

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT – EDGEFIELD PC FOR OCTOBER 2025

1. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

The Future Norfolk Partnership submitted their case for 3 Unitary Authorities on behalf of Kings Lynn & W Norfolk, Broadland DC, Gt Yarmouth BC, Norwich City Council and NNDC to the Government on 26 September. The documents outlining the case are accessible on www.futurenorfolk.com. Elections for a new Unitary Authority in this area are still to be announced if change is expected to be in April 2028.

2. MAYORAL ELECTIONS 2026

All political parties are in the process of selecting their candidates to elect a new mayor for the Norfolk and Suffolk Combined Mayoral Authority required by the Government in May 2026.

3. OVERDUE COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS

No more news to report on whether the County Councillors elected in 2021 for a 4-year term will be required to extend their term of office next May until 2027 into a sixth year. County elections due in May this year were postponed because of the ongoing local government reform changes.

4. CRIME COMMISSIONER BRIEFING

Commissioner Sarah Taylor recently visited the Council to address councillors on the main issues for policing priorities in communities until 2029. We were informed that actually any Council has the power to set their own speed limits on local roads. Many people, including me, understood that limits were set exclusively by national government. Some counties are introducing 20 mph speed limits; for example, Hertfordshire has 23 zones with 84 more in the pipeline in response to public demand.

5. NEW VOTING REGISTRATION RULES

Anyone who registered to vote before October 2023 will need to re-register thanks to new government electoral rules. The annual reminder to correct your voter information has been sent out to households across the district. Please note that it doesn't give the option to register for a postal vote. You need to apply on a separate form or submit a postal vote application online. For more details google electoralservices@north-norfolk.gov.uk.

6. FIREWORKS ADVICE

You can use category 1,2 & 3 fireworks (if you are over 18) only on private land between the hours of 8 am and 11pm. The only exceptions to this are Bonfire Night and New Year's Eve; extended until midnight in both cases. Public restricted firework displays can only be operated by licensed professionals. The Council operates an out-of-office hours service for emergency nuisance complaints of this nature.

7. HOUSING SUPPLY NUMBERS

NNDC planners are legally required to publish stats for the number of new properties available for construction for the next 5 years every year in October. This year's figures are much improved as the new Local Plan is getting closer to completion. Last year we had less than 4 years' supply but the figures for this year show we have capacity to meet government targets for the next 7 years.

8. DAM HILL PLANTATION ENFORCEMENT APPEAL

Unfortunately, this is still not determined by the Planning Inspectors 18 months after being submitted in February 2024. You can track progress (or lack of) under ref ENF/23/0092 via the View Planning Applications link on the NNDC website and by selecting "Enforcement" above the search field beforehand. Please note the Council are not able to influence the Planning Inspectorate with regard to when this appeal will be dealt with.

9. LICENSING LAW REFORM

There are plans to scrap publishing alcohol licensing notices in local papers and so risks decisions being buried in obscure websites or official documents restricting people from having a say in what goes on in their local areas. If approved then proposals for new pubs, nightclubs (we wish) or for existing venues to change their operating hours will no longer be publicly advertised.

10. SHRUBBS FARM POULTRY FARM

The Council are waiting for confirmation from the court case brought by the Campaign Against Factory Farming that the decision to quash the approval by the Council before the case is returned for referral to the Development Committee. We have been directed to give more consideration to animal welfare matters; effects of manure spread on watercourses and cumulative impacts on local nature habitats.

11. HUNNYBELL ISSUES

I am continuing to work with the planners, Stody Estate and Hunworth residents to promote an acceptable scheme and I have referred it to the Development

Committee for determination. Everyone agrees that any refurbishment needs to achieve a viable and sustainable future for this much-loved venue.

Thanks for reading this report

Cllr Andrew Brown

18/10/25