

WINFARTHING PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on
Monday 13 April 2026 at 7.30 pm at
Winfarthing Village Hall, Hall Road, Winfarthing IP22 2EJ

Councillors Present: Cllr Richard Steel, (Chair), Cllr Eric Cole, Cllr David Rix, Cllr Lynne Rogers, Cllr Jono Smith (Two Cllr vacancies)

In attendance: Karen Rix (Clerk)

Members of the Public (MOP): 5 increased to 6 at 19.40

1. To receive and consider apologies for absence

None received.

2. To receive or update any declarations of pecuniary interest

None received.

3. To receive a written application for the vacancy for Parish Councillor and to co-opt a candidate to fill such vacancy

An application for co-option had been received from Mr Peter Mackay and circulated to Cllr's prior to the meeting. Mr Mackay was invited to make a short presentation where he explained he had lived in the village for 25 years, that his work involved the farming industry and that he wanted to become more involved in the development of the village.

Cllr Smith asked Mr Mackay what attributes he thought he could bring to the parish council. Mr Mackay hoped that he could represent the youthful voice of the community. Cllr Steel asked Mr Mackay if his working patterns would allow him sufficient time to attend meetings. Mr Mackay advised that his employers were flexible and with advance warning of meeting dates his schedule could be adjusted to ensure his attendance. Cllr Cole advised Mr Mackay that significant time was also required to read the documentation prior to a meeting and asked if Mr Mackay would have the time to complete this. Mr Mackay confirmed he would be able to do this. Cllr Cole asked Mr Mackay if he was aware of the Nolan Principles. The Clerk explained the Nolan Principles and agreed to provide Mr Mackay a copy for his information. Cllr Rogers advised that the role of a parish councillor involved a lot more than reviewing planning applications. The Clerk advised councillors that Mr Mackay had already been directed the parish council website to access documentation and to understand the role of a councillor.

County Councillor Rowett arrived 19.40.

Cllr Smith proposed that Mr Mackay be co-opted as a parish councillor, a vote took place by a show of hands. The vote was unanimous.

Mr Mackay signed the Declaration of Acceptance which was witnessed by the Clerk. The Clerk provided Mr Mackay with a copy of the register of pecuniary interests to complete, sign and return before the next meeting. Mr Mackay joined the meeting as councillor.

Signed Chair

Action: Clerk to provide Cllr Mackay with a copy of the Nolan Principles, parish council standing orders and a digital copy of the register of pecuniary interests.

Action: Clerk to add Cllr Mackay to the PC WhatsApp group and circulate Cllr email addresses to all Cllr's.

Action: Clerk to book Cllr Mackay onto Councillor induction training with Norfolk Parish Training and Support.

4. To approve minutes of previous meeting held on 2 March 2026

Minutes were proposed by Cllr Rogers, seconded by Cllr Rix, unanimously agreed and signed by the chair.

5. To consider any matters arising from minutes (not covered by an agenda item)

No matters arising.

6. To receive an update on actions from previous minutes

September 2025

- **Item 14.4 - Clerk to circulate an Emergency Plan template to all councillors – deferred.**
- **Item 14.5 - Clerk to circulate an Action Plan template to all councillors – deferred.**

March 2026

- **Item 6 – from September 2025, Item 13.4 Clerk to email Adam Mayo NCC Highways Engineer again regarding the moving of the 30 MPH speed limit sign to past Lodge Drive. A response was received confirming that the location had been moved to the other side of Lodge Drive.**
- **Item 6 – from February 2026, Item 13 Clerk to obtain email for IDB Operations Manager Alastair Bloomfield and contact regarding the annual maintenance of the water course. A response had been received advising the work had been completed in February. This was confirmed by Cllr Cole.**

All other actions were completed or were listed as an agenda item.

7. To receive questions or comments from members of the public.

A MOP asked if the tree planting had gone well. Cllr Steel confirmed it had and thanked all those who had helped.

