is expected that the new contract will start in June/July 2024.

No one in our society should have to suffer the injustice of living a life on the streets, deprived of shelter, warmth and basic necessities. Rough sleeping can be a vicious cycle which can perpetuate existing vulnerabilities and health needs.

The delivery of this supported accommodation provision to meet rough sleepers' needs will hopefully help towards breaking the cycle of repeat rough sleeping.

Advice on homelessness and rough sleeping

If you are concerned about someone sleeping rough in our area, please let us know by:

- Calling our Rough Sleeping team on 01536 464630.
- Emailing roughsleepingteam@northnorthants.gov.uk.
- Using our out-of-hours service on 0300 126 3000.

You can also report a rough sleeper through [Street Link](#), a national website that sends alerts to the local authority.

More advice and information about [Homelessness and rough sleeping](#) can be found on our website.

North Northamptonshire Council set to receive nearly £3m for electric vehicle infrastructure

North Northamptonshire Council will receive a funding boost from central government to help deliver a network of publicly available electric charging points across the local area.

The council was provisionally allocated £2,895,000 of funding and had to provide a business case on how the funding would be spent. This business case has now been approved which means that the council will receive all of the allocated funding.

The funding will be used to deliver a network of publicly available electric vehicle charging points to all 12 towns across North Northamptonshire, with a particular focus on supporting residents who are not able to charge an electric vehicle at home.

This supports residents who are looking to switch to electric vehicles which, in turn, contributes to our overall goal to make North Northamptonshire net zero.

Recent figures indicate there are currently 169 charge points in North Northamptonshire. The council is planning to raise this to at least 250 by the end of 2025.

Our goal is for 80% of residents, without off-street parking, to be within 250m of a public electric vehicle charging point by the end of 2029.

Residents can find their nearest on-street electric vehicle charging point on the [Electric car chargers](#) section of our website.

New measures from April 2024 to manage houses in multiple occupation in parts of Corby

The council has introduced an Article 4 direction for parts of Kingswood in Corby, following public consultation last year.

From Wednesday 24 April, planning permission will be needed to convert a single house into a house in multiple occupation ('HMO').

HMOs are properties rented out by more than two people who are not from the same family or household and who share basic facilities like a kitchen or bathroom.

The council recognises that HMOs play an important part in the housing market and provide a home for many people.

A rigorous investigation has been carried out to assess concentrations of HMO across North Northamptonshire, including consultation with local people that raised concerns about a change in the character of the area, poor appearance of the properties and car parking problems.

Small HMOs, defined as those with up to seven occupants for planning purposes, do not ordinarily need planning permission to change use from a house to HMO as this is allowed under permitted development rights.

The introduction of the Article 4 direction removes the permitted development right for properties in the affected area, so will require a planning application to be submitted to the council to consider in the context of local policies and circumstances.

The direction and area to which this applies can be viewed on the [Article 4 directions](#) section of our website.

To see if an individual property is affected by the introduction of the Article 4 direction, please view our [NNC Interactive Mapping](#) tool. Select 'Article 4 Direction, Kingswood Corby' from the list of map layers to view.

The direction does not affect [licensing arrangements for HMOs](#), which are dealt with by the council's private sector housing team.

This direction has been introduced after local MP Tom Pursglove highlighted to me his concerns that had been fed back from residents, which led to a consultation being carried out last year. This direction is very useful in regulating development.

Hop down to town and show your support for local businesses this Easter

Easter is fast approaching, and if you are excited about celebrating this special time of year, you're likely to be thinking about family gatherings, hunting for treats, eating delicious food and giving chocolate-themed gifts.

Don't forget our local businesses this Easter, a huge variety of places would love your support at this time of year. You could book a table at an independently owned restaurant for a delicious meal with the family, and hunt around the High Street and surrounding areas to find unique products such as handmade chocolate delights, artisanal gifts, decorations, or treats for the Easter table. There are so many places only a few miles away, and many local businesses are online too.

