

English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill

Our new mayoral combined website has been launched www.norfolksuffolk-cca.gov.uk.

The decision taken by [Norfolk County Council on 16 October](#) and [Suffolk County Council on 2 October](#) means that new devolved powers and funding will be overseen by a mayor, elected by voters in May 2026 to lead a new combined authority.

Under the Government's devolution priority programme Norfolk and Suffolk have been offered the transfer of powers and funding from Whitehall, to enable decisions on jobs, skills, transport and housing to be taken in Norfolk and Suffolk. There is also a multi-million-pound investment fund for 30 years, to spend on local priorities.

The combined authority would be made up of the mayor, plus councillors from Norfolk and Suffolk. They will take responsibility for a range of functions and funding, including:

- Local transport
- Skills and jobs
- Housing development
- Economic growth and regeneration
- Environment and climate change
- From 2027 - taking on police and crime commissioner and fire and rescue authority functions

Devolution benefits include:

- Having a mayor who is directly elected by the public, enabling the voice of Norfolk and Suffolk to be heard by the Government - the mayor would be a member of the Committee of the Nations and Regions
- Targeting funding and resources to local priorities
- Unlocking housing and employment sites
- Investing in the skills we need and attracting and retaining key businesses.
- Opening the door to further powers and funding in the future

The new site - www.norfolksuffolk-cca.gov.uk will serve as a central hub for information about the new authority, including what it will be responsible for and key milestones such as the upcoming mayoral election on 7 May 2026.

The devolution proposals and annual investment fund give us a major opportunity to improve lives in Norfolk and Suffolk, by boosting our economy, jobs, transport and housing.

It would enable us to focus on local needs - whether it's for the types of training required to attract quality jobs, the sites we need to develop for industry and housing and the transport links we need to get the two counties moving.

Councillors will discuss the issues at a special meeting, before the cabinet meeting takes its decision."

Under the proposals, the mayor and the combined authority would take responsibility for a range of functions and funding, including:

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Funding

Summary Table: Funds and Powers

Area	Funding/Resource	Powers/Functions
Investment		
Fund	£37.4m/year for 30 years	Local allocation for strategic priorities (Capital and revenue)
Skills	£27m/year (est.)	Control over Adult Skills Fund, shape local training
Transport	Consolidated funding	LTA powers, Key Route Network, bus franchising, rail planning
Housing	Share of national grants	Strategic partnerships, Mayoral Development Corporations, spatial strategy
Economic Growth	Local Growth Plan, match funds	Lead Growth Hubs, business support, innovation partnerships
Environment	To be confirmed	Heat network zoning, energy planning, nature recovery strategies
Health & Safety	To be confirmed	Statutory health duty, PCC and Fire & Rescue governance (from 2027)

General	£4m mayoral capacity funding	General power of competence, power to convene, duty to collaborate
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Governance and Budget

Mayor: Directly elected every four years, with significant executive powers.

Constituent Members: Norfolk and Suffolk each appoint two members to the CCA.

Budget Setting: The Mayor proposes the budget; the CCA can veto with a three-quarters majority.

Mayoral Precept: The Mayor can raise a council tax precept to fund mayoral and CCA functions.

RPG

3 proposals put forward.

The Govt will check each proposal against their guidelines.

There will be a public consultation but only the proposals that they decide fit their criteria.

Therefore, we may have 1, 2 or 3 proposals out to public consultation!

If you want to read more, please go to link:

<http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/onecouncil>

1 million trees

Tree planting in Norfolk is set for another boost this season as Norfolk County Council continues its drive towards 1 million trees for the county.

This winter, a new woodland will be created at Wighenhall St Germans totaling 15.5 hectares on the council's county farmland. Around 40,000 trees will be planted, transforming the site into a vibrant, wildlife-rich landscape. Work is already underway, with planting continuing through to summer 2026.

The council's subsidised tree scheme is also open again - offering individuals, parish councils, community groups, businesses, schools and landowners the chance to apply for tree packs and protection materials at up to 50% off the original price.