8. To receive a report from County and District Councillors

- County Cllr Rowett report was circulated prior to the meeting and can be found with these minutes. County Cllr Rowett highlighted the key items in her report.

Action: Clerk to advertise the Norfolk Heating Oil Crisis Fund on the Parish Council and Village Facebook pages.

- District Cllr Easter's report was circulated prior to the meeting and can be found with these minutes. District Cllr Easter highlighted the key items in his report.

Signed Chair

Cllr Cole asked if District Cllr Easter could provide some 'No Fly Tipping' signs. 10 signs were agreed.

Action: District Cllr Easter to deliver 10 'No Fly Tipping' signs to the Chair/Clerk

It was noted that this was the last meeting for County Cllr Rowett who was stepping down from her position. Cllr Steel thanked County Cllr Rowett for her support and the work she had completed on behalf of the parish council.

County Cllr Rowett and District Cllr Easter left the meeting after agenda item 8.

9. To receive the Clerk's report and update on correspondence

The Clerk reported:

- She had registered for the next Clerk's Networking meeting in June 2026.
- Work on the audit and AGAR return had started.
- A fault report had been submitted to NCC Highways regarding the broken signpost in Hall Road opposite the Goose Green Lane turning, together with the bent 'Recycling Centre' signpost in The Street opposite the entrance to the pub car park.
- The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) report for 2025-26 had been submitted.

Email correspondence had been received from:

- The Norfolk Ramblers Association suggesting an annual footpath audit which could be included in the Chair's annual report to the parish in May. The Clerk agreed to respond explaining that the council's footpath officers already regularly inspect and maintain the footpaths and that the community are also actively reporting any issues to the parish council or NCC asap. Actions on footpaths are regularly reported at meetings.
- Norfolk River Trust promoting a 'Free Sceptic Tank' offer to help protect local rivers. Cllrs investigated the offer to find this area was not covered by the scheme.

Action: Clerk to respond to Norfolk Ramblers Association explaining the regular inspection and maintenance of the footpaths in the parish.

10. FINANCE

10.1. To approve payments (C)

Payment Type/ Cheque No	PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	VAT
100332	K Rix	Reimbursement of website domain fee and purchase of defibrillator sign	26.19	2.54
100333	Norfolk Parish Training and Support	2026/27 Subscription	109.48	18.25
100335	K Rix	March 2026 salary	193.00	
		Total	328.67	20.79

Signed Chair

Payments were unanimously approved.

10.2. Receipts (B)

DATE	RECEIVED FROM	DETAILS	AMOUNT
		Total	0.00

10.3. To receive a report from the Responsible Finance Officer

DETAILS	CR	DR	BALANCE
Cash book balance brought forward: A	6089.03		
Receipts in Mar 26 (listed above): B	0.00		
Payments in Mar 26 (listed above): C		328.67	
Cash book balance carried forward (A+B-C) Community Account Balance			5760.36

10.4. To receive spend against budget to 31/03/26 and approve explanation of variances

Income Details	Budget Ex VAT	CR to Date Ex VAT	Balance	Comments
HMRC VAT Refund	£ -	£ 67.42	£ 67.42	Additional income not budgeted
SNC Litter Pick	£ 20.00	£ 20.00	£ 20.00	
Winfarthing Parish Trust – VE Day	£ -	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	Additional income not budgeted
Total Income	£20.00	£587.42	£587.42	
Expenditure De-tails	Budget Ex VAT	DR to Date Ex VAT	Balance	Comments
Clerk Salary	£3,531.00	£3,482.58	£48.42	
Clerk Expenses	£100.00	£105.86	-£5.86	
Training	£200.00	£170.40	£29.60	
Insurance	£250.00	£241.00	£9.00	
Membership/ Subscriptions	£110.00	£153.93	-£43.93	
Dog Bin Maintenance	£300.00	£278.00	£22.00	
Defibrillator Maintenance	£150.00	£145.85	£4.15	
Donations (S137)	£50.00	£50.00	£0.00	
Rent (Glebe Land)	£10.00	£10.00	£0.00	
Village Hall Hire	£150.00	£180.00	-£30.00	
Internal Audit	£75.00	£65.00	£10.00	