In recent times, small businesses have faced big challenges, yet they remain resilient. They are built from the heart, meaning they can provide a bespoke experience for customers that can't be matched with online giants and supermarkets. Plus, you'll get expert advice, warmth and authenticity that can't be replicated, all while supporting and contributing to your community too.

Each of our towns have their own unique characteristics, and all with a brilliant range of small businesses with something for everyone to shop, eat out, treat themselves and others.

To celebrate Easter, our [Hi Street](#) campaign has a special chocolate hamper giveaway, and a sweet feature with a local business that has treats to tantalise every tastebud. Visit our [Hi Street Facebook](#) and [Hi Street Instagram](#) pages to find out more.

Household Waste Recycling Centres this Easter bank holiday

Our Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) are expected to be very busy over the next two weeks due to the Easter bank holidays.

Please make sure that you:

- Pre-sort your waste before leaving home.
- Do not arrive before the centres open at 10am.
- Do not block roads (otherwise we may need to temporarily close to disperse traffic).

Please visit our website to:

- [Find a Household Waste Recycling Centre \(HWRC\)](#)
- Find out [what can be recycled at our HWRCs](#)
- [Apply for a waste e-permit](#)

Fly-tipping warning issued by council

The council has issued a warning to anyone considering fly-tipping after a targeted investigation in two areas with known problems.

Mill Road in Wellingborough and Brooke Road in Great Oakley, Corby have been experiencing ongoing issues with bags of waste, furniture and other household items being left at the roadside and in public spaces.

Action was taken to identify those responsible which resulted in five Fixed Penalty Notices for up to £400 each issued to local residents.

Signage has now been put up in both areas, which continue to be monitored by officers. Further enforcement will be taken if anyone else fly-tips waste in these locations, alongside the council's wider action to tackle fly-tippers.

We have a zero-tolerance approach towards fly-tipping and, wherever possible, we will investigate cases across the area, and take targeted action in known problem areas.

We will not hesitate to take enforcement action. In the last four months, the council has issued 24 waste offence-related Fixed Penalty Notices.

If you are unsure about how and when to dispose of your waste, please [contact the council](#) or visit the [Bins, recycling and street cleansing](#) section of our website.

Safer Communities: Community Engagement Hub reopens in Wellingborough

Following its success last Winter, the Community Engagement Hub has reopened this week at the Swansgate Shopping Centre in Wellingborough. It will remain open until Sunday 24 March.

It is an opportunity for the many local partners our Safer Communities Team works with to showcase their services to the public, increase their visibility and advise on a range of issues such as antisocial behaviour, crime and safeguarding issues.

A wealth of agencies will be attendance including domestic violence support, drug and alcohol services, the Daylight Centre, Trading Centre, Northamptonshire Police and more.

Local events, support groups and services are all advertised in the hub through leaflets and merchandise. Crime prevention freebies, such as handbag bells, trolley tokens and security measures, are available to those who need them.

Tourism strategy for Northamptonshire officially launched

To coincide with English Tourism Week, a brand-new tourism strategy for the county has been launched by North Northamptonshire Council and West Northamptonshire Council.

The [Northamptonshire Tourist Strategy](#) sets out a vision and approach to nurturing and enhancing the county's visitor economy and aims to improve pride in place, generate inward investment, create new employment opportunities and reduce carbon emissions in line with both councils' sustainability goals.

The strategy, which has been developed over an 18-month period and co-produced by both councils, alongside partners and stakeholders from across the public, private and voluntary and community sectors, will be implemented between now and 2030.

It focuses on four key themes:

- Visits and Value,
- Great People,
- Better Business and
- Inspirational Places.

A total of 150 representatives from across the industry, both councils and stakeholders gathered for an event at Northampton Museum and Art Gallery earlier this week to hear about opportunities to progress the development of a Northamptonshire Local Visitor Economy Partnership, see the new strategy and hear from presenters including Visit England.

I would like to thank Cllr Helen Howell for her dedication and all the hard work she has put into this strategy.

National statistics show that Northamptonshire receives over 18 million visits each year. This totals a spend of close to £1 billion which supports over 30,000 jobs and 3,000 businesses across the county, including a wide range of attractions, hotels, pubs and other amazing venues that visitors value and enjoy.