The Wighenhall woodland will feature a mix of native and fruiting species, chosen to create a thriving and resilient habitat for wildlife.

The space will be open for public access in late Spring 2026, with paths provided so that local residents can walk, explore, and enjoy the changing woodland as it grows.

The woodland is expected to take time to mature, with some trees reaching maturity within 10 years and others taking several decades.

Tree packs

For those who want to do their bit to boost the number of trees in Norfolk but don't have space for woodland, subsidized tree packs are available to order now.

For the first time this year, a limited number of 'Taller Tree Packs', grown at Gressenhall Community Tree Nursery, are also available. These include larger beech, oak, and birch trees, making it possible for more people to take part and be 1 in a million.

For more information on Norfolk's One Million Trees initiative, visit www.norfolk.gov.uk/milliontrees

Transforming services and addressing financial pressures

Norfolk County Council is continuing to transform local services while navigating significant financial pressures.

Driven by rising demand and inflation, the council has a budget gap of £41.6m in 2026/27 - rising to £171.4m over the next four years.

To help address the financial gap, the Council has developed proposals to save £35.7m - with major savings expected through investment in key demand-led services such as adult social care and home-to-school transport.

Over the coming months, the budget will be subject to public consultation and scrutiny by the council's select committees. Key national announcements - including the Autumn Budget on 26 November and the Local Government Finance Settlement in December - will inform final proposals.

Cabinet will consider the finance reports when it meets on 13 October. The cabinet report is available [here](#).

Cabinet will then review updated proposals on 26 January 2026, with Full Council making final decisions, including on council tax, on 17 February 2026.

Falling pupil numbers

The education landscape in Norfolk is set to change as the county tackles the national drop in pupil numbers. The number of children in the education system in the county is expected to fall from a peak of nearly 10,000 in the current year 9, to fewer than 7,000 in the 2027 reception intake.

In a report on the Education Policy and Strategic Program, members will hear how the council is looking to refresh its policy framework, in light of changes to legislation and the changing demographics.

Cabinet will consider the emerging pressures on Norfolk's schools caused by lower pupil numbers and the associated reduction in budget when it meets on 13 October.

Further information and a link to the papers is available in our press release [here](#).

#NorfolkWinter Campaign and name our gritters competition

The #NorfolkWinter Communications Campaign has run for many years and gets high levels of engagement across Norfolk. This year we are introducing Gritter characters and creating more video content - both in the lead up to winter and throughout the season. The campaign will communicate important safety messages and help residents to gain a better understanding of the preparations and work involved in delivering the service.

A key highlight of this year's campaign is the re-launch of the popular 'Name Our Gritters' competition - offering residents the chance to name all of the vehicles in our winter fleet. All infant and junior schools in Norfolk are invited to participate, with classroom activities designed to make the process engaging and educational for children. Additionally, we've teamed up with BBC Radio Norfolk and the Eastern Daily Press (EDP) who will each run public competitions for their audiences.

Key details:

- 48 gritters will be named by primary schools across Norfolk.
- 5 gritters will be named by Radio Norfolk listeners (voting via the BBC website).
- 5 gritters will be named by EDP readers (voting via the EDP website).

The final date for submissions is Friday 24 October

Winning schools will be notified, and all winners for the Radio Norfolk and EDP-named gritters will be announced. Vehicles will have winning names printed on them ahead of the first gritting run of the season. Additionally, winning schools will be offered a visit from a gritter at the end of winter - a great opportunity for pupils to meet the team and see the vehicle up close.

Helping to keep everyone safe and warm this winter, we are holding a series of electric blanket testing events with [Norfolk County](#)

[Council Trading Standards](#) on October 13-15 at libraries across Norfolk.