Signed Chair

Microsoft Office 365	£60.00	£0.00	£60.00	
Information Commissioners Office	£50.00	£47.00	£3.00	
Grass Cutting	£840.00	£0.00	£840.00	
Litter Picking Equipment	£0.00	£157.27	-£157.27	Expenditure from CIL funding
VE Day	£0.00	£500.00	-£500.00	Expenditure from Winfarthing Parish Trust Donation
Total Expenditure	£5,876.00	£5,586.89	£289.11	

An explanation of variances between the 2024/25 and 2025/26 budgets was circulated prior to the meeting and can be found on the parish council website www.winfarthingparishcouncil.gov.uk/finances Approval of the variances were proposed by Cllr Cole, seconded by Cllr Rogers and unanimously agreed.

10.5. To receive and approve the year end bank reconciliation for 2025/26

The year end bank reconciliation for 2025/26 had been circulated prior to the meeting and can be found on the parish council website www.winfarthingparishcouncil.gov.uk/finances Approval of the bank reconciliation was proposed by Cllr Cole, seconded by Cllr Smith and unanimously agreed.

11. To comment on planning applications

11.1. To discuss application no. 2025/0004 - Mill Road

No further update.

11.2. To discuss application no. 2024/2476 - Hall Road

No further update.

12. To receive and discuss updates concerning parish infrastructure

12.1. Village Hall Governance

A draft copy of the new village hall governance document with the parish council as sole trustee had been circulated to councillors. The Clerk took Cllrs through the document explaining the queries that had been raised with Tonya Winsley at Community Action Norfolk early that day:

- Can the village hall committee keep the same structure i.e. Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer? Therefore, the Treasurer would continue to maintain the accounts as they do now rather than this being the responsibility of the parish council as sole trustee. The village hall committee want to retain as much autonomy as possible.
- Would name on insurance need to be changed. To save money can the parish council take out insurance for the village hall as suggested in Bucklesham village hall paperwork.
- Whether there was a need to report the connection of the hall cleaner to a trustee to the Charity Commission.
- Disparity between clause 5.6.2 and clause 10 as to how many of the cheque signatories should be parish councillors.

Signed Chair

The Clerk explained that there would be an update on these queries by the end of the week. The Clerk also advised that as separate trustee meetings would need to be held the work would incur additional hours for the Clerk. Cllrs accepted this would be the case.

The Clerk asked Cllrs if they still wanted to go ahead with trustee training once the change in governance had taken place. It was agreed this was a good idea and an in-person meeting would be planned for later in the year.

12.2. Parish Footpaths

Cllr Smith reported that work had still not taken place on the new stile for FP 21. Cllr Smith to report the issue again.

Cllr Cole reported that there were 2 FP's on his land that required maintenance. Cllr Smith agreed to review these with Cllr Cole.

Cllr Mackay agreed to become a Footpath Officer to support Cllr Smith.

Action: Cllr Smith to report the broken stile on FP21.

Action: Cllr's Smith and Cole to meet to review maintenance required on two FP's on Lodge Farm.

12.3. Application to Parish Partnership Fund for Speed Awareness Monitor

The clerk advised that the installation of the equipment must be paid in full by the parish council on completion of the work. This was before they could receive the grant from NCC. It was agreed the Clerk should check installation lead in times with Westcotec and when the first instalment of the precept is due so the parish council is not without funds for the interim period. Once established it was agreed that the Clerk should give the go ahead for the installation.

Action: Clerk to contact Westcotec to establish installation lead in time and check when the first instalment of the precept is due.

12.4. South Norfolk in bloom grant application

A draft of the grant application had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting. Cllr's discussed the merits of the application and it was agreed not to submit this year but to use the remainder of the money from the grant to the Winfarthing Parish Trust to purchase bulbs that could be planted in various locations around the village.