Both councils want to grow this economy to support local businesses, increase footfall and spend, and raise the profile of Northamptonshire on a global scale as a unique destination to visit time and time again.

This week sees the first birthday of the [Discover Northamptonshire Hub](#) at Rushden Lakes - a fully interactive space which promotes all things Northamptonshire, including days out, attractions, walks, town and village offerings, places to eat, sustainable transport, heritage, accommodation and local and major events. The hub has events planned to mark English Tourism Week and for the Easter holidays.

Join the Northamptonshire Police, Fire, and Crime Panel as an independent member

The Northamptonshire Police, Fire, and Crime (NPFC) Panel is seeking three dedicated and passionate individuals to serve as independent members on the panel from June 2024 until May 2028.

The Police, Fire, and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) is responsible for overseeing the delivery and performance of police and fire services. They work closely with the Chief Constable and Chief Fire Officer to establish strategic objectives for their respective areas and hold the chiefs to account for delivering them. The PFCC is accountable to the electorate. The NPFC Panel scrutinises how the PFCC carries out their responsibilities.

The Police, Fire and Crime Panel, consisting of ten councillors from West Northamptonshire Council and North Northamptonshire Council, along with three independent members, ensures accountability and transparency in decision-making processes of police and fire services.

In your role as an independent member, your responsibilities will include scrutinising decisions and actions taken by the PFCC, reviewing draft plans and annual reports, advising on precept proposals, participating in the appointment of senior staff, and resolving non-criminal complaints about the conduct of the PFCC. Your insights and recommendations will directly influence the direction of public safety initiatives in Northamptonshire.

Applicants must reside or work within Northamptonshire and be available during working hours to attend Panel meetings. While previous experience of policing, fire and rescue, community safety or the criminal justice system is desirable, it is not essential. Panel meetings typically take place in Northampton. Independent members are paid an allowance for carrying out the role and are able to claim other reasonable expenses.

To embark on this rewarding journey and contribute to shaping the future of policing and fire services in Northamptonshire, interested candidates are encouraged to access the application pack and additional information and to submit their applications by Sunday, 21 April 2024.

[Apply to be a Northamptonshire Police, Fire, and Crime Panel independent member.](#)

Your Voice Matters: Consultation launched on air quality in North Northamptonshire

Local authorities across England have been asked by Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) to publish a local air quality strategy.

The council has launched a consultation asking for views on proposals to maintain good air quality and tackle poorer air quality in areas of traffic congestion.

The consultation focuses on two documents: the draft Local Air Quality Strategy and the draft Air Quality Supplementary Planning Document.

The draft strategy contains a list of proposed measures that the council is taking, and will take in the future, to maintain and improve good air quality, alongside other stakeholders.

Measures include:

- Promoting and providing infrastructure for electric vehicles and active travel.
- Dealing with traffic congestion.
- Bus improvement plan.
- Carbon management measures.
- Domestic burning restrictions.
- Taxi licencing policy for net zero vehicles.

If approved, it will ensure a more consistent approach to reducing air pollution arising from new developments across North Northamptonshire.

A summary of responses will be considered to inform whether changes should be made to the two draft documents. Proposed final versions will be considered by Executive for adoption later this year.

The [Local Air Quality Strategy consultation](#) will be open until Sunday 7 April.

If you would like to make any comments or share ideas, please email envprotection@northnorthants.gov.uk or write to: Air Quality Consultation, Environmental Protection Team, North Northamptonshire Council, Sheerness House, 41 Meadow Road, Kettering NN16 8TL.

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](#).

