

Recycling Centre Survey

Norfolk County Council has launched a survey of the recycling centres asking residents to share their experiences, suggest improvements and help shape the future of the service. To take part in the survey, which closes on September 17th visit: <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/RecyclingCentreSurvey/2025/>

Libraries Summer Reading Challenge

Participation in this year's Summer Reading Challenge for 4 – 11 year olds showed an increased of 10% more children than last year.

The theme was Adventures in Nature and the Great Outdoors.

Castle Museum

The transition of the Castle Keep is now complete and shows how the area was used and what it might have looked like 900 years ago. There have been long queues of people wanting to visit it and have a look around.

There was also a documentary on Channel 4 showing the restoration as it slowly took place. The work also included a new entrance and a lift to all floors so that everyone can access all levels including the battlements where they can look down over the city.

Battery Energy Storage Systems for Solar Farms

The Leader put forward a Motion at the July Council Meeting, which I seconded, and the Council agreed, to write to the Secretary of State for Energy Security asking for legislation:

1. To make Fire and Rescue Services Statutory Consultees for all BESS (Battery Energy Storage System) planning applications as they are experts in fire prevention and safety. At the moment they are not consulted.
2. To introduce mandatory, enforceable, national safety standards including minimum distances from residential properties and critical infrastructure.
3. Funding was also requested to pay for the enhanced training and equipment needed to respond to BESS related incidents as they cause prolonged fires and release toxic gases with burn times lasting for many hours.
4. It was also suggested that BESS developers be required to contribute financially to the additional emergency and response costs incurred by local authorities and blue light services.
5. Also that planning policy be strengthened to require developers to fully assess and mitigate community disruption during construction and consult local residents on this.

Devolution

In preparation for the new Unitary Service/Services which has been proposed for Norfolk and Suffolk Norfolk County Council is working with the Norfolk Association of Local Councils (NALC) to make contact with Parish Councils to raise discussions on how councils can work together and support each other in future.

Consideration is also being given to areas which do not have Parish Councils and whether they might want to set up a Parish Council/Neighbourhood Group to represent their needs.

The Districts and County Council have to submit their proposals (for one, two or three Unitary Councils) by September 26th. The Government will consider these and

tell us which they intend to support early next year. Suffolk is doing the same. In May there will be an election to elect a Mayor to control the two areas.

Margaret

Cllr. Margaret Dewsbury

Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships

Norfolk County Council: Hingham Division

South Norfolk Council: Easton Ward