12.5. Update on registration of land in Chapel Close

The Clerk reported that during a meeting with James Laband at Jackamans Solicitors regarding the registration of the Trust land, she and Cllr Cole asked Mr Laband to investigate what was happening with the registration of the land in Chapel Close. Mr Laband was advised that land had been given a land registry number which suggested a registration application had been made, however it did not seem to have been completed. Mr Laband agreed to look into this and would confirm the outcome of the meeting in an email. The Clerk reported that an email had not been received, so it was agreed the Clerk should visit Jackamans again to stress the urgency of this work as it had been going on for so long.

Signed Chair

Action: Clerk to visit Jackamans Solicitors to chase email from Mr Laband and stress the urgency of the work.

13. To receive items for the next Agenda and confirm date of next meeting

The Clerk advised that the next meeting would start with the Annual Parish Meeting at 7.00pm followed by the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council at 7.30 pm. The Annual Meeting of the Parish Council's first agenda item would be the election of Chair.

To receive an update from Cllr Rix on the parameters of the donations awarded by the Winfarthing Town Estate Charity.

Next parish council meeting: Monday 11 May 2026

Meeting Closed: 21.50

Action List

September 2025

- **Item 14.4 - Clerk** to circulate an Emergency Plan template to all councillors – **deferred**.
- **Item 14.5 - Clerk** to circulate an Action Plan template to all councillors – **deferred**.

April 2026

- **Item 3 - Clerk** to provide Cllr Mackay with a copy of the Nolan Principles, parish council standing orders and a digital copy of the register of pecuniary interests.
- **Item 3 - Clerk** to add Cllr Mackay to the PC WhatsApp group and circulate Cllr email addresses to all Cllr's.
- **Item 3 - Clerk** to book Cllr Mackay onto Councillor induction training with Norfolk Parish Training and Support.
- **Item 8 – Clerk** to advertise the Norfolk Heating Oil Crisis Fund on the Parish Council and Village Facebook pages.
- **Item 8 - District Cllr Easter** to deliver 10 'No Fly Tipping' signs to the Chair/Clerk/Item 6 – from February 2026,
- **Item 9 - Clerk** to respond to Norfolk Ramblers Association explaining the regular inspection and maintenance of the footpaths in the parish.
- **Item 12.2 - Cllr Smith** to report the broken stile on FP21.
- **Item 12.2 - Cllr's Smith and Cole** to meet to review maintenance required on two FP's on Lodge Farm.
- **Item 12.3 - Clerk** to contact Westcotec to establish installation lead in time and check when the first instalment of the precept is due.
- **Item 12.5 - Clerk** to visit Jackamans Solicitors to chase email from Mr Laband and stress the urgency of the work.

Signed Chair

Updates on what I'm doing

Heating oil

The price rise for heating oil is seriously affecting a lot of our rural households, some of them very urgently. Adrian Ramsay has done some work at Parliament to ensure that short term help is quickly put in place for those affected. The good news now is that the government is finally considering decoupling electricity prices from gas prices, in line with Green Party policy, which would be transformative, especially because people would see the savings that come from having cheap homegrown renewables by contrast with the expensive high risk fossil fuels.

Recent research from Oxford University has shown that drilling for more oil or gas in the North Sea would yield very small tax benefits (only about £16 to £82 per household to the UK treasury which would nowhere near cover the subsidies needed to make oil affordable) and would deliver no reduction in energy costs, while benefits to householders from shifting instead to renewables would be between £105 and £441 per annum per household (and much more if the renewables were public or community owned instead of taking profits offshore). So we'll be massively much better off from increasing investing in renewables instead (besides the fact that climate breakdown is a serious threat to national security generally and farming in particular).

Norfolk Heating Oil Crisis Fund



Thanks to funding received from the government, Norfolk County Council has set up a £3 million crisis fund to support residents affected by the rise in heating-oil prices.

Who can access support?