But we'd also love it if you could check your hot water bottles at home, which wear out after two years and can cause some really serious burns. To find out how old yours is - the number in the middle of the flower symbol on your bottle is the date it was made and each of the petals are the 12 months of the year. **The hot water bottle in the photo is from April 2021 and should have been replaced more than two years ago.**



Keep an eye on general wear and tear too, as they are affected by regular use, filling them up using boiling water, being stored near a heat source such as an airing cupboard or radiator, damage from something sharp or storing them full of water - which can degrade the rubber.

More details of our electric blanket testing events are available by following the link in the comments below.

Join the Safe School Run pledge

Norfolk County Council's Public Health Road Safety team are inviting schools, parents, and carers across the county to join the Safe School Run pledge, an initiative that encourages safer, healthier, and more sustainable travel during school drop-off and pick-up times.

Last year nearly sixty schools took part in the pledge. Participating schools report a 10% increase in walking, scooting, or cycling, fewer cars during peak times, and a noticeable improvement in road safety awareness among children and their families.

This year, schools will receive updated resources designed to support safe parking, reduce engine idling, and improve air quality around school gates. These free materials, developed by Norfolk County Council's Public Health Road Safety team with resources from Norfolk Constabulary and Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service, aim to help schools engage their communities in creating safer streets and cleaner air for all.

Schools interested in joining the pledge or accessing the free resources can visit the Norfolk County Council website or contact the Road Safety team directly for support. [Norfolk County Council's website](#).

Get ready for Stoptober

The NHS offers a wide range of free, trusted support to help people quit, including:

- The NHS Quit Smoking app to track your progress and keep you motivated
- A Personal Quit Plan tailored to your needs
- Expert advice and one-to-one support from local stop smoking services
- Encouragement and motivation from the Smokefree Facebook community
- You can also find information about medicines, nicotine replacement therapies and vaping as aids to quitting at nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking.

There are a range of services available within Norfolk to help you from [Smokefree Norfolk](#). The Smokefree Norfolk team is dedicated to helping people to quit smoking for good.

With their support, people make sustainable change that will help them improve their wellbeing, become healthier and reduce their chances of developing illnesses. [Visit the Smokefree Norfolk website to find out more.](#)

Our Norfolk County Council webpages, available [here](#), provide further information and sources of support with stopping smoking.

Rangers

Please see attached

Parish Partnership

Each year local councils are invited to submit bids for highway improvement schemes. For 2025/26 the fund is £848,702 with Norfolk County Council funding 50% of the cost of successful bids. Town and parish councils contribute the balance.

Deadline for submissions

The new letters of invitation to bid for 2026/27 will be sent out to Parish & Town Clerks in June 2025.

The deadline for submissions for 2026/27 is 1 December 2025.

Further information or advice

We've provided answers to the most frequently asked questions about the schemes we support below.

If you need further information on the bid process, please email ppschemas@norfolk.gov.uk.

For advice on the scheme practicalities or likely costs, contact your local highway engineer.

Link: [Parish Partnership Scheme - Norfolk County Council](#)

Scams

Scam Alert - Fake 'Parking Charge Notice' text messages

Scam Alert - Fake FCA messages

Rogue Trader Alert - Doorstep cold callers offering roofing work

Scam Alert - Task based job scams

Rogue Trader Alert - Doorstep cold callers offering driveway cleaning

Safety Alert - Updated urgent 'stop drive' recall for some Citroen C3, C4, DS3, DS4 & DS5 models

Scam Alert - Emails claiming to be from 'BT'

Scam Alert - Emails claiming to be from 'British Gas'

Scam Alert - Emails regarding 'Council tax payments'

Scam Alert - Online surveys to receive high value items

Cold Calling Alert - Telephone cold callers regarding solar panels

Scam Alert - Online surveys to receive high value items

Cold Calling Alert - Telephone cold calls regarding 'loft insulation'

Rogue Trader Alert - Doorstep Cold Caller offering to trim trees

Cold Calling Alert - Doorstep Cold Caller offering hedge and garden services

Scam Alert - Be aware for fake QR codes

Rogue Trader Alert - Doorstep Cold Caller claiming issues with properties' roof

Scam Alert - Fake DVLA emails