

Stoke Holy Cross District Councillor Report 24th April 2025

Member Ward Grants

Member Ward Grants for 2025/26 are now available. Requests for support with small projects (typically up to £1,000 per project) to benefit the local community can be made to your District Councillors.

Unfortunately, the total amount available remains at £1,000 per Councillor.

Community Action Fund Grants

Another round of CAF grants has opened with total funding of £150,000 this year. Applications should be made via a District Councillor for amounts between £1,000 and £15,000. The closing date for applications will be mid-June. Applications are likely to be oversubscribed. Successful projects are likely to have matched funding in place, be able to complete within 12 months of the grant and be able to demonstrate considerable community benefit and support. Interested organisations are encouraged to contact a Councillor at the earliest opportunity.

New Nature Conservation Fund

The fund has been launched to make up to 5 awards for projects that best meet the following criteria:

- Carbon sequestration: Projects that actively contribute to tackling carbon emissions.
- Biodiversity benefit: Initiatives that enhance local ecosystems and support a diverse range of plant and animal life.
- Public accessibility to greenspace: Creating and improving green spaces that are accessible and enjoyable for the entire community.

Priority will be given to proposals that deliver one or more of the following projects:

- A Miyawaki mini forest
- Pond creation and restoration
- A circular walk

Interested bodies should make an initial expression of interest to the Council as soon as possible.

Applications close on 31 July.

<https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/climate-change-environment/trees-biodiversity/nature-conservation-fund>

Devolution & Local Government Reform

Different proposals for local government reform were submitted in March by the County Council, South Norfolk Council and the other District, City and Borough Councils in Norfolk. No feedback from the Westminster Government is available at the time of writing. South Norfolk Council favours a two unitary model for Norfolk. One serving Norwich and East Norfolk, including Great Yarmouth and the other encompassing West Norfolk. Further work on this is ongoing. Final proposals need to be submitted in September 2025.

South Norfolk and Broadland Town & Parish Summit 2nd April 25.

Devolution and LGR were discussed at the summit on 2nd April. It was noted that reform is a complex process that will probably shape local government for the next 50 years. It has been hurried but South Norfolk Council, with its cross-party LGR working group, is trying to work towards a beneficial conclusion. Councils, including South Norfolk, intend to engage with communities in the summer to get feed-back on local government reform.

New Town Proposal

South Norfolk Council has expressed interest in being considered as a site for a new town as part of the Government's new town initiative, subject to certain conditions. It is understood that this is seen as a way of meeting higher local housing targets, rather than seeking even more growth locally.

It is worth noting that South Norfolk is currently unable to demonstrate a 5-year land supply meaning that the area is more at risk from speculative planning applications and reapplications from sites already rejected from the Greater Norwich Local Plan.

'Norwich to Tilbury' Update

The National Grid application for a Development Consent Order is expected later this year.

PylonsEastAnglia are continuing to campaign against the pylon proposals. For further information visit <https://pylonseastanglia.co.uk/actions>

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