Help is available to those who are on low incomes, typically households with less than £35k coming in each year. Priority will be given to those who are due to run out of oil and are at imminent risk of losing access to heating and hot water. Once eligibility is confirmed, the council will offer grants of around £350 per household. There is also support available around setting up payment plans with oil suppliers.

Residents can apply to the Norfolk Heating Oil Crisis Fund through the council's website at www.norfolk.gov.uk/HeatingOil

Longer term we need to be building energy security and resilience by helping households to access the support for household renewable energy schemes (see below).

Those who are in financial hardship can also access a range of support through the council's Crisis and Resilience Fund (Further details [here](#)) which offers crisis payments for unexpected financial

shocks and support to build financial resilience, including budgeting advice, grant applications, and debt referrals.

Full Council on 24th March

The Full Council meeting was an embarrassment. Despite the chair insisting that there was to be no electioneering, the Conservative leader gave several party political broadcasts and election manifestos, including in her opening statement. The Reform councillors are usually silent throughout and leave before the debate on motions, but this time Councillor David Bick (Reform councillor from Thetford) gave an election address making out that the council was encumbered with debt (apparently having no notion of fiscal responsibility or investing to save). The Liberal Democrats presented a manifesto outlining their commitment to protecting the environment. It was almost as if everyone was afraid of the Green Party and needed to use the Chamber as a performance space. The chair did not intervene to stop any of it.

Because of the time spent on these performances I did not get to ask the question that I was intending to ask of the cabinet member for economic growth about the uneven playing field for local businesses, which is the effect of cheating by businesses that flout planning law and get away with retrospective planning applications or resisting enforcement. Nor did we get time for the motion that we were proposing.

However, we did debate a motion about food labelling (brought by the Conservatives). In our amendment to that motion we sought to tell the truth about the damage caused to farming by both the Conservative government (including the Brexit-related red tape and trade barriers), the Labour government, climate change, oil prices and other preventable catastrophes; and we sought to defend hard-pressed farmers from attack by their neighbours, and encourage them to contribute to local energy schemes by hosting small solar farms for the benefit of Norfolk communities (something which the Conservatives seemed keen to outlaw). It is worth noting that much land is currently used for biofuels, which produce energy at less than a tenth of what you can produce from the same hectare used for wind or solar generation. We support farmers who need to put a small area of land to solar panels or a wind turbine, alongside nature recovery or agriculture, to ensure a consistent income, so that they can farm the rest of their land in harmony with nature, while also supporting the local community by supplying very cheap community energy (especially for homes where it is less easy to install solar panels).

Cabinet questions

Because I didn't get to ask my question at Full Council, I put the question about the uneven playing field for businesses due to organisations and individuals who flout planning rules and run illegal businesses in rural areas as a question to cabinet on 7th April. Unfortunately the question was meant to be for the cabinet member for economy and growth (and was about the problems for businesses that comply with the rules) but the cabinet perversely misconstrued it and I got a reply from the cabinet member for environment and waste, because my question was partly about unauthorised waste disposal on rural land. So I have still not had any response from the cabinet about how to address the lawlessness of certain rural landowners (which blights the lives of local residents who have to devote energy to campaigning for enforcement, as well as disadvantaging decent law-abiding businesses).

I also asked a question about the adequacy of the County's provision of domestic abuse refuges, to which the answer was satisfactory.

Could you benefit from a community energy scheme (and stop the industrialisation of our countryside)?

On 13th March I attended an excellent conference organised by Adrian Ramsay for organisations interested in nature recovery and community energy etc in Waveney Valley area and there were some inspiring examples of the good stuff that's going on.

The government has announced new funding for community energy projects. Some of our parishes and district councils are working with Community Climate Action to devise a scheme to benefit local people and get clean cheap energy: <https://www.communityclimateaction.uk>. If you haven't already, do join up to the *Norfolk Environmental Collaboration* (organised by the NALC).

