



Norfolk County Council

Latest Information, Advice, Useful Links and Service Updates

Updated 15 July 2021

This weekly briefing is intended as a resource to keep you up to date with the latest information and advice.

Covid-19 Trusted sources of information

The most recent **verified data on cases in the UK and Norfolk** is available from Public Health England [here](#) and the Norfolk Insights website [here](#).

Everyone has a key role in promoting www.nhs.uk/coronavirus and www.gov.uk/coronavirus as trusted sources of information to the public. It is important to ensure people go to the right sources of information and keep up to date with how to look after themselves.

Keep up to date: We have [a dedicated webpage for coronavirus updates](#) in Norfolk and impact on Norfolk County Council services. This is updated regularly so please do re-visit this page.

Service updates: The most up to date information on council services can be found at [Norfolk County Council services disruptions](#). The council will continue to monitor its services and, if regulations and circumstances change, it will review its current plans.

Latest national announcements

Post-16 Education

Government reforms are [expected to make it easier for young people and adults](#) to identify the right courses for them following their GCSEs.

Young people and adults will have clearer qualification and training routes, as part of a shake-up of the post-16 system to remove low-quality qualifications which lack job prospects.

The new system will create two clearly defined paths for people who have completed GCSEs or similar courses: academic, meaning qualifications that primarily lead to further study, and technical, those qualifications that primarily lead to skilled employment. This will mean everyone can see more easily how their studies support their future training or job aspirations.

Covid-19

Restrictions:

The Prime Minister [confirmed on 12 July that all legal restrictions on Covid-19 would end](#), as England moves into step 4 of the roadmap. The latest data shows that the Government's 4 tests for easing Covid-19 restrictions have been met. The four tests are as follows:

- The vaccine deployment programme continues successfully

- Evidence shows vaccines are sufficiently effective in reducing hospitalisations and deaths in those vaccinated.
- Infection rates do not risk a surge in hospitalisations which would put unsustainable pressure on the NHS.
- Our assessment of the risks is not fundamentally changed by new Variants of Concern.

NCC's Advice:

The council has today launched its new campaign IChoose, which encourages people to follow measures designed to keep us safe.

The council's advice is:

- Continue familiar prevention behaviours such as hand washing and wearing a face covering in public indoor spaces
- Continue to meet outdoors where possible and ensure indoor places are well ventilated
- Carry out symptom-free testing two times per week, including for secondary school aged children. Free test kits are available from libraries and pharmacies

Communities

Big Norfolk Holiday Fun:

Bookings are now [open for Big Norfolk Holiday Fun](#) which provides hundreds of free activities for children and young people.

After a successful Easter programme the Big Norfolk Holiday Fun is back for summer, for children eligible for means-tested free school meals. There will be a wide range of free activities for 5-16 year olds taking place during the holidays, with events across the county available to book [online here](#).

Public Health

Drug Treatment:

A review carried out by Professor Dame Carol Black [has called on the Government to make a significant investment](#) of £550 million into drug treatment and recovery systems. The report calls for an integrated system with more investment and national guidance as Government announces their intention to set up a cross-Government combatting drugs unit. Norfolk continues to lead the way in reducing county lines, with the latest figures suggesting a ~90% decrease. The county has also set up a pilot site for treatment orders (ADDER).

Education and Schools

Schools:

Two schools were closed for two and three days each last week, due to Covid-19 related staffing issues

Attendance of pupils in Norfolk remains in-line with the national averages:

- Overall last week, attendance was 91% in primary schools, compared to 93% the week before, and compared to 85% nationally
- Attendance in secondary schools was 84%, compared to 86% the week before and 74% nationally. These figures have been adjusted for Y11-13 not expected to attend
- Attendance in state-funded special schools was 85%, compared to 86% the week before and 76% nationally. These figures have been adjusted for Y11-13 not expected to attend

Post 16's:

81% of young people at risk of NEET have been contacted. All Year 12 young people who have not had an offer of education are in the process of being contacted. We are providing IAG to the 15 young people at risk of NEET due to closure of Develop.

September Guarantee offers have increased to 84.5% year 11 and 60% Year 12 in the past week

The SEN Employment Pathway workshop facilitated by the DfE was held on 8th July with attendance from colleagues in special schools, colleges, health, DWP, Children and Adult Services and Economic & Skills teams. This event will be followed by a second workshop in September and the development of an action plan to improve progressions into employment for young people with SEND

Early Years:

The number of settings open this week is 677 with the number of children attending also increasing from 15,047 to 15,288. Of those 4,788 are children of critical workers, and 807 are vulnerable.

Transport and Environment

Biodiversity:

Projects to restore kelp forests, create new woodland, deliver natural flood risk management, and improve water quality are among an initial 27 schemes to [benefit from a pioneering new fund](#) to drive private investment in nature and tackle climate change, Defra, the Environment Agency & Natural England announced yesterday.

Both the Norfolk Rivers Trust and Norfolk Wildlife Trust have been successful in receiving funding for their projects on the river Stiffkey and the Wendling Beck respectively.

Great Yarmouth Haven Bridge:

Work which is well underway on the Great Yarmouth Haven Bridge [is set to continue through the summer](#). As expected, the comprehensive upgrade work has revealed age-related problems

with the bridge such as the lifting gears and original drive shafts. This now means that engineers will need to carry on the upgrade over the summer months and potentially into the autumn. Every effort continues to be made to complete the work as swiftly as possible given the importance of the bridge to both road and river users.

The bridge remains open to road traffic and pedestrians while the work is underway, apart from on a limited number of overnight and evening closure dates. These closure dates will be publicised nearer the time. A list of bookable bridge lifting slots will be published to allow mariners planned access while the work is being carried out.

Norwich Lanes Consultation Opens:

Monday saw the launch of [a major consultation on the future of the Norwich Lanes](#) as Norfolk County Council and the Transport for Norwich (TfN) partnership ask for views on a series of proposals to change how the area functions and feels.

The public are invited to [view the plans on the project website](#) and comment on the proposals overall or the detailed changes proposed in each area via the online surveys.

The consultation will run for 4 weeks until Monday 9 August.

Great Yarmouth Walking and Cycling Network:

Cycle routes in Great Yarmouth and Gorleston have been earmarked for improvements to encourage more residents to make journeys on foot or by bike. A new consultation has been opened and residents are encouraged to have their say.

The feedback will be used to help shape and prioritise the initial plans, and the views given will also help to support applications for future funding.

People are able to give their views on the proposals from 14 July – 8 September. To find out more and respond visit: www.norfolk.gov.uk/activetravel

General Updates

Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service:

Safe Boating:

This summer we are expecting a busy time on the Norfolk broads and at the coast. Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service's Greg Preston is also chairman of Norfolk Drowning Prevention Forum. Partners including Norfolk Police, The Broads Authority, RNLi and our fire service are working together to try and raise awareness of the risks – particularly for British holidaymakers boating for the first time.

This week, the service has been shared videos around safer boating and next week they are launching a summer push around dangers of open water swimming and the risks factors such as alcohol. NFRS is aiming to target local people and holidaymakers from across the UK who will be heading to Norfolk in the summer holidays.

Partners will be encouraging people to read information carefully before they go aboard, preparing themselves by noting where life rings and throwlines are located and making sure people stay away from boat propellers which can cause fatal injuries.

Last summer, the service attended several boating incidents in our Norfolk waterways, sadly some of these resulted in deaths and serious injuries.