- [North Northamptonshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy consultation](#). The draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029 sets out how, over the next five years, North Northamptonshire Council will work collaboratively with our partners to build on our existing approach and respond to challenges to tackle and help prevent homelessness and support those who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness. We are seeking the views of residents and local partners to understand your views. Closes 31 March 2024.
- **NEW:** [Kettering Town Centre Community Safety Survey](#). This survey is being carried out by the North Northamptonshire Town Centre Task Group. The group is made up of several partner organisations including North Northamptonshire Council, Northamptonshire Police, local town councils, and other local organisations who have a focus on community safety. This survey is seeking the views of residents and visitors to Kettering Town Centre. We want to hear your views of the town centre, specifically your thoughts on its safety. We will use your feedback to highlight the areas of concern and coordinate action plans with our partners to help to deal with the issues. We are trialling this in Kettering first then will roll it out to the other towns across North Northamptonshire. Closes 3 April 2024.

Forthcoming meetings

Executive

- Thursday 18 April from 10am.

Full Council

- Thursday 25 April 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):

- [Tourism strategy for Northamptonshire officially launched](#)
- [New measures from April 2024 to manage houses in multiple occupation in parts of Corby](#)
- [More than £800,000 funding for homeless people with complex needs across North Northamptonshire](#)
- [NNC set to receive nearly £3m for electric vehicle infrastructure](#)
- [Your Voice Matters...consultation launched on air quality in North Northamptonshire](#)
- [Fly-tipping warning issued by council](#)

Social media: Top stories

Follow our social media accounts and share our [Facebook](#) and/or [Twitter](#) posts when you can.

Top Facebook posts so far this week (18 to 20 March)

- It is with huge disbelief, shock and sadness that the Rushden and Irthlingborough team and the whole library service share the news that our beloved friend, colleague and manager Liam Dorney passed away suddenly on 17 March. Liam was a much-loved member of staff, a face of the

community, and a funny, kind and caring gentleman known by many in the town. Liam started in the library service with work experience at Wellingborough Library in 2002. He then returned as a Saturday Assistant at Rushden in 2005. Through the years Liam took on a variety of roles and responsibilities, working at many of the libraries in Northamptonshire and being part of many different teams and communities. During this time, he thrived in his work and was a key part of the countless changes in the service. In 2016 he returned to his home library and became the manager for Rushden, then a couple of years later also managing Irthlingborough. Liam loved his libraries. He was a kind and compassionate manager, with a wealth of knowledge and ideas. His personal interests of Lego and Star Wars were always filtered into the events, celebrations and activities hosted in libraries. For those of you who have visited Rushden Library, Liam created the Lego model of the Rushden Carnegie building on display in the glass cabinet. This devastating news has shocked the team and those who knew him. Please be kind and patient with our staff at this time as we try to continue, while we come to terms with the loss of our dear friend.

(Reach 10,282, Link Clicks 1, Engagement 673)

- The next Beep Beep! Day 2024 will take place on Wednesday 24 April 2024. The day helps teach young children (aged 2–7) important road safety basics and help parents, carers and the wider community understand how to protect children on roads. Schools, nurseries, playgroups or childminders, Sign-up now for your FREE action pack* to teach road safety to young children. Your action pack includes fun activities, stickers, certificates and posters featuring characters from Aardman Animations' Timmy Time. Find out more <https://ow.ly/wt9550QAZop>
(Reach 6,078, Link Clicks 48, Engagement 233)
- It's #GlobalRecyclingDay, and did you know you can place a wide range of plastic items in your recycling bin, including sweet or chocolate tubs, plastic pots, tubs and trays and bottles. Even better, how about reusing them at home?
(Reach 5,544, Link Clicks, Engagement 123)

Top Tweets so far this week (18 to 20 March)

- Come along to this great resource at Swansgate Centre in Wellingborough, (opposite Roman clothes shop). Anti-social behaviour advice, domestic abuse support and lots more services.
(Impressions 608, URL Clicks 0, Engagements 7)
- Looking for a new job? Have you considered a career in local government? Are you the final piece of the puzzle to make our team the best it can be? Check out our latest vacancies, and we look forward to welcoming you to NNC! <https://t.co/MvHTjgSvKy>
(Impressions 459, URL Clicks 10, Engagements 20)
- New measures from April 2024 to manage houses in multiple occupation in parts of Corby <https://t.co/uuE219vTIE>
(Impressions 386, URL Clicks 17, Engagements 28)

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,
Jason