Road and green spaces improvements

I've now exhausted this year's local member fund and have allocated funds to the following works from it, or contributed to the projects:

Dickleburgh Dove Meadow nature conservation work: £3,000

Carleton Rode: initial safety measures for Upgate Street, including signs, white paint etc. £6,000

Winfarthing: towards the parish's share of the PP bid for SAM3 equipment, £1,000

Carleton Rode: towards the parish's share of the bus shelter improvements, £420

Tibenham/Bunwell: two horse riding signs near the stables on Cargate Common, £1,500

From next year's fund we are planning to undertake a feasibility study towards a reduced speed limit on part of Upgate Street.

Parish Partnership results

99 schemes across Norfolk have won support for their proposals under the parish partnership scheme. Of my parishes, we've won these:

Traffic calming chicanes, £25,000, Ashwellthorpe

Village Gateways: Aslacton £8421; Bressingham, £4548

SAM cameras/equipment: Great Moulton (£3928), Winfarthing (£4685).

Footpaths

I'm chasing some information relating to the impassable footpaths in Bressingham and Fersfield, some of which are on the official rota for cutting by the County Council, but seem not to be clear at all.

Better buses

I'm seeking a second conversation with the buses officer to ask him for a regular bus service for villages such as Ashwellthorpe and Tacolneston, travelling towards Wymondham. The good news is that Norfolk County Council has received a multi-year settlement of money for public transport.

Sewage and fly tipping

It's not new, but we do have a problem of commercial fly tipping in the countryside. Please report incidents to the District Council. You can also ask your district councillor for "No Fly Tipping" notices (these help with securing a conviction for offenders).

I've been in touch with the Environment Agency about the outflow of sewage near Dickleburgh Moor. I believe Anglian Water has made promises....

Updates from County Council and the Health Board

Local Government reorganisation

We have now had the announcement from the government, saying they have opted for the plan for 3 councils for Norfolk (and three for Suffolk). The effect is that these parts of South Norfolk will be in the East Norfolk council, but parts of South Norfolk and Broadland that are suburbs and commuter belt for Norwich will be incorporated into the Norwich area. It is doubtful that this arrangement will be financially sustainable since the East Norfolk council will include deprived areas with high social needs, coastal erosion areas with high costs from climate issues, and

coastal areas with a high proportion of retired people and second homes. As yet, also, there is no provision towards the huge costs of reorganising, with this scheme being the most expensive of the recommended options to implement, since it will involve disaggregating services that are currently run as a single service across the whole of Norfolk.

Five for a fiver on Norwich Park & Ride

Norfolk County Council has reduced the price of group tickets on all Norwich Park & Ride services from 29th March. Groups of up to five people can now enjoy all-day travel on Park & Ride services for just £5 making it even better value for families and cheaper than parking for more than 3 hours in most city centre car parks. For one person, the price is £3 (for concessions £2); for two people £4.

Nine new Specialist Resource Bases to open this year

Nine new bases providing 110 specialist places are opening at mainstream primary schools this year as part of Norfolk's Local First Inclusion programme to increase capacity for children who need additional support. This includes one Specialist Hub of Inclusive Practice (SHIP) now open at Roydon Primary School near Diss (16 places) and several others.

Household Hazardous waste disposal events

👉 Booking is now open for Norfolk County Council's free disposal event at Thetford Recycling Centre. There is also a later event in June at Norwich South recycling centre.

♻️ Accepted items: aerosols, anti-freeze, drain cleaners, fertilisers, paint, and weed killer.

🚗 Booking required – reserve your spot early!

Friday 17th and Saturday 18th April, 8am - 4pm at [Thetford Recycling Centre](#)

Friday 5th and Saturday 6th June, 8am - 4pm at [Norwich South Recycling Centre](#) (Booking will be available online and by phone from 9am on Thursday 28th May)

Norfolk Rural Business Awards

The closing date for applications for the Norfolk Rural Business Awards is Tuesday 21st April. There are nine category areas aimed at showcasing a wide range of our best businesses, community groups and people. The awards ceremony takes place at the Royal Norfolk Show. You can nominate yourself! Submit nominations here:
<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/65893/Apply-for-Norfolk-Rural-Business-Awards>.

National Information

County Councils Network (CCN) response to the National Planning Framework

The CCN has [published its consultation response](#) to the Government's revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), warning that the reforms would weaken local communities' voice and increase the risk of speculative, unsustainable development in rural areas.

Additionally mandatory housing targets introduced last year mean county areas face, on average, a 56% increase in expected delivery: 64,000 homes a year (around 1,245 a week) which is over seven times the increase for councils in England's major cities. But houses in rural places are not selling, and developers aren't completing the plans that have already been approved. It's no solution to a housing crisis that's about existing housing being unaffordable and stock piled by the wealthy investors in lucrative and high-demand areas.

Land use framework

The Government's new [land use framework](#) has now been published. This is guidance on how land is used across England, to balance farmland with valuing nature and pressures such as housing and industry. It has three parts:

- A vision for England's future landscapes, informed by land-use change analysis
- Principles to guide land-use decision-making
- Actions to support land-use change, delivered with partners

The full framework is available [here](#). It commits to maintaining overall food production in England, and to support food security and economic growth. It also sets out how the Government will protect the most productive land and give farmers (owners and tenants) greater rights, data and certainty to invest. This is all excellent but directly conflicts with everything in the two items I listed above (about housing targets in rural areas and the threats in the new planning framework). You couldn't make it up.

Children and parents to pilot social media bans, time limits and digital curfews at home.

Social media bans, digital curfews, and time limits on apps will be piloted in the homes of 300 teenagers in a first of its kind trial by the UK government. This runs alongside the [digital wellbeing consultation](#), which is closing on 26 May 2026. The pilot studies will last 6 weeks and test how different restrictions affect young people's day-to-day lives.

Both the children and the parents taking part will be interviewed at the beginning and end of the pilots to understand the impacts on family life, sleep and schoolwork that come from limiting social media.

County Council Elections on 7th May

Please encourage residents to check that they are registered to vote. More information here:

<https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote>

Voters who will be away on holiday, on business, in hospital or looking after a relative may need a proxy vote (if you will be away when the postal vote arrives). See more here

<https://www.gov.uk/how-to-vote/voting-by-proxy>

If someone you know has no photo ID they should either apply for a postal vote, or apply for a voter authority certificate (which is free): <https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate>

Students who will be away at University can register at both addresses. Please encourage them to get a postal vote if they want to vote at the home address, or they can vote at their college address providing they have registered there. For local elections **it is legal to vote in both places.**

Contact me

Catherine.rowett.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk. See also my Facebook page [here](#).

Catherine Rowett

12th April 2026

District Councillors report April – Winfarthing

County Elections

The County elections are going ahead on 7th May 2026 a result of this is that things at South Norfolk become very quiet although all the services continue to run as normal.

LGR/Devolution

By now you will have heard that the break up of Norfolk will be to 3 Unitary Councils, North and South Norfolk and Norwich which has grabbed all the high rated property areas and the majority of large businesses from the surrounding Councils. It is anticipated that the remainder of South Norfolk and Broadland will support Gt Yarmouth and parts of North Norfolk. Without a good income stream the area outside Norwich could become bankrupt within 5 years with residents picking up the bill.

National Grid

The planning inspectorate hearing into the Norwich Tilbury pylon line rumbles on with National Grid coming under fire for not doing their consultations properly or listening to the concerns of residents. However we all know the outcome – Ed Milliband will wave it through regardless.

Diss Leisure Centre

At a planning committee meeting last week the plans to build the new leisure centre were approved and the contract has now gone out to tender. Work should start later in the year.

Food Waste

The first of the special lorries to collect food waste have been delivered, the rounds organised, staff employed and the first residents have received their food waste caddies. The system will begin in July and continue to be rolled out as and when the new lorries are delivered.